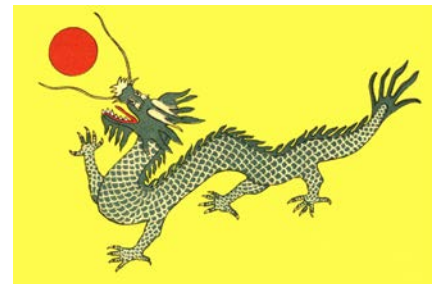




One of the earliest known records of the use of flags is circa 1046 BC, when Emperor Zhou Wuwang had a white flag carried before him, and another early depiction of the use of flags is a tomb carving from the 1st Century.[5] However, it is unclear when the dragon flag was first used in China. Aldo Ziggio [6] suggests that the dragon flag could date from as early as 221 BC with the unification of China under the First Qin Emperor. The celestial dragon was a Chinese Imperial symbol, though there is little documentation of its use on flags. Yellow was the colour associated with the Emperor since antiquity.

Prior to the encroachment of the European powers, China did not have a national flag. The Emperor used a flag and the army and navy used various coloured flags. [7]



At European insistence, flags were adopted for the Chinese navy in 1862. The ensign was a green flag with a yellow saltire with a blue dragon [8] on a small triangular pennant embroidered onto the centre.[9] The Emperor's flag had a dragon embroidered in gold on a yellow flag with flammules. The dragon flag was also authorised for use by Chinese merchant ships and as a civil flag on land. In 1890 the shape was made rectangular with plain edges.

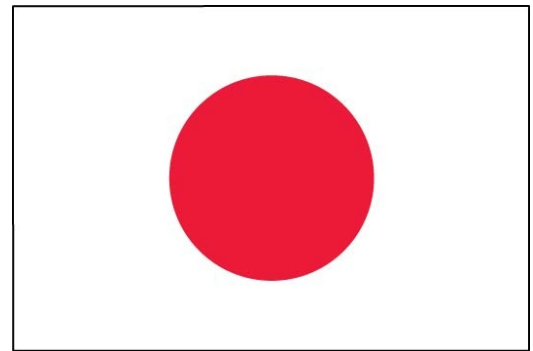


Two flags for Japan were illustrated by Le Gras. The first flag was identified as that of the Emperor, bearing the imperial seal. [10] The second flag was described as flying from the back of a junk to indicate the presence of a high official. This second flag represented the Tokugawa Shogunate, with the black and white triband (called *Nakagura*) being the original Tokugawa family *mon*.

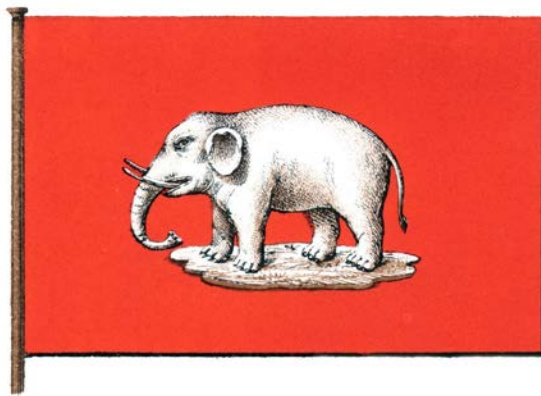
As with China, prior to the opening to foreign trade, Japan had little need of flags to represent the nation. To the extent that flags were used, they represented personal authority and identity, not the nation-state. The opening of Japan to foreign trade demonstrated the need for a national flag.



Factional rivalries between supporters of the Shogunate and the Emperor focused on the choice of flag for use by ships travelling beyond Japanese waters. The decree of 5 August 1854 was a compromise, with the Sun Disk flag (the *Hinomaru*) made the ensign for large ships with the *Nakagura* emblazoned on the main sail. Use of the *Nakagura* as a sail emblem ended in 1863 [11] and following the abolition of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the *Hinomaru* was officially made the naval ensign and merchant flag for all Japanese shipping in 1870.[12]

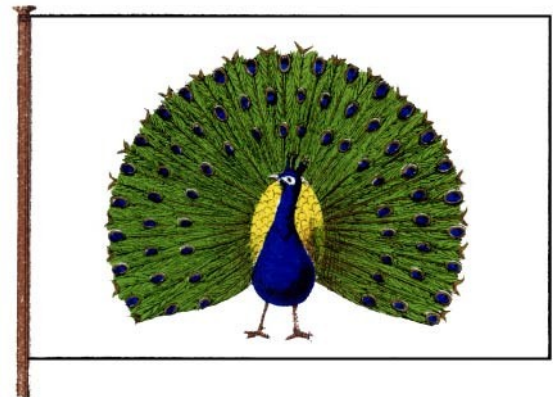


Others at this Congress will be better able than I to comment on the history and meaning of the *Hinomaru*; all that I would note is that it was not created in 1854; its use can be documented as early as the 16th Century and its design is a graphical representation of the nation's name of *Nippon* ("the sun's origin").



A third Asian country included in Le Gras' book was Siam. This was not the first flag of Siam, which initially used a plain red flag.[13] In 1855, King Rama IV added an elephant in order to make a more distinctive merchant and civil flag. [14] The colour red is claimed to be that of the Thai aristocracy [15] The rare white elephant had been a prized component of the Thai royal herd since the 15th Century, esteemed as a symbol of the greatness of the monarch.

The Kingdom of Burma flag showed a green peacock, its plumage in full display, on a white field. This version uses natural colours for the peacock, though other sources show a more stylised drawing in red, sometimes on a red disk. It is unclear when this peacock flag was first used, with the earliest identified use being 1826, after the first Anglo-Burmese War.[16] In 1885 the British invaded Upper Burma, exiled King Thibaw and incorporated Burma into British India as a province.



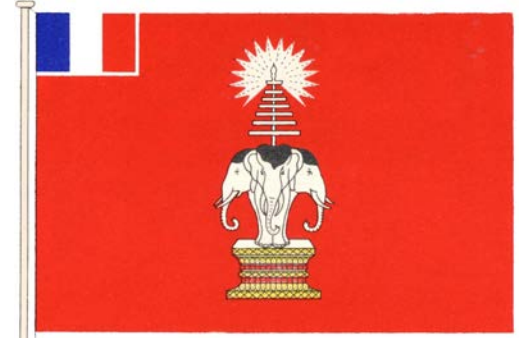
The Chosŏn Dynasty ruled Korea from 1392 and maintained an isolationist policy, but by 1882 trade and diplomatic contacts created the need for a flag. The origin of the Korean flag is attributed to Prince Pak Yeong-hyo, who created a flag with the *t'aegeuk* circle and four *palgwae* trigrams for his use as ambassador to Japan.[17] The design symbolises the Taoist concept of yin and yang and the four trigrams symbolise the four universal elements: heaven, earth,

fire and water.[18] However, the flag was relatively short-lived, because Korea became a protectorate of Japan in 1905 following the Russo-Japanese War and it was annexed in 1910.



A flag for the Kingdom of Cambodia was created sometime after the establishment of a French protectorate in 1863. With a blue border around a red field, the flag included in the centre a simplified drawing of a temple, possibly intended to be representative of Angkor Wat. The temple drawing changed over time and progressively came to more clearly look like Angkor Wat.

Laos can trace its history to 1353 as the land of a million elephants and white parasol. However by 1893 it had become a French protectorate with limited autonomy as the Kingdom of Luang Phrabang, using its traditional flag [19]: red with a three-headed elephant (the *Erawan*) on a pedestal and surmounted by a parasol, though with the addition of a small canton of the French tricolour. The *Erawan* formed part of the traditional Royal Arms of Siam [20], whilst the other elements have Buddhist symbolism.



Vietnam is another ancient nation with the traditional date of independence being 939, but with several extended periods of division and foreign control. The nation was reunified with the establishment of the Nguyễn Dynasty in 1802. The French military captured Saigon in 1858 and progressively expanded their control until by 1885 they controlled the whole country. Central and Northern Vietnam were allowed to remain nominally under the control of the Nguyễn Emperors as the protectorates of Annam and Tonkin, whilst the South was made the colony of Cochinchina.[21]



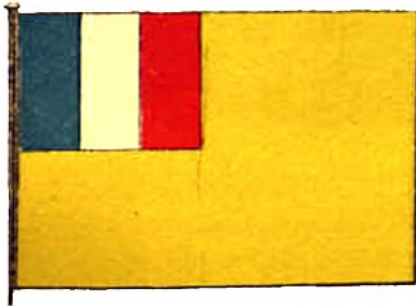
The flag of Vietnam in the 19th Century appears to have been yellow, with a blue wolf-teeth border, or more likely a border of blue flammulets.[22] Another flag that is reported to have been used in 1878 is a yellow flag with the words “Dai Nam” written in red in Chinese Han characters.[23] Both yellow flags reflected Vietnam’s status as a vassal state of China.

The Philippines had been under Spanish colonial control since 1565, but in the southern island of Mindanao, the Muslim sultanate of Sulu retained its sovereignty until 1878 and the treaty with the Spanish Crown included the privilege to fly its own flag, though there were many variants.[24]



Colonialism

Elsewhere in Asia, colonialism was in full rule by 1859. The colonial authorities in India and the Netherlands East Indies allowed a large number of princely states to continue to exist with varying degrees of autonomy, many of which had flags, but it is beyond the scope of this paper to consider them. Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Russia did not permit the maintenance of any local political status and there was no recognition of local identity through flags or other emblems.[25]



The French Union of Indo-China was established in 1887, combining Annam, Tonkin and Cochinchina with Cambodia, and later Laos. A yellow flag with the French tricolour in the canton became the flag of the Union, though individual flags continued for the protectorates within the Union. Later the size of the French flag was reduced.[26]



Emperor Khai Dinh of Annam adopted a new flag in 1920, which consisted of a horizontal triband of yellow and red unequal stripes. The meaning of the design is inferred by its name: the "Dragons of Annam" flag.[27]

The British established an extensive system of colonial badges to create flags for government vessels and the Governors, and unofficial flags for use on land by its colonies.[28]

A total of 15 territories in Asia had British colonial badges and a further 12 badges were created for use by the Indian princely states with a maritime border.[29] Many these badges are familiar to vexillologists, so I will limit my comments to only a few observations.

The first colony to acquire a colonial badge was Hong Kong in 1870.[30] British authorities required that each colony use the local part of the colony's seal as the flag badge, even where that design was unsuitable for use on a flag.



of





The colonial seal of Ceylon was so nondescript that the Governor proposed a badge showing an elephant in front of a *Dagoba*, a Buddhist monument.[31] The badge of British North Borneo, with its British lion, was an example of many of the colonial badges that sought to represent the vice-regal authority of the Governor, rather than any local identity.



Liu Kung Tau 1898



Weiheiwei 1902



Burma 1939



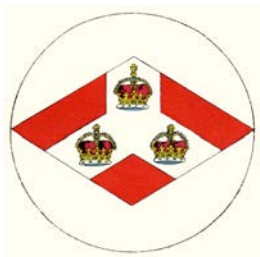
British North Borneo
1948

Weiheiwei was a treaty port in Shandong province in northern China leased to Britain from 1898 until 1930. Initially it was the Royal Navy base of Liu Kung Tau with its own dragon badge. The birds on the Weiheiwei badge are a male and female Mandarin duck. When Burma was established as a separate colony in 1939 the badge adopted was a peacock, the same emblem as the former Kingdom.



British India was a founding member of the League of Nations and it participated in the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp, though there was only a limited form of representative self-government. A red ensign with a Star of India badge.[32] was used to represent British India.

In Malaya, the Straits Settlements colony was established in 1867 to administer the British territories of Singapore, Penang and Malacca. The badge with its three crowns is a clear allusion to the three crown colonies, whilst the arrangement is approximately geographic. The Straits Settlements was dissolved in 1946 and separate colonial badges were created for its components.



Straits Settlements
1874



Singapore 1948



Penang 1949



Malacca 1951



Four of the Malay sultanates were organised into the Federated Malay States in 1896, whilst the five other sultanates remained as separate protectorates of Britain.[33] A flag combining the colours of the flags of the member states was created, with the addition of a leaping tiger.

the White Rajah. flag with a cross divided changed in 1870 to black added in the centre.



The British trader, James Brooke became Sultan of Sarawak in 1841: Brooke adopted in 1848 a yellow vertically blue and red, which and red, when a small crown was



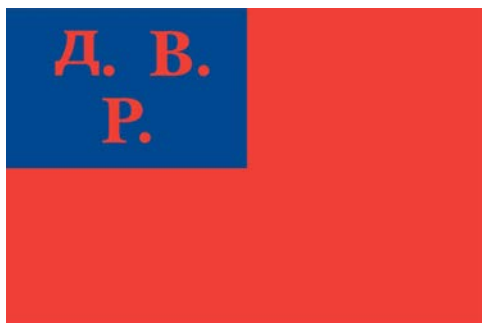
protectorate in 1887 and there traditional flag.[35]



A British protectorate was established over the Sultanate of Brunei in 1888 and a yellow flag with unequal white and black diagonal stripes was adopted in 1906.[34] The Maldives became a British were several variations on its

Siberia and Mongolia

Siberia is one part of Asia that is often overlooked. By the mid-17th Century, Siberia was under the control of Russia. A Siberian National Banner was adopted in August 1917 as part of attempts to obtain autonomy. White was for the Siberian snow and green for the Siberian *taiga* (forests).[36]



The Bolsheviks established the Far Eastern Republic in April 1920 as a nominally independent republic, though it was absorbed into Russia in 1922.

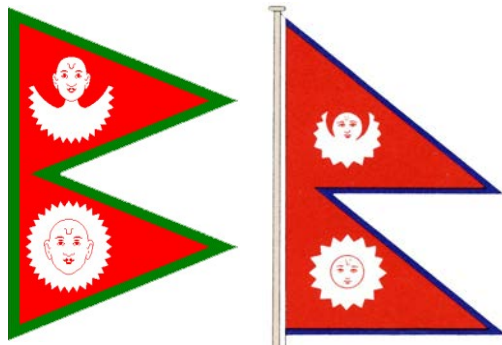


Tannu Tuva broke away from Chinese rule in 1913, retaining its nominal independence until its incorporation into the USSR in 1944. During this period Tannu Tuva had a number of flags ranging from a blue flag with a traditional Buddhist *Khorlo* emblem to red banners bearing the Tuva arms.[37]

In 1911, the Buddhist spiritual leader of Mongolia, the *Bogd Gegeen* declared independence as the Bogd Khan State. Except for the period 1921-1924, the various Mongolian flags have incorporated the ancient *soyombo*, though in its earliest usage the shape of the flag also reinforced its Buddhist and Chinese origins.[38]

Tibet and Nepal

Tibet declared its independence from China in October 1912, adopting a flag featuring two snow lions, twelve alternating red and blue rays emanating from a sun and other Tibetan and Buddhist emblems.[39] The status of an earlier flag showing only one snow lion is unclear. China invaded Tibet in 1950 and in 1959 the Dalai Lama was forced to flee to India.



The earliest reported flag for Nepal dates from 1928. This flag is similar to the current flag except that the border was green and it included faces on the crescent and sun emblems. By 1939 the border had changed to blue, still with faces.[40]

Japanese Expansion and War

In addition to European colonialism, Asia experienced the military expansion of Japan.

Following the Meiji Restoration, Japan undertook a rapid modernisation. Japan consolidated its control of Hokkaidō in 1869 by suppressing the short-lived rebellion of former Tokugawa retainers, who had declared independence as the Republic of Ezo. Its chrysanthemum flag is now only a footnote of history, though there is an echo in the modern flag of Hokkaidō.



The Ryūkyū Kingdom had been a tributary state of both China and Japan until 1879 when it was annexed by Japan. The flag of the Sho Dynasty featured a *mitsudomoe* (a circular *mon* of three *tomoe* - spheres with a flowing curved tail).[41]

As a consequence of the First Sino-Japanese War, China was obliged to transfer Taiwan to Japan.[42] However the local Chinese sought to resist and proclaimed the Republic of Formosa on 25 May 1885. Five days later, the Japanese army invaded Taiwan and after six months, the resistance ended. Another short-lived flag.

Japanese hegemony over Korea had been confirmed by victory in its war with Russia in 1905 and the Japanese navy captured the German colonies in the Northern Pacific in 1914.[43]



Japan invaded Manchuria in 1932, where it established the puppet state of Manchukuo. The design of its flag combined the Chinese imperial yellow with a canton of four stripes.



Another puppet state, Mengjiang was established in Inner Mongolia in 1937. Its flag combined the colours of the Han Chinese, Mongols, and Japanese.[44]

Japan and China continued to fight intermittently in various “incidents” until 1937 when full-scale war began. On 8th December 1941 Japan launched naval attacks on Pearl Harbor and attacked and occupied all the major European colonies in Asia, except India.[45]

Whilst Western history focuses on the island hopping from Guadalcanal to Iwo Jima, ending in two terrible bombs; the long term effects of Japan’s Greater East Asia War [46] was not in the Pacific Theatre, but in the consequences of Japan’s military occupation of much of Asia. Vexillologically, the slow process of the Japanese military actually handing over control to the Allied military forces, created significant opportunities for Asian nationalists.[47]

Asian Nationalism



During the war Japanese military avoided direct rule and established a number of puppet governments.

In March 1945, Emperor Bảo Đại proclaimed the restoration of independence as the Empire of Việt Nam. A new national flag was selected on 12 June 1945: the traditional imperial yellow field, with three red stripes, with the central stripe broken to form the trigram *Li*, from the *I Ching*, meaning “Fire” and “South”.

When Japan surrendered, power was handed to Hồ Chí Minh and the Việt Minh, with its flag being a yellow star on a red field. The Việt Minh began a long guerrilla war against the French that, following their defeat at the Battle of Điện Biên Phủ, divided Vietnam at the 17th Parallel, with control of the north being transferred to the communist government in October 1954.



The shape of the star was changed in November 1955 to its current form.



In the south, France had recognised an autonomous Republic of Cochinchina in June 1946 within the French Union. The colour of the stripes was altered to blue and the central stripe was joined, changing the trigram to *Qian* (“Heaven”). On 2 June 1948, the red colour of the stripes was restored and a year later the State of Vietnam was established unifying all of the south. [48]



From 1957, communist cadres, the Việt cộng, began an insurgency in the south, which expanded into full scale war.[49] On 8 June 1969 the Việt cộng adopted a flag: similar to North Vietnam, but with the field divided red over light blue. The Vietnam War ended on 30 April 1975 and in 1976 the country was formally unified, using the flag of the north, unchanged.



In Cambodia, King Norodom Sihanouk proclaimed the restoration of independence in March 1945 [50], but French control was restored in October 1945 and it was not until December 1954 that the French recognised independence. The Cambodian flag was altered on 20 October 1948 to its current form.

A similar situation occurred in Laos. On 8 April 1945 King Sisavang Vong, under Japanese pressure, proclaimed an end to the French protectorate of Luang Prabang. Due to opposition, the French colonial administration took 17 months to be restored, becoming the French associated state of Laos in July 1949; with independence being recognised by France in July 1954.[51]



The French flag was removed from the Lao flag during its brief period of attempted independence in 1945-46. On 11 May 1947, when a constitution was adopted, the flag was revised – dropping the French flag and re-drawing the elephant emblem. The revised emblem altered the symbol from the three-headed *Erawan* to three elephants sharing a stylised pedestal. This change appears to have been to better symbolise the union of the three former kingdoms that were now united into a single Laos and to reduce the overtly Buddhist elements.

During the war, some of the Malay sultans cooperated with the Japanese, though there was a Chinese communist-led resistance movement, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA). Whilst predominantly Chinese, it advocated multiracial unity as symbolised by its three yellow stars on a red flag.[52] The MPAJA was able to take control of much of the countryside after the surrender of Japan until the restoration of British control in September 1945.



A similar power vacuum occurred in Indonesia after the collapse of Japanese authority. Sukarno, with Japanese agreement, proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 1945, with effective control over most of Sumatra and about half of Java. The flag adopted was a bicolor of red over white (*Merah-Putih*), which had been first used in 1922 by Javanese students in the Netherlands.[53] Allied forces occupied Batavia in late September 1945, but the republican militias resisted the return of European colonialism and a guerrilla war ensued. The

Netherlands bowed to international diplomacy and granted independence to Indonesia on 27 December 1949. The Indonesian flag remained unchanged.



The United States began the process of decolonisation in the Philippines in March 1935 with the inauguration of the Commonwealth of the Philippines, using the flag that had originally been adopted by the Philippine Republic on 12 June 1898, when independence was first proclaimed.[54] Following the American defeat of the Filipinos, the flag continued unofficially until its use was banned by the Americans in

1907 until 1920. During the Japanese occupation, in October 1943, independence was declared by a puppet government in the Philippines, and it continued to use the pre-war Philippine flag.[55]



In Burma, the Japanese set-up a provisional government from August 1942. Its flag was yellow with a green stripe bearing a red disk. On 1 August 1943, the Republic of Burma declared its independence, though the country remained under Japanese military occupation. The flag was changed to a

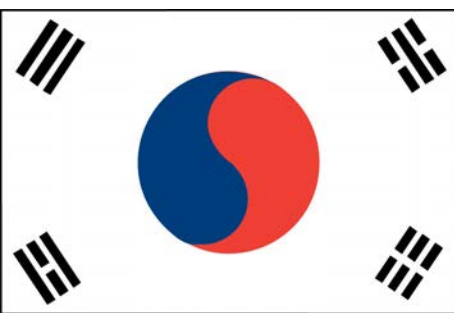
triband of yellow, green and red with a large peacock in the centre.[56] After the war the Burmese agitated for independence, which was granted in January 1948 as the Union of Burma.

Korea was divided at the 38th parallel and the Soviet Union occupied the north and the United States the south. This led to the establishment of two separate governments. North Korea adopted its current flag on 8 September 1948 on the creation of the communist state, whilst the traditional *t'aegyeukgi* flag was adopted in the south.[57]

The Communist Party had established the Chinese Soviet Republic in 1930, with Mao Zedong as

Head of State, but it was defeated by the *Kuomintang* in 1934 and the Communists retreated inland in the “Long March”.

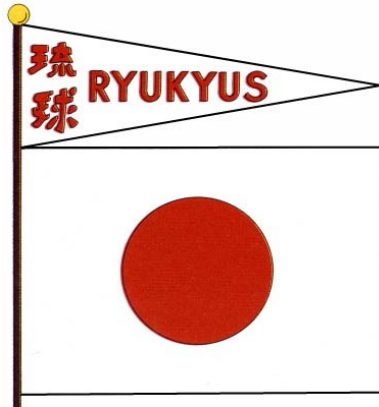
By June 1946 the Civil War resumed after the combined effort of war with Japan and progressively the People’s Liberation Army captured territory 1949 the People’s Republic of raising for the first time the *wu* red flag).[58]



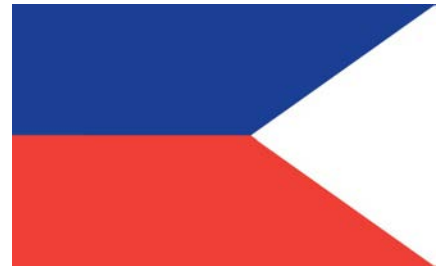
until, on 1 October China was proclaimed, *xing hong qi* (five star



The last country impacted by the end of the war was Japan itself. Following the surrender of Japan, the use of the Japanese flag was prohibited. Local shipping was required to fly a modified E signal flag in place of a national flag. It was not until 1952 that the allied occupation ended and sovereignty was restored, permitting the resumption of use of the Japanese flag.[59]



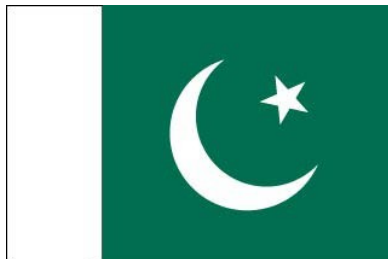
A separate local shipping flag was used for the Ryukyu Islands consisting of a modified D signal flag. In 1967 the Ryukyu Islands, other than Okinawa, reverted to Japan. Okinawa shipping was permitted to use the Japanese flag, but with the addition of a pennant with the Ryukyus name until 1972.



Independence

The immediate aftermath of the Second World War resulted in independence for a number of Asian countries, and de-colonisation continued apace.

Non-violent mass movements campaigned for independence for India from 1920. After the war, the British government came to realise that British rule in India could not be sustained



and it agreed that India should become independent. The Muslim League insisted on partition, creating the separate homeland of Pakistan out of India. Independence for both countries came at midnight of 14/15 August 1947.



The princely states were nominally given a choice as to which state they would join. The Hindu Maharaja of the Muslim-majority state of Jammu and Kashmir in October 1947 acceded to India, which resulted in an invasion from Pakistan and three subsequent wars between the two countries over the divided territory.[60]



The Muslim Nizam of the large Hindu-majority state of Hyderabad did not want to join either country and sought the independence it was theoretically entitled to. But the Indian military invaded Hyderabad in September 1948 and forced its accession.[61]



Only the Himalayan Kingdom of Sikkim managed to avoid incorporation and it was effectively independent from

August 1947 until May 1975, when anti-royalist riots led to Sikkim accepting Indian statehood. The flag of Sikkim featured a Buddhist *Chakra*.



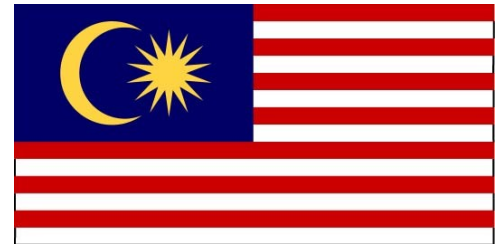


The Dominion of Ceylon became independent on 4 February 1948. Ceylon adopted as its flag the lion flag of the former Sinhala Kingdom of Kandy.[62]

The Federation of Malaya became independent on 31 August 1957 and it continued to use the flag



that had been adopted in 1950, with 11 red and white stripes – one for each state. Formation of the Federation of Malaysia in September 1963, represented the end of colonial rule of Singapore, Sabah (British North Borneo) and Sarawak.[63] The flag changed to 14 stripes.



However, the majority-Chinese Singapore fitted uncomfortably with the Muslim-majority of Malaysia, and Singapore was expelled from the federation on 9 August 1965. Singapore's flag had been adopted in December 1959 after it obtained self-government.

The Sultanate of Maldives became independent on 26 July 1965 ending the British protectorate.[64] The national flag was changed by removing the diagonally striped vertical band.



Bhutan achieved full independence on 21 September 1971.[65] The choice of the dragon is logical for Bhutan, because the local name of the country is *Druk*, meaning “dragon”.

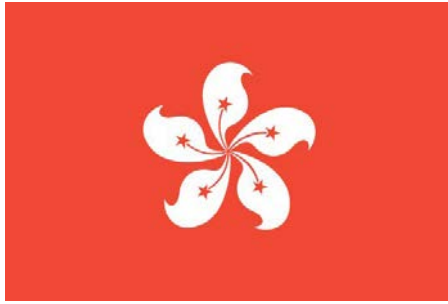
East Pakistan unilaterally proclaimed independence on 26 March 1971 as the People's Republic of Bangladesh, but it did not become effective until 16 December 1971 when the Pakistani military surrendered to Indian forces. The first Bangladeshi flag was green with a red off-center disk bearing a map of Bangladesh, in yellow.[66]



When Portugal abandoned its colonies following the overthrow of the Salazar regime, the East Timorese seized the opportunity to unilaterally declare independence as the Democratic Republic of East Timor on 28 November 1975. However, Indonesia invaded after only nine days. International protests against the occupation eventually led to a referendum that resulted in independence being achieved in May 2002.[67] The 1975 independence flag was restored with only minor changes.



Brunei Darussalam (“Brunei, Abode of Peace”) became independent on 1 January 1984. The royal coat-of-arms had been added to the traditional flag in 1959.



Sovereignty of Hong Kong returned to China on 1 July 1997 and it became a Special Administrative Region of China. The Hong Kong flag, with its stylised Bauhinia flower, is used as an additional flag, subsidiary in its protocol to the Chinese flag.[68]

There seems to me a certain symmetry that the first European

colonies in Asia were established by Portugal and it was the last European power to shed colonialism.[69] The Macau Special Administrative Region of China was established on 20 December 1999. The Macau flag features a white lotus above a stylised bridge and water with five yellow stars.



Monarchy and Republics

The concept of monarchy has a long tradition in Asia, and as in Europe, the forces of nationalism and the upheavals of the 20th Century have resulted in the overthrow of the monarchy in some countries, with resultant changes to national flags.



The earliest and most major change was that of China in 1912. The Qing Dynasty had ruled China from 1644, but political intrigue resulted in General Yuan Shi-kai forcing the abdication of the six-year old Emperor on 12 February 1912 [70] and he became President of the Republic of China. A new flag with five stripes representing the five races of China replaced the imperial dragon.[71]



Yuan declared himself Emperor in December 1915, but abandoned the title after only three months. During this short period, the Republican flag was re-arranged into a saltire using the same five colours. Following Yuan's death, the country fragmented; with local warlords competing for control of the country with various military governments, the

Nationalist (*Kuomintang*) government and later the communists. It was not until 1928 that the *Kuomintang* had obtained control over all China. The flag of the Republic of China became a red flag with the *Kuomintang* sun symbol in the canton.[72]



When a Communist government was established in Mongolia in 1921, the lama continued as nominal head of state, though the Mongolian flag was changed, removing the *soyombo*, keeping only the sun and moon symbol. [73] The Mongolian People's Republic was established in November 1924 and it is interesting that the *soyombo*

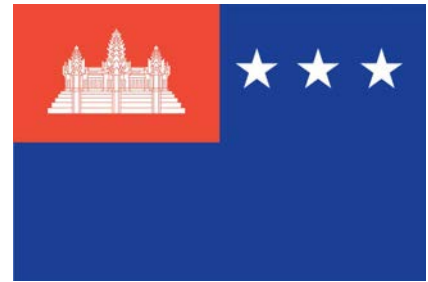
(above a lotus flower) was restored on the flag, as if to provide one element of symbolic continuity with traditional culture.[74]





The Cambodian royal flag has been used on three separate occasions, as numerous regime changes have alternatively abolished and restored the monarchy over the past 40 years.

On 9 October 1970 the Khmer Republic was established by General Lon Nol. Angkor Wat was moved to a red canton with



three white stars on the blue flag. Prince Norodom Sihanouk again became head of state when the communist Khmer Rouge came to power in April 1975, but a year later he was forced out again and Democratic

Kampuchea was established with a new red flag featuring a stylised Angkor Wat. During 1992 the country was under United Nations administration and the flag was a map of the country on a UN blue field. It



was not until 30 June 1993 that full sovereignty was restored and the country reverted again to the 1948 flag, with Norodom Sihanouk as King.



The communist military takeover of Laos was completed on 2 December 1975 with the creation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the abdication of King Savang Vatthana. The flag of the Pathet Lao insurgents became the new Lao national flag.

Queen Elizabeth II was the head of state of the Dominion of Ceylon

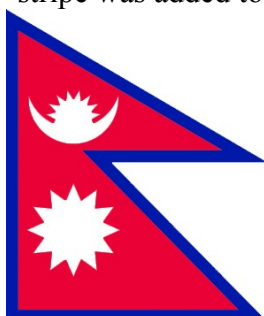
when it became independent in 1948, and it was not until 1972 that the country became the Republic of Sri Lanka. [75] The move to a republic was reflected in a small change to the national flag – the corner finials were altered to Bo-Tree leaves.[76]



Constitutions

Relatively few Asian flags have been altered due to a change of constitution. This is a contrast with Latin America, though only one Asian country (Brunei) includes the coat of arms on its national flag.

The flag of Mongolia has been revised on two occasions reflecting new constitutions - June 1940, when a vertical blue stripe was added to the red field and the *soyombo* was moved to the first red stripe[77] and in February 1992 the yellow star was removed following the end of communism.[78]



Another flag that was introduced in tandem with a new constitution is the 1962 Nepal flag, which simplified the emblems on the flag and standardised its shape.

On 4 January 1974, Burma adopted a new constitution becoming the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma.[79] The canton of the flag was changed to a cog-wheel and rice plant emblem surrounded by 14 white stars, one for each state.



In Cambodia, there were other changes of flags associated with constitutional changes, though not involving a change to the monarchy. On 7 January 1979 the regime of Pol Pot was

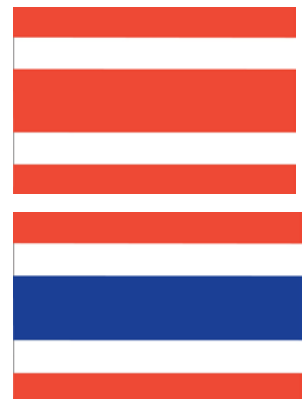


overthrown and the People's Republic of Kampuchea was proclaimed. The new flag was also red, but the simplified representation of Angkor Wat now had five towers. International pressure led to the creation of the State of Cambodia on 1 May 1989 and the flag reverted to the detailed representation of Angkor Wat, this time on a field divided red over blue.

Design and Other Reasons



For reasons that are not known, Siam altered its flag in November 1916 to use a more elaborate version of the white elephant with caparisons and a pedestal.[80] A further change was made in early 1917, with the elephant flag being replaced by a flag with three horizontal red stripes and two white. It



is claimed that this change was to make the flag more affordable and to prevent the flag being flown upside down in error.[81][82] On 28 September 1917 the colour of the central red stripe was changed to blue, possibly to show support for the European allies in World War I. The flag has become known as the *Trairanga* (tricolour) and it has remained unchanged, despite numerous military coups and changes to the Thai constitution.



In South Korea new specifications for the *t'aegeukgi* flag were issued with effect from 25 January 1950, which established the South Korean flag in its current form. The main difference was the change in the alignment of the *t'aegeuk* circle to horizontal and the shape and positioning of the four *palgwae* trigrams.



Sikkim simplified from the colourful and elaborate royal standard of the Chogyal in 1962.

The flag raised at independence for Ceylon was intended to be only an interim flag.[83] On 2 March 1951 a new flag was adopted which added two vertical bars, coloured green and saffron, to



represent the Muslim and Tamil minorities.[84]

On independence, the Bangladeshi flag included a silhouette map of the country, however on 13 January 1972 the Bangladesh government simplified the flag by removing the map.



Each of these three flags represented a tidying-up of the design of the national flag shortly after independence, rather than any fundamental change.

Conclusions

Having reviewed this record of flag creation and change, it is now possible to draw together some conclusions about flags in Asia. In Latin America a pattern of flag changes was able to be readily discerned because there was a highly comparable national history. The history of Asian countries is less uniform, but there are several common aspects.

- China exercised suzerainty over most of East Asia and its influence is apparent in the usage of yellow, especially where there was a traditional ruler (Vietnam, Brunei, Bhutan and Sarawak).
- Most countries began as local kingdoms, and regal eminence was reflected by the use of symbolic animals – dragon, white elephant (Siam, Laos), peacock (Burma), lion (Ceylon), tiger (Malay States) and snow leopard (Tibet), with only the White Rajah of Sarawak using a crown and only Brunei adds its coat of arms to its flag.
- Buddhism spread widely through Asia and symbols of its beliefs are dominant in the flags of Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Tibet and Sikkim, the temple of Angkor Wat has been on all the various Cambodian flags and more subtly, the Bo-tree leaves on the Sri Lankan flag. The *Ashoka Chakra* on the Indian flag is a Buddhist wheel of *Dharma*, though its use is more emblematic of ancient Indian greatness, than religion.
- Islam is another great religion of Asia. The flag of Pakistan features the star and crescent, Malaysia, Singapore and the Maldives include the crescent, whilst the green of Bangladesh and on the Indian and Sri Lankan flags represent their Muslim populations.
- Colour – red, the colour of fire and blood, is celebratory, representing good luck whilst yellow, the colour of the sun and gold can represent prosperity. Red appears on almost all Asian flags, though the meaning varies. The combination of red and yellow were the colours of communism, influencing the current flags of China and Vietnam and the former flags of Kampuchea and Mongolia. The red and white bicolour of Indonesia are the traditional Javanese colours. The red of the Thai flag derives from the traditional colours of the flags of Siam, whilst the red of Singapore represents the majority Chinese.
- Colonialism created the great city-ports of Singapore, Hong Kong and Macao but overall, it had less impact than on other continents. Vexillologically, it is the manner in which colonialism was ended that had the most impact on flags, especially the encouragement of local nationalists during the Japanese military occupations. Independence was often a restoration of historical sovereignty, resulting in the use of traditional symbolism on the new national flags, rather than tribands and tricolours of contrived meaning.
- The change from monarchy to republic and constitutional changes were major reasons for change in Latin America, but had a relatively small impact in Asia, whilst there were almost no changes for the sake of design improvements.
- Excluding the impact of colonialism, most countries have enjoyed a high degree of continuity in their flags. However, the exceptions are notable for the number of flags created with each lurch in their political history. Many new flags chronicled the instability of China, Mongolia, Cambodia and Vietnam and to a lesser extent Burma, whilst only Sri Lanka, Maldives and Nepal experienced a series of minor design alterations associated with political changes.

- The adoption of the first flag for many Asian countries was not associated with independence, but with the early interactions of ancient nations with traders and the European powers. Events such as the port opening here at Yokohama identified a need to express national identity, when the strength of the local traditions and society had not previously required something as trivial as a flag, even though some of the oldest usage of flags originated in Asia.

I would like to conclude by expressing my thanks to JAVA for organising this, the first ICV in Asia and I hope that my paper will encourage further research in the important area of the vexillology of Asia. I have only been able to describe the pattern of Asia's flags - there is much detail to enjoy.

Illustrations and Sources:

Figure 1 – Map of Asia for the purpose of this lecture (Source: drawing by Ralph Kelly. **All illustrations not otherwise sourced are by Kelly**)

Figure 2 – Imperial Chinese 1858 (Source: “Album des Pavillons, Guidons, Flammes de toutes les puissances maritimes”, by M.A. Le Gras, Au Dépôt des Cartes et Plan de la Marine, 1858, Paris)

Figure 3 – Carving in tomb of Wu Liang (“Flags of the World” by E M C Barraclough, 1965, Frederick Warne & Co Ltd, London)

Figure 4 – Chinese Navy 1862

Figure 5 – China 1868 (“Flags of Maritime Nations”, United States Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, 1868, Washington)

Figure 6 – China 1890 (“Drawings of the Flags in use at the present time by Various Nations”, British Admiralty, 1907, London)

Figure 7 – Japan Emperor (Le Gras, 1858)

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Figure 12 – Kingdom of Burma 1826 (Le Gras, 1858)

Figure 13 – “Corea” 1882 – the *Taegeukgi* (“Flags of Maritime Nations” (Fifth edition), US Navy, 1882). Note that this image has been vertically reversed. The flag as published was reversed from the usual direction of the *taegeuk* and *palgwae*, and probably is an error. Another illustration dated from March 1883 from China has the same design, but the direction is the same as later flags. The name given to the Korean flag is the *taegeukgi*.

Figure 14 – Kingdom of Cambodia circa 1863 (“Album des Pavillons Nationaux”, Marine et Colonies, 1889, Paris)

Figure 15 – Kingdom of Luang Phrabāng circa 1900 (“Flaggenbuch (Flg. B.)” published by German Kriegsmarine, 1939, Berlin)

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- Figure 51 – Nepal 1928 (Breschi “Bandiere”)
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Figure 55 – Republic of Formosa 1885 (FOTW: tw-1895.gif)
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 Figure 104 – Lao People’s Democratic Republic 1975
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 Figure 106 – Mongolian People’s Republic 1940
 Figure 107 – Nepal 1962
 Figure 108 – Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma [Myanmar] 1974
 Figure 109 – People’s Republic of Kampuchea 1979
 Figure 110 – State of Cambodia 1989 (FOTW: kh-1989.gif)
 Figure 111 – Siam November 1916 (www.siamflag.org)
 Figure 112 – Siam March 1917
 Figure 113 – Siam [Thailand] September 1917
 Figure 114 – South Korea January 1950
 Figure 115 – Ceylon March 1951
 Figure 116 – Sikkim 1962 (FOTW: in-sik.gif)
 Figure 117 – Bangladesh January 1972

Endnotes

1. “Caudillos, Coups, Constitutions and Changes: An analysis of flag changes in Latin America” by Ralph Kelly, 21st International Congress of Vexillology, published in *Crux Australis*, Volume 20/4 Number 84, October-December 2007, pages 169-198, Flag Society of Australia, Sydney.
2. For my purposes I have excluded the Chinese autonomous region of Xinjiang and Western Siberia. My definition also excludes the Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Papua as their people are Melanesians and more properly considered to be part of Oceania. The Chagos Archipelago is an extension of the Maldives Island chain, but the forced eviction of its people by the Diego Garcia US military base makes its inclusion as academic as that of the Spratly Islands. The Australian territories of Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands could be included within this definition of Asia for some purposes.
3. “Album des Pavillons, Guidons, Flammes de toutes les puissances maritimes”, by Capitaine Alexandre Le Gras, Au Dépôt des Cartes et Plans de la Marine, 1858, Paris
4. Le Gras, plate 15. Also shown were eight plain coloured banners. The colours of the banners were blue with red border, red with white border, red, yellow, blue, white with red border, white and yellow with red border; the illustration of a yellow with blue border banner was not listed. These banners were similar to the eight banners used by the Chinese Army, which was organised into companies using banners in the same colour combinations. See the Wikipedia article: “Eight Banners” for more information and illustrations.
5. A bas-relief stone carving on the tomb of the Confucian scholar Wu Liang (circa 150 AD) in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province shows a rider mounted on a deer holding a flag with four horizontal stripes. See illustration on page 3 of *Flags of the World* by E M C Barraclough, 1965, Frederick Warne & Co Ltd, London. The drawing was sourced from “Mission archeologique dans la Chine septentrionale” by Edouard Chavannes, 1913, E Leroux, Paris. Both Barraclough and Aldo Ziggio mis-identified the tomb as that of Emperor Wu of Han (141- 87 BC). Barraclough refers to the Zhou dynasty flag use, but does not give a source. He referred to the date of the start of the Zhou dynasty as 1122 BC, though the chronology of Ancient China has since been revised and the date is now estimated at 1046 BC.

6. "Dove l'Oriente è rosso", by Aldo Ziggio, supplement to *Rivista Marittima* n. 6 June 1996. Large parts of the book were translated by Tony Burton and published as "Where the East is Red" in *Crux Australis*, Volume 14/2 Number 58, April-June 2000, pages 60-111, Flag Society of Australia, Sydney. The celestial dragon was seen as a powerful and benevolent creature with the head of a camel, antlers of a deer, eyes of a rabbit, ears of a cow, neck and body of a serpent, 81 scales of a carp, palms of a tiger and talons of a hawk. (see page 72 of "The Symbols, Standards, Flags, and Banners of Ancient and Modern Nations", Part I of "Origin and History of the American Flag" by George Henry Preble, second edition, 1917, Nicholas Brown, Philadelphia)
7. Detailed information on Chinese imperial flags is contained in two articles: "Some Notes on 19th Century Chinese Flags" by Whitney Smith in *The Flag Bulletin*, Volume XXIV:3, Issue No. 111, pages 84-93 and "Banners and Flags of the Army and Navy of China in 1883" by Lucien Phillipe, a lecture presented to the 7th ICV in 1977 and published in *The Flag Bulletin*, Volume XIX:3-5, No. 84, pages 268-282.
8. The blue dragon symbolised the East, springtime, and morning and was also associated with water. The red disk represented the sun, though it is sometimes described as a pearl.
9. Ziggio speculated that the design inspiration may have been from Charles "Chinese" Gordon, the English commander of a Chinese army with European officers, however this is considered unlikely. "Les pavillons de la flotille dite 'Lay-Osborne', 1863" by Roger Baert in *Vexillacta* #12 (June 2001) (a translated extract is located on Flags of the World web-site at "flags/cn~lo.html") offers an alternative origin. Baert suggests the green field was chosen for its distinctiveness and the saltire proposed by Robert Hart, the Irish-born Inspector-General of Customs who proposed the purchase of a fleet of British steam cruisers, which travelled from England to China in 1863.
10. The seal was actually the mon of the Matsudaira clan (which included the Tokugawa Shoguns): three blue hollyhock leaves. The leaf shape is also very similar to that of the Paulownia, the flower of which is the lesser *kiri-mon* of the imperial household. The *kiri-mon* was assigned by the Emperor to the Ashikaga Shoguns, but Tokugawa Ieyasu had declined a similar assignment. The Shoguns held the actual power in Japan with the emblem of their administration of government supplanting the use of the main Imperial *kiku-mon*, the chrysanthemum until the emperor regained power in the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The Tokugawa emblem has been mis-described as wild ginger (*asarum*) leaves, a North American plant.
11. Though it was subsequently shown as part of a masthead pennant in the 1868 (first) edition of "Flags of Maritime Nations", Bureau of Navigation, Washington DC. In the 1871 (third) edition the masthead pennant had been replaced by one showing a red disk.
12. Decree 57 of the Central Government of the Restoration, dated 27 January 1870, mandated the use of the national flag on all shipping and established the proportions as 7:10 with the diameter of the central disk 3/5ths the length of the hoist and the disk centred on a point off-centre towards the hoist at a point 49/100ths of the length. Decree 651 dated 3 October 1870 established the navy flag with a proportion of 2:3 and the disk fully centred. These proportions are sourced from "The Proportions of the Japanese Flag" by Tokuo Tanino, *The Flag Bulletin*, Vol. 6:4 (Issue No. 23).
13. The plain red flag is believed to date from about 1656, during the reign of King Narai the Great (1656-1688); probably about 1680 when the French East India Company began trading in Siam and an ambassador to France was appointed. The *chakra* (meaning "wheel", drawn in Thailand as a discus with ribbons angled to suggest a rotating wheel) is an emblem of the Chakri dynasty and it was added to the centre of the state flag in 1782 on the establishment of the Kingdom of Krung Thep in Bangkok by King Rama I, and a white elephant was added to the centre of the *chakra* in 1817 by King Rama II. Note that the official Siam flag did not include the cloud upon which the elephant is standing in the US drawing.
14. There is some uncertainty as to this date. An 1849 book "The Ship, its Origin and Progress" has 10 flag plates which includes the Siam flag of a red flag with a white elephant, though no base. This flag also appears in an 1852 Chinese flag book.
15. Comment by Ivan Sache, 21 July 2004 on Flags of the World (FOTW) web-site at flags/th1656.html.
16. The archived web-page www.myanmars.net/myanmar/admin.htm from October 1999 states that the flag was used when Rangoon was recovered from the British in 1826, though it could be as early as 1752 at the start of the Konbaung Dynasty under King Alaungphaya. This source also suggests that the peacock drawing is the same as used on the obverse of coins minted by King Mindon in 1862 (back dated to 1852). The 1849 book "The Ship, its Origin and Progress" includes a crudely drawn peacock on a white field for "Burmah". Hounsell's "Flags and Signals of All Nations", 1873 shows the Burmese flag with a similar peacock drawn similar to the coin, in natural colours, though surrounded by a thin red disk. The red "circular" peacock version of the flag may be the result of a standardised drawing being created in the late 19th Century, or it may be a modern reconstruction.
17. This story is found in an information sheet on the Korean flag by The Korean Culture and Information Service at www.korea.net. The Prince became a prominent collaborator with the Japanese and the story of

Pak's role with the flag apparently became widely known based on his autobiography, rather than archival sources. It has also been suggested that a Chinese diplomat, Ma Chien-Chung proposed the design of the flag in April 1882, but with all 8 trigrams of the *I Ching* (research by Dr Kim Sang-Sup reported to FOTW by Ivan Sache, 15 August 2002). The American Navy book however appears to contradict the Pak role, as it is dated July 1882, which is earlier than the date the flag is claimed to have been created by Pak. A possible source of the flag in the book is the flag that may have been used when the Treaty of Chemulpo (now Incheon) between Korea and the United States was signed on 22 May 1882, according to Kim Weon-mo of Dankook University (see <http://english.chosun.com/w21data/html/news/200401/200401260030.html>). The flag was formally proclaimed by King Gojong on 6 March 1883, though no exact specifications were established until 1942, when the provisional government in exile established specifications. A flag claimed to have been presented to Owen N. Denny, an American Foreign Advisor to King Gojong in 1890, and returned to Korea in 1981, has blue trigrams, as do some other contemporary examples.

18. The red section represents the proactive cosmic forces of the yang (heaven) and the blue section represents the responsive cosmic forces of the yin (earth). The two forces together embody the concepts of continual movement, balance and harmony that characterises the sphere of infinity (explanation from web-site of the Korean President: <http://english.president.go.kr/koreain/national.php>)
19. It is unclear when the flag of Luang Phrabāng was created, though a Laotian source states that the royal emblem dates from the mid 16th Century. See footnote 3 of "Kingdom of Laos" by Whitney Smith in *The Flag Bulletin*, Volume XIV:3, Issue No. 57, pages 59-64. Laos in 1353 was known as the Kingdom of Lān Xāng. However in 1707 Lān Xāng became divided into three Kingdoms that were vassals of Siam, with periods of control by Burma and Vietnam. The three kingdoms were Luang Phrabāng, Viang Chan (Vientiane) and Champāsak, with the latter two states becoming provinces of Siam by the mid Nineteenth Century, reverting to Laos from 1893 and 1904 respectively (except for the period 1941-1946 when annexed by Thailand). In 1893 Siam was forced to transfer control of all its lands east of the Mekong River to France and the Kingdom of Luang Phrabāng in northern Laos became a protectorate.
20. The shield of the royal arms of Siam prior to 1910 consisted of the *Erawan* in white on a gold field, with a base of two compartments: pink with a single elephant to represent Laos and red with two crossed swords to represent the Malay provinces. The three heads of the elephant were claimed to represent northern, central and southern Siam. In Laos, it was claimed that the three heads of the elephant represent the three Kingdoms forming Laos, however whilst this may have been a modern interpretation, it would not have applied to the period when the emblem was used by Luang Phrabāng. The Buddhist Thai *Erawan* is based on the Hindu divine white elephant *Airavata*, which carried Lord Indra and symbolizes greatness and wisdom. The parasol is a Buddhist symbol, one of the eight auspicious symbols, and its use was also an emblem of rank in the Thai royal court. The pedestal and radiant light are also Buddhist symbols.
21. An Nam ("Peaceful South Country") was originally used by the Chinese as the name for the whole of modern Vietnam, whilst the local name was Dai Viet. The first Nguyễn Emperor Gia Long adopted the name Viet Nam in 1804, though Europeans continued to use the name Annam. Cochin-China was another name used by Europeans, initially for the whole area of Indo-China. Cochin was derived from the Malay word for Vietnam and China was added to distinguish it from the Indian princely state of Cochin. The Tonkin name was derived from a former name for Hanoi.
22. Ben Cahoon's World Statesmen page on Vietnam included several historical flags that are reproduced by others, though Cahoon does not usually provide sources for his flag images.
23. See Roberto Breschi's "Indocina" page on his *Bandeire* website, where he states that such a flag was used to represent Annam at an international exposition in Paris in 1878. "Dai Nam" meaning "Great Southern Country" was used as the local name for Vietnam from 1839 to about 1885.
24. See "Historical Timeline of the Royal Sultanate of Sulu" by Josiah Ang (www.seasite.niu.edu/Tagalog/Modules/Modules/MuslimMindanao/historical_timeline_of_the_royal.htm). The image is of a flag in the Museo Naval de Madrid, one of several different designs attributed to the Sultanate of Sulu. The symbol is a stylised Mecca door with okir motifs.
25. In the case of the Netherlands East Indies, however, the generic flag of a Dutch governor was occasionally used to represent the territory. An example is from "The Pictorial Encyclopaedia", published by Sampson, Low, Marston, London, 1952), one of the few books that my family owned when I was a child. This showed the Dutch flag with two red circles on a white canton for "District Governor Dutch E. Indies" in a tableaux of flags and badges illustrating the "Peoples of Oceania". I now know that this was wrong – the correct representation of the Governor-General of the Netherlands East Indies was the Dutch flag with the addition of a swallow-tailed wimple, whilst a flag with two white circles on the red field was only used by the Governors of Celebes, Aceh and Sumatra's West Coast until 1913 (see plate 8 of "Nederland. Commando - en Onderscheidings-Vlaggen, Standaarden en Wimpels", circa 1910.
26. Image from Russian Admiralty book of 1898, plate XVII ("Album of Standards, Flags and Streamers of the Russian Empire and Foreign Governments" edited by M. Bilovw).

27. Page 13 of “Flaggenbuch”, Berlin 1939.
28. These flag badges were initially created from 1867 firstly for the British Blue ensign, in response to the Colonial Naval Defence Act, then for the Order in Council of 1869 authorising the use of the badges in the centre of the Union Jack for colonial Governors and from 1875 in response to a circular despatch of 1875 seeking the designs of colonial badges for publication in the Admiralty Flag Book. With a few exceptions, the badges were not specifically authorised for use on the British Red Ensign as a commercial shipping flag, but the practice developed of using red ensigns with the colonial badges as an unofficial local land flag.
29. Vessels operating from ports in Indian princely states were not entitled to use the red ensign as they were not British registered ships. However the decision was made to grant them the right to use a defaced red ensign and badges were created in 1924 for twelve states: Baroda, Bhavnagar, Cambay, Cochin, Janjira, Junagadh, Kutch, Morvi, Navanagar, Porbandar, Sachin and Travancore.
30. Revisions to the Hong Kong badge were made in 1876, 1955 and 1959.
31. The badge is similar to that of the Ceylon Government Railway, which featured a caparisoned elephant, *dagoba* (also known as a *stupa*) and a palm tree. Glen Hodgins (FOTW – Ceylon 4 June 2000) states that this logo was adopted in 1860. The Governor of Ceylon in 1870 was Sir Hercules Robinson, who became Governor of New South Wales from 1872 to 1879, during which period NSW adopted its current badge.
32. Queen Victoria had assumed the title of “Empress of India” in 1876. The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India was instituted in 1861 as a senior order of knighthood to honour Indian princes and senior British military officers and administrators. The Star of the Order is part of the insignia of the Knights Grand Commander and Knights Commander. In 1884, the Viceroy, as the representative of the Empress of India, began to use a Union Jack, in the centre of which was a drawing of the insignia of the Order of the Star of India, surmounted by an Imperial Crown. Whilst a red ensign with Star of India was used to represent British India in international locations, the Viceroy’s flag was widely used by a large number of British officials, not just the Viceroy, and it was frequently depicted as the flag of India. In addition to the Star of India badge, vessels employed by Indian government departments used a blue ensign with a yellow lion rampant guardant holding a crown (Figure 30).
33. The federation consisted of Selangor, Perak, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang. All nine states had developed their own flags and flags for the sultans.
34. Nozomi Kariyasu (FOTW 14 January 2000) claims that Brunei used a plain yellow flag prior to 1906, though he does not identify a source. There are reasonable grounds to believe that yellow was the royal colour in Brunei, though it may not have been used as a national flag. The High Commissioner Brunei from 1950 had a personal flag of the Union Jack with a badge bearing the central device of the Brunei arms, which was replaced in 1959 by a crown above the letter H.C.B.
35. When the Maldives became a British protectorate in 1887 no flag badge was created, as there was no local British Resident and no involvement in the islands’ administration. The Sultan of the Maldives flag was a red flag with a green panel bearing a crescent and star, together with a narrow vertical diagonally striped band at the hoist. The Maldives flag had several variants – with the crescent only for the state flag, star only for the state ensign, no crescent or star for the civil ensign, and a red field only for the civil flag. The green panel was apparently added in 1932 following the introduction of a constitution, the flag having originally been plain red with the striped border being added in the early 20th Century.
36. “National Symbols of White Russia” by V.V. Zhuravlev, 2000 quoted in Wikipedia “Siberian separatism”. Stuart Notholt (FOTW, “Siberia”, 13 October 1995) claims that the colours date back to 1865 and that a horizontal bicolour was used during 1917-18.
37. These images are sourced from Roberto Breschi’s “Tuva” page on his *Bandeire* website. The 1918 flag is stated to be a reconstruction, the second flag has the 1933 coat of arms. Control of Tannu Tuva alternated between the Paramount Chief, Mongolia, White Russians, the Red Army, and China until independence was declared in August 1921 as the People’s Republic of Tannu Tuva.
38. Image from Songool, 21 May 2004 on www.buryati.org. The Mongolian Khanate was united in 1203 by Genghis Khan, who ruled vast areas, though by the mid 14th Century Mongolia had been reduced to its present territory and subsequently adopted Tibetan Buddhism and fell under Chinese suzerainty. Like Tannu Tuva, control alternated from 1911 between the spiritual leader, China, Imperial Russia and White Russians, until a Communist government was established in 1921.
39. There is one aspect of the design of the current Tibetan flag that is uncertain. The Tibetan flag today has twelve rays alternating between red and blue, starting so that they commence with red in the lower hoist. However, the version of the Tibet flag shown in the British Admiralty flag books of 1930 and 1955 commences with blue. It is unclear as to whether the British version is erroneous or whether the order changed at some point in time. The date for adoption of the Tibetan flag is also unclear. Professor Pierre Lux-Wurm, in “The Story of the Flag of Tibet” in *The Flag Bulletin*, Volume XII:1 Number 43, Spring 1973, pages 36-40, states the adoption date to be 1912. Lux-Worm was of the view that the design had not changed

since its adoption, but actual flags were subject to variation depending on their manufacture, whilst information in the West was subject to errors in communication. Roberto Breschi's "Tibet" page on his *Bandeire* website shows a yellow flag with one snow lion and other Tibetan and Buddhist emblems which he states as dating from 1920. This may have been one of the various designs of military flag from which the national flag was derived.

40. The first flag is illustrated in "Drapeaux royaux et militaires du Nepal" by Michel Lupant, 1995, Centre Belgo-Européen d'Etudes des Drapeaux. Lupant identifies his source as "Nepal: Volume 1" by Perceval Landon, 1928 at pages 233-236. The British Admiralty book of 1930 did not include a flag for Nepal, though a similar design to that shown by *Flaggenbuch* (the faces were larger and the number of points on the sun and crescent was larger) was included in the 1955 edition of BR20.
41. The colours blue and yellow are reversed in the version on page 185 of Whitney Smith's "Flag Book of the United States", 1970. The correct version has been identified by Nozomi Kariyasu (FOTW/flags/jp-47-dy, 29 January 2005) based on a 1981 Okinawan book. The symbol is similar to the Korean *Sam Taeguk* emblem. Another flag, with a black and blue *mon* on white and three lower stripes of black and red, is shown by Ben Cahoon's World Statesmen website which is attributed to the Ryuku Islands in the period prior to 1875 (and identified by Roberto Breschi as dating from 1854).
42. The First Sino-Japanese War began in 1894 as a conflict over Korea and ended in 1895 with the Japanese destroying the Chinese fleet, defeating its army in Manchuria and capturing the Penghu islands in the Taiwan Strait. Under the Treaty of Shimonoseki, China lost suzerainty over Korea and ceded the Liadong Peninsula and Taiwan to Japan.
43. The German Pacific colonies were Palau, the Mariana, Caroline and Marshall Islands. Japan had been an ally of Britain in World War I. These territories were retained by Japan under a League of Nations mandate (named "South Seas Mandate") and subsequently became the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The Marshall Islands had become a German protectorate in 1885 whilst the other German colonies in Micronesia (the Carolines, the Marianas and Palau) were purchased by Germany from Spain via the German-Spanish Treaty of 1899, following the Spanish-American War, which had transferred the Philippines and Guam to the United States, making the remaining islands in the Spanish East Indies unviable.
44. This is the flag claimed for the period from 1939 per FOTW (flags/cn_j_im.html). Two other flag designs have been claimed, both blue flags with a canton – one with vertical stripes of red, yellow and white; the other with horizontal stripes of red, blue, yellow and white (see Worldstatesmen.org/China.html/Manchuria)
45. Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 (local time, East of the International Date Line) and at the same time on 8 December it attacked Guam, Wake Island, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Thailand, Malaya, the Philippines and the Dutch Indies. The furthest extent of Japanese occupation was reached in August 1942, at which time it was fighting in China, western Burma and northern New Guinea, having occupied Indochina (from July 1941), Malaya, Singapore, all of Borneo, the Dutch Indies, the Philippines, Guam, Wake Island, the Solomon Islands, the Gilbert Islands, Nauru, the Andaman Islands and some of the Aleutian Islands. Japan however continued to expand its control of territory in China until February 1945. Thailand was not occupied, but entered into a military alliance with Japan on 14 December 1941 and in return it was able to recover territories previously lost to the British and French.
46. Official wartime name for the Pacific War and the Fifteen Year War with China (from Mukden Incident in 1931).
47. Whilst the Japanese Emperor broadcast the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945, it was not until 12 September that all Japanese military forces surrendered throughout Asia, and several months before all Japanese occupied territories were transferred to Allied military control.
48. The interpretation of the three stripes appears to have also changed from that suggested by the *I Ching*, to a more secular reference to the three regions of Vietnam – north, central and south. On 4 June 1949, the State of Vietnam was established unifying the entire south, with the former Emperor, Bảo Đại as Chief of State. The south formally received independence on 26 October 1955 as the Republic of Vietnam, without any change to its flag.
49. The countries supporting South Vietnam with military forces were the United States, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines and Thailand.
50. FOTW and some other sources show a red flag with a stylised aerial view of Angkor Wat stating that it was used during the Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945. This appears to be erroneous. The flag is identified by Karl Faschinger as that of the Khmer Issarak, anti-French rebels operating from 1940 to 1949, initially with Thai support. See "State of Cambodia" *The Flag Bulletin* Issue 133, figure 6 on page 7 and footnote 2 on page 12.
51. There is conflicting information as to the date of Lao independence. The US Library of Congress country study states that the constitution of 11 May 1947 declared Laos an independent state within the French Union

and the Franco-Lao General Convention of 19 July 1949 gave Laos greater powers. The United States and Britain recognised Laos as independent on 7 February 1950.

52. This flag is included in Roberto Breschi's "Malaysia" page on his *Bandeire* website. The flag is also described in "Red Star Over Malaya" by Cheah Boon Kneng at page 68. The stars represented the three races: Malay, Chinese and Indian and three stars were used as a cap badge by the MPAJA. The MPAJA had the twin aims of defeat of the Japanese and independence as the Malayan Democratic Republic. The MPAJA disbanded and the communists initially cooperated with the British who had promised a post-war democratic government for Malaya. Britain established the Malayan Union on 1 April 1946, uniting all the Malay States and the colonies of Malacca and Penang, however the Malays were opposed to this Union as it reduced the privileges of the Malay elite and promoted equality for non-Malays. The flag of the Malayan Union was the same as for the Federated Malay States.
53. The red and white bicolour is claimed to date to 1293 as the flag of the Javanese Majapahit Empire, though most sources believe it originally had nine alternating red and white stripes, (Mark Sensen, FOTW, 21 May 1998). *Merah-Putih* means Red-White, another name is *Sang Saka* (Lofty Bicolor). The flag had also been used by the Partai Nasional Indonesia from 1928. The original flag actually flown on Independence Day in 1945, hand-sewn by Sukarno's wife, is called the *Bendera Pusaka*. Dutch military forces progressively replaced the British Commonwealth forces fighting the militias, and it was not until November 1946 that a ceasefire came into effect, with the Netherlands recognising the Republic of Indonesia's de-facto control of Java and Sumatra, whilst restoring Dutch control over the other islands. The Dutch attacked the republic in July 1947 and again in December 1948, but they were not able to acquire control of the countryside and a guerrilla war continued until independence was recognised by the Netherlands.
54. The flag was first flown on 28 May 1898 by General Aguinaldo after a victory against the Spanish (see Manuel L Quezon III, FOTW/ph-hist2.html, 9 January 2002). That first flag appears to have had a face in the sun and only eight rays. The United States formally granted independence on 4 July 1946.
55. Some sources state that the flag as originally used during the Spanish occupation and during the Japanese occupation used a lighter blue. The official specifications for the flag were also changed to light blue (Cuban flag blue) during the period February 1985 to February 1986, however few flags were actually used in the new colour shade (see "Recent Flags" by Whitney Smith, *The Flag Bulletin*, Volume XXVIII:6, Issue number 132). The shade of blue was changed from navy blue to royal blue from 12 February 1998. Similarly, many sources indicate that the colours red and blue are reversed during war-time. Whilst this is a provision of Executive Order No. 321 of 12 June 1950, it is unclear if the colour reversal has ever actually occurred, other than during the 1898-99 War of Independence.
56. Different sources draw the peacock in a variety of ways - either in a very elaborate natural colours or a single colour on white. The disk is usually white, but some show it as red. Another flag is claimed by Roberto Breschi to have been in use from 30 March 1941 to 1 August 1945, consisting of a peacock badge on a plain blue flag. It is unclear if this flag relates to the activities of the Thirty Comrades, the founders of the Burma Independence Army or to part of the period of government of Prime Minister U Saw.
57. As mentioned in footnote 17, the provisional government-in-exile established specifications on 29 June 1942. New specifications were issued on 15 October 1949 (with effect from 25 January 1950) and further small changes were made on 21 February 1984, colours were specified in October 1997 and a National Flag Law was established in 2007.
58. The four small stars represent the four social classes (workers, peasants, intellectuals and middle class) [alternative interpretations are: "peasants, workers, petty bourgeoisie and progressive capitalists" or "peasantry, proletariat, army and progressive capitalists"] united under the leadership of the Communist Party. An alternate interpretation is the Han people and the Manchurian, Mongolian, Tibetan and Uyghur minorities, though this five races interpretation was the meaning behind the five stripes republican flag of 1912. The design has been credited to Zeng Liansong, who won a national competition held in July 1949, though his design included a red hammer and sickle in the large star.
59. Whilst the Japanese national flag was restored unchanged, the version with the off-centre disc was not restored, as this was regarded as having been tainted by past militarism.
60. The flag of Jammu and Kashmir from 1936 was red with a red plough. In 1953, the design was altered to add three vertical white bars near the hoist.
61. Kalat was forced to accede to Pakistan, whilst the Muslim Nawab of the Hindu-majority state of Junagadh was deposed to prevent it joining Pakistan. A number of other princely states tried to delay the process, but by January 1950 they had been sufficiently persuaded. Some of the princely states that were slow to accede to India included Jaipur and Jodhpur (April 1949), Bhopal (June 1949), Travancore and Cochin (July 1949), Cooch Behar and Charkhari (January 1950). The French establishments in India (Pondichéry and other enclaves) and the Portuguese enclave of Dadra and Nagar Haveli were occupied by Indian nationalists in 1954 and later annexed. Goa and the remaining Portuguese possessions in India were occupied by the Indian

military in 1961 and annexed the following year. The port enclave of Gwadar was sold by Oman to Pakistan in 1958.

62. The Kingdom of Kandy existed from 1581 to 1815, when it was defeated by the British. A flag identified as that of the Last King Sri Vikrama Rajasinha was found in England and its image was first published in Ceylon in 1915.
63. The Federation of Malaysia had been scheduled for 31 August 1963, but was delayed by protests from Indonesia and the Philippines. However sovereignty was transferred from Britain to each of Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak with effect from 31 August 1963.
64. The sultanate had been briefly replaced by a Republic from 1 January 1953 to 7 March 1954, and after independence the sultanate was again abolished from 11 November 1968.
65. The flag of Bhutan dated from 1949 with a small green dragon, which changed in 1956 to a yellow and dark red flag with a large white dragon. Different flags are shown on FOTW and World Statesmen websites.
66. The flag was designed by Serajul Alam and was first displayed at Dhaka University on 3 March 1971 and again on 7 March when Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made a speech and launched a campaign of civil disobedience in a struggle for liberation. In December 1970 the Awami League had won a majority in the Pakistan election, but its leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was prevented from becoming Prime Minister. An ineffective government response to a devastating cyclone further inflamed Bengali nationalism. On 25 March 1971, the Pakistan President declared martial law in East Pakistan, the Awami League leaders were arrested and the army began committing mass killings. In response, Sheikh Mujib unilaterally proclaimed independence the next day as the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Due to the arrest of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and other leaders, the first Bangladeshi government was formed in exile in Calcutta on 17 April 1971. It is unclear if the flag was formally adopted by the government-in-exile. On 3 June 1971 university students in Dhaka again displayed the Bangladesh flag in defiance of the martial law. India provided supplies to the Bangladeshi freedom fighters, which provoked a Pakistani Air Force attack on India on 3 December 1971. India retaliated and invaded East Pakistan, resulting in the surrender of the Pakistan military on 16 December 1971 and the independence of Bangladesh becoming effective.
67. A government in exile was maintained throughout the Indonesian occupation under President Xanana Gusmão and resistance fighters continued intermittent guerilla activities against the Indonesians. A referendum was held in August 1999 that resulted in a 78% vote for independence. However, violent clashes between militias led to the intervention of an international peacekeeping force on 20 September 1999. Indonesia revoked the annexation on 19 October 1999 and on 28 February 2000 the United Nations established UN Transitional Administration for East Timor undertook control of the country until independence. No distinctive flag appears to have been used by UNTAET.
68. The Bauhinia flower is from the Hong Kong orchid tree and it is actually bright pink/purple not white. The flag was first designed in 1990 and approved by the preparatory committee on 10 August 1996.
69. Portuguese settlement in Macau began in 1553. This was however not the first Portuguese settlement. Vasco da Gama arrived in India in 1498 and the first settlement occurred at Cannanore in 1502, and colonial claims were made in Ceylon, Goa, Malacca, the Spice Islands and Timor prior to settlement in Macau. Technically, my comment is not correct. The British Indian Ocean Territory is at the end of the island chain that extends from the Lakshadweep Islands through the Maldives to the Chagos Archipelago. However, it can be argued that Britain, after having shamefully expelled the Chagossians in 1971, gave up control of its colony through the lease to the United States military for the Diego Garcia Naval Support Facility.
70. Emperor Pu-Yi was briefly restored for 11 days in July 1917, but this can be ignored for our purposes.
71. The "Five Races Under One Union" flag represented the Han Chinese (red), Manchus (yellow), Mongols (blue), Huis and Uyghurs (white) and Tibetans (black).
72. The *Kuomintang* symbol was the "Sun of Liberty" and it had been adopted by Sun Yat-sen's Revolutionary League in 1906, based on an earlier version designed in 1895 for the Association for Regenerating China. The national flag is known as "Blue Sky, White Sun and a Wholly Red Earth" [Ziggio p78]
73. The design is a reconstruction; no contemporary image has been located yet.
74. There is conflicting information on the design of the 1924 flag. "New Symbols for Mongolia" by Andrzej Wocial, *The Flag Bulletin*, Issue 147 states that the flag was red with a blue *soyombo* and lotus leaf in the centre. However, Songool on www.buryatia.org, has photographs of what appear to be actual historical flags showing the *soyombo* in yellow and the country's name in white Uyghur script. Page 125 of "Flaggenbuch", Berlin 1939 shows the Mongolian flag with a blue *soyombo* and lotus leaf on a red field, suggesting that at some stage between 1924 and 1939 the flag design was revised.
75. *Lanka* had been the Sinhalese name for Ceylon, though it literally means "land", whilst *Sri* means "resplendent".

76. The Bo tree, or Pipal tree (*Ficus religiosa*), is a fig tree that is sacred in Buddhism; Buddha is believed to have sat under a Bo tree when he attained enlightenment at Bodh Gaya in India. It is unclear if there was any significance in the change to the drawing in 1978, other than greater artistic realism, though it did correspond to a new drawing in the new constitution creating the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.
77. The Mongolian linguist, Dr Byambyn Rinchen in “Mongolia’s Ancient Symbol: The Soyombo”, *The Flag Bulletin*, Issue 123 claimed to have designed the Mongolian flag in 1944, though he gave no explanation for the new flag other than “the government became convinced of the true national character of the soyombo. Thus it was placed on a red verticle stripe at the hoist of a new state flag”. The article does give a good explanation of the symbolic meaning of the *soyombo*. The flag is sometimes described as dating from either 1945 or from 23 February 1949 – this is the date of a Mongolian Constitution that confirmed the design already in use, probably from 1940.
78. The “leading role” of the communist Mongolian People’s Revolutionary Party (MPRN) was abolished on 13 April 1990 following the removal of Jambyn Batmönkh from power as a result of democracy demonstrations. The MPRN however remained the government, transforming itself from communism to a socialist party and permitting multi-party elections. “New Symbols for Mongolia”, *The Flag Bulletin*, Issue 147 gave details of the 1991-92 design process that attempted to create new national symbols for Mongolia, which resulted in a new coat of arms, but only a minor change to the national flag.
79. “Socialist Republic” was dropped from the country name in 1988, though there was no change in the flag. The change of name from Burma to Myanmar occurred in 1989 and did not involve any constitutional change, only a change in the English translation of the country name in Burmese: *Pyeidaungzu Myanma Naingngandaw*. A new flag for Myanmar is proposed for introduction when the new constitution comes into force, possibly in 2010.
80. FOTW claims that the direction of the elephant was reversed to face the fly, however www.siamflag.org shows the same flag as previously used as the naval ensign.
81. www.siamflag.org says that Thai people who could not afford an elephant flag used red and white cloths instead of a flag. This would be a plausible reason to adopt a red and white striped flag.
82. Nozomi Kariyasu (FOTW 23 July 2004) identifies this flag as having been used earlier - from 1911 as the civil ensign, adopted by Decree No. 129 in the proportions 1:1:2:1:1. Another report by Kariyasu (FOTW 10 Oct 2005) claims the flag used as a national flag as having equal stripes. The 1915 British Admiralty book continued to show the plain white elephant as the merchant flag. Note the name of the country was changed to Thailand in 1939, however there was no flag change.
83. A select committee was appointed by Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake on 6 March 1948 for the design of a national flag. The committee report, dated 14 February 1950, recommended the Lion Flag be retained, but that two stripes be added, each equal in width to one seventh the length of the flag. The independent Tamil Senator, S. Nadesan dissented from the report believing that the national flag did not sufficiently express national unity with its retention of the dominant Sinhalese Lion emblem. He would have preferred a tricolour of yellow, red and white or saffron, red and green.
84. Notwithstanding the acknowledgement of the Tamils on the flag, the community continued to be dissatisfied. But of course, the Tamil concerns were more than about a flag and a long and bitter civil war has been fought in Sri Lanka. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam was formed in 1976 as a separatist movement seeking a homeland for the Tamil people in northern and coastal Sri Lanka. The flag of the Tamil Tigers is red with a tiger within a circle of bullets and two crossed rifles.