A GROUP OF adult women lead the community in the ceremony and chant poetic lyrics. It can be performed to greet an individual celebrating his/her birthday, someone who had just recovered from a serious illness, someone returning after a long absence, or to greet an esteemed visitor. The lyrics of the *putong* vary in accordance with the purpose of the ceremony. It is said to have originated in Tiguion, Gasan from where it spread to the other communities of Marinduque. The songs are written in verse.

*Putong* is usually held in the late afternoon and may last for three to four hours, depending on the number of people who will participate. The *mamumutong* is a group of six to eight women in the late middle age who lead the community in the ceremony, directing the phases and taking lead in the singing of the *putong* songs. They are usually accompanied by two guitarists. The mamumutong proceeds to the house of the *puputungan* (the one to be crowned). The group dances while singing the folksong *putong* in front of the house of the honoree. Then, they go inside the house to look for the puputungan until they find the person and lead him or her to a chair prepared by them. Two persons will be on both sides of the chair: either a boy or a girl, holding two lighted candles with a plain white blanket. When the puputungan is already there, the plain white blanket is removed to show the puputungan to everyone present. The puputungan remains seated while the mamumutong continues singing and dancing until the next phase of the ceremony.

When the performance ceases, they shower the honoree with a confetti of petals and bits of paper, even coins; or presented with palm fronds, sprigs of flowers and single roses. Paper bills of different denominations are pinned on his clothing. There are variations to the presentation of these gifts. At times, the presentors come in a single file, while singing; at other times they flock about the celebrated person.

The next part is the crowning. An improvised crown of vines, leaves, flowers or any festive material, is placed on top of the head of the *pinutungan*. The mother or the father, or a senior individual performs the crowning. After this, the mamumutong will sing the “Viva,” a triumphant song. Other songs like the “Hosanna” are sung after the “Viva”. Then people carry the *pinutungan* around.

With the *putong* phase done, the crowd feasts on the food prepared by the host. They dance, sing and socialize the rest of the evening.

*Felicily Magparangalan-Estadilla (FME)*

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*Putong / Putungan*

TAGALOG, MARINDUQUE ISLAND PROVINCE, CENTRAL PHILIPPINES. Among the better known and popular traditional practices and rituals of Marinduque is the *putong*. This is practiced by the Marinduqueños up to the present especially in the town of Gasan and its barangays.