

**REPORT ON THE WORK OF PROFESSOR VICENTE G.  
SINCO AS EXCHANGE PROFESSOR TO THE  
UNIVERSITIES OF JAPAN \***

Nov. 11, 1936

The President  
University of the Philippines  
Manila

Sir:

I have the honor to submit the following report on my work and activities as exchange professor to the universities of Japan:

I left Manila on September 6, 1936, on board the S. S. Scharnhorst, and arrived in Tokyo on September 14, 1936. The Foreign Office of the Japanese Imperial Government sent a representative to meet me at Yokohama as soon as the steamer arrived at that port. He was accompanied by the executive secretary of the Philippine Society of Japan. They made the necessary arrangements for my landing and, from the steamer, they took me directly to Tokyo at the Imperial Hotel.

Immediately after my arrival several newspapermen came for interviews on Philippine conditions. The results of these interviews were published in four or five of the principal dailies in the Japanese language and in one leading English daily. It should be stated in this connection that the Japanese papers continued giving publicity to the lectures I subsequently delivered in the universities in Japan without any request on my part whatever, and have, therefore, in that manner directed to a certain extent the attention of the Japanese reading public to the educational and cultural development of the Filipinos, a matter which I later discovered to be quite unknown to the bulk of the intelligentsia, not to say anymore of the general public, of Japan.

Soon after my arrival I found out that the entire program of my activities in Japan was to be wholly arranged by the Foreign Office (Gaimusho) of the Imperial Government. The Foreign Office is divided into several bureaus, most of these being political and economic in character, but one is purely cultural. This bureau is officially called CULTURAL WORK BUREAU of the

---

\* Prof. Vicente G. Sinco was designated by the Board of Regents of the University of the Philippines exchange professor to the Imperial universities of Japan, on August, 1936.

Foreign Office. It is subdivided into several sections; and one of these sections takes charge of visiting or exchange professors from foreign universities. The director of the Cultural Work Bureau is Mr. K. Okada, a cultured, soft-spoken, ultra-refined gentleman, who speaks English carefully and correctly. The person in charge of the section that had direct dealings with me is Mr. T. Yanagisawa, another fine gentleman, who speaks English, Spanish, French, and several other European languages. He is a poet and a literary man besides. He went personally to see me and my family in my hotel, and then he assigned his first secretary, Mr. H. Takawa, to attend my official needs.

My first two weeks in Tokyo were spent wholly in what might be called orientation work, both on my part and on the part of the Foreign Office as well. It should be borne in mind that I was sent to Japan as the first exchange professor from the Philippines, a country that does not have any representative of any category whatever in Japan who might be able to arrange matters for any official visitor from the Philippines, the American consular or diplomatic representatives not being disposed to have anything to do with persons of my standing from the Philippines. I was properly escorted to the office of the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs and to the Vice-Minister of Public Education in order to pay my respects. These gentlemen received me kindly and assured me of their assistance in their country. In passing, it would be said that the Department of Education of the Imperial Government has very little to say about the program and activities of visiting or exchange professors from other countries; and so I had very little dealing with that Department. I also went to pay my respects to the officers of the Philippine Association of Japan, Marquis Tokugawa and Mr. Nuida, and then to the officers of the SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL RELATIONS (Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai). This society is headed by Prince Konoe, who was not in Tokyo when I went to its office. But I met two of its managing directors, Viscount Okabe, Mr. Mihara, who gave me a very cordial reception. This society is a semi-government institution. Its size is equal to a regular Philippine bureau. It has a distinctive library, where one can see books, magazines, original documents, and other materials pertaining to Japanese culture and civilization. One finds there professors and researchers from other countries visiting the library

for the purpose of investigating and studying Japanese civilization; for it is a fact not known by many Filipinos perhaps that Japan is not simply interested in the economic progress of the country but also in its cultural development and in the dissemination of her culture all over the civilized world. The building occupied by the society houses also a large reception room, an auditorium (which also serves as a small theatre for some of the Japanese plays it promotes) and office rooms for its officers and employees. The executive secretary, Mr. S. Aoki, runs the force very efficiently. He had been for some years secretary of the Japanese delegation to the League of Nations. Mr. Aoki helped me very much in the investigations I made later on the elementary and vocational schools of Japan. It was also this society that designated a man to accompany me to the Kyushu Imperial University in Fukuoka to deliver a lecture in that institution.

The Foreign Office also prepared a schedule for me for a visit to different places in Tokyo, among these being a visit to the art exhibition in Ueno Park, the Meiji Shrine, and two big department stores. In the meanwhile they were communicating with the different universities for my lectures. Before my arrival there was very little preparation done along this line. When after a stay of about ten days they asked for the subjects of my lectures, I submitted the following:

For the first lecture: Social and Cultural Conditions of Pre-Spanish Philippines.

Second lecture: The Philippines Under Spain.

Third lecture: The Philippine Revolution and the First Philippine Republic.

Fourth lecture: The Philippines Under the United States.

Fifth lecture: The Philippine Government Before the Commonwealth.

Then follows nine other lectures on different aspects of the Philippine Constitution.

The above are not exactly the names of the subjects I gave them, but they cover the field of the lectures I told them I proposed to deliver. I also informed them that my designation by the authorities of the University of the Philippines was as exchange professor to imperial universities, and that I would want to be in one particular university, without prejudice to my giving some lectures in other universities and public gatherings. My statement seemed to take them by surprise.<sup>1</sup> They told me

---

<sup>1</sup> This conversation took place at the Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, with Messrs. Aoki and Takawa.

that their understanding of an exchange professor is that of a professor who is to deliver some addresses to university students or to a class of students or to a mixed public gathering, but not to conduct a series of lectures which is intended to constitute a course for a particular class or regularly organized group in a particular university. They cited to me a case of an Italian professor, an authority on higher mathematics, who had just then finished some lectures in Japanese universities. His lectures did not constitute a course but rather detached from any course given in the university. Lectures of exchange professors are to be purely for informational purposes. They informed me that no foreign professor may give a course, special or regular, in any imperial university in Japan without the approval of the Imperial Government acting through the Department of Public Education, or rather at the invitation and appointment of this Department, which considers many things before taking that step. After some more discussion about this matter, I told them that their idea of an exchange professor is different from ours or the American idea. To the Philippines, their idea was that of a visiting professor. I informed them then that if that was what they wanted, they could have it and that I was then ready to lecture on topics relating to the Philippine conditions which they seemed to want most. That matter having been disposed of, the Foreign Office began to wait for the replies from the universities with respect to the time each university could set aside for my lecture. As soon as they were received, the Foreign Office sent me a partial list of the universities where I was expected to lecture, and, later on, a complete list was made. The universities in which I delivered lectures and the dates of the respective lectures as arranged by the Foreign Office were the following:

## I

Imperial University of Kyushu ..... September 28, 1936  
 Subject: Political and Economic Conditions of the Philippines

## II

Meiji University ..... October 2, 1936  
 Subject: A Brief Review of the Salient Points of Philippine Constitutional Law (This subject was especially requested by the President of that University.)

## III

Waseda University ..... October 3 and 10  
 The two lectures were on the same subject delivered before two different groups of liberal arts or preparatory students, who are so

many that they could not all be accommodated in the same auditorium. Subject: A Brief Analysis of Philippine Conditions.

Waseda University ..... October 8, 1936  
 Subject: The Political Organization of the Philippines Under the New Constitution (This subject was requested by the law faculty and students of Waseda as well as the students and faculty of economics and politics.)

I could feel the interest of the large audience that filled the lecture hall to the full limit, some merely standing on the aisles. The lecture lasted two hours including the translation made by Professor Fujii of the faculty of politics. At the end of the lecture, Dr. Shiozawa, Dean of the faculty of Political Economy of Waseda and formerly president of that University, made a lengthy remark of appreciation of the lecture and told the students about Rizal and the acquisition of the Philippines by the United States, which took place at the time he was a graduate student under Prof. Richard Ely of the University of Wisconsin in 1899; and then proceeded to deplore the propoganda of Japan's so-called plan of territorial expansion to the Philippines. He branded it as a tissue of lies manufactured by the enemies of Japan and the enemies of Philippine independence. Representatives of the Foreign Office were present as he made these statements. At the end of the lecture, when asked for comment I told them that not being a diplomatic or political official but merely an educational representative, I had nothing to say about it by way of elaboration but that I was glad to hear that Japan has no imperialistic ambitions with respect to the Philippines. No one after that occasion referred to the subject of Japanese expansion anymore, except in Tohoku Imperial University which I shall later relate.

Waseda University ..... October 23, 26, 27, and 28, 1936  
 This was a more systematic series of lectures on the general subject: The Philippines and the Filipinos.

This series of lectures were delivered at the special request of the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Letters as well as by the English Language Club of Waseda. The scope of the lectures covered pre-Spanish Philippines, Spanish Philippines, the Philippine Revolutionary government, the first Philippine Republic, the Malolos Constitution, American conquest of the Philippines, the organic laws under the United States, and the economic and educational provisions of the Constitution of the Philippines.

#### IV

Chuo University ..... October 12, 1936  
 Subject: A Brief Analysis of Philippine Conditions

## V

Hosei University ..... October 14, 1936  
 Subject: A Brief Analysis of Philippine Conditions

## VI

Tohoku Imperial University ..... October 15, 1936  
 Subject: A Brief Analysis of Philippine Conditions

After the lecture there was a round table discussion of students under the direction of members of the faculty of law and literature. This lasted over one hour. Among the many questions asked by the students, there was one which was asked by one particularly eager and intelligent student to this effect: What do the Filipinos think about Japanese expansion? I countered him by asking what he meant by expansion. I said there are various forms of expansion: there is cultural expansion, trade expansion, territorial expansion, etc. My remark rather embarrassed him as well as the members of the faculty who joined in saying that there really are various classes of expansion. I added that as far as I am concerned I do not welcome territorial expansion to our country by any foreign nation, just as no man would want to see his own house usurped by strangers. That round table conference revealed to me the meager knowledge Japanese students and professors in general have about the Philippines and the Filipinos.

## VII

Nippon (or Nihon) University ..... October 23, 1936  
 Subject: A Brief Analysis of Philippine Conditions

## VIII

Tokyo Imperial University ..... October 30, 1936  
 Subject: The Political and Social Development of the Philippines.

This lecture was open not only to students but also to the public. It was well attended. At the end of the lecture, the English Club of the University invited me to deliver another lecture the week following, but I had to turn down the invitation on account of the fact that the date of my departure, as previously announced to the Foreign Office, was set as of October 31, 1936.

*Radio Addresses*

Besides the lectures I delivered in the universities, there were also two addresses I made over the radio in Tokyo at the invitation of the JOAK Radio Station officials. One was a thirty-minute broadcast throughout Japan, which was translated into Japanese, on the subject of Philippine conditions. The second was an international broadcast over the shortwave station over the United States, Hawaii, China, and neighboring

countries, on the subject of "My Impressions of Japan" For obvious reasons, this talk was not translated.

#### *Receptions*

In almost all the universities where I lectured, receptions were given by members of the respective faculties in my honor. But besides these university parties, individual members of the various faculties now and then invited me to private parties in restaurants or in the home. The Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai (Society for the Promotion of International Cultural Relations) gave a public reception in my honor to which men prominent in the business, social, and educational circles of Tokyo were invited. Besides this, an official luncheon was also given in my honor at the residence of the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs by the Director of the Cultural Work Bureau of the Foreign Office at which representative men in the educational and cultural spheres of the country were in attendance.

#### *Nature of Lectures and Effect*

Practically all my lectures were descriptive rather than critical. The only critical lectures were those delivered in Waseda University about the Constitution of the Philippines. The first lecture I intended to deliver in the Kyushu Imperial University was to be critical; but I had to change it at the last minute when after a conference with some professors I discovered that the average Japanese student and professor have very little knowledge of the most common facts about the Philippines. For instance, they asked me questions like the following: What language is taught or used in the schools of the Philippines; what the religion of the Filipinos is; how far the Philippines is from Japan; to what race the Filipinos belong; whether there are any universities in the Philippines besides the state university, and the like. There are of course a few men, mostly in business, who are quite well acquainted with the Philippines, but they did not generally constitute my audience. I do not think I met more than six professors who could name a single prominent Filipino of the past or of the present time. About the only places in the Philippines most of them have heard of are Manila and Davao. I understood from two or three professors that the Japanese papers gave much publicity to Davao some time ago when the Japanese leases and holdings in Davao were the subject of investigation by the

Philippine Government. In view of the insufficient information the average student and professor in Japan have about the Filipinos, my lectures had to be descriptive or informational, rather than critical, in nature. I would simply be talking over their heads, so to speak, had I attempted to give criticisms.

The main subjects I stressed upon in my lectures, when not directly about the Constitution of the Philippines, were Philippine culture before the Spanish conquest, Christianity and its effects upon Filipino society and psychology, the political unity of the Filipinos, their racial homogeneity, the growth of democracy as a principle and as an institution in the Philippines, the work of the United States in the development of the Philippines, the stability of the Philippine government in the hands of the Filipinos, the success of present Filipino leaders, notably President Quezon, in the establishment of the Commonwealth, and the preparatory work being undertaken at present for the organization of a strong Philippine Republic. Among the upper class and among the intelligentsia in Japan, there is a very marked leaning towards Fascism, not exactly of the Italian species, because the Japanese are in the habit of introducing modifications to everything they copy, but of the same genus at any rate, which is the totalitarian or corporative state. And so when I talked on the decision of the Filipinos to follow the democratic ideal and to eschew the Fascistic and Communist principles, I always made it a point to add the qualifying phrase "rightly or wrongly."

Judging from the remarks I would hear after these lectures, it seems that I never hurt their feelings but that, on the other hand the lectures were quite highly appreciated. In the few cases where there were roundtable conferences or some informal interviews after the lecture, I was able to see that most of the things I told them were quite a revelation to them. Perhaps over ninety per cent of the professors themselves were so surprised that university education has been enjoyed by the Filipinos for the last four hundred years and that one of our universities is older than Harvard. The existence of a strong political organization in the Philippines and an Occidental culture of over four hundred years visibly impressed the Japanese student and professor.

The dearth of information possessed by the average Japanese professor or student is the result of several causes. I examined the geography textbook they use in the elementary

schools and I found that the only reference it has to the Philippines is a short paragraph of about two sentences which say that Manila is the capital of the Philippines, which belongs to the United States and produces hemp. According to reliable information I secured, the Oriental history textbook they use in Middle Schools (corresponding to our high schools) is mostly about China, India, and Corea. There is no chapter about the Philippines but only about the South Sea Islands of which the Philippines is but a small part. In the university libraries I saw no book about the Philippines except in one or two universities where I found a copy of an old edition of Malcolm's *Philippine Constitutional Law*. Of course, one always finds in some universities one or two professors whose wide reading give them some ideas of the Filipinos and the Philippines. They are naturally among the most highly cultured. They are found in the best universities, like Waseda or one or two imperial universities.

Another cause of the lack of knowledge the Japanese universities have of the Philippines is the fact that the Philippines is still a part of the United States. Their attention is focused more on independent countries with which they can deal directly and which they can really study as individual units in international society. Afghanistan and Siam are small countries, but because they are independent and because they are Asiatic, there is a noticeable interest in them on the part of the Japanese student. In fact, from the educational point of view the little attention now being directed towards the Philippines only really began from the inauguration of the Commonwealth, which they know to be a preparatory stage to complete independence.

#### *The Japanese Universities*

There are two classes of Japanese universities: the government or imperial universities and the private universities. There are eight imperial universities distributed all over Japan proper, Corea, and Formosa. There are many private universities, one or two of them being run by Christian missionaries. All the imperial universities I visited are very well equipped. The largest and most complete is the Tokyo Imperial University. Of the private universities, the best I have seen and visited is Waseda University. This is comparable to any imperial university in equipment and personnel. In fact, in the matter of discipline, order, and intellectual atmosphere Waseda has im-

pressed me very profoundly. None of these universities has a library less than three hundred thousand volumes. Some have as many as six hundred thousand volumes. I have been informed that Keio University is also of the standing of Waseda. Even the poorest of these Japanese private universities are preponderantly educational in their atmosphere rather than commercial. All have well-equipped libraries and full-time or part-time professors, lecturers being quite few.

The Japanese University is modelled after the European University in its organization and courses. It is made up of faculties instead of colleges as in the case of our universities or the American universities. The college of liberal arts is not properly a part of the university, except its graduate courses. It is called the preparatory school of the university or the higher schools. Outside of the very small private universities, a Japanese university is not simply a school for teaching but is also a research institution. Scientific buildings are divided into buildings of applied science and those of theoretical or pure science. Their applied science courses and instruction are really very practical. For instance, in the Waseda school of applied chemistry, which is a very large structure of five stories, one finds students actually producing cellulose, or mineral oil, or rayon, or some other material in the process of being turned into commercial or industrial uses. Experiments and researches in television are also going on in the Waseda engineering faculty. In Tohoku Imperial University I saw experiments in what they call "heavy water", discovered there for which they are now looking for some industrial use. In the Tokyo Imperial University research departments in medicine are very much developed. Similar research activities may be observed in all other major universities.

The Japanese university as a rule is not very much concerned about expansion of courses and faculties. Its main attention seems to be directed to the thorough development and intensive improvement of few courses or colleges. Outside of the Tokyo Imperial University, no university, imperial or private, has more than four faculties or colleges. The Tokyo Imperial University itself has but seven faculties. This situation seems to be the result of two main causes: First, the characteristic trait of the Japanese to be thorough; and second, the requirement made by the Imperial Ordinances that all universities, public or private, must have adequate equipment and suf-

ficient capital and income-producing funds sufficient for the maintenance of its courses; such funds or securities to be designated by the Minister of Education and deposited with him.

The Imperial Ordinances on universities are rather strict. Every university, public or private, must have so many professors solely belonging to it. No person may be appointed professor in a private university without the approval of the Minister of Education. Because of this rule, the Imperial Government is in a position not only to inquire into the qualifications of a candidate but also into his political ideas, especially in the case of foreign professors, including regular exchange (not merely visiting) professors. The Minister of Education may require reports from, or make inspection in universities, public or private, or issue orders necessary for their supervision and regulation. The use of the title *University* is allowed only to institutions which conform to the provisions of the Imperial Ordinances.

The average professor of a Japanese university is a serious and very industrious individual. Every professor takes pride in having gone abroad, either to study or to observe. The university sees to it that professors receive the necessary financial assistance in going abroad.

In imperial universities, the teaching load of a professor averages six hours a week. The professor, therefore, has time for reading and for investigation or research. He generally is a regular contributor to newspapers or scientific and technical journals. A good number of university professors (the full-time ones) and lecturers are authors of books. The professor-author seems to command even a much higher respect in academic circles than those who have not produced any work at all.

The Japanese student is, as a rule, a serious student. He enters a university to learn something, whether law, economics, engineering, or medicine, knowing full well that after his graduation all he can reasonably expect is a job, if at all, paying him 40 or 50 yens a month. He is in the university, therefore, solely to learn something worthwhile, not to engage in frivolous things. Besides, there are no frivolous things in the Japanese universities. Their extracurricular activities consist of athletics and societies which deal with such subjects as "science, art,

literature, religion, and the like. In their activities, students have the benefit of the guidance of faculty members." No societies exist for purely social purposes such as dancing. Excursions to historical places are common among students in the elementary schools. In fact, these are in a way required.

#### *Conclusions and Recommendations*

The exchange of professors between the University of the Philippines and the Japanese universities is an arrangement which should be made permanent. The advantages may be quite clearly seen from the facts embodied in the above report. There is much that we can learn from what we see and observe in the universities of Japan. We should bear in mind that despite our preferences Japan is one of the most advanced nations on earth today and that the Philippines is geographically her close neighbor. The technological, economic, and even cultural progress of the Japanese people is so marked and has so enhanced their general well-being as well as their prestige and influence all over the world, that as scholars we should be thankful that the opportunity to observe it and to learn from it is in our hands. We need not necessarily copy everything the Japanese have, for we have distinct customs and traditions, and we have lived and are living under different institutions, social, political, or religious. But the success of Japan, viewed with an impartial eye, and an open mind, furnishes an incentive for the Filipinos to higher achievements.

The exchange professorship tends, moreover, to foster mutual understanding between us and the Japanese. Behind the thick smoke-screen of propaganda, true or untrue, we should see what the Japanese really are in their own land and within their own environment. As university men we should not believe every report we read without testing its contents by actual comparison with the naked facts we see with our own eyes and touch with our own hands. The knowledge we are able to disseminate in the cultural centers of Japan about the effectiveness of our institutions, the virility of our people, the strength of our government, the vitality of our culture, the homogeneity of our race, our love for freedom, and the firmness of our social and political order serves to create in the minds of the people and the leaders of the nation a friendly feeling towards us and a profound respect for our country and our people.

It is desirable that the Filipino educated class should have some acquaintance with the Japanese language. This is the vehicle of instruction in all Japanese schools and universities. While the great majority of their students have some knowledge of English, this language being a required subject for five years in the Middle Schools, still an intimate knowledge of Japan is better attained by one having some acquaintance with the spoken and the written language. The technical courses offered in Japanese schools, such as all branches of engineering, chemistry, mining, and the like, are so advanced, so thorough, and so practical that it pays to investigate the advisability of our students taking advantage of them. But before any one decides to pursue his studies in that country, it is of the utmost necessity that he first learn the Japanese language. I feel that in the University of the Philippines a course of at least two years of Japanese language should be *required* of all students of foreign or consular service and of science, commerce, and engineering students. Filipino students going to Japanese schools without some previous acquaintance with the Japanese language spend about two years learning the language first before they can really begin learning the courses they seek to pursue. That means so much time lost. Those who are not serious enough to learn the tongue do not get much out of the instruction in the schools of Japan.

The intervention of the Foreign Office of the Japanese Imperial Government in the arrangement of exchange professors has many advantages. It enables an exchange professor who is sent there, to see and observe, with all facilities available, places and institutions, public or private, which otherwise would be closed to him as an outsider or a foreigner. Moreover, his standing in Japanese social and educational circles is greatly enhanced by the fact that he is the guest and comes under the guidance of the Foreign Office. But this circumstance makes it necessary that the professor sent by us should be cultured besides being well-acquainted with one particular line of learning. He represents the intellectual class of the Philippines and so he moves in the circles of the intelligentsia where all sorts of topics are discussed affecting not merely his line but also other branches of human knowledge; and he is naturally expected to say something about them. These statements are here included without any thought of self-praise or any reference at all to the qualifications or disqualifications of the exchange

professor we sent there. They are here made to serve as a guide in the selection of future exchange professors, if the results of my observation and my experience may be taken at all as a guide in this matter. Furthermore, it is advisable that our exchange professor should be one from the faculty of social sciences rather than from the group of natural sciences. The reason is obvious. It has been arrived at by me after a close observation of Japanese universities; and it was also actually suggested to me not only by professors of social sciences in Japan but also by professors of natural sciences themselves. For we might just as well honestly admit that Japan or her universities have practically nothing to learn from us in natural sciences just now.

Lastly, the University of the Philippines should encourage conferences between Filipino students and professors, on the one hand, and Japanese students and professors, on the other hand. I made this suggestion in two or three universities in Japan, and those present were in favor of the idea. The exchange professor from Japan who will be here next month, Prof. Kojiro Sugimori of Waseda University, will be able to assist us in perfecting our plans for Japanese-Filipino student conferences, because he has been in charge of American-Japanese student conferences as far as the Japan side is concerned.

Respectfully submitted,

VICENTE G. SINCO