

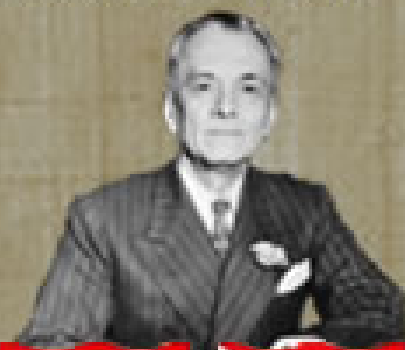
Filipino Martial Arts

EVOLUTION OF THE PHILIPPINE FLAG

Digest

Special Edition
2007

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Philippine Country Guide

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The FMA Digest is published quarterly. Each issue features practitioners of martial arts and other internal arts of the Philippines. Other features include historical, theoretical and technical articles; reflections, Filipino martial arts, healing arts and other related subjects.

The ideas and opinions expressed in this digest are those of the authors or instructors being interviewed and are not necessarily the views of the publisher or editor.

We solicit comments and/or suggestions. Articles are also welcome.

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From the Publishers Desk

Kumusta

In this Special Edition the FMA Digest has put together with the help of the **Philippine Country Guide**. It entails some of the history of the Philippines with the flags that have been flown. This is not a minute-by-minute history, but a general history, and it was thought that in learning the Filipino martial arts also some other aspects of the Philippines and its history, culture etc should also be known.

With the establishment of the Katipunan, Andres Bonifacio requested his wife, Gregoria de Jesus, and with the help of Benita Rodriguez to create a flag for the society. Which was the KKK (Kataastaasan at Kagalanggalang Katipunan ng Mga Anak ng Bayan -The Highest and Most Honorable Society of the Sons of the Nation) Flag (1892).

After that various flags were created for personal and battalion identification. It wasn't until revolutionary leaders at their assembly in Naic, Cavite on March 17, 1897 adopted the first official flag of the revolutionary government of General Emilio Aguinaldo. The first Filipino national flag was a red flag with a white sun of eight rays, symbolizing the search for liberty.

The second phase of the Philippine revolution (1898-1902) began the hopes for creating the first Philippine republic. And one of the first tasks of the founders who were exiled abroad is to produce the flag and a new anthem, the symbols of a state. Emilio Aguinaldo designed the Philippine national flag during his exile in Hong Kong.



On March 25, 1936, President Manuel Quezon issued Executive Order No. 23 which restricted the official description and specifications of the Philippine flag.

In 1981, President Ferdinand Marcos ordered the colors of the Philippine flag be changed back to the original Cuban colors.

Due to much debate amongst historians as to which type of blue was correct, the blue was changed to royal blue as a agreement by Republic Act No. 8491 which was passed on February 12, 1998. This is the current version of the Philippine National Flag.

What many people do not realize is that the Philippine flag was banned in the Philippines at times throughout the country's history.

So it is hoped that you the reader will enjoy this issue in the spirit that it has been put together.

Maraming Salamat Po

Philippine Flag

Provided by: Philippine Country Guide
www.philippinecountry.com

The Philippine National Flag made its first public appearance at General Aguinaldo's declaration of independence from Spain. Prior to this flag, there were several Katipunan flags and war banners and some of the revolutionary generals had their own flags, some of which stand some similarity to the present national flag. The Philippine flag was banned at certain times during the US and Japanese occupation. The exact specifications of the flag were placed down in 1936 although the blue used in the flag has long been an issue of debate amongst historians. The blue was changed to royal blue in 1998 as a compromise to the argument regarding the use of a Cuban blue, American (or navy) blue and sky blue used in previous flags.

While in forced exile abroad, one of the first tasks of the founding fathers of the aspiring new nation was the preparation of the symbols of state - a new flag and a new Philippine National Anthem. They decided to have a new common flag to use in another attempt at independence. This new flag would not have the stigma of disunity of the previous war standards, and it would symbolize the common aspirations for freedom.

General Emilio Aguinaldo and the other leaders decided the design of the new flag after a great deal of discussion and study. The sketch was submitted to Mrs. Marcela Mariño de Agoncillo, who was living with her husband Don Felipe Agoncillo at No. 535 Morrison Hill Road, Hong Kong, where the other exiles lived. This patriotic woman was requested by General Aguinaldo to make the flag because of her skill in sewing, which she acquired from her hometown of Lipa, Batangas and her student days at the Colegio de Santa Catalina, Manila.

Two equal horizontal bands of blue (top) and red with a white equilateral triangle based on the hoist side; in the center of the triangle is a yellow sun with eight primary rays (each containing three individual rays) and in each corner of the triangle is a small yellow five-pointed star.

Explanation of the Flag



Each part of the Philippine flag has a specific meaning as follows:

- The blue field stands for common unity and the noble desires of the Filipino people.
- The white triangle with equal sides of the flag is symbolic of equality among men.
- The white field stands for purity.
- The sun stands for the gigantic strides that have been made by the Sons of the land on the road to

progress and civilization.

- The eight rays of the sun in the triangle represent the first eight united provinces that revolted for independence - Batangas, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Manila, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga and Tarlac.
- The three stars in the triangle stand for the three major geographical divisions of the country, which are Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

The red field symbolizes the eagerness of the Filipino people to shed blood in defense for their country.

Early History or Pre-Colonial Period

The primary peoples of the Philippine archipelago were the Negrito, proto-Malay, and Malay peoples. The Negritos are believed to have journeyed to the Philippines by land bridges some 30,000 years ago from Borneo, Sumatra, and Malaya, during the last ice age. Later migrations were by water and took place over several thousand years. The Malayans followed in successive waves. These people belonged to a prehistoric age of Malayan culture, which has in fact survived to this day among certain groups such as the Igorots. The Malayan tribes that came later had more highly developed material cultures.

The social and political organization of the population in the widely scattered islands evolved into a generally common pattern. Only the permanent-field rice farmers of northern Luzon had any notion of territoriality. The basic unit of settlement was the barangay, formerly a kinship group headed by a datu (chief). Within the barangay (Malay term for boat; also came to be used for the communal settlements established by migrants who came from the Indonesian archipelago and elsewhere. The term replaces the word barrio, formerly used to identify the lowest political subdivision in the Philippines), the broad social divisions consisted of nobles, including the datu; freemen; and a group described before the Spanish period as dependents. Dependents included several categories with differing status: landless agricultural workers; those who had lost freeman status because of indebtedness or punishment for crime; and slaves, most of whom appear to have been war captives.

In the 14th century Arab traders from Malay and Borneo introduced Islam into the southern islands and extended their influence as far north as Luzon. Traders and proselytizers brought Islam to the Philippines from the Indonesian islands. By the 16th century, Islam was recognized in the Sulu Archipelago and spread from there to Mindanao; it had reached the Manila area by 1565.

The first Europeans to visit (1521) the Philippines were those in the Spanish expedition around the world headed by the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan. Other Spanish expeditions followed, including one from New Spain (Mexico) under López de Villalobos, who in 1542 named the islands for the infante Philip, later Philip II. Muslim immigrants introduced a political concept of territorial states ruled by rajas or sultans who exercised suzerainty over the datu. Neither the political state concept of the Muslim rulers nor the limited territorial concept of the inactive rice farmers of Luzon, however, spread beyond the areas where they originated. The majority of the estimated 500,000 people in the islands lived in barangay settlements when the Spanish arrived in the 16th century.

Spanish Colonization (1521 - 1898)



Ferdinand Magellan arrived in the Philippines in 1521.

The Philippine islands first came to the attention of Europeans with the Spanish expedition around the world led by Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan in 1521. Magellan landed on the island of Cebu, claiming the lands for Spain and naming them Isles de San Lazaro. He set up friendly relations with some of the local chieftains and converted some of them to Roman Catholicism. However, natives led by a local chief named Lapu-Lapu, who went up against foreign domination, killed Magellan.

Over the next several decades, other Spanish expeditions were sent off to the islands. In 1543, Ruy López de Villalobos led an expedition to the islands and gave the name Las Islas Filipinas (after Philip II of Spain) to the islands of Samar and Leyte. The name would later be given to the entire archipelago.

The invasion of the Filipinos by Spain did not begin in earnest until 1564, when another expedition from New Spain, commanded by Miguel López de Legaspi, arrived. Permanent Spanish settlement was not established until 1565 when an expedition led by Miguel López de Legaspi, the first Governor-General of the Philippines, arrived in Cebu from New Spain. Spanish leadership was soon established over many small independent communities that previously had known no central rule. Six years later, following the defeat of the local Muslim ruler, Legaspi established a capital at Manila, a location that offered the outstanding harbor of Manila Bay, a large population, and closeness to the sufficient food supplies of the central Luzon rice lands. Manila became the center of Spanish civil, military, religious, and commercial activity in the islands. By 1571, when López de Legaspi established the Spanish city of Manila on the site of a Moro town he had conquered the year before, the Spanish grip in the Philippines was secure which became their outpost in the East Indies, in spite of the opposition of the Portuguese, who desired to maintain their monopoly on East Asian trade. The Philippines was administered as a province of New Spain (Mexico) until Mexican independence (1821).

Manila revolted the attack of the Chinese pirate Limahong in 1574. For centuries before the Spanish arrived the Chinese had traded with the Filipinos, but evidently none had settled permanently in the islands until after the conquest. Chinese trade and labor were of great importance in the early development of the Spanish colony, but the Chinese came to be feared and hated because of their increasing numbers, and in 1603 the Spanish murdered thousands of them (later, there were lesser massacres of the Chinese).

The Spanish governor, made a viceroy in 1589, ruled with the counsel of the powerful royal audiencia. There were frequent uprisings by the Filipinos, who disliked the encomienda system. By the end of the 16th cent. Manila had become a leading commercial center of East Asia, carrying on a prosperous trade with China, India, and the East Indies. The Philippines supplied some wealth (including gold) to Spain, and English freebooters often attacked the richly loaded galleons plying between the islands and New Spain. There was also trouble from other quarters, and the period from 1600 to 1663 was marked by continual wars with the Dutch, who were laying the foundations of their rich

empire in the East Indies, and with Moro pirates. One of the most difficult problems the Spanish faced was the defeat of the Moros. Irregular campaigns were conducted against them but without conclusive results until the middle of the 19th century. As the power of the Spanish Empire diminished, the Jesuit orders became more influential in the Philippines and obtained great amounts of property.

Occupation of the islands was accomplished with relatively little bloodshed, partly because most of the population (except the Muslims) offered little armed battle initially. A significant problem the Spanish faced was the invasion of the Muslims of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. The Muslims, in response to attacks on them from the Spanish and their native allies, raided areas of Luzon and the Visayas that were under Spanish colonial control. The Spanish conducted intermittent military campaigns against the Muslims, but without conclusive results until the middle of the 19th century.

Church and state were inseparably linked in Spanish policy, with the state assuming responsibility for religious establishments. One of Spain's objectives in colonizing the Philippines was the conversion of Filipinos to Catholicism. The work of conversion was facilitated by the absence of other organized religions, except for Islam, which predominated in the south. The pageantry of the church had a wide plea, reinforced by the incorporation of Filipino social customs into religious observances. The eventual outcome was a new Christian majority of the main Malay lowland population, from which the Muslims of Mindanao and the upland tribal peoples of Luzon remained detached and separated.

At the lower levels of administration, the Spanish built on traditional village organization by co-opting local leaders. This system of indirect rule helped create in a Filipino upper class, called the *principalía*, who had local wealth, high status, and other privileges. This achieved an oligarchic system of local control. Among the most significant changes under Spanish rule was that the Filipino idea of public use and ownership of land was replaced with the concept of private ownership and the granting of titles on members of the *principalía*.

The Philippines was not profitable as a colony, and a long war with the Dutch in the 17th century and intermittent conflict with the Muslims nearly bankrupted the colonial treasury. Colonial income derived mainly from *entrepôt* trade: The Manila Galleons sailing from Acapulco on the west coast of Mexico brought shipments of silver bullion and minted coin that were exchanged for return cargoes of Chinese goods. There was no direct trade with Spain.

Decline of Spanish rule

Spanish rule on the Philippines was briefly interrupted in 1762, when British troops invaded and occupied the islands as a result of Spain's entry into the Seven Years' War. The Treaty of Paris in 1763 brought back Spanish rule and the British left in 1764. The brief British occupation weakened Spain's grip on power and sparked rebellions and demands for independence.

In 1781, Governor-General José Basco y Vargas founded the Economic Society of Friends of the Country. The Philippines by this time was administered directly from Spain. Developments in and out of the country helped to bring new ideas to the Philippines. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 cut travel time to Spain. This

prompted the rise of the ilustrados, an enlightened Filipino upper class, since many young Filipinos were able to study in Europe.

Enlightened by the Propaganda Movement to the injustices of the Spanish colonial government and the "frailocracy", the ilustrados originally clamored for adequate representation to the Spanish Cortes and later for independence. José Rizal, the most celebrated intellectual and essential ilustrado of the era, wrote the novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, which greatly inspired the movement for independence. The Katipunan, a secret society whose primary principle was that of overthrowing Spanish rule in the Philippines, was founded by Andrés Bonifacio who became its Supremo (leader).



The Philippine Revolution began in 1896. Rizal was concerned in the outbreak of the revolution and executed for treason in 1896. The Katipunan split into two groups, Magdiwang led by Andrés Bonifacio and Magdalo led by Emilio Aguinaldo. Conflict between the two revolutionary leaders ended in the execution or assassination of Bonifacio by Aguinaldo's soldiers. Aguinaldo agreed to a treaty with the Pact of Biak na Bato and Aguinaldo and his fellow revolutionaries were exiled to Hong Kong.

It was the opposition to the power of the clergy that in large measure brought about the rising attitude for independence.

Spanish injustices, prejudice, and economic oppressions fed the movement, which was greatly inspired by the brilliant writings of José Rizal. In 1896 revolution began in the province of Cavite, and after the execution of Rizal that December, it spread throughout the major islands. The Filipino leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, achieved considerable success before a peace was patched up with Spain. The peace was short-lived, however, for neither side honored its agreements, and a new revolution was made when the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898.

The Katipunan (1892 - 1897)



The First KKK (Kataastaasan at Kagalanggalang Katipunan ng Mga Anak ng Bayan -The Highest and Most Honorable Society of the Sons of the Nation) Flag (1892) With the establishment of the Katipunan, Andres Bonifacio requested his wife, Gregoria de Jesus, and with the help of Benita Rodriguez to create a flag for the society. De Jesus created a simple red flag bearing the society's acronym, KKK, in

white and arranged horizontally at the center of a rectangular piece of red cloth (locally called "kundiman"). The color red represents the blood and courage of the Katipuneros who stood ready to fight for freedom and shed their blood if need be. This was the flag, which was developed during the "First Cry of Nationhood" at the district of North Manila in August 1896. This was the first official flag of the society.

Early Katipunan One-K Flag



In some areas, only one white letter K was positioned on a rectangular piece of red cloth.

The Second Katipunan Flag (1892).



Some members of the Katipunan used other variations. A red flag with the three white letter Ks arranged in an equilateral triangle, a shape prominent in Philippine revolutionary imagery, at the center of the rectangular field.

Andres Bonifacio's Flag (1892)



Andres Bonifacio "the father of katipunan," had a personal flag, which represents a white sun with an indefinite number of rays on a field of red. Below the sun are three white Ks arranged horizontally. This flag was first shown on August 23, 1896 during the Cry of Pugadlawin where the Katipuneros gather tore their cedula (poll tax certificates) in rebelliousness of Spanish authority. The flag was used later

during the Battle of San Juan del Monte on August 30, 1896, the first major battle of the Philippine Revolution. This was also used by the war camp of Bonifacio, the "Great Plebeian" ("Dakilang Anak Pawis").

Katipunan 1st Degree Flag (1892)



A red flag with one white letter K at the center of the field, crossed by a native sword ("tabak") pointing downwards and a small skull above the letter K. This was accepted to rally the Katipuneros belonging to the lowest rank or grade.

Katipunan 2nd Degree Flag (1892)



A red flag similar to the 1st degree design, but with two K's and no skull symbol. This was supposed to rally the middle ranks of the Katipuneros.

Katipunan 3rd Degree Flag (1892)



A red flag, again, with three K's and sword sign, for the highest ranks of the society.

War Camp of Katipuneros of Malibay, Pasay (1896)



This battle flag had the Masonic triangle on the left, with the Malibay Katipunero description over a red field.

Personal Flag or Battalion Flags

Pio del Pilar's Rising Sun Flag (1896)



A red flag with a white triangle on the left side became famous through General Pio del Pilar of San Pedro de Makati (the hero of Makati and one of the most trusted generals of Emilio Aguinaldo), who used it up to the Pact of Biak-na-Bato. The triangular strip at the left side led the national flag design. At each of the angles of the triangle was a letter K. The rising sun in the middle had eight rays representing the first eight

united provinces that were placed under martial law by the Spanish colonial government for rising up in rebellion namely, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bulacan, Manila, Cavite, Laguna and Batangas. The flag was called Bandila ng Matagumpay (The Flag of the Victorious) and was first used on July 11, 1895. The flag was also one of the first to illustrate an eight-rayed sun.

General Mariano Llanera's battle Skull Flag (1896)



General Mariano Llanera who fought in the provinces of Bulacan, Tarlac, Pampanga, and Nueva Ecija used a dull-looking black flag, with the single white letter K and the skull and crossbones symbol. The hood worn during the secret initiation rites of the first-degree Katipuneros inspired the black color of the flag. The flag was for the camp of General Mariano Llanera of Cabaio, Nueva Ecija, who earned for

himself a reputation as a brave and reckless fighter. "Let us fight to the finish," was one of his favorite remarks. Owing more to Freemasonry than to traditional Katipunero imagery. This flag looked like the pirates' banner in the Caribbean. It is said that Andres Bonifacio made fun of this flag, calling it Bungo ni Llanera or Llanera's skull.

The Aguinaldo-Magdalo Flag (August 30, 1896)

Katipunan Flags



When the revolution heated up, the Magdiwang group of the Katipunan, which operated in Cavite under Gen. Santiago Alvarez, adopted a flag consisting of a red flag with the character at the centre of the flag is a K in an ancient Filipino alphabet or alibata script in white placed at the center of a sun with eight pointed rays, again representing the Katipunan and the eight revolutionary provinces in Luzon

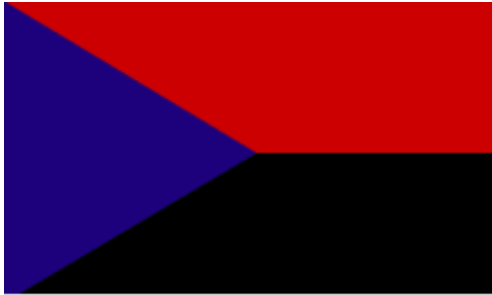
that pledged its support to fight under Aguinaldo's banner and to start the Philippine revolution. This was the flag adopted by General Emilio Aguinaldo for his Magdalo group at Kawit, Cavite on August 30, 1896. General Aguinaldo referred to this flag in his proclamation of October 31, 1896: "Filipino people!! The hour has arrived to shed blood for the conquest of our liberty. Assemble and follow the flag of the Revolution - it stands for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity." Due to the popularity of General Aguinaldo, the revolutionary forces used it until December 30, 1897 when it was hauled down from the flagstaff at Biak-na-Bato, signifying the end of warfare with Spain after the peace agreement. This flag became the first official banner of the revolutionary forces and was blessed in a crowd celebrated at Imus.



The Magdalo faction of the Katipunan, which also operated in Cavite under Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, used a flag alike to the Magdiwang faction's. It features a white sun with a red baybayin letter ka. This symbol has recently been revived by a breakaway group of army officers calling themselves the Magdalo Group. These officers rebelled against the government of Gloria

Macapagal-Arroyo at the command of Senator Gregorio Honasan.

Gregorio del Pilar's Tricolor Flag (1897)



The first Filipino tricolor. General Gregorio del Pilar, “boy hero of the Battle of Tirad Pass” and “The Young General of the Katipunan,” used a flag almost alike to the present National Flag. The upper red stripe stood for the Katipunan color; the lower black was motivated by General Llanera's flag; and the blue triangle at the left indicates comradeship with the revolutionary flag of Cuba, another colony of

Spain which was also in revolt and like the Philippines, it was in a state of revolution for independence from Spain. The flag took its last stand against the Americans in Tirad Pass, Ilocos Sur, defending the retreating armies of Aguinaldo.

First Official Flag

"Sun of Liberty Flag" (March 17, 1897)



The first official flag of the revolutionary government of General Emilio Aguinaldo. The first Filipino national flag. A red flag with a white sun of eight rays, symbolizing the search for liberty. This was adopted by the revolutionary leaders at their assembly in Naic, Cavite on March 17, 1897. It was a transformed version of the Aguinaldo-Magdalo flag, with a mythological sun at the center.

The last revolutionary flag represented the desires for independence of the Filipino nation as a whole, rather than the Katipunan society alone, for the sun (nation) had replaced the KKK as the center of their sign. It was raised and waved during some of the bloodiest days of the revolution, but unfortunately, it did not last long. The flag served as the national flag and was used for less than a year because the Filipinos signed a truce with Spanish authorities (Pact of Biak-na-Bato) on December 14 to 15, 1897. On December 27, 1897, the first phase of the Philippine Revolution ended with the signing of the Pact of Biak-na-Bato between the struggling Spanish colonial government and the poorly armed and unsalaried volunteer army of Katipuneros. The truce ushered in a period of false peace before another storm was released in the land.

The leaders of the Katipunan decided to fight under Aguinaldo's banner. Aside from being formally educated, Aguinaldo was winning his battles while Bonifacio was struck by a number of losses. For this same reason, Aguinaldo's flag was said to have become the basis for the design of the new flag of the revolutionary government – the Sun of Liberty. This same revolutionary government was responsible for ordering the execution of Andres Bonifacio. Bonifacio was charged with treason for provocative rebellion against the new government. The flag was approved on March 17, 1897 in Naic, Cavite.

The Spanish-American war started in 1898 after the USS Maine, sent to Cuba in connection with an attempt to arrange a peaceful resolution between Cuban independence ambitions and Spanish colonialism, was sunk in Havana harbor. After the U.S. naval victory led by Commodore George Dewey defeated the Spanish squadron at Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, the U.S. invited Aguinaldo to return to the Philippines, which he did on May 19, 1898, in the hope he would rally Filipinos against the Spanish colonial government. By the time U.S. land forces had arrived, the Filipinos had taken control of the entire island of Luzon, except for the walled city of Intramuros Manila, which they were besieging. On June 12, 1898, Aguinaldo declared the independence of the Philippines in Kawit, Cavite, establishing the First Philippine Republic under Asia's first democratic constitution. Their dreams of independence were crushed when the Philippines were transferred from Spain to the United States in the Treaty of Paris (1898), which closed the Spanish-American War.

Concurrently, a German squadron under Admiral Diedrichs arrived in Manila and declared that if the United States did not grab the Philippines as a colonial possession, Germany would. Since Spain and the U.S. ignored the Filipino representative, Felipe Agoncillo, during their negotiations in the Treaty of Paris, the Battle of Manila between Spain and the U.S. was alleged by some to be an attempt to exclude the Filipinos from the eventual occupation of Manila. Although there was substantial domestic opposition, the United States decided neither to return the Philippines to Spain, nor to allow Germany to take over the Philippines. Therefore, in addition to Guam and Puerto Rico, Spain was forced in the negotiations to hand over the Philippines to the U.S. in exchange for US\$20,000,000.00, which the U.S. later claimed to be a "gift" from Spain. The first Philippine Republic rebelled against the U.S. occupation, resulting in the Philippine-American War (1899–1913).

"The Sun and the Stars"



The second phase of the Philippine revolution (1898-1902) began the hopes for creating the first Philippine republic. And one of the first tasks of the founders who were exiled abroad is to produce the flag and a new anthem, the symbols of a state.

Emilio Aguinaldo designed the Philippine national flag during his exile in Hong Kong. The flag was sewn at 535 Morrison Hill, Hong Kong by Mrs. Marcela Mariño Agoncillo - wife of the first Filipino diplomat, Felipe Agoncillo, because of her sewing skills with the help of her daughter Lorenza and Mrs. Delfina Herbosa de Natividad, niece of Dr. Jose P. Rizal and wife of General Salvador Natividad, they skillfully sewed what was later to be known as "The Sun and the Stars."

The flag was completed within five days and handed over to Emilio Aguinaldo before he returned to the Philippines. The flag was unfurled for the first time on the balcony of Emilio Aguinaldo's home in Cavite on June 12, 1898 in proclamation of independence from Spain. This flag was used June 12, 1898 - April 1, 1901 and had the

same red and blue as found on the Cuban flag. The flag was flown with the red stripe on top during the Philippine-American war.

The flag's design spoke of the Filipinos' spirit and their deep longing for the country. A white triangle on the flag stood for equality; the upper stripe of dark blue for peace, truth and justice, the lower stripe of red for patriotism and courage, the sunburst of eight rays representing the first eight provinces that took up arms against Spain and the three stars symbolizing Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao.

For the period of the US military government in the Philippines, there was an unwritten ban on the Philippine flag and use of the national colors. Once a civil government was recognized, the unwritten ban was relaxed. However, due to the patriotic nature of Filipinos and their use and display of their flag and the national colors, and several incidents related to their patriotism, the Flag Law was passed. The Flag Law or Act No. 1696 (An act to prohibit the display of flags, banners, emblems, or devices used in the Philippine islands for the purpose of rebellion or insurrection against the authorities of the United States and the display of Katipunan flags, banners, emblems, or devices and for other purposes) was passed on September 6, 1907. The US flag was used as the official flag of the Philippines 1898-1946.

There were numerous attempts to abolish the Flag Law and finally on October 22, 1919, Act No. 2871 was passed abolishing the Flag Law. On October 24, 1919 Proclamation No. 19 was issued establishing October 30, 1919, as a public holiday to be known as Flag Day. However, the Philippine flag now had the American red and blue, rather than the Cuban red and blue. This flag was adopted as the official flag of the Philippines on March 26, 1920, by Act No. 2928.

American Colonization (1898 - 1946)

In February 1899, Aguinaldo led a new revolt, this time against U.S. rule. Defeated on the battlefield, the Filipinos turned to guerrilla warfare, and their defeat became a mammoth project for the United States. Thus began the Philippine-American War, one that cost far more money and took far more lives than the Spanish-American War. Fighting broke out on February 4, 1899, after two American privates on patrol killed three Filipino soldiers in San Juan, Metro Manila. Some 126,000 American soldiers would be committed to the conflict, 4,234 American and 16,000 Filipino soldiers, part of a nationwide guerrilla movement of indeterminate numbers, died. Estimates on civilian deaths during the war range between 250,000 and 1,000,000, largely because of famine and disease. Both sides committed atrocities.



Emilio Aguinaldo

The poorly equipped Filipino troops were handily overpowered by American troops in open combat, but they were frightening opponents in guerrilla warfare. Malolos, the revolutionary capital, was captured on March 31, 1899. Aguinaldo and his government escaped, however, establishing a new capital at San Isidro, Nueva Ecija. Antonio Luna, Aguinaldo's most capable military commander, was murdered in June. With his best commander dead and his troops suffering continued defeats as American forces pushed into northern Luzon, Aguinaldo dissolved the regular army in November

1899 and ordered the establishment of decentralized guerrilla commands in each of several military zones. The general population, caught between Americans and rebels, suffered significantly.

The revolution was effectively ended with the capture (1901) of Aguinaldo by General Frederick Funston at Palanan, Isabela on March 23, 1901 and was brought to Manila, but the question of Philippine independence remained a burning issue in the politics of both the United States and the islands. The matter was complex by the growing economic ties between the two countries. Although moderately little American capital was invested in island industries, U.S. trade bulked larger and larger until the Philippines became almost entirely dependent upon the American market. Free trade, established by an act of 1909, was expanded in 1913. Influenced of the uselessness of further resistance, he swore allegiance to the United States and issued a proclamation calling on his compatriots to lay down their arms, officially bringing an end to the war. However, sporadic insurgent resistance continued in various parts of the Philippines, especially in the Muslim south, until 1913.

U.S. Colony

The Americans established civil government in 1901, with William Howard Taft as the first American Governor-General of the Philippines. English was declared the official language. Six hundred American teachers were imported aboard the USS Thomas. Also, the Catholic Church was disestablished, and a substantial amount of church land was purchased and redistributed. Some measures of Filipino self-rule were allowed, however. An elected Filipino legislature was established in 1907.

When Woodrow Wilson became U.S. President in 1913, there was a major change in official American policy concerning the Philippines. While the previous Republican administrations had predicted the Philippines as a perpetual American colony, the Wilson administration decided to start a process that would slowly lead to Philippine independence. U.S. administration of the Philippines was declared to be temporary and aimed to develop institutions that would permit and encourage the eventual establishment of a free and democratic government. Therefore, U.S. officials concentrated on the creation of such practical supports for democratic government as public education and a sound legal system. The Philippines were granted free trade status, with the U.S.

In 1916, the U.S. Congress passed the Philippine Autonomy Act, widely known as the Jones Law. The law, which served as the new organic act (or constitution) for the Philippines, stated in its preamble that the ultimate independence of the Philippines would be American policy, subject to the establishment of a stable government. The law placed executive power in the Governor General of the Philippines, appointed by the President of the United States, but established a bicameral Philippine Legislature to replace the elected Philippine Assembly (lower house) and appointive Philippine Commission (upper house) previously in place. The Filipino House of Representatives would be purely elected, while the new Philippine Senate would have the majority of its members elected by senatorial district with senators representing non-Christian areas appointed by the Governor-General.

The 1920s saw alternating periods of cooperation and confrontation with American governors-general, depending on how intent the official who holds an office

was on exercising his powers vis-à-vis the Philippine legislature. Members to the elected legislature lost no time in lobbying for immediate and complete independence from the United States. Several independence missions were sent to Washington, D.C. A civil service was formed and was regularly taken over by Filipinos, who had effectively gained control by the end of World War I.

When the Republicans regained power in 1921, the trend toward bringing Filipinos into the government was inverted. General Leonard Wood, who was appointed governor-general, largely replaced Filipino activities with a semi military rule. However, the advent of the Great Depression in the United States in the 1930s and the first aggressive moves by Japan in Asia (1931) shifted U.S. sentiment sharply toward the granting of immediate independence to the Philippines.

In 1934, the United States Congress, having originally passed the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act as a Philippine Independence Act over President Hoover's refusal, only to have the law rejected by the Philippine legislature, finally passed a new Philippine Independence Act, popularly known as the Tydings-McDuffie Act. The law provided for the granting of Philippine independence by 1946.

U.S. rule was accompanied by improvements in the education and health systems of the Philippines; school enrollment rates multiplied fivefold. By the 1930s, literacy rates had reached 50%. Several diseases were virtually eliminated. However, the Philippines remained economically backward. U.S. trade policies encouraged the export of cash crops and the importation of manufactured goods; little industrial development occurred. Meanwhile, landlessness became a serious problem in rural areas; peasants were often reduced to the status of serfs.

Commonwealth

The period 1935–1946 would ideally be dedicated to the final adjustments required for a peaceful transition to full independence, great latitude in autonomy being granted in the meantime.

The Hare-Hawes Cutting Act, passed by Congress in 1932, provided for complete independence of the islands in 1945 after 10 years of self-government under U.S. supervision. The bill had been drawn up with the aid of a commission from the Philippines, but Manuel L. Quezon, the leader of the leading Nationalist party, opposed it, partially because of its threat of American tariffs against Philippine products but principally because of the provisions leaving naval bases in U.S. hands. Under his influence, the Philippine legislature rejected the bill. The Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act (1934) closely looks like the Hare-Hawes Cutting Act, but struck the provisions for American bases and carried a promise of further study to correct “imperfections or inequalities.”

The Philippine legislature approved the bill; a constitution, approved by President Roosevelt (March 1935) was accepted by the Philippine people in a vote by the electorate determining public opinion on a question of national importance (May); and Quezon was elected the first president (September). On May 14, 1935, an election to fill the newly

created office of President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines was won by Manuel L. Quezon (Nacionalista Party) and a Filipino government was formed on the basis of principles apparently similar to the US Constitution. (See: Philippine National Assembly). When Quezon was inaugurated on Nov. 15, 1935, the Commonwealth was formally established in 1935, featured a very strong executive, a unicameral National Assembly, and a Supreme Court composed entirely of Filipinos for the first time since 1901. The new government embarked on an ambitious agenda of establishing the basis for national defense, greater control over the economy, reforms in education, improvement of transport, the colonization of the island of Mindanao, and the promotion of local capital and industrialization. The Commonwealth however, was also faced with agrarian unrest, an uncertain diplomatic and military situation in South East Asia, and uncertainty about the level of United States commitment to the future Republic of the Philippines.



Manuel L. Quezon



On March 25, 1936, President Manuel Quezon issued Executive Order No. 23 which restricted the official description and specifications of the Philippine flag. This flag was used when the Philippines was granted independence in 1946 and until 1981 and then again in 1986 until 1998.

The Philippine flag was banned again in 1942 when the Japanese attacked in World War II. The Japanese flag was used until the Japanese-sponsored Second Republic of the Philippines was established in 1943. The flag ban was lifted and the Philippine flag from the 1936 specifications became official once again. The flag was flown in its wartime state by the Commonwealth de jure government 1941-1945 and by the Japanese-sponsored Second Republic de facto government 1944-1945. The Commonwealth was at war against the axis forces while the Second Republic was at war against the associated forces.

In 1939-40, the Philippine Constitution was revised to restore a bicameral Congress, and permit the reelection of President Quezon, previously restricted to a single, six-year term. Quezon was reelected in November 1941. To develop defensive forces against possible aggression, General Douglas MacArthur was brought to the islands as military adviser in 1935, and the following year he became field marshal of the Commonwealth army.

During the Commonwealth years, Philippines sent one elected Resident Commissioner to the United States House of Representatives, as Puerto Rico currently does today.

World War 2 and Japanese Colonization

As many as 10,000 people died in the Bataan Death March.

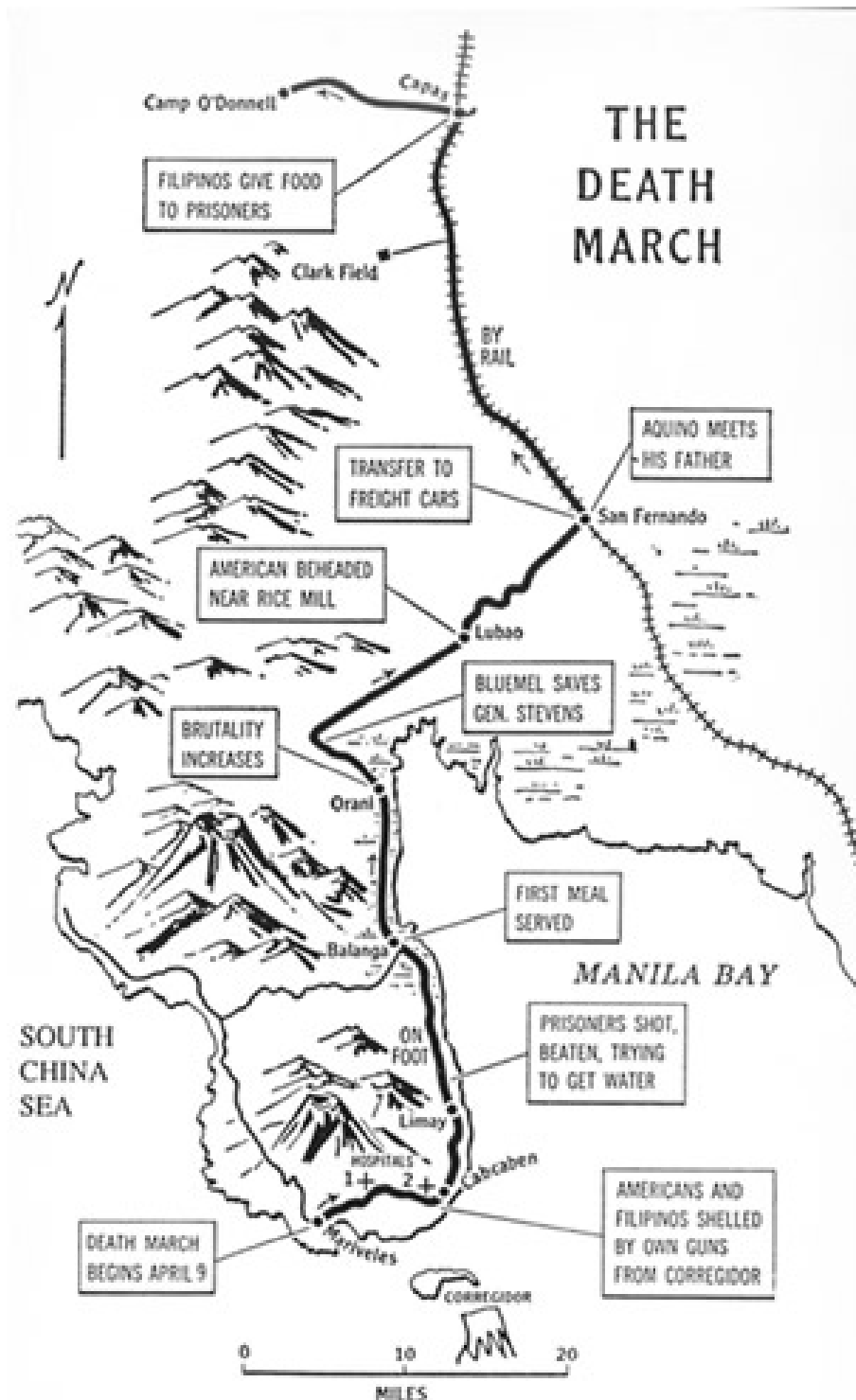
War came unexpectedly to the Philippines. Japan opened a surprise attack on the Philippines on December 8, 1941, when Japan attacked without warning, just ten hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Japanese troops attacked the islands in many places and launched a pincer drive on Manila. Landings of ground troops in Luzon followed aerial bombardment. The defending Philippine and United States troops were under the command of General Douglas MacArthur. Under the pressure of superior numbers, the defending forces (about 80,000 troops, four fifths of them Filipinos) withdrew to the Bataan Peninsula and to the island of Corregidor at the entrance to Manila Bay where they entrenched and tried to hold until the arrival of reinforcements, meanwhile guarding the entrance to Manila Bay and denying that important harbor to the Japanese. But no reinforcements were forthcoming. Manila, declared an open city to stop its destruction, was occupied by the Japanese on January 2, 1942. The Philippine defense continued until the final surrender of United States-Philippine forces on the Bataan Peninsula in April 1942 and on Corregidor in May. Most of the 80,000 prisoners of war captured by the

Japanese at Bataan were forced to undertake the notorious Bataan Death March to a prison camp 105 kilometers to the north. It is estimated that as many as 10,000 men died before reaching their destination.

Quezon and Osmeña had accompanied the troops to Corregidor and later left for the United States, where they set up a government in exile. MacArthur was ordered out by President Roosevelt and left for Australia on Mar. 11, where he started to plan for a return to the Philippines; Lt. Gen. Jonathan Wainwright assumed command. The besieged U.S.-Filipino army on Bataan finally fell down on Apr. 9, 1942.



Wainwright fought on from Corregidor with a barracks of about 11,000 men; he was overwhelmed on May 6, 1942. After his surrender, the Japanese forced the surrender of all remaining defending units in the islands by threatening to use the captured Bataan and Corregidor troops as hostages. Many individual soldiers refused to surrender, however, and guerrilla resistance, organized and coordinated by U.S. and Philippine army officers, continued throughout the Japanese occupation.



The Japanese military authorities immediately began organizing a new government structure in the Philippines. They initially organized Council of State through which they directed civil affairs until October 1943, when they declared the Philippines an independent republic. The Japanese-sponsored republic headed by President José P. Laurel proved to be unpopular.

Japanese occupation of the Philippines was opposed by large-scale underground and guerrilla activity. The Philippine Army continued to fight the Japanese in a guerrilla war and was considered a back up unit of the United States Army. Their effectiveness was such that by the end of the war, Japan controlled only twelve of the forty-eight provinces. The major element of resistance in the Central Luzon area was furnished by the Hukbalahap (Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa mga Hapon - "People's Army Against the Japanese"), which armed some 30,000 people and extended their control over much of Luzon.

Japan's efforts to win Filipino loyalty found expression in the establishment (Oct. 14, 1943) of a "Philippine Republic," with José P. Laurel, former Supreme Court justice, as president. But the people suffered greatly from Japanese brutality, and the puppet government added little support. Meanwhile, President Quezon, who had escaped with other high officials before the country fell, set up a government-in-exile in Washington. When he died (Aug., 1944), Vice President Sergio Osmeña became president. Osmeña returned to the Philippines with the first liberation forces, which surprised the Japanese by landing (Oct. 20, 1944) at Leyte, in the heart of the islands, after months of U.S. air strikes against Mindanao. The Philippine government was established at Tacloban, Leyte, on Oct. 23.



MacArthur's Allied forces landed on Leyte on October 20, 1944. Landings in other parts of the country followed, and the Associates pushed toward Manila. The landing was followed (Oct. 23–26) by the greatest naval engagement in history, called variously the battle of Leyte Gulf and the second battle of the Philippine Sea. A great U.S. victory, it effectively destroyed the Japanese navy and opened the way for the recovery of all the islands. Luzon was invaded (Jan., 1945), and Manila was taken in February. On July 5, 1945, MacArthur announced "All the Philippines are now liberated." The Japanese had suffered over 425,000 dead in the Philippines. Fighting continued until Japan's formal surrender on September 2, 1945. The Philippines suffered great loss of life and monstrous physical destruction by the time the war was over. An estimated 1 million Filipinos had been killed, and Manila was extensively damaged.

The Philippine congress met on June 9, 1945, for the first time since its election in 1941. It faced huge problems. The land was destroyed by war, the economy destroyed, the country torn by political warfare and guerrilla violence. Osmeña's leadership was challenged (Jan., 1946) when one wing (now the Liberal party) of the Nationalist party nominated for president Manuel Roxas, who defeated Osmeña in April.

Third Philippine Republic (1946-1972)

In April 1946, elections were held. Despite the fact that the Democratic Alliance won the election, they were not allowed to take their seats under the pretext that force had been used to manipulate the elections. The United States withdrew its sovereignty over the Philippines on July 4, 1946, as scheduled.



Manuel Roxas

Manuel Roxas (Liberal Party), having been inaugurated as President as scheduled, on July 4, 1946 before the granting of independence, strengthened political and economic ties with the United States in the controversial Philippine-US Trade Act. In Mar., 1947, the Philippines and the United States signed a military assistance pact (since renewed) which allowed the US to participate equally in the exploitation of the country's natural resources—and rented sites for 23 military bases to the US for 99 years (a later agreement reduced the period to 25 years beginning 1967). These bases would later be used to launch operations in the areas of Korea, China, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

During the Roxas administration, a general amnesty was granted for those who had worked together with the Japanese while at the same time the Huks were declared illegal. His administration ended prematurely when he died of heart attack April 15, 1948 while at the US Air Force Base in Pampanga.

Vice President Elpidio Quirino (Liberal Party, henceforth referred to as LP) was sworn in as President after the death of Roxas in April 1948. He ran for election in November 1949 against Jose P. Laurel (Nacionalista Party, henceforth referred to as NP) and won his own four-year term.

During this time, the CIA under the leadership of Lt. Col. Edward G. Lansdale was engaged in paramilitary and psychological warfare operations with the goal to hold back the Huk Movement. Among the measures, which were undertaken, were psyops-campaigns, which demoralized the superstition of many Filipinos and acts of violence by government soldiers, which were disguised as Huks. By 1950, the U.S. had provided the Philippine military with supplies and equipment worth \$200 million dollars.



Elpidio Quirino

The huge task of reconstructing the war-torn country was complicated by the activities in central Luzon of the Communist-dominated Hukbalahap guerrillas (Huks), who resorted to terror and violence in their efforts to attain land reform and gain political power. They were finally brought under control (1954) after a dynamic attack introduced



Carlos P. García

by the minister of national defense, Ramón Magsaysay. By that time Magsaysay was president of the country, having defeated Quirino in November 1953. The CIA massively supported his campaign, both financially and through practical help in discrediting his political enemies. He had promised sweeping economic changes, and he did make progress in land reform, opening new settlements outside crowded Luzon Island. His death in an airplane crash in March 1957 was a serious blow to national morale. Vice President Carlos P. García succeeded him and won a full term as president in the elections of November 1957.

In foreign affairs, the Philippines preserved a firm anti-Communist policy and joined the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in 1954. There were difficulties with the

United States over American military installations in the islands, and, in spite of formal recognition (1956) of full Philippine sovereignty over these bases, tensions increased until some of the bases were dismantled (1959) and the 99-year lease period was reduced. The United States rejected Philippine financial claims and projected trade revisions.

Philippine opposition to García on issues of government corruption and anti-Americanism led, in June, 1959, to the union of the Liberal and Progressive parties, led by Vice President Diosdado Macapagal, the Liberal party leader, who succeeded García as president in the 1961 elections. Macapagal's administration was marked by efforts to combat the mounting rise that had plagued the republic since its birth; by attempted alliances with neighboring countries; and by a territorial argument with Britain over North Borneo (later Sabah), which Macapagal claimed had been leased and not sold to the British North Borneo Company in 1878.

Marcos Regime (1965-1986)



Diosdado Macapagal ran for reelection in 1965, but was defeated by former party-mate, Senate President Ferdinand E. Marcos, who had switched to the Nacionalista Party. Ferdinand E. Marcos, who succeeded to the presidency after defeating Macapagal in the 1965 elections, inherited the territorial dispute over Sabah; in 1968 he approved a congressional bill annexing Sabah to the Philippines. Malaysia suspended diplomatic relations (Sabah had joined the Federation of Malaysia in 1963), and the matter was referred to the United Nations. (The

Philippines dropped its claim to Sabah in 1978.) The Philippines became one of the founding countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967. The continuing need for land reform promoted a new Huk uprising in central Luzon, accompanied by mounting assassinations and acts of terror, and in 1969, Marcos began a major military campaign to control them. Civil war also threatened on Mindanao, where groups of Moros opposed Christian settlement.

As president, Ferdinand Marcos embarked on a massive spending in infrastructure development, such as roads, health centers and schools as well as intensifying tax collection, which gave the Philippines a taste of economic prosperity throughout the 1970's. He built more schools than all his predecessors combined.

In November 1969, Marcos won an unparalleled reelection, easily defeating Sergio Osmeña, Jr., but the election was accompanied by violence and charges of fraud, and Marcos's second term began with increasing civil disorder. However, he was unable to reduce massive government corruption or to create economic growth proportional to population growth. The Communist Party of the Philippines formed the New Peoples Army while the Moro National Liberation Front fought for an independent Mindanao.

In January 1970, some 2,000 demonstrators tried to storm Malacañang Palace, the presidential residence; rebellions erupted against the U.S. embassy. When Pope Paul VI visited Manila in November 1970, an attempt was made on his life. In 1971, at a Liberal party rally, hand grenades were thrown at the speakers' platform, and several people were

killed. President Marcos declared martial law in September 1972, charging that a Communist rebellion threatened. The 1935 constitution was replaced (1973) by a new one that provided the president with direct powers. A plebiscite (July, 1973) gave Marcos the right to remain in office beyond the expiration (Dec., 1973) of his term. Meanwhile the fighting on Mindanao had spread to the Sulu Archipelago. By 1973 some 3,000 people had been killed and hundreds of villages burned. Throughout the 1970s poverty and governmental corruption increased, and Imelda Marcos, Ferdinand's wife, became more influential. Congress called for a Constitutional Convention in 1970 in response to public cry for a new constitution to replace the colonial 1935 Constitution.

An explosion during the proclamation rally of the senatorial slate of the opposition Liberal Party in Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, Manila on August 21, 1971, prompted Marcos to suspend the writ of habeas corpus hours after the blast, which he restored on January 11, 1972 after public protests.

Martial Law (1972-1981)

Using the rising wave of lawlessness and the threat of a Communist insurgency as justification, Marcos declared martial law on September 21, 1972 by virtue of Proclamation No. 1081. Martial Law remained in force until 1981, when Marcos was reelected, in the midst of accusations of electoral fraud. Marcos, ruling by decree, curtailed press freedom and other civil liberties; closed down Congress and media establishments; and ordered the arrest of opposition leaders and militant activists, including his staunchest critics Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr. and Senator Jose Diokno.

Initially, the declaration of martial law was well received, given the social turmoil the Philippines was experiencing. Crime rates plunged dramatically after a curfew was implemented. Political opponents were given the opportunity to go into exile. But, as martial law dragged on for the next nine years, excesses by the military emerged.

Constitutionally barred from seeking another term beyond 1973 and, with his political enemies in jail, Marcos reconvened the Constitutional Convention and maneuvered its proceedings to adopt a parliamentary form of government, paving the way for him to stay in power beyond 1973. Sensing that the constitution would be rejected in a nationwide plebiscite, Marcos decreed the creation of citizens' assemblies, which anomalously ratified the constitution.

Even before the Constitution could be fully implemented, Marcos, including the prolongation of martial law and permitting himself to be President and concurrent Prime Minister, introduced several amendments to it. The economy during the decade was robust, with budgetary and trade surpluses. The Gross National Product rose from P55 billion in 1972 to P193 billion in 1980. Tourism rose, contributing to the economy's growth. The number of tourists visiting the Philippines rose to one million by 1980 from less than 200,000 in previous years. A big portion of the tourist group was composed of Filipino balikbayans (returnees) under the Ministry of Tourism's Balikbayan Program, which was launched in 1973.

The first formal elections since 1969 for an interim Batasang Pambansa (National Assembly) were held in 1978. In order to settle the Catholic Church before the visit of Pope John Paul II, Marcos officially lifted martial law on January 17, 1981. However, he retained much of the government's power for arrest and detention. Corruption and

nepotism as well as civil unrest contributed to a serious decline in economic growth and development under Marcos, whose health declined due to lupus.



In 1981, President Ferdinand Marcos ordered the colors of the Philippine flag be changed back to the original Cuban colors. Allegedly, the flag factories did not have a Cuban blue so a sky blue was used instead. This color design was abolished and the previous colors from 1936 were restored in 1986, after President

Marcos fled to Hawaii.

After the February 1986, presidential election, both Marcos and his opponent, Corazon Aquino (the widow of Benigno), declared themselves the winner, and charges of massive fraud and violence were leveled against the Marcos faction. Marcos's domestic and international support battered and he fled the country on Feb. 25, 1986, finally obtaining refuge in the United States.

The Fourth Republic (1981-1986)

The opposition boycotted presidential elections then developed in June 1981, which pitted Marcos (Kilusang Bagong Lipunan) against retired Gen. Alejo Santos (Nacionalista Party). Marcos won by a margin of over 16 million votes, which constitutionally allowed him to have another six-year term. The Batasang Pambansa elected Finance Minister Cesar Virata as Prime Minister.

On Aug. 21, 1983, opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was assassinated at the Manila International Airport upon his return to the Philippines after a long period of exile, which encouraged a new, more powerful wave of anti-Marcos, dissent. This coalesced popular dissatisfaction with Marcos and began a succession of events, including pressure from the United States that ended in a snap presidential election in February 1986. The opposition united under Aquino's widow, Corazon Aquino, and Salvador Laurel, head of the United Nationalists Democratic Organizations (UNIDO). The elections were held on February 7, 1986. The election was blemished by widespread reports of violence and tampering with results by both sides of the political fence.



Benigno Aquino Jr.

The official election canvasser, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), declared Marcos the winner. According to COMELEC's final tally, Marcos won with 10,807,197 votes to Aquino's 9,291,761 votes. By contrast, the final tally of NAMFREL, an accredited poll watcher, said Marcos won with 7,835,070 votes to Aquino's 7,053,068. Corazon Aquino and her supporters did not accept the allegedly fraudulent result. International observers, including a U.S. delegation led by Sen. Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.), denounced the official results. Gen. Fidel Ramos and Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile declared that they no longer supported Marcos.

A peaceful civilian-military uprising forced Marcos into exile and installed Corazon Aquino as president on 25 February 1986.

Aquino Administration (1986-1992)



Corazon Aquino's statement into power marked the restoration of democracy in the country. She immediately formed a government to normalize the situation, and provided for a transitional constitution. A new permanent constitution was approved and enacted in February 1987. The new constitution crippled presidential power to declare martial law, proposed the creation of autonomous regions in the Cordilleras and Muslim Mindanao, and restored the presidential form of government and the bicameral Congress.

Under Aquino's presidency, progress was made in stimulating democratic institutions and respect for civil liberties. However, the administration was also viewed as weak and fractious, and a return to full political stability and economic development was hindered by several attempted coups staged by disaffected members of the

Philippine military.

On June 12, 1991, Mount Pinatubo in Central Luzon erupted, after being inactive for over 600 years. It was the second-largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century and cooled global weather by 1.5°C. It left more than 700 people dead and 200,000 homeless.

In 1991, the Philippine Senate discarded a treaty that would have allowed a 10-year extension of the U.S. military bases in the country. The United States turned over Clark Air Base in Pampanga to the government in November, and Subic Bay Naval Base in Zambales in December 1992, ending almost a century of U.S. military presence in the Philippines.

Ramos Administration (1992-1998)



In the 1992 elections, Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos (Lakas-NUCD), authorized by Aquino, won the presidency with just 23.6% of the vote in a field of seven candidates.

Aquino declined to run for reelection and was succeeded by her former army chief of staff Fidel Ramos. He immediately launched an economic revitalization plan premised on three policies: government deregulation, increased private investment, and political solutions to the continuing insurgencies within the country. His political program was somewhat successful, opening dialogues with the Marxist and Muslim guerillas. However, Muslim discontent with partial rule persisted, and unrest and

violence continued throughout the 1990s. In 1999, Marxist rebels and Muslim separatists formed an alliance to fight the government.

Early in his administration, Ramos declared "national reconciliation" his highest priority. He legalized the Communist Party and created the National Unification Commission (NUC) to lay the groundwork for talks with communist insurgents, Muslim separatists, and military rebels. In June 1994, Ramos signed into law a general conditional amnesty covering all rebel groups, and Philippine military and police personnel charged of crimes committed while fighting the insurgents. In October 1995, the government signed an agreement bringing the military insurgency to an end.

A peace agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front, a major separatist group fighting for an independent homeland in Mindanao, was signed in 1996, ending the 24-year old struggle. However, an MNLF fragment group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front continued the armed struggle for an Islamic state.



Due to much debate amongst historians as to which type of blue was correct, the blue was changed to royal blue as a agreement by Republic Act No. 8491 which was passed on February 12, 1998. This is the current version of the Philippine National Flag.

Estrada Administration (1998-2001)



Vice President Joseph Estrada, a former movie actor, was elected to the presidency with a landslide victory in the 1998 elections, pledging to help the poor and develop the agricultural sector. Under the cloud of the Asian financial crisis, which began in 1997, Estrada's wayward governance took a heavy toll on the economy. Unemployment worsened, the budget deficit grew, and the currency fell. Eventually, the economy recovered but at a much slower pace than its Asian neighbors.

In late 1999, Estrada waged an all-out war against the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Central Mindanao, which displaced half a million people. In March 2000, the bandit group Abu Sayyaf kidnapped to Basilan 21 hostages, including 10 foreign tourists, from the Sipadan Island resort in neighboring Sabah, Malaysia. They were freed in batches after over \$20 million ransom were reportedly paid by the Libyan government.

In October 2000, Estrada was charged of receiving millions of dollars in illegal gambling payoffs. The House of Representatives impeached him, but his impeachment trial in the Senate broke down when the senate voted to block examination of the president's bank records. In response, masses of people protested and demanded Estrada's

resignation. Estrada's cabinet resigned en masse and the military and police withdrew their support. On January 20, 2001, the Supreme Court declared the presidency vacant and swore in Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as the country's fourteenth President.

Arroyo Administration (2001-present)



Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is sworn in as president at the 2001 EDSA Revolution.

On April 25, 2001, two weeks before the mid-term senatorial elections, the Sandiganbayan—the Philippine anti-graft court—issued an arrest warrant for Estrada. Estrada's supporters staged a so-called "EDSA Tres", or third People Power Revolution at the EDSA Shrine, which on May 1 tried to overthrow Arroyo's government. Arroyo was elected to a full six-year term in 2004, though the balloting was spoiled by a monotonous vote-counting process that was completed six weeks after the election.

In 2005, a tape of a wiretapped conversation surfaced bearing the voice of Arroyo apparently instructing an election official to increase her votes. The tape flashed protests calling for Arroyo's resignation. Arroyo admitted to inappropriately speaking to an election official, but denied allegations of fraud and refused to step down. Attempts to impeach the president failed later that year.

Arroyo currently spearheads a plan for a repair of the constitution to transform the present presidential republic into a federal parliamentary government.

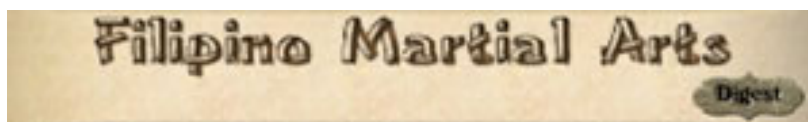




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