

# Rite of Passage (The Circumcision Poem)

by Bona Rae Villarta (June 15, 2011)

Background: I have been curious about how Filipino traditions translate to actions or non-actions in other countries, such as circumcision usually performed before a boy reaches adolescence as a rite of passage here. However, as Filipinos migrate, they usually have that earlier for their sons or not at all.

When a boy comes of age,  
Our society dictates that  
He should be cut  
So as to distinguish him  
From the younger ones,  
Now that he's a man.

During the time between  
The moment of his birth  
And the moment he is cut  
He enjoys being a boy  
While not fully mature,  
He is carefree and freewheeling.

But why do some choose not to undergo this?  
Maybe they don't want to give some of their habits up  
Or they are afraid that they lose their image with this.

In other countries or cultures, this either comes soon after birth  
Or not at all; or perhaps he chooses to have it here  
Still others have a different way of defining this  
Whatever or wherever the reasons, it is the same  
Rite of passage most boys undergo when they come of age.

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