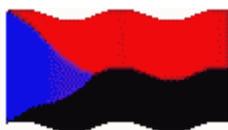


The Evolution of the Philippine Flag

Flags of the Katipunan



With the Katipunan now well organized, Bonifacio turned his attention to the symbol of its authority. Upon his request, Benita Rodriquez with the help of Gregoria de Jesus, Bonifacio's wife, made a flag. It consisted of a red rectangular piece of cloth with three white *K*'s arranged horizontally at the center. This was the first official flag of the society. But some members of the Katipunan has their flag with the three *K*'s arranged in the form of a triangle. Bonifacio himself has a personal flag which consisted of a red rectangular piece of cloth at the center of which was a white sun with an indefinite number of rays. Below the sun were the three white *K*'s arranged horizontally.

Owing to the lack of uniformity in the design and use of the flag, some generals of the revolution adopted their own designs. Thus General Mariano Llanera used a black banner with a skull above two cross bones and the letter *K*, all in white. So different was this banner that Bonifacio humorously called it "Llanera's skull." Still another flag was that of General Pio del Pilar which consisted of an equilateral triangle with a *K* at each angle. Inside the triangle was a mountain with the sun rising behind it.

When the revolution flared up, the Magdalo faction of the Katipunan in Cavite adopted a flag consisting of a red rectangular banner with a white *K* in the ancient Tagalog script in the center of a sun, represented by a white circle, with an indefinite number of rays. Later on, the rays of the sun were limited to eight to represent the eight provinces which first took up arms against the Spaniards. This flag became the first official banner of the revolutionary forces and was blessed in a mass celebrated at Imus.

In the Naik Assembly of March 17, 1897, the Katipunan military leaders decided to adopt a flag with a new design. It consisted of a red rectangular cloth with a white sun and rays in the middle. The sun was the mythological sun with eyes, eyebrows, nose and mouth. This flag superseded the flag of the Magdalo faction and became the first official flag of the Filipinos. It became the symbol of the Filipino nationality until the signing of the Truce of Biyak-na-bato on December 14-15, 1897, when it was hauled down from the pole of the revolutionary headquarters at Biyak-na-bato.

The Filipino Flag

The Filipino flag has an interesting story. It was made in Hongkong by Mrs. Marcela de Agoncillo, wife of Don Felipe Agoncillo.

During his exile in Hongkong, General Aguinaldo designed the flag as it looks today. Mrs. Marcela de Agoncillo sewed it with the help of her daughter Lorenza and Mrs. Josefina Herbosa de Natividad(niece of Dr. Jose Rizal). It was made of silk with a white triangle at the left containing a sunburst of eight rays at the center, a five pointed star at each angle of the triangle, an upper stripe of dark blue, and a lower stripe of red. The white triangle stands for equality; the upper blue stripe for peace, truth and justice; and the lower red stripe for patriotism and valor. The sunburst of eight rays inside the triangle represented the first eight provinces that took up arms against Spain. The three stars symbolized Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

The flag which Mrs. Agoncillo made in Hongkong was taken to the Philippines by General Aguinaldo. It was hoisted officially at Kawit on June 12, 1898, in connection with the proclamation of Philippine independence. From that date, it has served as the National Flag of the Filipinos.

Ref.: <http://filipino.biz.ph/history/flags.html>