

Umeko Tsuda: a Pioneer in Higher Education for Women in Japan

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Abstract: This article explores the life and achievements of Umeko Tsuda, who played a pioneering role in higher education for women in Japan in the early twentieth century. In 1871, the Japanese government sent five girls to the United States to study. They were expected to become models for Japanese women when they returned. Six-year-old Umeko Tsuda was the youngest among them, and she remained in the United States for eleven years until she had graduated from high school. We trace her steps historically in order to highlight the experiences which drove her to work to raise women's status in Japan. The first biography of her, by Toshikazu Yoshikawa, was reviewed by Umeko herself, and in the years since other researchers have analysed Umeko's life from various viewpoints. Umeko's writings, speeches, and correspondence with her American host family and friends also reveal her thoughts. As an early female returnee, Umeko developed her ideas of what schools for women should be like. With the moral and financial support of close American and Japanese friends, Umeko started her ideal school in 1900 with only ten students. This Tokyo school was the first private institution for higher education for women in Japan. Thus, Umeko's determination to help Japanese women become more educated and happier was the foundation of Tsuda University, now offering BAs, MAs, and PhDs in a variety of programmes in Tokyo.

Keywords: Umeko Tsuda; higher education for women; Japan; returnee.

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1. Historical Background

Umeko Tsuda¹ was born on December 31, 1864, in Tokyo, Japan, as the second daughter of Sen Tsuda and his wife Hatsuko. It was just at this time that Japan had realized the need to stress modernization. Towards the end of the Edo Period (1603-1868), Japan was switching her direction from feudal to modern society by adopting Western science and technology, as well as the West's legal, social and educational systems. At the beginning of the Meiji Era (1868-1912), motivated young men of the

¹ Her parents named her «Ume», but she herself officially changed it to «Umeko» in 1902. In this paper, we call her «Umeko».

samurai (warrior) class, including Umeko's father, learned the English language and participated in government activities as government officials, delegation members, and interpreters. With their experiences abroad, these young men were prime candidates for leadership roles in Japan's march toward Westernization. In 1867, Sen Tsuda took part in a government delegation as an interpreter and stayed in the United States for about half a year, and during this time he was strongly influenced by new things and ideas. Western women's way of life, in particular, seemed totally different from that of Japanese women, and impressed him and the other young Japanese men greatly.

In the Edo Period, there were public and private schools for boys of the samurai class, but not for girls. Seeing women's education as one of the major keys to modernization, the government announced a plan to send some girls abroad for ten years as students. The offer, however, was not received positively by most people. At that time, girls were supposed to be protected by men, namely fathers, husbands, and then sons. In such an atmosphere, it was unthinkable for the average man to send girls alone to foreign countries.

Finally, five girls responded to the offer. The girls all had immediate family members or relatives with experience abroad, and these adults knew how far Japan lagged behind Western society. They thought girls would benefit from education and would be safe in the Western world, and they did not hesitate to send their daughters. Without any particular preparation, the five girls were summoned to Tokyo to join a government mission to the West led by Ambassador Plenipotentiary Tomomi Iwakura. The group was scheduled to leave the Port of Yokohama for San Francisco by the steamer *America* at the end of 1871. Umeko, who was one of the group, was only six years old.

2. Studying Abroad (1872-1882): Growing Up in the United States

On board ship, Umeko turned seven². She was the youngest of the five: Teiko Ueda and Ryoko Yoshimasu were both fourteen years old; eleven-year-old Sute-matsu Yamakawa came next; and slightly older than Umeko was eight-year-old Shigeko Nagai. Most girls from educated families were taught reading and writing from their early years, and therefore, at the time they left Japan, even Umeko could write letters to her parents in Japanese in the proper manner. Of the five girls, the two older ones ended their stay in less than ten months for physical and personal reasons and returned to Japan. The other three, Sute-matsu, Shigeko, and Umeko, studied for ten or more years in the United States as originally planned.

Before they left Japan, the group had the honor of meeting with the Empress, who handed them an official document encouraging them to study hard so that they could become good models for Japanese women in the future³. This was the

² In this paper, ages and dates follow the Western system.

³ The mandate read as follows: «Your intention of studying abroad, considering that you are a girl, is admirable. When, in time, schools for girls are established, you, having finished your studies, shall be examples to your countrywomen. Bear this in mind and apply yourself to your studies day and night» (Furuki, 1991, pp. 11-12).

«mission» these scholarship students were to accomplish. While they were in the United States, this mission statement was mentioned repeatedly by host parents and Japanese ministers of state. Thus, the girls including the youngest Umeko shared an image of themselves as future educators and leaders who would help Japanese girls and women become better educated and happier.

The three girls stayed at separate homes so that they might learn English quickly. Umeko lived in Washington, D.C., almost like the real daughter of a family called the Lanmans. Mr. Lanman, as a secretary for the Japanese Legation, had both knowledge of and friendly feelings for Japan. Umeko entered Stephenson Seminary, a primary school. According to a letter from Mrs. Lanman to Umeko's mother Hatsuko in November 1872, Umeko learned English very quickly; other sources report that on June Class Day in 1874 she beautifully recited a lengthy poem by William Cullen Bryant without making any mistakes (Furuki, 1991, p. 31). After finishing primary school at the age of fourteen, she entered the Archer Institute, a local high school. In this way, from the primary to the secondary level, Umeko received a standard education as an American girl. One year before she finished high school, she and her two friends, Shigeko and Sutematsu, received a government order to come home. Shigeko was graduating from a program of music at Vassar College then, and returned home as ordered. However, Umeko had one more year left before finishing high school, and Sutematsu also needed one more year to graduate from Vassar College with a B.A. They requested that the Japanese government extend their stay for one year, and the request was accepted.

After they completed their educations, they came «home» in 1882. Although Japan was their homeland, it was more like a foreign country for them. Particularly for Umeko, Japan was little more than her place of origin and the land where her family members were waiting for her. She knew how to behave properly in the United States, but not in Japan. Further, when it came to language, neither Sutematsu nor Umeko had a serviceable command of Japanese. They had anticipated this problem, but it was more serious for Umeko, who had been in the United States for eleven formative years from the age of seven, just the period when children acquire a mastery of their mother tongue. Sutematsu and Shigeko had lived in the same town, studied at the same college, and spent some time together every week when they spoke Japanese; as a result, they maintained some command of speaking in their native language. Umeko, however, did not have such an environment, and grew up only in English.

One more important point related to personal growth was Umeko's religious belief. When she left Japan, Christianity was prohibited by law and the five girls had been strictly ordered not to become Christians, but that prohibition was soon removed. Living with the Lanmans, pious Christians, it was natural for Umeko to be attracted by the Christian faith. In 1873, she made up her mind to be baptized. Her parents also converted to Christianity in 1875, and Umeko was very happy to come back to a Christian home, practicing the Christian way of living.

3. Return to Japan (1882-1885): Adaptation in Japan

When Umeko and Sute-matsu returned to Yokohama by the *Arabic* in 1882, their families welcomed them warmly after over ten years of absence. According to her travel diary, Umeko felt both happy and anxious in mind towards the end of the trip. She realized none of her family members knew what she was like. She tried to make herself into the kind of person they wanted in her new life in Japan. At first, she thought she could learn the Japanese language easily if she tried hard. With regard to her identity, she wrote, «In heart I am as true a Japanese as ever was, and love and feel proud of my country, which will be my country whatever comes, and wherever I go»⁴.

Although Umeko insisted that she was «a real Japanese» in spirit, she faced many difficulties as a returnee. The first and most serious difficulty was her lack of language ability. Even in daily life, without the help of her father Sen or her sister Kotoko to interpret for her, Umeko could not do anything at all. She was seventeen years old, and was no longer young enough to acquire a new language as children do. There were no appropriate teaching materials for learners of Japanese as a foreign language. With the assistance of Kotoko and a friend, Utako Shimoda, she tried hard, but throughout her life she kept on struggling to learn Japanese, sometimes losing patience.

Another serious problem that Umeko and Sute-matsu faced was the change of government expectations toward the female returnees. At the time of their recruitment Japan was making a strenuous effort to Westernize, and, as expressed in the document presented to them by the Empress, the girls were expected to serve as educated models for future Japanese women. Some years later, however, the power balance had shifted toward nationalism and nobody in the government showed much interest in the female returnees, who were almost totally Americanized. On the other hand, the male returnees, who mostly returned after just a few years, were normally assigned to important positions so that they could contribute to nation building.

After Shigeko's completion of her study of music at Vassar she returned home, and one month after Umeko and Sute-matsu's return in November of 1882 she married Lieutenant Sotokichi Uriu, also a returnee from the United States. She was fortunate enough to be appointed to the faculty of the new government music school, which later became the Tokyo University of Fine Arts. There were not many musicians who had received proper training in Western music, and Shigeko's language problem was no obstacle to her professional career in music teaching.

Umeko and Sute-matsu, on the other hand, did not hear anything from the government. They paid courtesy calls on prominent government officials to remind them of their situation, but there was no progress. They were very much vexed but could find no way forward.

Umeko, Sute-matsu, and Shigeko called themselves the «Trio», and they helped each other greatly. Shigeko Uriu's house became the Trio's salon. According to a letter Umeko wrote to Mrs. Lanman, «...I was so glad that we were for once able to have the old trio together, which we have not had since Shige's marriage.... Our

⁴ *The White Plum* (p.42), by Yoshiko Furuki, 1991, New York: Weatherhill.

theme was just the same – our great responsibilities and yet the indefinite way of doing it, Japanese ways and ideas, and our own future lives which, we all know, will not be easy or strewn with roses. We have no friends – true real friends – but each other; our ways of thinking are very different from Japanese, very different from the foreigners here; and so we have only each other to advise and help and receive advice» (Furuki, et al., 1991).

One of the major topics was marriage. At the time when they returned home, Japanese generally assumed that girls of fourteen to sixteen years old were of marriageable age. As soon as Umeko and Sutematsu returned, Shigeko announced her plans to marry Lieutenant Uriu, whom she had met while she was in the United States. Then, less than a year after Shigeko's marriage, Sutematsu made the difficult decision to marry General Iwao Oyama, a widower and the Minister of the War Department.

Sutematsu's marriage was a great shock to Umeko. While in the United States and after their return, the two had discussed how to fulfill their responsibility by starting a school for girls⁵. Sutematsu, with her B.A. from Vassar College, was to be the leader and Umeko, who had only a high school diploma, would assist her. But the situation changed. Sutematsu, now a high-ranking lady, could not be expected to be directly involved in education herself. Lacking sufficient Japanese language ability, Umeko found herself in a very difficult position.

4. Teaching at the Peeresses' School (1885-1889): Hope and Reality

To Umeko's delight, Hirobumi Ito brought a change to her life. In 1871, Ito had been a young vice-envoy extraordinary, traveling to the United States as part of the Iwakura Mission that also took Umeko there, but now, when he and Umeko met at a ball in 1883, he held the post of Minister of the Imperial Household. During their short conversation, he found Umeko was frustrated and bored, and decided to give her new opportunities. Soon she was offered teaching posts at private girls' schools and also a tutoring position at Ito's home. In 1885, the government opened the Peeresses' School, and Umeko was first appointed associate professor, and then promoted to professor in 1886. She now had a respectable and well-paid position. The Empress herself often visited the school to observe the educational activities. In the beginning, Umeko was very proud to be able to fulfill her responsibility as a government scholarship returnee and to make repayment to the country in a satisfactory way.

Contrary to Umeko's expectations, however, this government school for girls did not maintain high academic standards. The students were mainly from noble families and were not eager to learn, but rather regarded the institution as a finishing school. Umeko was unhappy with this situation. The girls' school which Umeko had planned to establish with Sutematsu was to be as academically demanding as the American equivalent. From the viewpoint of the average person, Umeko had no reason to

⁵ In the Sutematsu's letter to Alice, dated August 2, 1882, Sutematsu suggested that Alice would teach English language and literature, and that Sutematsu would teach physiology and gymnastics. It implies their «school» was either secondary or higher level of education.

feel dissatisfied with her teaching post at this honorable school, but she herself felt differently.

The more Umeko thought of starting a «real» school, the more she felt the need to receive higher education herself. While Sutehatsu had obtained a B.A. at Vassar College, Umeko was young and had only a high school diploma when she returned home. She started to collect information about women's colleges in the United States, and finally was offered a full scholarship, including room and board, at Bryn Mawr College, near Philadelphia. She then negotiated with the principal of the Peeresses' School to get a two-year paid leave to improve her teaching ability. Thus in 1889 Umeko left on her second trip to the United States to gain further education at Bryn Mawr.

5. Studying Abroad Again (1889-1892): Roots of Umeko's School

Bryn Mawr College had been established near Philadelphia by the Quakers in 1885, only four years before Umeko's arrival. They advocated a simple and fortitudinous way of living. Umeko's college life at Bryn Mawr influenced her greatly, and her core principles regarding her own school were centered along the same lines as those of this women's college. Bryn Mawr demanded an academic standard of education as high as that of men's higher education. Umeko chose Biology as her major field, and also studied History, English Literature, Chemistry, Political Economy and Philosophy. Her adviser, Dr. Thomas H. Morgan, was a prominent professor who would later receive the Nobel Prize (1933). Umeko devoted herself to research and study, and even assisted faculty members and students as a demonstrator in the laboratory⁶.

After one and a half years at Bryn Mawr, Umeko went to study teaching methods at Oswego State Normal School, N.Y., for six months. This college was known for its introduction of Pestalozzi's teaching method. As a teacher of the English language at the Peeresses' School in Japan, Umeko felt it was her duty to become a better teacher by learning about new teaching methodologies.

Towards the end of the original two-year term, Umeko requested permission to do one more year of study and it was granted on condition that she do research on the current situation of women's education in the United States. Her article in the journal *Jogakuzasshi* written in 1893 seems to have been her response to this requirement.

Umeko's academic ability was highly regarded and Bryn Mawr suggested that she should stay as a researcher, but she declined the offer. This decision irked some members of the faculty, not least the college president. For Umeko, however, her strong desire to assist Japanese women more educated and her sense of responsibility to contribute to her country were more important than any academic pursuit. The fact that she had a paper published as co-author with Dr. T. H. Morgan suggests the high academic level of Umeko's studies (Morgan & Tsuda, 1894). It was later said that «the best qualities of Bryn Mawr, broadmindedness, thoroughness,

⁶ According to a later memoir, many students were grateful not only for Umeko's knowledge and skill while she was assisting, but also for her «kindness and patience».

exact standards of scholarship, became rooted in her and were an integral part of her educational ideal» (Morgan & Tsuda, 1894) Keeping these principles in mind, Umeko returned to her duties at the Peeresses' School in 1892.

One great event for Umeko while she was studying at Bryn Mawr College was her encounter with Anna C. Hartshorne. Anna had graduated from the Pennsylvania Academy of Art, passed the Harvard Examination for Women in six subjects including Greek and German, and was at Bryn Mawr to study German as an auditor (Kameda, 2005). She and Umeko met there. One year after Umeko returned home, Anna came to Japan with her father, Henry Hartshorne⁷, in order to teach English Literature at the School of Friends in Tokyo. During her stay, she and Umeko became good friends. From an early stage she had heard of Umeko's plans for a school, and she soon turned into a supporter and a long-term key figure in Umeko's work. This role continued until shortly before World War II, more than a decade after Umeko's death.

While Umeko was in Philadelphia, she accomplished another major goal. She created a scholarship fund «American Scholarship for Japanese Women» so that talented Japanese women would be able to study at colleges and universities in the United States. The chair of the scholarship foundation's committee was Umeko's friend and supporter, Mrs. Morris. It was she who had helped Umeko herself be admitted as a scholarship student at Bryn Mawr. Dr. Thomas, the president of Bryn Mawr, added her support as an adviser. Umeko's speeches on Japanese women's educational situation and social status made a strong impression on upper class women in the United States. Members of the committee included influential women in major towns on the East Coast. They succeeded in raising as much as eight thousand dollars to use for scholarships. This amount was substantial enough to support Japanese women's study in North America for many decades, but the committee continued its campaign for donations until 1976. The scholarship recipients included future leaders such as professors and presidents of women's colleges. This is one way in which Umeko's efforts helped to make a difference for future Japanese women over a period of more than eighty years (1893-1976) (Shibuya, Uchida & Yamamoto, 2015).

6. Preparations for Umeko's School (1892-1900): Making a Start

As soon as Umeko returned to Japan in 1892, she went back to teaching at the Peeresses' School. Later, in 1898, in addition to that position, she was also assigned to teach at the Higher Normal School for Women, the only higher educational institution for women at that time. Umeko was teaching seriously at these schools, applying what she had learned in the United States, but she was not satisfied.

In Japan, girls' education above the primary level was initiated by mission schools. Only a limited number of girls from rich families of liberal thinking took advantage of them. Public girls' high schools numbered only seven in 1891. They were given official standing in 1899, when there were twenty-nine of them. Perhaps thanks to

⁷ Henry Hartshorne's medical textbook, *Essentials of the Principles of Practice of Medicine* was brought to Japan by Sen Tsuda, Umeko's father, in 1867. Henry first visited Japan with Anna in 1893, came for a second time in 1895, and then returned again with Anna in 1897. He passed away in Tokyo in 1897.

official approval, by 1903, the number had reached eighty-two. Although the number and scale of such girls' high schools expanded rapidly, they did not aim at helping women to participate in society or to make a contribution as part of a quality work force, but at producing women who supported the traditional patriarchic family and social system. While these schools were named «high schools», they were ranked at the same level as boys' middle schools. They focused more on homemaking skills such as sewing and other subjects oriented toward women's specialties than on academic subjects. Unlike what liberal leaders had worked toward at the beginning of the Meiji Era when the five young girls ventured to the United States, the mainstream of Japanese women's education had been pushed back to a focus on training «good wives and wise mothers». This was true both at the Peeresses' School and the Higher Normal School for Women.

The idea that Umeko had developed while she was studying at Bryn Mawr College was quite different. Consulting Sutomatsu and Shigeko, she developed her plans in her mind, but she had to be very careful not to let others find out what she intended to do. She could speak openly only with the other two members of the Trio and friends in the United States. Umeko knew that her ideas for a school would be rebuffed by the average Japanese person, including her colleagues at both the schools where she taught. Only those who had had the same experience of living and studying in the United States for a long time, like Sutomatsu and Shigeko, understood Umeko's ideas and were willing to help her with both their moral support and actions. For most Japanese, a high school education for girls had become acceptable only in the sense that educated young women would be able to perform better as traditional wives and mothers. In this social atmosphere, Umeko had to be careful not to irritate the people around her unnecessarily. Her status as professor at the Peeresses' School was so honorable that it was unthinkable that she would throw away such an ideal position for the sake of an unrealistic dream.

From the American viewpoint, which Umeko shared, one function of education was to help both boys and girls gain self-confidence and the ability to be independent. Although education for girls was still much behind that for boys even in the United States, Umeko recognized that it was much more advanced than in Japan. Thus, she had no doubt about the image of her school, and she never gave it up. She did not discuss her plans with people of conservative belief, but instead turned for help to Sutomatsu and Shigeko and the American friends she had come to know at Bryn Mawr College and in the Philadelphia area.

Her problem was not new in the history of women's education, regardless of the country. Nineteenth century America was not without female educators or education specialists, but they had to struggle to raise the status of women professionals. For example, in the early part of the century, Emma Hart Willard (1787-1870), Catherine Esther Beecher (1800-1878) and Mary Mason Lyon (1797-1849) emphasized the importance of quality teacher training schools for women. In the mid-nineteenth century, Electa Lincoln Walton (1824-1908) succeeded in becoming assistant to the principal of Massachusetts State Normal School, but never managed to be appointed principal. In the latter part of the century, Annie Johnson (?-1894), Ellen Hyde (1838-1926) and Julia Anne King (1838-1919) got posts in management and developed teacher training curricula based on their experiences as women teachers

(Sakuma, 2017). In all these cases, however, the women met with resistance, and their task was not an easy one. Thus, we can see the history of struggle even in the United States, where the situation of women was much more advanced than in Japan. It would not be easy for Umeko to implement the educational principles she had committed herself to at Bryn Mawr.

One major event from the period between Umeko's return from Bryn Mawr and the founding of her school was her trip to England in 1898-99. After her attendance as a representative at the international convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in Denver in 1898, she was invited to go on directly to England. On this trip she found the inspiration and encouragement to make her own dream come true. She visited many schools and women's colleges in places such as London, Oxford, and Cambridge, including Cheltenham [Ladies'] College. This school had been founded by a woman on a small scale and later it expanded to an enrollment of nine hundred students. This was a good model for Umeko when she considered her own plan, starting a school of quality education on a small scale. She also stayed at St. Hilda's College in Oxford, and this gave her an idea of what English university life was like. These visits provided practical ideas and new inspirations.

Umeko also received spiritual support during her stay in England. While on a visit to York, she was received with much courtesy by the archbishop and had an opportunity to talk with him in his library. This conversation gave her a chance to look back on the past: the privileges she had received in her life, her sense of responsibility, and the Christian faith that supported her. The encouragement she received from the archbishop remained deep in her heart and supported her as she laid her plans for the future.

In sharp contrast to what Umeko had in mind, plans for another girls' school with strong support from business and political circles emerged in Tokyo. To announce the establishment of Nihon Joshi Daigakko (the forerunner of today's Japan Women's University), about two hundred political and business leaders gathered at the Imperial Hotel in March 1897. The design of the school showed that what these prominent men expected was only an institution that would provide traditional women's higher education, i.e., focusing on the «good wife and wise mother» image. The school was to be established on a large estate in Tokyo donated by the Mitsui family, and this would enable the founders to build large school buildings which would house more than two hundred students from the very beginning. Umeko was disappointed, and she also knew she could not expect financial support from them, because of their quite different vision of higher education for women.

Thus, a huge problem that stood in the way of Umeko's plans was money. As she was not supported by any prosperous and influential groups in Japan, she had to depend on friends in the United States. Her major supporters were the members of the Philadelphia Committee who had originally helped her to start the scholarship fund and who had been financing Japanese women students at American colleges and universities since 1892. Umeko wrote letters to these friends very frequently, asking for financial support to start her school. Knowing all that women had gone through in the United States to advance their status, the members of the Philadelphia Committee and their friends easily understood what Umeko was facing. Most of these friends in the United States had not received a higher education themselves,

but they felt it very meaningful to help Umeko with her school for girls in Japan. They worked very hard to gather donations, and finally the amount collected was large enough to start the school, although the school building was small and old.

At last, Umeko could put her long-cherished plan into action. In July 1900, she resigned from both the Peeresses' School and the Higher Normal School for Women. This was a great shock to all concerned. People never imagined that someone might resign from such an honorable position with the highest possible title and salary for a woman. In exchange for her former social status and salary, however, Umeko obtained freedom--freedom from conservatism and the traditional way of thinking.

In 1900, one year before Nihon Joshi Daigakko opened, Umeko's school, Joshi Eigaku Juku (the Women's Institute of English Studies) came into being in Tokyo in a small school building with only ten students, supported mainly by American women benefactors. The inauguration ceremony took place on September 14, 1900. Umeko and Sutematsu were members of the board of directors, and the six board members also included Inazo Nitobe⁸ and Zenji Iwamoto⁹.

The opening address, which Umeko delivered in Japanese, showed the spirit of her school. She emphasized three major points: (1) importance was to be placed on «the qualifications of the teacher, the zeal, patience and industry of both teachers and pupils, and the spirit in which they pursue their work» rather than on the physical plant and equipment; (2) emphasis was to be placed on the individual learner rather than on attempts to impart knowledge to a large class, for «in true education, each one ought to be dealt with as a separate individual»; and (3) there was to be avoidance of an over-focus on English studies and the development of narrow interests, for students should «not neglect other things, which go to make up the complete woman». Umeko often repeated the expression «all-round woman», which is similar in meaning to the phrase she used in her speech. She also warned that, at this first private school of higher education for women, students should watch their language and manners, for «if... criticism [of students' behavior should] impede the progress of the higher education for women it would be a matter of great regret to all of us» (Furuki, 1991, pp. 104-105).

Only graduates from public girls' high schools and normal schools for women were qualified to apply for the school, and Umeko set high standards. And so it was that the first private institution of higher education for Japanese women was born.

7. Growth of Umeko's School (1900-): Into a College and Now a University

In September 1900, Umeko's school started in Tokyo on a very small scale, both in terms of facilities and student body. The two-story house acquired as the school building was so small that all the space, including even the dining room and the

⁸ Inazo Nitobe: 1862-1933. Prof. of Kyoto Imperial University (1903-), Prof. of Tokyo Imperial University (1913-), member of the House of Lords. He worked for women's education and supported Umeko's school, but later in 1918, to Umeko's surprise and despair, he became the first President of Tokyo Women's College.

⁹ Zenji Iwamoto: 1863-1942. He worked for women's education and supported Meiji Women's School.

parlor, was used for classroom teaching. After Umeko resigned from the Peeresses' School, her new school was approved as a private institution by the Ministry of Education. The school then immediately announced its inauguration only two months before the start of classes. For potential applicants, this was not long enough, and the number of students was only ten at the start in September, but within six months it had grown to thirty and more. The increase in numbers was a relief, but it also brought a great need for an increase in teaching space. Umeko wrote frequently to her supporters in the United States, requesting more money to secure a spacious building for teaching. Responding to Umeko's letters, the Philadelphia Committee accelerated its fund-raising. Toward the end of the second year, the number of students surpassed fifty, including ten boarding students. Thanks to an unexpectedly generous donation by an American woman, a Mrs. Woods from Boston, the school was able to get sufficient land nearby to build new facilities, with even a tennis court, to start the third year in 1903. In this way, Joshi Eigaku Juku developed steadily.

The Ministry of Education reorganized such post-secondary schools into *senmon gakko* (professional schools) in 1903, and Joshi Eigaku Juku was approved as one of them in 1904. When Umeko started the school, she had not been confident about its future and regarded the first five years as a trial period. As the name of her school implies, she expected her students to study English very hard. She was a charming and pleasant person, but some graduates' memoirs suggest how strict she was as a classroom teacher. Her high standards had not been a mistake, however, and now she had demonstrated that her school met the demands of the age as an institution of higher education.

In 1901, Umeko herself also gained the honor of being appointed by the Ministry of Education as an examiner for those seeking an English teaching certificate. This was a great honor for the school. When Umeko started Joshi Eigaku Juku, one of the major targets was to prepare students to pass the teaching certificate exam for English so that they could become independent economically. The licensing system had already been settled, but there was no school to prepare women for the English certificate. Even the Higher Normal School for Women did not have a program specializing in English teaching. This was one of the reasons why Umeko focused on it when she started her school. Beginning in 1905, graduates of Joshi Eigaku Juku enjoyed the privilege of exemption from the government examination for this teaching certificate, thus showing that the Ministry of Education recognized the high standard of English education at Umeko's school. For eighteen years after that, Joshi Eigaku Juku was the only women's institution to enjoy the privilege.

Umeko's goals for her students were not only practical and career-oriented, but also included a fundamental focus on human beings. She understood how Western culture and ideas, studied through the medium of English, could benefit students, and emphasized the power of English to open to women a broad new world of learning, hitherto monopolized by educated men. In this way, Joshi Eigaku Juku tried to demonstrate women's ability to be equal members of society, not just socially respectable members of a family, once they were properly educated. Umeko wanted the graduates of her school to contribute to the betterment of women's position in society by sharing what they had gained through education, and by working to improve their ability throughout their lives.

Thanks to the achievements and reputation of the graduates, Joshi Eigaku Juku continued to expand, and as a result, the school facilities again became too small to house all the students. In 1922, a campus site in Kodaira, at what must then have seemed the very great distance of twenty-five kilometers from the Tokyo school, was purchased. It was less than one year after this purchase that the Great Kanto Earthquake (1923) struck Tokyo. The giant conflagration which followed the earthquake burned the whole school building to the ground. The earthquake itself had been devastating, and the resulting fire damage was a further harsh blow to Umeko and all the people connected with the school.

Umeko had been suffering from asthma since 1906, diabetes since 1917, and the aftereffects of a cerebral hemorrhage since 1919. At the time of the earthquake, she was not teaching, but was recuperating at a house in Tokyo that fortunately escaped disaster. Soon afterwards, Anna Hartshorne visited Umeko with the idea of going to the United States for fund-raising. Within one short month after the earthquake and fire, Anna was on a steamboat from Yokohama, bound for San Francisco. With the assistance of Umeko's sister Yona, Anna started to organize the Tsuda College Emergency Committee in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Graduates of Umeko's school who were then studying in the United States also joined the campaign. Their target was a breathtaking five hundred thousand dollars¹⁰. It took Anna two and a half years to reach this goal. The Emergency Committee finished their activities in 1926, at which time Anna returned to Japan. There, the alumni association and the school, working in tandem, had also started fund-raising under the banner of the «Tsuda-Hartshorne Commemorative Fund» with a target of one hundred thousand yen.¹¹ This astonishing goal was reached very quickly.

With this generous fund raised by friends in the United States and Japan, the new campus in Kodaira was finally built in 1931, but Umeko was unable to see its completion. She passed away in Kamakura, in the suburbs of Tokyo, in 1929. The Kodaira Campus today is still the main campus of the school. After Umeko's death, in 1933, the school was renamed Tsuda Eigaku Juku, bearing Umeko's family name. By this time, Umeko's main supporters were also dead. She had lost her parents in 1908 and 1909, Mrs. Lanman in 1914, Sutomatsu in the flu epidemic of 1919, and Shigeko in 1928. But a new group of supporters and graduates had emerged to take their place, and the school's continued existence no longer seemed a question mark.

During the Second World War, the school added Departments of Mathematics and Physics/Chemistry to meet the demands of the age. After the war, the Ministry of Education reorganized institutions of higher education, and Tsuda Eigaku Juku was officially accredited as a four-year college, Tsuda Juku Daigaku (Tsuda College), equivalent to other national and private colleges and universities. To the Department of English in the Faculty of Liberal Arts were added the Department of Mathematics (1949), the Department of International and Cultural Studies (1969), the Department of Computer Science (2006), and the Department of International Cooperation and Multicultural Studies (2019). In 2017, the Faculty of Policy Studies was added on

¹⁰ Around 2.5 billion yen or 25 million dollars in today's money.

¹¹ Around 250 million yen or 2.5 million dollars in today's money.

a new campus in central Tokyo. Now Tsuda Juku Daigaku (Tsuda University), with undergraduate and graduate programs serving nearly three thousand students, is living testimony to Umeko's strong desire to help Japanese women become educated, independent, and equal to men in social status. Thanks to her own determination and the support of her friends in Japan and the United States, her dream has been realized.

8. Conclusion: Umeko Tsuda as a Returnee

Umeko's life was full of unexpected twists and turns. For a long time during the Edo Period, Japan had kept her doors closed to outsiders except for a few from China, Korea, and the Netherlands (1639-1854), and Japanese were not permitted to leave the country. When the door was finally opened, in order to accelerate modernization, a number of young men were sent out to Europe and America as students. Umeko was sent to the United States as one of the first five female students to go abroad, recruited by the Hokkaido Development Bureau of the government.

When they left Yokohama, Umeko Tsuda was the youngest, six years old; Shigeko Nagai, eight; Sutematsu Yamakawa, ten; Teiko Ueda and Ryoko Yoshimasu, fourteen. Of these five girls, the two older ones, Teiko and Ryoko, suffered from physical and mental problems and returned home in less than ten months.

Here we can observe the general issues that confront foreign students in adjusting to a new environment. According to research on young people who study abroad, the speed and degree of acclimatization depends on the age at which they arrive (Minoura, 1984). The five girls mentioned above indicate this very clearly. Teiko and Ryoko were a little too old to become assimilated to a new culture. They were already fairly mature, probably much more so than today's fourteen-year-olds. Having been granted an audience with the Empress before they left Japan, these girls all felt a strong sense of responsibility to complete their studies so that they would be models for modern Japanese women. Teiko and Ryoko both felt this responsibility, too, but they could not deal with the difficulty of assimilation, very probably due to their stage of maturity. On the other hand, Umeko, who turned seven while crossing the Pacific Ocean, was so young that she experienced very little difficulty in getting used to her new environment.

Another general issue for students abroad is language. Umeko had started learning to read and write Japanese at the age of four, and for a time after she arrived in the United States, she wrote letters to her parents in Japanese. But between the ages of seven and eighteen, Umeko had only limited opportunities to hear or use Japanese. It was not just her physical environment that changed, however. During those eleven years, she lived with an intelligent, loving, middle-class American family, Mr. and Mrs. Lanman, and as a matter of course, her emotional ties became intimately bound up with English. She spent the critical period for learning a first language in this environment, and, as might be expected, she forgot Japanese quickly and her first language became English. She started her formal school education from the primary level in the United States and ten years later received her high school diploma. After she returned to Tokyo and made the first steps toward reentering Japanese society, she found the opportunity to discuss things with her

close friends Sutematsu and Shigeko in English a great comfort, not only for the sake of language but also for the way of thinking that came with it. Even much later, when she was preparing her school, there was no one she could have heart-to-heart talks with in Japan except Sutematsu and Shigeko. Linguistically and emotionally, it was in English that she felt at home.

Umeko did make a strenuous effort to learn Japanese, but in the 1880s there were no established language teaching methods or materials available, nor did she have access to a skilled teacher. The writing system must have been even more daunting than speech, for twenty years after she returned to Japan, her students observed Umeko practicing kanji (Chinese characters) by herself. Throughout her life, she experienced difficulty with the Japanese language.

Sutematsu and Shigeko, on the other hand, were eight and eleven years old, respectively, when they left Japan. They had already secured a certain level of language ability and basic education, and this was a link to their sense of identity as Japanese. After they arrived in the United States, they lived with host families who resided not too far from each other, and had opportunities to get together frequently. On top of that, as they were studying at the same institution, Vassar College, for the last few years, and as Sutematsu's brother, Kenjiro¹² told them to spend some time talking together in Japanese periodically, they kept a certain command of their native language, at least in speaking. This experience helped them when they returned. Although their Japanese was not perfect, they could at least communicate with people in Japanese.

The other general issue for returnees is readjustment to the society of their homeland. The male government scholarship students sent abroad were expected to contribute to the government or its projects with their new knowledge and skills, but this was not true of women students. The Trio, as returnees, experienced many difficulties. Unlike the male returnees, Sutematsu and Umeko had no work opportunities awaiting them. When they left Japan, the government had been eager to Westernize the social system as a whole. Progressive people led the government and society, and as a result a totally unexpected project was realized: sending girls to study abroad for as long as ten years. However, the gap between the imported Western ways of thinking and traditional philosophy triggered criticism of Westernized policies. Therefore, by the time the Trio completed their studies and came back to Japan, apart from Shigeko, they aroused little interest. Shigeko happened to fit in with government plans for the music school which was being established as the cornerstone of Western musical education, and was assigned to teach there.

By that time, the traditional view of women had won out and had re-entrenched itself as mainstream. In spite of the systematization of women's high schools in 1899, their academic level was equivalent to that of middle schools for boys. The main purpose of these women's high schools was to bring up girls with proper manners and the skills to maintain the traditional social system. The Trio, particularly Sutematsu and Umeko, were shocked to find that they were no longer expected to serve as models for modern educated female leaders. Facing this situation, Sutematsu, who

¹² Kenjiro Yamakawa also studied in the United States. He studied physics at Yale University, and later became President of Tokyo University.

was the first Japanese to graduate from Vassar College with a B.A., finally chose to marry General Oyama, and supported him by playing the role of lady to his role of elite man in international society, and by taking care of his family. She gave up the hope of establishing her own school. Instead, she gained a very high social rank and the influence to go with it, both of which were of great help in supporting Umeko.

Umeko, on the other hand, did not choose to marry. It took two and a half long years after she came back, but she finally got a teaching job at the Peeresses' School, the government girls' school, which she was proud of at first. For a female government scholarship returnee, she had gained an extremely respectable position within the traditional framework.

However, Umeko soon realized that the Peeresses' School was far from her ideal. This was the turning point. Although she was treated well socially and economically, after acquiring Western values during her eleven years of experience in the United States she could not be satisfied with her honorary status and began a concerted effort to bring reality closer to her ideal.

This was not a situation in which success seemed likely for a female Japanese returnee with insufficient native language ability, and so it may be worth asking what it was that made it possible for Umeko to achieve her goals. One answer may be her strength of will and her belief that she must carry out the mission she had been given in 1871. Another may be that she had a gift for forming connections with people who believed in what she was trying to do and would give her help.

The Philadelphia Committee, which worked so long and hard to gather the necessary funds for Umeko's school, is a prime example, but all those who knew Umeko were brought together by strong ties to her and to each other. In Japan, Sute-matsu and Shigeko were Umeko's greatest source of strength. Although both of them married, while Umeko remained single throughout her life, this was no obstacle to their friendship or to their shared goal. As mentioned above, the Urius' home in Tokyo turned into a salon where the Trio could get together and talk about their memories, problems and ideas. As they were the only women with such experiences, the time they shared helped them maintain their mental balance. For Umeko, it was like an emotional oasis. She could also discuss her plans for her school in English. Shigeko showed Umeko a model of teaching at the government music school, where she was making the most of her education at Vassar College. Sute-matsu had been like Umeko's big sister while they were in the United States, and their ties were made all the stronger by their shared dream of a school. Therefore, when Sute-matsu married General Oyama and gave up the idea of teaching, Umeko lost her most important collaborator. But we cannot ignore Sute-matsu's influence, direct or indirect, in bringing Umeko's plans to fruition.

One of Sute-matsu's most important contributions was the connection to Alice Mabel Bacon, her «sister» from her American host family. When the two young Japanese foreign students talked about starting an ideal school for Japanese girls, Alice had joined their discussion. After Sute-matsu married, Umeko still hoped that Alice might help her. In 1888, Alice first came to Tokyo for about a year to teach English at the Peeresses' School. This invitation came about thanks to a recommendation from Umeko and background support from Sute-matsu. Anna Hartshorne was a

mutual friend of Alice's and Umeko's, and in the 1890s Alice joined Anna in making strong appeals to the Philadelphia Committee for financial support.

It is not too much to say that Umeko's wide network of friends and contacts was what eventually made her school a success. The constant support of Sute-matsu and Shigeko has been referred to often above, as has the financial backing of friends in the United States. In the area of classroom teaching, too, Umeko's connections made all the difference. Her cousin Masako Watanabe had a daughter named Mitsuko, who was adopted by Alice and went to the United States with her in 1889. Later, Mitsuko came back to Japan with Alice to teach at Umeko's school. On this second trip, Alice was employed by the Higher Normal School for Women, and taught as well at Umeko's school. When she returned to the United States in 1902, she left this much-loved daughter behind in Japan as she knew Umeko's school really needed Mitsuko on the teaching staff. Alice and Umeko's close friend Anna Hartshorne then came back to Japan in 1902, only one month after Alice returned to the United States, almost as if to replace her. Anna would devote herself to assisting at Umeko's school for nearly forty years. Another important source of support came from returning Philadelphia scholarship recipients. One of their number, Utako Suzuki, became a member of the teaching staff. In this way, Umeko's network of friends provided the core human resources that enabled her to start her school without relying on teachers trained in Japan.

Umeko chose a road beset with many hardships, but she found it meaningful in order to raise Japanese women's status, which was the real purpose and responsibility she had in mind. Her school, founded in 1900, was the first private institution of higher education for women in Japan. This hard-won achievement for the betterment of Japanese women's lives came about not only because of Umeko's unflinching determination in the face of the countless obstacles facing her as a female returnee but also because of the strong backing of friends who believed in her, both in Japan and in the United States.

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