

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ph.D. in Philippine Studies

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**SAPATERO IN MARIKINA CITY: ENACTING ECONOMIES IN
THE PHILIPPINES' FOOTWEAR CAPITAL**

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APPROVAL SHEET

I hereby recommend the dissertation prepared under my supervision by Ma. Concepcion Rapisora-Lagos, entitled **Sapatero in Marikina city: Enacting Economies in the Philippines' Footwear Capital**, presented to the Tri-College Ph.D. Philippine Studies Program under the supervision of the Asian Center, the College of Arts and Letters and the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Philippine Studies.

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Any misinformation or errors in this work are solely mine.

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Abstract

This study argues that Marikina city's nostalgically popular trademark as the Philippines' footwear capital has been made possible by sapatero in the past and present who have enacted a localised economy.

This narrative begins with the story of the footwear-making industry in the sleepy town of Marikina at the end of the nineteenth-century. Then, through archival research, analysis of previous works and participant-observation, a series of infrastructural, economic, political and social phenomena will be problematized to better understand the periods and 'perceived moments' when footwear production in the city reached national prestige and encountered obstacles. Next, ascertaining the causes of this localised industry's presently informal structures will prove that its sapatero have continued to adapt and survive amidst a series of local, national and global challenges. Lastly, the manner with which footwear in Marikina is promoted by the city's local government and represented by private retailers will be manifested. These channels, albeit faced with a number of problems, are also shown to be sources of opportunity which can improve the state of footwear-making and the lives of Marikina's sapatero.

At the heart of this work are the life histories of sapatero who have witnessed a time of prosperity and periods of set-backs in this localised industry. Illuminating the lives of sapatero, from which an enacted economy emerged, provides a magnified view about footwear not too captivated on the amount or cost produced, but on people who create footwear in/for the city. This study shall illustrate that it is on account primarily of Marikina's sapatero, and less on footwear as a commodity, that Marikina city has enacted a localised economy. Demonstrating this here intends to inform theoretical ideas relevant to discourses on work, culture and urban theory. The research questions and objectives of this study are a means to dialogue with such broad base of conceptual aggregates.

The case of footwear in Marikina city exemplifies how a city is best understood in its own terms rather than pitting it vis-à-vis "global standards" of economic progress. The survival of a dynamic network of sapatero, detached from the global competition of footwear commodities, while neither directly contributing to the financial revenue of the city nor the country's, can be interpreted as a certain form of shielding which is decent evidence of the survival of a city's localised industry rather than a sign of its decline.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS AND ACTIVITIES ATTENDED

Interview dates arranged chronologically:

Candazo, Romeo. (Former Congressman of the municipality of Marikina). September 10, 2012. Kapitan Moy Café.

Mr. Lim. September 10, 2012. Kapitan Moy Café.

Valentino, Nelson. September 12, 2012. Valentino Shoe Shop, also his residence.

De la Paz, Rudolfo. Historian and playwright. September 12, 2012. His Residence.

De Guzman, Rudolfo (Tatay Ruding), father of former Marikina Mayor Osmundo de Guzman. December 3, 2012.

Bacnat, Victoria, sapatero, May 15, 2014.

Gallarpe, Mariano, Lourdes, sapatero. May 23, 2014

Flores, Renato, sapatero. June 10, 2014.

Mataro, Rowena, sapatero. June 11, 2014

Tiamzon, Cleotilde, sapatero. July 4, 2014

Jun, sapatero. October 6-7, 2014

Cruz-Reyes, Deborah, sapatero. November 26, 2014.

Valero, Faye. *Pustoryosa* designer/owner. October 6, 2014

Willy, sapatero. December 2014.

Kuya John, sapatero. May 6, 2015

Cruz-Reyes, Florencio From May 2014 until 2015 (regularly met and chatted)

Activities:

1. Uppermaking workshop – April 28 to May 2014 San Roque Barangay Hall;
2. Seminar on Adhesives – May 15, 2014 Kapitan Moy Sentrong Pangkultura;
3. Shoe Design Masterclass, Design Conceptualisation Workshop – July 10, 2014 Marikina Convention Center;
4. Shoe Design Walking Tour – October 3, 2014 Around Marikina, from the Footwear Museum, Otto Building, Roweliza, Pam's Shoe supply, and Riverbanks Center.
5. Footwear Making Skills Training – May to June 2015, Marikina Polytechnic College