

So the point here is that *sashiko* clothing was essential for survival at one time. And even though making things in this way took up many hours for people who also had to work, do household tasks and so on, it was a ⁽¹⁾ . The wife of someone like a farmer, for instance, had to spend time making clothes, and she would do the stitching without a frame or structural support. And the ⁽²⁾ , once you put them on, were flexible and moulded themselves to the wearer. If you look at a genuine *sashiko* garment today, then you can see the evidence of wear and get a ⁽³⁾ for the shape of the wearer's body, which is fascinating.

Then, in 1895, traditional life changed, and *sashiko* was no longer ⁽⁴⁾ because rail travel reached northern Japan, and warm textiles could then be imported. However, since the 1970s, *sashiko* has been ⁽⁵⁾ in Japan and has also been taken up by quilters and embroiderers in the USA and the UK. Nowadays, the designs are a little different. There are vertical and horizontal stripes, for example, or the ⁽⁶⁾ can be arranged to produce a diamond ⁽⁷⁾ .. here we are. Similar fabrics to those used traditionally can be found in modern furnishing or dressmaking departments or from suppliers so that the traditional appearance of a *sashiko* item has been maintained.

Now, there are exhibitions of ancient *sashiko* items, but the disappointing thing is this. While old pots and ceramics are considered to be treasures and preserved, even with cracks, ancient garments ⁽⁸⁾ by poor village women have not been given such a high value ... and, sadly, many of them have been thrown away, rather than getting the ⁽⁹⁾ of collectors. This is a ⁽¹⁰⁾ because they say a great deal about how people once lived and about their technical skill ... and it's no coincidence that *sashiko* has now become a pastime on an international level.