

The story of philippine national anthem



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Philippine national anthem was composed by Julian Felipe in Spanish. The lone surviving revolutionary member of the “13 Martyrs of Cavite”, whose life was spared from the firing squad because of illness. Originally written as incidental music, it did not have words when it was adopted as the National Anthem of the Philippines. When General Aguinaldo came back from Hong Kong in June 5, 1898, he brought with him a musical piece composed by another Filipino. Historical accounts tell of General Emilio Aguinaldo being visited by a young pianist and composer, a Caviteño by the name of Julian Felipe. He brought with him a letter written by General Mariano Trias, introducing him as a good musician and composer. Felipe was then asked to play a musical composition, Hymno de Balintawak. The general found it nice but he wanted music that was serious, majestic and patriotic.

General Aguinaldo was then looking for a composition that embodies the noble ideals of the Filipino, something that would inspire the people to fight against foreign invaders. He was not quite satisfied with the composition although it sounded good. The next day, Aguinaldo told Felipe, "It is not what I'm looking for. I want something more stirring and majestic". This was a week before the scheduled proclamation of the Philippine independence in Kawit. Felipe labored on the new composition during the next six days and nights. On the following Saturday, six days after, June 11, 1898, Julian Felipe brought the rough score to the residence of Aguinaldo and in the presence of General Trias, Baldomero and other revolutionary leaders, played the music to the appreciation of his audience who promptly titled it “Marcha Nacional Filipinas”.

As historical books narrated it, when General Aguinaldo proclaimed the country's independence on June 12, 1898, the "soul-inspiring masterpiece without lyrics" was played by the music band of San Francisco de Malabon (now General Trias, Cavite), while the Filipino flag (made in Hongkong, red, white and blue with the sun shining through) was being hoisted outside the central window of the Aguinaldo ancestral home which still stands now in Kawit, Cavite. Being a Marcha, no one sang it, because it had no wordings then. The music was a beautiful and deathless patriotic hymn which awed the audience.

For more than a year the anthem remained without words. Towards the end of August of 1899, a young poet-soldier named Jose Palma the brother of Rafael Palma and member of the editorial staff of *La Independencia*, wrote the Spanish lyrics to suit the hymn, "Filipinas" for the ardent patriotism and fighting spirit of the people. wrote the poem titled "Filipinas". This poem expressed in elegant Spanish verses the ardent patriotism and fighting spirit of the Filipino people. During the 1920s, with the repeal of the Flag Law which banned the use of all Filipino national symbols, the American colonial government decided to translate the national hymn from Spanish to English. The first translation was written around that time by Paz Marquez Benitez of the University of the Philippines, who was also a famous poet during that time.

The most popular translation, called the "Philippine Hymn", was written by Senator Camilo Osias and an American, Mary A. Lane. The "Philippine Hymn" was legalized by an act of the Philippine Congress in 1938. In 1943, the poets Julian Cruz Balmaceda and Ildefonso Santos translated it into Tagalog.

In 1956, a new version penned by the Surian ng Wikang Pambansa (Institute of National Language) was adopted. Entitled "Lupang Hinirang," it was declared by President Ramon Magsaysay on May 26, 1956, as the official Tagalog version of the Philippine National Anthem. Minor revisions were made in 1966, and it is this final version which is in use today. The Filipino lyrics have been confirmed by a new national symbols law in 1998, but not the English and Spanish words.

The anthem is an indestructible reminder of the people's nationhood and oneness as a nation. It is not just a battle song of revolution, it is a genuine unifying force forged in history, in blood and in faith. It is a song composed by Julian Felipe, who fought with music as well as a sword. It is a solemn and dignified material tune that stirs the people with patriotic fervor and racial pride. It is not usual for Filipinos abroad to shed tears while singing or listening to the Philippine National Anthem. A timeless musical legacy is now our national treasure. It speaks of our beginnings, without which we will not be what we are now. May we never forget to tell our children one of the most beautiful stories in the history of our country.