

Evangelists for Women's Education: The 'Civilizing Mission' of Tsuda Umeko and Alice M. Bacon

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After a year of teaching at Tokyo's Kazoku Jogakkō (the Peeresses' School) in 1889, Alice Mabel Bacon, a white woman on the faculty of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute in the United States, acknowledged that her notion of "civilization" had changed. "... 'Civilization' is so difficult to define and understand" she wrote, "that I do not know what it means now as well as when I left home."¹ While Bacon's assumptions about racial hierarchies and her certainty about the moral superiority of Christian civilizations were shaken, her sense of duty to extend the benefits of civilization and promote social progress through education was confirmed. An advocate of what was known as 'racial uplift' in the 19th-century United States, or "civilizationist ideology" in contemporary scholarship, Bacon promoted education with religious fervor and found her Japanese colleague, Tsuda Umeko, to be equally ardent in the cause of educating Japanese women. After having taught together at Kazoku Jogakkō in 1888, Bacon and Tsuda co-authored *Japanese Girls and Women* (1891), in which they analyzed the factors that contributed to Japanese women's subjugation and argued for education as the necessary corrective; raised funds for and administered the American Women's Scholarship for Japanese Women; and founded Joshi Eigaku Juku to implement their educational goals for Japanese women. Tsuda and Bacon were key members of a transnational network of women educators and philanthropists who supported educational opportunities to enable Japanese women to become economically independent. With this main goal, their educational vision differed from the state-supported schools in Japan that advocated girls receive domestic training to prepare them for roles as wives and mothers (*ryōsai kenbo*).

The "Civilizing Mission"

As analyzed by Gail Bederman, "civilization" was seen in turn-of-the-century United States as having attributes of both race and gender. In the popularized understanding of Darwinism, "civilization" carried the connotation of a specific stage in human racial evolution, following simple savagery and violent barbarism, that had been attained solely by white societies. Civilizationist discourse had protean qualities, however, as Bederman observes, and could be used to legitimize different claims for power.²

Civilizationist ideology in Japan reflected the perceived analogous political and social circumstances of freed blacks in the United States and women in Meiji Japan.

Both groups were understood to have been recently released from a status of enslavement or subjugation in which their capacity to function independently and develop civilized virtues had been impeded. In both the United States and Japan, efforts to educate these subjugated groups were subject to skepticism and public ridicule.³⁾ In these relatively hostile environments, progressives sought to demonstrate the educability of these groups, nurture their moral development, and equip them with skills to function independently. Progressives understood that opposition to education was based primarily on the public's fear that subjugated groups would demand their political rights⁴⁾, thus, progressives sought to allay that fear. Education was understood by the advocates of civilizationist ideology to necessarily precede any pursuit of political rights or legal equality, with the assumption that public opinion had to be changed regarding the capacity and merit of these groups. Gradual social change was deemed to ultimately be the most effective. The advocates of civilizationist ideology were criticized both by conservatives, who argued that their goal of educating these groups was futile and that the hope of integrating them into the polity was misguided, and radicals, who challenged social conventions and advocated immediate political redress. Historians have tended to be critical of the leaders of civilizationist ideology as conservatives who were ambitious for themselves and too willing to accept the continued subordinate status of the groups they led. More recent scholarship recognizes the role of civilizationist ideology in the projects of expansion and empire. The collaboration of Tsuda Umeko and Alice Bacon is a case study of civilizationist ideology in an international context⁵⁾, with Alice Bacon serving as the person linking the American ideology of racial uplift with the cause of elevating the status of women in Meiji Japan.

Alice Bacon was introduced to civilizationist ideology by her father and these values were affirmed in her teaching experience at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. She was the daughter of the Reverend Leonard Bacon, a Congregationalist minister, Yale University faculty member, and prominent abolitionist who said that education was the means by which "we are to fulfill our destiny and lead the nations in their progress toward a 'perfect civilization,' to maintain order and establish cultural conformity, and to enable people to develop their talents."⁶⁾ Historian Hugh Davis has described Leonard Bacon's struggle "to find an acceptable balance between pragmatism and principle on the race and slavery issues," ultimately embracing a "gradualist approach."⁷⁾ I argue that his daughter, Alice, similarly sought a balance between pragmatism and principle with respect to elevating the status of Japanese women, and, as was the case with her father, advocated a gradual approach to social change that avoided conflict. In 1872, Leonard Bacon's civilizationist impulses turned to Japan when Mori Arinori, then the head of the Japanese Legation in Washington, asked the Bacon family to become guardians of twelve-year old Yamakawa Sutematsu (later, Oyama Sutematsu), sent by the Japanese government to be educated in the United States.⁸⁾ Sutematsu and Alice attended school together and participated in community activities in New Haven, Connecticut. In 1883, Alice Bacon began teaching political economy and theology at Hampton Institute, a school dedicated to educating African Americans and Indian Americans to promote their economic independence and inculcate Christian values.⁹⁾ The found-

er and Principal of Hampton Institute, Samuel Armstrong, articulated a “scale of civilization,” placing Caucasians at the apex of the scale, with Asians, Africans, and Native Americans in descending order. David Wallace Adams, a historian of the Hampton Institute, argues that this “scale of civilization” was always implicit in the Hampton staff’s rhetoric.¹⁰ I argue that Alice Bacon extended the civilizationist mandate, with the assumptions she had developed at Hampton, to her work in Japan with Tsuda Umeko.

The eventual collaboration between Alice Bacon and Tsuda Umeko was based on their common understanding of the applicability of civilizationist ideology to the project of raising the status of women in Japan. Tsuda Umeko was herself, the product of the “civilizationist” intent of the Japanese government during the *bunmei kaika* period. In an unprecedented undertaking of the Japanese government, Tsuda, along with the Bacon family’s ward, Yamakawa Sutematsu, were raised and educated in the United States, with the intention that they might become “fully acquainted with the blessings of home life in the United States, [learning] all those kinds of information which will make them true ladies [developing a] respect for what is called true culture.”¹¹ Mori Arinori placed Tsuda in the Washington D.C. home of Charles and Adeline Lanman, where she developed knowledge of English-language scholarship and literature. She was educated at leading Washington female seminaries, receiving the best available pre-collegiate education for women.¹² Ostensibly at the request of Tsuda, herself, and with the permission of Mori Arinori, she was baptized into the Christian faith.¹³ It was the education, both formal and informal, that Tsuda received from Adeline and Charles Lanman that prepared her for her life as a women’s educator and inclined her to the values of civilizationist ideology which shaped her collaboration with Alice Bacon.

Having been celebrated for her virtue and intelligence in the United States, Tsuda Umeko was sobered to return, in 1882, to a more conservative Japan and one less supportive of adopting American ideas about women’s education. Tsuda initially expressed despair over the condition of Japanese women and their lack of desire for change. “Oh, women have the hardest part of life to bear in more ways than one,” she wrote to Adeline Lanman. “Even in America I often wished I were a man. Oh how much more so in Japan! Poor, poor women, how I long to do something to better your position! Yet, why should I, when they are so well satisfied, and do not seem to know any better.”¹⁴ Expressing a sentiment consistent with the racial hierarchy of civilizationist ideology, Tsuda stated that while women were no better off anywhere than in the United States, nevertheless, Japan remained more civilized, with respect to the status of women, than any other Asian nation.¹⁵ Confident that she was uniquely well qualified to educate and elevate the status of Japanese women, Tsuda criticized both missionaries and the students whom they had taught. The ethnocentrism of the missionaries, Tsuda thought, rendered them ineffective. Critical of the low social standing, poor behavior, and flawed character of the missionaries’ Japanese students, she told Adeline Lanman, “Do not suppose that these girls have anything of the refinement, sense of honor, or moral standards like the girls I have known, though now, to be sure, many are Christians. Most of [them] are from very low, common [families] and brought up miserably, and at first, had probably many

bad ways and habits which had to be corrected.”¹⁶⁾ Tsuda’s views were ironic, in the sense that, as Sally Hastings has observed, Tsuda’s criticisms of the Japanese students were virtually identical to those of the ethnocentric missionaries, about whom she complained.¹⁷⁾ Historians have observed a similar irony in the views of nineteenth-century, black middle class leaders of racial uplift in the United States, noting that they, like Tsuda, can be seen to have held a liminal position, both as members of a socially aspiring middle class and as members of a subordinated group without political rights.¹⁸⁾ It was during this period—her initial return to Japan—that Tsuda most clearly articulated the civilizationist values that she had internalized during her education in the United States.

Teaching and Writing: The Collaborative Projects of Tsuda and Bacon

Tsuda and Bacon’s shared belief in the power of education to elevate the status of socially subordinated groups in their respective societies was the foundation of their collaboration in teaching and writing projects from 1888 to 1890. Their collaboration was mutually beneficial. Tsuda was instrumental in bringing Bacon to teach in Japan, an experience which confounded Bacon’s assumptions about race and stimulated her life-long reflection on the concept of culture. Bacon, a gifted classroom teacher, educated in political economy, and experienced in an institution designed to elevate the social status of its graduates, offered Tsuda a sympathetic conversational partner with whom to refine her teaching philosophy and establish professional, career goals.

Ostensibly, Tsuda’s aspirations were finally fulfilled by the government in 1885 when she was appointed to teach English at the newly-established, Kazoku Jogakkō, a school created by the Imperial Household Department for the daughters of the Japanese nobility. On the recommendation of Itō Hirobumi, for whose family she had tutored, Tsuda was appointed the head of the English Department. At the time, Tsuda was twenty years old and had only an American college preparatory education; she spoke little Japanese.¹⁹⁾ The appointment brought Tsuda financial security, professional standing, and the prestige of court rank, but from the outset, she had reservations about the elementary level of English-language instruction and the excessive amount of instructional time devoted to formalities associated with court.²⁰⁾

Upon the recommendation of Tsuda, Bacon taught English at Kazoku Jogakkō in 1888;²¹⁾ the experience prompted her to question her assumptions about a “scale of civilization”. Bacon praised the elegant appearance and disciplined behavior of the peeresses (thus presenting a contrast to the ethnocentrism of American missionaries). In correspondence to her family, which she later published as *A Japanese Interior*, Bacon observed that, “the first thing that one notices after American schools is the absolute absence of discipline, or any necessity for it. The pupils are all so perfectly lady-like that politeness restrains them from doing anything that is not exactly what their teachers or superiors would wish them to do.” And commenting on the students’ practice of bowing to their teachers, Bacon wrote, “the whole thing is very pretty, and I am charmed with this manner of calling to order and dismissing of classes. It might have a *civilizing* [emphasis added] effect, if introduced to American schools.”²²⁾ Bacon was by no means the only American whose assumptions were

confounded by their experience in Japan. Karen K. Seat has observed that "... Japan, more than any other country during this era, forced American Protestants to rethink their assumptions about racial hierarchies and the superiority of 'Christian' civilizations."²³⁾

While Bacon praised the peeresses' deportment, she saw, as well, the constraints imposed by their social class. Bacon observed their lack of independence and its consequences—their "... narrowing circumstances ... the constant restrictions of etiquette, the helplessness engendered by the crowd of servants with which they are surrounded from earliest childhood, the total lack of those interests and employments which develop the mind and render it strong and active."²⁴⁾ Confronting differences in race, culture, social class and historical circumstances, Bacon found a surprising (apparently to herself, as well as others) similarity between the lives of the peeresses and her African-American students at Hampton. "When I saw them [the peeresses], my thoughts could not but fly back to Hampton, and contrast our poor little pickaninnies there with these little peeresses. But they are alike in one way, and that is that their lives are more or less stunted and cramped by the circumstances of their birth, the pickaninnies by poverty and the disabilities of their low social position, the peeresses by their rigid restraints and formalities that accompany their rank."²⁵⁾

Bacon advocated education as the means by which both groups would escape from the confines of their socially-imposed constraints. Identifying herself as a "Yankee school-ma'am" rather than a missionary, Bacon advocated the liberating merits of English-language literature. "The opening of English literature to the mind is the opening of a window toward a fresher air and sunshine and magnificent new vistas of thought and feeling. The careful study of English literature is in itself a liberal education to the mind trained only in Japanese thought," she argued.²⁶⁾ The independence and freedom which Bacon sought to convey to her students was consistently intellectual and spiritual, rather than political or legal.

In 1889, both Bacon and Tsuda returned to the United States to enhance their academic credentials, refine the goals of the educational project on which they would collaborate, and lay the foundation for its funding. Recognizing that merely having graduated from a college preparatory academy no longer assured her position as the pre-eminent female English-language expert in Japan, Tsuda began a two-year study at Bryn Mawr, the newly established [1885] liberal arts college for women. Tsuda flourished at Bryn Mawr, studying with students, many of them former teachers like herself, who shared their abiding sense of duty to work for the advancement of women. Anna Hartshorne, a Bryn Mawr classmate who later taught with Tsuda in Japan, concluded that "the best qualities of Bryn Mawr, broadmindedness, exact standards of scholarship, became rooted in her [Tsuda] and were an integral part of her educational ideal."²⁷⁾ Bacon returned to teach at Hampton and, perhaps with an increased commitment to the education of young women, established the Dixie Hospital, a teaching hospital for training nurses. She developed administrative experience, particularly with respect to overcoming public skepticism and the need to cultivate financial contributors for a new institution.

In the summer of 1890, Bacon invited Tsuda to join her at Hampton to collabo-

rate on the book project with which they launched their careers in publishing, lecturing, and fund-raising, culminating in the expectation of together establishing a school for girls in Tokyo.²⁸⁾ Bacon and Tsuda were appealing to a new audience of educated women readers, and later they took the book content as a basis for lecture tours and fund raising opportunities.²⁹⁾ Reflecting Bacon's perspective as a teacher of political economy, their book, *Japanese Girls and Women*, is an analysis of the social classes with respect to women's opportunities to engage in productive labor and the extent to which they might exercise what scholars now identify as "agency."

Bacon and Tsuda observed that in Japan, gender, together with social class, determined the hierarchical nature of Japanese society. "The difference between the women of the lower and those of the higher classes, in the matter of equality with their husbands," they wrote, "is quite noticeable. The wife of the peasant or merchant is much nearer to her husband's level than is the wife of the Emperor. Apparently, as each step in the social scale is a little higher for the man than it is for the woman, and lifts him a little farther above his wife."³⁰⁾ Contrary to the contemporary texts available in the United States that emphasized the cultural contributions of court ladies,³¹⁾ Bacon and Tsuda emphasized the role of the Japanese woman in productive labor ["direct production"], and using the standard of independence, judged women of the lower classes to have greater autonomy. "The wife of the countryman, though she may work harder and grow old earlier is more free and independent than her city sister; and the wife of the peasant, pushing her produce to market, is in some ways happier and more considered than the wife of the noble, who must spend her life among her ladies in-waiting, in the seclusion of her great house with its beautiful garden, the plaything of her husband in his leisure hours but never his equal, or the sharer of his cares of his thoughts."³²⁾ In Bacon and Tsuda's analysis, a woman's social standing and the quality of her marital relations were a function of her engagement in productive labor. And to the extent that Japanese women were engaged in productive labor, Bacon and Tsuda asserted their similarity with American women. "There seems no doubt at all that among the peasantry of Japan one finds the women who have the most freedom and independence. Among this class, all through the country, the women, though hard-worked and possessing few comforts, lived lives of intelligent, independent labor, and have in the family positions as respected and honored as those held by women in America. Their lives are fuller and happier than those of the women of the higher classes, for they are themselves bread winners contributing an important part of the family revenue, and they are obeyed and respected accordingly."³³⁾ By emphasizing the importance of women's engagement in direct production, Bacon and Tsuda overturned the traditional social hierarchy.

Writing at the time of the adoption of the Civil Code, which institutionalized patriarchal practices, and the Peace Police Law of 1890, which limited women's political activity, Bacon and Tsuda compared the status of Japanese women to the experiences of slaves in the United States.³⁴⁾ Acknowledging the ultimate need for reform of the marriage law, Bacon and Tsuda argued that first women must have the employment opportunities that would make their independence possible.³⁵⁾ Rather than proposing an education that would better prepare women for marriage, parent-

ing, and household management, Bacon and Tsuda stated that “The women of Japan must know how to do some definite work in the world beyond the work of the home, so that their position will not be one of entire dependence upon father, husband, or son.”³⁶⁾

The civilizationist message which Tsuda and Bacon crafted, promoting education opportunities to enable women to become economically independent, was well suited for garnering Americans’ financial support for their educational projects in Japan. Privileging the role of samurai women as agents of progress, identifying them as the new middle class, they advocated professional education to prepare women, particularly teachers and nurses, to serve as community leaders. “The samurai women of today are eagerly working into the positions of teachers, interpreters, trained nurses, and whatever other places there are which may be honorably occupied by women. The girls’ schools, both government and private, find many of their pupils among the samurai class; and their deference and obedience to their teachers and superiors, their ambition and keen sense of honor in the school-room, show the influence of the samurai feeling over new Japan. To the samurai women belongs the task—and they have already begun to perform it—of establishing upon a broader and surer foundation the position of woman in their own country.”³⁷⁾ Bacon and Tsuda’s project of creating a progressive identity for samurai women in *Japanese Girls and Women* is an example of what Mark A. Jones has called “... the role of human agents in the construction of social classes” when “individuals ... self-consciously construct a community of like-minded individuals, deem themselves a social class, and use that label to attain legitimacy and power.”³⁸⁾ The role for samurai women in Japan, envisioned by Bacon and Tsuda, was similar to the role the advocates of racial uplift identified for the black middle class in the United States. Kevin Gaines has observed that, “Generally, prominent blacks defended themselves against racial stereotypes and voiced their aspirations for middle class identity and leadership status by espousing an ethos within which they increasingly saw themselves obliged to act as privileged agents of progress and civilization for the disadvantaged black majority—hence they often used the phrase ‘uplifting the race ...’”³⁹⁾ Given her experience with civilizationist ideology at Hampton, Bacon played a particularly important role in conferring upon Tsuda, their mutual friend Ōyama Sutematsu, and the samurai women of whom they were representative, a leading role in elevating the status of women in Japan.

To promote higher education opportunities for Japanese women, Tsuda and her personal benefactor, Mary Wistar Morris, established the American Women’s Scholarship for Japanese Women (AWSJW), with the hope of raising an endowment of \$8,000.⁴⁰⁾ Alice Bacon, understanding the importance of developing a network of financial supporters from her work at Hampton and the Dixie Hospital, served as a consultant to the committee.⁴¹⁾ In speaking engagements, Tsuda appealed to donors who held reform commitments and believed that education and Christianity were the means by which the status of Japanese women would be elevated, saying, “The present time demands broad education for women new avenues of employment and of self-support so that it may be possible for a woman to be independent,”⁴²⁾ She spoke for the education of upper-class women, saying “We should expect them to

have the greatest influence.”⁴³⁾ As was the case with civilizationist educators in the United States, when soliciting donations, Tsuda linked the issues of religion and education, stating that, “More education and freedom without the under-current of religion and morality must need be a very doubtful experiment.”⁴⁴⁾ Tsuda concluded in words that invoked a mission project, “Cannot education together with Christianity give to Japanese women the power to come forward at this crisis, and take up the grand work that lies before them?”⁴⁵⁾ The scholarship was administered by a transnational committee; the Japanese committee of prominent women’s educators and alumnae of American institutions selected the scholarship recipients and the American committee of prominent women’s educators and philanthropists solicited contributions, supervised the recipients’ academic work, and accustomed the students’ to life in the United States.⁴⁶⁾

Alice Bacon served as a consultant to the committee, providing them insights from her teaching experience in Japan. The administration of the AWSJW was characterized by intensely close personal relationships between members of the committee and scholarship recipients; these familial-like relationships paralleled the close relationships which Umeko had experienced with the Lanman’s and Alice and her family had experienced with Sutematsu. Between 1893 and the beginning of World War II, eleven women received the scholarship and though relatively small in number, had a disproportionately significant influence on twentieth-century women’s higher education in Japan. During the time in which they worked together on the writing project and the establishment of the scholarship program, Bacon agreed to assist Tsuda in establishing a school for young women in Japan in which they would put into practice the educational ideals about which they had written. Bacon urged Mary Wistar Morris to establish a Committee for Miss Tsuda’s School, the membership of which was virtually that of the ASJW committee. American women’s philanthropy gave Tsuda and Bacon the opportunity to establish a school consistent with their values, rather than those of the state or a governing board.

The ‘Experimental Period’: The Establishment of Joshi Eigaku Juku

Tsuda and Bacon were laying the foundations for their school in the late 1890’s when the Japanese government promulgated new regulations to shape women’s education and growing nationalism following the Sino-Japanese war accelerated opposition to Christian-influenced education and Western-based curricula.⁴⁷⁾ Increasingly, in the 1890s, particularly with the 1895 Provisions of Girls’ High Schools, (which specified the years of study, the subjects of the curriculum, and the purpose of education—*ryōsai kenbo*); and the 1899 Act of Women’s High Schools and Vocational Schools, (which mandated every prefecture to establish girls’ high schools with four years of study), government expanded and regularized female education, while mandating that it emphasize domestic training.⁴⁸⁾ Religious education was prohibited in schools licensed by the Ministry of Education, at the same time that the mission boards sponsoring women’s schools increasingly wished to make evangelizing their priority.⁴⁹⁾ In 1897, Tsuda wrote of the need for a girls’ high school in Tokyo that aspired to the same standards as the boys’ high school, one which was open “... to women of all classes and without restriction.”⁵⁰⁾ On July 20, 1900, Tsuda petitioned

the Tokyo district governor for permission to open a private academy, Joshi Eigaku Juku, which would prepare women to pass the government's English language certification examination and fill the increasing need for teachers in girls' public schools. The mission of the academy was to fulfill the civilizationist goals of providing a vocational education that would enable graduates to become financially independent. The curricular emphasis on English-language instruction enabled Tsuda and Bacon to teach texts they considered providing a specifically Christian education.

In 1900, Tsuda and Bacon began the "experimental period" of Joshi Eigaku Juku, in which a small entering class and extremely limited funding resulted in an educational program that clearly reflected Tsuda and Bacon's own skills and values. As Tsuda attested, Alice Bacon's contribution to the success of Joshi Eigaku Juku during its experimental period, and her influence on Tsuda's thinking about education was decisive.⁵¹⁾ In modest material circumstances, Tsuda and Bacon emphasized their own zeal for teaching, the dedication of their students, and the opportunity for personal instruction to nurture the students' moral development. Tsuda later reminisced, "In the autumn of 1900, was begun our work in a little Japanese house, where parlor, living room and dining room served for classes as well. It was neither convenient, comfortable, or happy, but it taught the lesson which had been my conviction that having the right spirit of study on the part of the pupils, and truly earnest teachers, all things else cease to be absolute necessities."⁵²⁾ Making a virtue of necessity, Tsuda emphasized the home-like environment of the school. In a letter to M. Carey Thomas, Tsuda wrote, "The girls take their meals with me and I share their life ... This is most unusual in Japan, but I wish to carry out this principle and not live apart from them ..."⁵³⁾ The trope of self-sacrifice was characteristic of both samurai values and the civilizationalist educational institutions; both Joshi Eigaku Juku and Hampton were entirely dependent on financial contributions for their operation. With limited resources to support Joshi Eigaku Juku, Bacon taught eight to twelve hours a week, led weekly discussions on current events, and contributed to Christian worship services. She did not accept a salary; rather, she contributed to her room and board at the school by teaching at Kazoku Jogakkō and the Tokyo Higher Women's Normal School and tutoring private students.⁵⁴⁾

Consistent with civilizationist values, Tsuda privileged strength of character over mere knowledge. Hampton, for example, sought to inculcate in their students the character traits that were assumed to have been lost or damaged during their enslavement. Freedom was thought to require the former slaves develop cultural values that would act as an internal system of control.⁵⁵⁾ Similarly, Tsuda emphasized the development of her students' character which she deemed to have been stunted by the dependence with which they had been raised. The independence which she sought for Japanese women similarly required that they internalize values that would enable them to exercise self control. "We have only asked for a few, earnest students, who were willing to work, and desirous to develop and improve themselves, not only to gain knowledge, but strength of mind and character," she wrote.⁵⁶⁾ Character development was a familiar theme, not only in traditional, Confucian education⁵⁷⁾ but also in nineteenth-century discourse of empire and nation.⁵⁸⁾

While *ryōsai kenbo* educational values integrated women into the Meiji polity through domestic training and their familial roles, Tsuda and Bacon emphasized the necessity of liberal education, for both women and men, to promote social stability. “The vital problem,” Tsuda asserted, “is that of social and moral reform. Granting that school work and book-learning and technical education are not everything, that moral training and the building up of the character of our girls should be the highest aim of the educator, a fact true also for the men, what chance, may I ask, have our women in their present narrow lives to gain that necessary experience, which gives stability and fortitude to the mind, and, how can the truest and best character be built up for a woman any more than for a man, without a knowledge of the facts that are the heritage of the human race, and a training of the reasoning faculties that they may clearly distinguish the good from the bad, reason from prejudice, and duty from misplaced emotion?”⁵⁹) Consistent with civilizationist assumptions that the character of those who had been subjugated must first be strengthened⁶⁰), Tsuda and Bacon argued that liberal education must precede legal reform to elevate the status of women. “When women through a more liberal education have proved themselves capable of greater things,” Tsuda wrote, “there will come the day when they can take a higher place in society, as they certainly will in the home, and in the esteem of their husbands. Will not the law, at that time, give the same justice to women as to men?”⁶¹)

As the outward manifestation of character development, and with great sensitivity to public criticism of female students and the schools which educated them, Tsuda and Bacon maintained high standards for their students’ conduct. Reflecting her sensitivity to the likely public criticism she and her students would face, in her opening address, Tsuda admonished her students, “There is one thing that I must warn you as students to be careful about. This school is the first of its kind in making a specialty of its higher courses of study. We may be criticized on many points. Perhaps some of these may not be of much importance, but even then, if such criticism impedes the progress of higher education for women, it would be a matter of great regret to all of us. And criticism will most certainly come, not so much on our own courses of study or methods of work, but on points which simply require a little care and thoughtfulness on your part—the little things which constitute the making of a true lady—the language you use, your manner in intercourse with others—your attention to the details of our etiquette. So I ask you not to make yourself in any way conspicuous or to seem forward, but be always gentle, submissive and courteous as have always been our women in the past.”⁶²) Tsuda and Bacon’s apparent conservatism regarding the significance of character development and the importance of feminine conduct is most helpfully interpreted in light of the assumptions of civilizationist education that recognized public opposition to the education of historically subjugated groups, making those groups responsible to conform to behavioral expectations that were beyond reproach.

Tsuda and Bacon saw no contradiction between expecting students to be conformist with respect to their conduct and, at the same time, develop the capacity to think independently. Tsuda noted the pedagogical emphasis on discussion rather than lecture or rote learning, saying that instead, “Every effort has been made to-

wards the encouragement of study on the part of students and of independent work and independent thought. The memorizing of ready-made opinions of others is not a sufficient help to meet the intricate and changing problems of life before us..."⁶³⁾ While the critics thought that educating women diminished their capacity to act responsibly, Tsuda countered, that "They gain by a broad education... moreover, they lose a certain recklessness, born of the times which many of them think must accompany progress."⁶⁴⁾ Reflecting the distinction Tsuda and Bacon made between the work of teachers and missionaries,⁶⁵⁾ they did not evangelize, but, they conveyed Christian ethical teachings to develop students' character and underscore their graduates obligation to service. Tsuda and Bacon argued that their graduates would ultimately elevate the status of women by using their professional skills to benefit of society, rather than using their domestic training for their homes and families, as the proponents of *ryōsai kenbo* advocated. Tsuda urged their alumnae, "Humbly strive to be worthy of respect so that all must acknowledge the value of your training, and bear in mind always that where much has been received, much must be given to others. If you can succeed in these things even in part, you will pave the way for privileges and the honor of Japanese women."⁶⁶⁾ Inculcating civilizationist values in their graduates, Tsuda and Bacon argued for a moderate, accommodationist approach to social reform, in which if women acted with humility and circumspection, they could reasonably hope to ultimately be granted legal privileges.

This case study of the collaboration between Tsuda Umeko and Alice Bacon, with their use of civilizationist ideology to elevate the status of Japanese women, had broader implications for women's higher education and the status of women in Japan. With respect to women's higher education in Meiji Japan, this study has demonstrated the variety of educational ideals, institutional models, and funding mechanisms that contributed to a diverse educational landscape that has often been characterized solely through the lens of state-sponsored *ryōsai kenbo* values and curricula. With respect to the status of women, this study challenges assumptions that legislation effectively removed women from public engagement⁶⁷⁾ by highlighting the development of women's professional employment and the economic independence it made possible. Further, this study documents the growing class distinctions amongst women, the extent to which higher education increasingly shaped middle-class identity, and the development of a rationale for opposing political efforts to elevate women's legal status.

Notes

- 1) Alice Mabel Bacon, *A Japanese Interior*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1893), 228.
- 2) Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 23, 25.
- 3) In her survey of the education of Japanese girls at the end of the nineteenth century, Margaret Burton cited a number of examples of attacks on women's education that appeared in the press. "The education of women was a favorite topic of discussion in the newspapers at this time and many were the scathing criticisms of the students in girls' schools. Another paper, the *Yomiuri shinbum*, published a series of articles maintaining that the system of education followed in government and private schools was responsible for vanity, extravagance, frivolity, and lack of refinement in the young women of the time. The *Jiji Shimpō* devoted a leading article to lament over the decay of good manners in women students. 'The usages of female life and deportment

- have one after another been dispensed with,' it maintained, 'and the modern girl in her attempt to imitate foreign manners has almost transformed herself into a man.' The schools in Tokyo were censured with especial severity, and accused of permitting their students to do things hitherto unknown among the women of Japan, such as living alone in lodging houses, walking unattended in the streets after dark, visiting tea houses without chaperonage, etc." Margaret E. Burton, *The Education of Women in Japan*, (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1914), 66–67. Kevin Gaines notes the increasing incidence of violence against blacks in the United States, which occurred from 1889–1901. Kevin Gaines, "Black Americans' Racial Uplift Ideology as 'Civilizing Mission,'" in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, eds., Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 441.
- 4) Robert J. Norrell notes that, "White Nationalists Always Connected their Opposition to Black Education to African Americans' Persistent Interest in Politics." Robert J. Norrell, *Up from History: The Life of Booker T. Washington*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 57.
 - 5) As advocated by David Sehat, this argument places "racial uplift" in a global context associated with U.S. expansionism, "... The civilizing mission in the South [U.S.] was one part of a larger effort by the late-nineteenth century benevolent organizations and church foreign mission societies to bring Christianity and 'civilization' to Native Americans, Hawaiians, Filipinos, and other 'colored' peoples around the world. As a result, the initiative in the region bears many similarities to the civilizing missions of other imperial regimes." David Sehat, "The Civilizing Mission of Booker T. Washington," *The Journal of Southern History* 73, (2007), 328.
 - 6) Hugh Davis, *Leonard Bacon: New England Reformer and Antislavery Moderate*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1998), 218.
 - 7) *Ibid.*, 34.
 - 8) Tsudajuku Daigaku, *Tsudajuku rokujunenshi*, (Tokyo: Tsudajuku Daigaku, 1960), 21. Sute-matsu and Alice attended Hillhouse High School in New Haven, Connecticut. Together, they worked for local charities serving destitute women and children and re-settling immigrants. Kuno Akiko, *Unexpected Destinations: The Poignant Story of Japan's First Vassar Graduate*, (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), 86, 91, 235.
 - 9) Historian Robert Francis Engs has observed that they sought to instill in their black students those values and forms of behavior that would enable them to advance in the "civilized" white world. Robert Francis Engs, *Educating the Disfranchised: Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Hampton Institute, 1839–1893*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 106.
 - 10) David Wallace Adams, "Education in Hues: Red and Black at Hampton Institute, 1878–1893," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 76, (1977), 161–162.
 - 11) Charles Lanman, *The Japanese in America*, (New York: University Publishing Company, 1872), 48. Five girls accompanied the Iwakura Mission to the United States in 1871, supported by the Japanese government to live and study in the United States for a ten-year period. They ranged in age from six to fourteen. The three youngest girls, Yamakawa, Tsuda, and Nagai Shigeko remained for the designated period; upon their return to Japan they remained friends and supporters of Tsuda Umeko.
 - 12) Tsuda was educated at Georgetown Collegiate Institute (Stephenson Seminary) and the Archer Institute. Tsuda's informal education in the Lanman household is analyzed in Linda L. Johnson, "Contributing to the Most Promising Revolution in Our Time: The American Women's Scholarship for Japanese Women, 1893–1941," in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, ed., Andrea Walton, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 298–319.
 - 13) Tsuda was baptized by the Reverend Octavius Perinchief, whom Mori had consulted on educational policy and whose volume of sermons was edited by Charles Lanman. *Tsudajuku rokujunenshi*, 23; Furuki Yoshiko, *The White Plum: A Biography of Ume Tsuda, Pioneer in the Higher Education of Japanese Women*, (New York: Weatherhill, 1991), 26–28.
 - 14) Furuki Yoshiko, *The Attic Letters: Ume Tsuda's Correspondence to Her American Mother*, (New York: Weatherhill, 1991), 24. Sally Hastings has observed that "By unquestioningly representing Tsuda's views of Japanese women as fact, [biographers] Furuki and Rose have reinscribed nineteenth-

- century Western perceptions of the lowly estate of Asian women.” Sally Ann Hastings, “American Culture and Higher Education for Japanese Women,” *Feminist Studies* 19(3), (1993), 626. I present an interpretation of Tsuda’s contradictory role as an explanation of her observations about Japanese women.
- 15) *Attic Letters*, 25.
 - 16) *Ibid.*, 78.
 - 17) Sally Ann Hastings, “American Culture,” 625. In her review of Rose’s *Tsuda Umeko and Women’s Education in Japan*, Hastings states, “Rose writes that Tsuda complained missionaries were peculiar, monotonous, bigoted, and stuck up and claimed to have no friends among them (43, 52) but her conceptualization of the problems of Japanese women was almost identical to the missionary critique. Tsuda lamented that Japanese women were dependent, that they had no means of self-support, no property, and no identity. She condemned drunkenness, public breastfeeding, geisha and concubines (45–46).
 - 18) Sehat, “The Civilizing Mission,” 325–326.
 - 19) Benjamin Duke, *The History of Modern Japanese Education: Constructing the National School System, 1872–1890*, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 109.
 - 20) Furuki, *The White Plum*, 70.
 - 21) Tsudajuku Daigaku, *Rokujunenshi*, 32, 45, 46. Tsuda wrote to Adeline Lanman, “You know she has a very fine education and she has been used to teaching for ever so long, and she has had a good training with all those Indians and Negroes at Hampton.” Furuki, *Attic Letters*, 293. The capacity to recommend native speaker teachers would have embellished Tsuda’s professional reputation in English-language instruction in Japan.
 - 22) Bacon, *Japanese Interior*, 10, 13, 16.
 - 23) Karen K. Seat, *Providence Has Freed Our Hands: Women’s Missions and the American Encounter with Japan*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008), xiv.
 - 24) Bacon, Alice Mabel, “Silhouettes from the Sunrise Kingdom,” *Southern Workman*, 17 (1888), 123. Sally Hastings has noted that it is problematic to accept “... Tsuda’s American friends as authorities on Japanese women. As Edward Said has warned us, Occidentals in the Orient are always a ‘consciousness set apart from, and unequal with its surroundings,’ and we have to ascertain the purpose of any journey into another culture (Said, 157). Both Furuki and Rose insert Alice Bacon and Anna Hartshorne, who assisted Tsuda and her school, into their work as reliable witnesses, without taking into account what investment these American women might have had in viewing Japanese women in a particular way.” Hastings, “American Culture,” 626. Perhaps by placing Bacon’s representation of Japanese women in the context of civilizationist ideology, I have identified the sense in which Bacon may have been invested in representing Japanese women.
 - 25) Bacon, *Japanese Interior*, 10.
 - 26) Bacon explicitly eschewed Christian evangelism as her motivation for teaching in Japan; missionaries were spreading rumors in Tokyo that before coming to Japan, Bacon had been teaching theology to prepare students for the ministry and that before accepting the Kazoku Jogakkō appointment; she had sought a guarantee that she could teach Christianity. “I shudder to think how I would fall in the estimation of those who believe this story if they knew that the conditions I made were not in regard to teaching Christianity, but were in regard to dogs and horses.” [Bacon had sought permission to bring her dog, Bruce, and purchase a horse for riding]. Alice Bacon cited by Margaret Burton, *The Education of Women in Japan*, 154.
 - 27) Tsuda was admitted to Bryn Mawr as a special student, exempted from fees for tuition, room and board. Kazoku Jogakkō agreed to give Tsuda a compensated, two-year sabbatical leave to study instructional methods.
Furuki, *White Plum*, 86.
 - 28) Tsudajuku Daigaku, *Tsudajuku rokujunenshi*, (Tokyo: Tsudajuku Daigaku, 1960), 36, 37.
 - 29) Daniel Walker Howe, “American Victorianism as Culture,” *American Quarterly*, XXVII, 1975, 530–531.
 - 30) Bacon, Alice Mabel, *Japanese Girls and Women*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1891), 107–108.
 - 30) Bacon, *Japanese Girls and Women*, 107–108.

- 31) The uniqueness of Bacon and Tsuda's analysis of Japanese women is illustrated by a comparison with *Japanese Women*, a compilation of articles published by the Japanese Woman's Commission for the World's Columbian Exposition (1893), which focuses primarily on the legendary women of Japanese antiquity and the court ladies who contributed to the classical canon of Japanese literature.
- 32) Bacon, *Japanese Girls and Women*, 110.
- 33) *Ibid.*, 260.
- 34) Bacon, *Japanese Girls and Women*, 16. Furuki Yoshiko notes the comparison made in *Japanese Girls and Women* between slaves and wives, noting that it was an analogy popular with nineteenth-century American feminists and rooted in the abolitionist cause. Furuki, *The White Plum*, 85. I make the more specific connection with Bacon's work with freed slaves at Hampton and her father, Leonard Bacon's work as an abolitionist.
- 35) Bacon, *Japanese Girls and Women*, 81–82.
- 36) Burton, *The Education of Women*, 154.
- 37) Bacon, *Japanese Girls and Women*, 226.
Bacon and Tsuda were not alone in highlighting the leadership role of samurai women. Sharon Nolte and Sally Hastings note that "In Japan, the historical model of self-sacrificing and frugal samurai women became generalized as the model of feminine virtue in the Meiji era for the entire nation." Nolte and Hastings, "The Meiji State's Policy Toward Women, 1890–1910," in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 171–172.
- 38) Mark A. Jones, *Children as Treasures: Childhood and the Middle Class in Early Twentieth Century Japan*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 12.
- 39) Kevin Gaines, "Black Americans' Racial Uplift Ideology as 'Civilizing Mission,'" in *Centuries of United States Imperialism*, Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, eds., (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 437.
- 40) The establishment and administration of the American Scholarship for Japanese Women is analyzed in Linda L. Johnson, "Contributing to the Most Promising Peaceful Revolution in Our Time: The American Women's Scholarship for Japanese Women, 1893–1941," in *Women and Philanthropy in Education*, Andrea Walton, ed., (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 305.
- 41) Tsudajuku Daigaku, *Tsudajuku Daigaku rokujunenshi*, 51.
- 42) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo* (Tokyo-to Kodaira-shi: Tsuda-juku Daigaku 1980), 31. "The Education of Japanese Women," August 22, 1891.
- 43) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo*, 22.
- 44) *Ibid.*, 25.
- 45) *Ibid.*, 24.
- 46) The Japanese committee, selected in 1893, included: Uryū (Nagai) Shige (who had studied at Vassar), Takeda Kin (who had studied at Wellesley), Dr. Okami Kei (who had studied at the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania), Iwamoto Yoshiharu and Shimoda Saburō (both of whom taught at Meiji Jogakkō), Dr. Motoda Yūjirō (a psychology professor at the University of Tokyo), and Takamine Hideo (teacher at the Tokyo Women's Higher Normal School). Tocco, *School Bound*, 256, The American committee included M. Carey Thomas, who supervised the recipients' academic program at Bryn Mawr. In describing the scholarship program and its administration to her companion, M. Carey Thomas remarked, with satisfaction, "Thus it will be out of the hands of the missionaries." Demakis, Louise Ward, "No Madame Butterflies: The American Women's Scholarship for Japanese Women," *Journal of American and Canadian Studies* 4, (1989), 7.
- 47) Noriko Kawamura Ishii, *American Women Missionaries at Kobe College, 1873–1909*, (New York: Routledge, 2004), 129; Heung Li Yuk, "Women's Education in Meiji Japan and the Development of Christian Girls' Schools," University of Hong Kong dissertation, (1993), 165–166; Kohiyama Rui, "No Nation Can Rise Higher Than Its Women: The Women's Ecumenical Missionary Movement and Tokyo Women's Christian College" in *Competing Kingdoms, Women, Mission, Nation and the American Protestant Empire, 1812–1960*, Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, Connie Ann Shimo eds., (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 224.

- 48) Ishii, *American Women Missionaries*, 129–130.
- 49) Ann Harrington notes that private schools declined following the 1899 Kōtōjogakkō act. “The government also prohibited religious education and ceremonies in any schools licensed by the Ministry of Education. Further, after the turn of the century, even though the government did not close mission schools, regulations made it difficult for private school graduates to sit for exams at higher level government schools and universities.” Ann M. Harrington, “Women and Higher Education in the Japanese Empire (1895–1945),” *Journal of Asian History* 21:2 (1987), 172.
- 50) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo*, 75.
- 51) Biographers of Tsuda have agreed on the important influence Bacon had on Tsuda. See, for example, Oba Minako, *Tsuda Umeko*, (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 1990), 86, 214 and Kuno, *Unexpected Destinations*, 197.
- 52) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo*, 103.
- 53) Tsuda Umeko to M. Carey Thomas, reel 222, M. Carey Thomas Papers, Bryn Mawr College; during the experimental period, Tsuda rented a small, Japanese house, with a parlor, living room and dining room. Tsudajukudaigaku, *Tsudajuku rokujunenshi*, 62.
- 54) Kuno, *Unexpected Destinations*, 197; Yamazaki, “Tsuda Ume,” 143; Takahashi, “Umeko Tsuda,” 198–199; Dorothy Robbins-Mowry, “Westernizing Influences in the Early Modernization of Japanese Women’s Education,” in *Foreign Employees in Nineteenth-Century Japan*, eds., Edward R. Beauchamp and Akira Iriye (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 132.
- 55) Sehat, “The Civilizing Mission,” 333–334.
- 56) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo*, 104.
- 57) Barbara Molony, “Women’s Rights and the Japanese State, 1880–1925,” in *Public Spheres, Private Lives in Modern Japan, 1600–1950*, eds., Gail Lee Bernstein, Andrew Gordon, and Kate Wildman Nakai, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005), 230.
- 58) Daniel Walker Howe has observed that “The Victorians habitually expressed themselves in moral terms ...” Howe, “Victorian Culture,” 27. J. A. Mangan, “Britain’s Chief Spiritual Export: Imperial Sport as Moral Metaphor, Political Symbol and Cultural Bond,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 27:1–2, (2010), 329. “In John H. Field’s *Toward a Programme of Imperial Life: The British Empire at the Turn of the Century*, ‘character,’ both in late Victorian usage and in analytical perspective, is the organizing principle. ‘Character,’ he notes, was a highly charged term of portentous significance for the late Victorians. The historian of this period is struck by the high incidence of the term and its frequent use in explicitly imperial contexts ...”
- 59) Takahashi, “Umeko Tsuda,” 170–171. Tsuda was not alone, amongst Meiji educational reformers in believing that moral education was imperative for the well being of the modernizing Japanese polity. As Byron Marshall stated, “Although much that Meiji reformers had to say about education stressed cognitive and utilitarian outcomes, there was also clearly the assumption that those outcomes were dependent on right attitudes. Schooling for these Meiji reformers was about inculcating morality, especially those civic virtues that would mobilize support for the new government ...” Marshall, *Learning to Be Modern*, 30–31.
- 60) Donald J. Waters, in his study of Hampton, wrote that, “By suggesting that blacks were morally weak, he [Armstrong] struck a missionary chord among white teachers and northern businessmen and obtained respectively their service and their money.” Waters, ed., *Strange Ways and Sweet Dreams: Afro-American Folklore from the Hampton Institute*, (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1983), 18; Robert Francis Eng, Samuel Chapman Armstrong’s biographer, quotes him as saying “Our work is to civilize quite as much as to impart book knowledge ...” “This difficulty with both races [African-Americans and Native Americans] is not so much ignorance as weakness or deficiency of character; not lack of brains but of moral stamina.” Engs, *Educating the Disenfranchised: Samuel Chapman Armstrong and Hampton Institute, 1839–1893*, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), 102, 121.
- 61) Takahashi, “Umeko Tsuda,” 174–175.
- 62) *Ibid.*, 198–199.
- 63) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo*, 105–106.
- 64) *Ibid.*, 97.

- 65) Tsudajuku Daigaku, *Tsudajuku rokujūnenshi*, 80. Yamazaki Takako observed that Tsuda "... never actively promoted Christianity herself. For her, Christianity was the foundation of education. However, it was not a mission school ...” Yamazaki, “Tsuda Ume,” 144.
- 66) Tsuda, *Tsuda Umeko monjo*, 151.