

The Cry of Pugad Lawin or Balintawak

Argument:

The Cry of Balintawak (or Pugad Lawin) is seen as the start of the Philippine Revolution. However, there are different versions of where and when it actually happened. In this paper, I'll talk about three different accounts from Guillermo Masangkay, Pio Valenzuela, and Santiago Alvarez, and I'll explain which one I think makes the most sense.

Guillermo Masangkay's Account

Basis:

Masangkay was close to Andres Bonifacio. He said the Cry happened on August 26, 1896, in Balintawak, at the house of Apolonio Samson. According to him, Bonifacio and other Katipuneros met there, and after their meeting, they tore up their cedula (tax certificates) as a way of showing they were done following Spanish rule. Masangkay said it was a powerful and emotional moment.

Flaws:

Masangkay shared this story in 1932, which was many years after the event. His memory might not be very accurate anymore. Also, other witnesses mentioned different dates and places, which makes his story less trustworthy.

Against:

Since Masangkay's version was told long after the event and is different from other accounts, it's hard to rely on it completely. His close friendship with Bonifacio might also mean he was trying to protect or highlight Bonifacio's role.

Pio Valenzuela's Account

Basis:

Valenzuela was also a Katipunan leader. He said the Cry took place on August 23, 1896, not in Balintawak but in Pugad Lawin, at the home of Juan Ramos, son of Melchora Aquino (Tandang Sora). He said Bonifacio asked the group if they were ready to fight, and when they agreed, they tore their cedulas and shouted, "Long live the Philippines!" His version was organized and easy to follow.

Flaws:

Even though Valenzuela's version became widely accepted (especially in 1964 by the National Historical Institute), he had given several different versions before. Sometimes he said the location was Balintawak, other times Bahay Toro, Kangkong,

or Pugad Lawin. Because of these inconsistencies, some historians question how accurate his memory was.

Favor:

Despite the inconsistencies, Valenzuela's version is more detailed, with names, dates, and clear actions. The fact that the National Historical Institute supported his version gives it more credibility.

Santiago Alvarez's Account

Basis:

Alvarez was from Cavite and also a Katipunero. He said the Cry happened on August 24, 1896, in Bahay Toro. He described how Bonifacio and the Katipuneros moved from Balintawak to Bahay Toro to plan their next steps. His version focused more on the planning part of the revolution.

Flaws:

Like the others, Alvarez shared his version years after the event. Some of his details are not confirmed by other records or eyewitnesses, which brings up some doubt.

Favor:

Even though there are some missing confirmations, Alvarez's account gives us insight into the planning and decision-making that the Katipuneros went through. It gives more depth to what happened around the Cry, showing it wasn't just a single action but part of a bigger movement.

Final Argument:

All three accounts offer helpful information, but they also confuse us because the details don't match. This might be because it was a chaotic time, or because each person remembered things differently. I believe that the versions by Valenzuela and Alvarez are more believable than Masangkay's. Valenzuela's version is more widely accepted, while Alvarez adds valuable context about how the revolution was planned. Together, they show that the Cry wasn't just one moment—it was part of a series of important actions.

In the end, even if historians can't agree on the exact date or place, the Cry of Balintawak (or Pugad Lawin) remains a symbol of Filipino courage and unity. Learning about these stories made me realize how complex history is and helped me appreciate the bravery of the Katipuneros even more.

Martial Law

Argument:

Martial Law, declared by President Ferdinand Marcos on September 21, 1972, was one of the most controversial moments in Philippine history. Marcos said it was to stop rebellions and restore order, but many believe the real reason was to stay in power. In this part, I'll explain his reasons, the flaws in his claims, and why I disagree with Martial Law.

Marcos' Justification

Basis:

Marcos declared Martial Law through Proclamation No. 1081. He said he needed to control the rise of the Communist Party (CPP) and the New People's Army (NPA). He also mentioned growing crime, bombings, and student protests. One of the main reasons he gave was an ambush on Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile, which he mentioned in his diary as a key reason for his decision.

Flaws:

Later, in 1986, Enrile admitted the ambush was fake—it was staged. This reveals that Martial Law may have been pre-planned, and the ambush was just used as an excuse to make people scared. Also, many reports say that Proclamation 1081 was already prepared even before the ambush happened.

Against:

This shows that Marcos may have lied to the public and used fear to gain total control. His actions were not just for peace but for holding on to power.

The Real Effects of Martial Law

Basis:

During Martial Law, many Filipinos suffered. Thousands were arrested, tortured, or killed. People lost their freedom of speech, and media outlets were shut down. Well-known leaders like Benigno Aquino Jr. and Jose Diokno were jailed early on. The government acted more like a dictatorship than a democracy.

Flaws in Marcos' Claims:

Marcos said Martial Law was needed to protect the country, but the actions taken were abusive. The people's rights and freedoms were removed, and fear ruled the country. His reasons do not justify what actually happened to the people.

Against:

I believe Martial Law was a clear violation of human rights. The government's job is to protect its citizens, not hurt them. The problems in the country could've been solved in better ways—without violence, torture, or abuse.

Final Argument:

Martial Law was not the solution it claimed to be. Instead of helping, it caused fear, pain, and loss of freedom. Marcos used it more as a tool to stay in power than to fix the country's problems. We must learn from this part of our history and make sure it never happens again.

In conclusion, freedom, justice, and truth are the values we should always protect. As students and future citizens, we must stay informed and never forget the voices of those who lived through Martial Law. Their experiences are the real lessons we need to remember.