

**RAMON PADILLA**  
(d.1897)

Bagumbayan Martyr

Ramon Padilla was one of the 13 martyrs of Bagumbayan. He was a Mason and a member of the Katipunan.

Padilla at the time of the outbreak of the Revolution in 1896 was said to be a clerk at the *Comandancia de la Marina* (Navy). He had joined the reform movement and later the *Liga Filipina* during its founding by Rizal in 1892. Along with countless others, he was arrested by the authorities following the discovery of the Katipunan. The discovery was triggered by a personal squabble among employees of the *Diario de Manila*, one of them- Teodoro Patiño- over an expected pay increase. Many of the employees were *Katipuneros*. Patiño was not. Enraged by a poison letter directed against him, Patiño betrayed the existence of the secret revolutionary society to a Spanish friar, who immediately reported the matter to the military authorities. A crackdown followed on suspected subversives and masons, whose homes were ordered searched from 1 October to 25 November 1896. In the list of those searched was one "Ramón Padilla y García". However, in his list of the "Bagumbayan Martyrs", Zaide gives "A." as his middle initial. Imprisoned and tortured, Padilla and 12 others, including Roman Basa, who also was a clerk at the Marina, were marched to Bagumbayan Field on January 11, 1897, and shot - a tragedy among the Masons whose ranks were decimated during those days that historian and Mason Teodoro Kalaw called "that period of terror." Ramon Padilla is the last name in his list of martyred Masons.

An interesting detail about the otherwise largely undocumented life of Padilla concerns his almost tragic confrontation with Emilio Aguinaldo.

Apparently, Aguinaldo had an altercation with Padilla, and felt aggrieved by it. According to him, Padilla tried to impress people with his superior air, but only succeeded in showing how rude and uncouth he really was.

The incident came to light shortly after Aguinaldo was inducted into the *Katipunan*. Noticing his glumness, Bonifacio, who was with other high-ranking *Katipuneros*, asked him the reason for it. Aguinaldo told him of his previous experience with Padilla. To assuage what he considered Aguinaldo's sullied honor, the Supremo immediately sent Dr. Pio Valenzuela and Jose Dizon to the house of Padilla for redress, by way of an apology. If Padilla refused to offer one, the two emissaries were to act as seconds to a duel.

Santiago Alvarez, who was also present, teased Aguinaldo about being nervous over that prospect. Aguinaldo was infuriated. As it turned out, however, there was not going to be any duel. Dr. Valenzuela and Jose Dizon returned and informed everyone that Padilla had decided to apologize to Aguinaldo.

History might have taken a different course had he not done so.

On 20 December 1916, the municipal board of Manila named in his honor a small park on Herbosa Street.

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