

The Possible Worlds of Rafael Daniel Baboom: An Indian-Armenian Merchant in Manila¹

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Abstract

This paper attempts to extrapolate, from Baboom's scant biography, the possible circles that he moved around in as a trader during his roughly six decades of existence from the 1770s to the 1830s. Very little is known of him, but he is perhaps most familiar to art historians as the Indian-Armenian merchant who commissioned Damian Domingo to paint his well-known *tipos del país*. Luciano P. R. Santiago documents aspects of his life, but as secondary to the works of the master, Domingo. By an examination of the circumstances of Baboom's existence, we hope to come to terms with the "everyday" of a real-life figure practicing his trade in the 19th century.

Key words: Rafael Daniel Baboom, Damian Domingo, Armenians in the Philippines

What We Know

Unconsciously, Nick Joaquin and Luciano Santiago's work (1990), *The World of Damian Domingo*,² must have stuck so much in my mind that I gave this paper its present title, "The Possible Worlds of Rafael Daniel Baboom." For that is perhaps what it is—a faint echo, a ping, as it were, in the sound and fury of the *Academia*³ director's (Domingo) life.

Domingo is known—though the fact has been contested⁴—as the "painter" of several albums, *tipos del país*, that Baboom in turn is said to have "authored." Referred to as a "collection," the albums are mentioned as *dibujado* [sic, *dibujada* (fem.) in reference to a *colección* by Domingo and *dispuesta* or *ynbentado* [?] by Baboom (Newberry Collections, n.d.; Filipinas Heritage Library n.d). In the albums, *dibujado*—"drawn" or "sketched"—is intentionally differentiated from *dispuesta*—"provided" or "prepared"—and *ynbentado*, i.e., (*inventado*), meaning "invented," "made up," and/or "dreamt." (Could the latter term perhaps be a confused rendition of the Spanish *inventariada*, i.e., *inventoried*?). Apart from these albums, Baboom's name does not appear in other sources, yet his association with Domingo has called the attention of many scholars. Just who was this man?

Santiago refers to Baboom in his studies on Domingo, but also devotes one full essay to him.⁵ From these various sources, we gather the following: Baboom was born circa 1770 or 1790⁶ from Catholic parents of the Armenian rite in Calcutta, India. When of age,⁷ he marries one Marian Aratum Isaac Agamur from Bombay, then moves to Madras with his wife and mother. There, he engages in silk and cotton manufacturing. The couple have a daughter, who dies in childhood of unstated causes. In the 1820s, having left his wife and mother in Madras, he establishes in Binondo the *Factoria de Baboom*, which dealt with the import and export of fabrics, with Don Mañas Sanz de Vismanos. He later leaves the management of his business to the latter. He is said to have lived a solitary life with his Armenian valet, Manuk Zorab. Baboom meets Domingo as a member of the *Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*. He dies in September 1832.

In this paper, I extrapolate on the details of Baboom's scant biography to look at three interrelated "worlds" that constituted his "everyday"—his Armenian roots, his life as a trader, and his personal circumstances.

Being Armenian

The Armenians in both India and the Philippines were a minority on two related counts—by religious and ethnic affiliation. In India, Hinduism has always been the predominant religion, although many Armenian churches were established in different parts, including in Agra, Kolkata, Chennai (Madras), and Surat. Perhaps Hinduism's polytheistic nature allowed for a certain "openness" to other faiths.

In the Philippines, on the other hand, Latin or Roman Catholicism became ascendant upon colonization. However, because of rifts between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Churches in the 17th century, Armenians who subscribed to the Eastern rite of Catholicism were considered "like other enemies of the Holy Faith" (Clarence-Smith 2004, 429). On 1 June 1711, for example, a Royal Decree by Philip V established that "infidels" should live in the Parian, together with the Chinese and Muslims. This policy began to be implemented in Manila in 1713, laxly or more forcefully—to the extent of expulsion from the year 1729—depending on the current political and ecclesiastical dispensation (Baena and Lamikiz 2014, *passim*). In 1730, two Armenians were expelled (710). Clarence-Smith mentions Inquisition documents in Mexico involving 24 Armenians investigated during the years 1734 and 1809,⁸ as well as one Jacob Isay, who "got into trouble...for going to either Armenian or Catholic services as he pleased" (Clarence-Smith 2004, 429–30, citing Angeles 1981). While data so far document the presence of Armenians in the Philippines, it is unclear where such services were taking place.⁹

Ethnically, Armenians in both India and the Philippines have always been a minority. Armenians are recorded to have been in India from the

fifth century BCE, and settlements had been established there as early as the seventh century CE. Diaspora populations driven by the Ottoman and Safavid empires reached India in the 15th century, and further migration received additional impetus in the 17th century when the British East India Company forged trading deals with the Armenian “nation” (Clarence-Smith 2004, 429). The arrival of Armenians in the Philippines is difficult to ascertain, but may perhaps date to the 1620s (Baena and Lamikiz 2014, 701–02). However, this presence is to see a drastic decline in 1850 (Clarence-Smith 2004, 430).

Baboom, who is believed to have made his move to Manila around the first quarter of the 19th century might have been wary of discriminatory tendencies in the city. Because of the Royal Decree of 1711, as previously mentioned, Armenians experienced intermittent discrimination from both the state and the ecclesiastics. Even if they were already Catholics, it seems that in the Philippines, people were suspicious of converted Armenians, as the former believed this to be a ploy to avoid expulsion and to continue their interests in the country (Baena and Lamikiz 2014, *passim*).

But in the case of Raphael Daniel (R.D.), it appears that even in India, his family were active Catholics. For example, Muthiah (2010) describes a Daniel Raphael (D.R.) Baboom as “a pillar of the Catholic Church” in Madras. Initially, I assumed this was the same as R.D. However, it now appears that the said D.R. was R.D.’s father.¹⁰ At any rate, Henry Davidson Love (1913, Vol. 3, 491), discussing the “affairs of the Roman Church,” also specifies that in 1796, the Bishop of Madras proposed “eight persons of property and fair character” for selection as Syndics.¹¹ D. R. Baboom was among the candidates, but he was not chosen. However, his nomination meant that he was of certain means and social stature. Moreover, that the Babooms were well-placed in Madras society was also evidenced by a tombstone dedicated to Michael Joannes Baboom, an uncle. The epitaph mentioned that he left considerable goods to his family.¹² Muthiah (2010) also mentioned a Michael (Marcar) Johannes Baboom—born in 1730 and died in 1810—whom he suspected to be D. Raphael’s father. He was more likely an elder uncle, seeing as how he shared with

Michael the same family name, Johannes/Joannes Baboom, their father's name. The name, Michael Marcar, was also in a list of tombstone inscriptions (Cotton 1945, 153), together with the documentation for Michael's epitaph. Cotton, however, did not explain the relationship of Michael (Marcar) to Michael. The difference in seven years between their dates of birth does not warrant a father-and-son relationship. They were most likely brothers.

Baboom's marriage to Marian Aratum¹³ Isaac Agamur (the last two names refer to Marian's father; it was customary among Armenians to add the father's name to the surname) reinforces the practice of marriage to people of the same ethnicity. The names Baboom, Aratum, and Agamur (and their many variants¹⁴) are established Armenian surnames, solidifying a genealogy traceable to Armenian roots. Yet Baboom did not think to bring his family (wife and mother) to the Philippines. According to Baena and Lamikiz (2014, 716–17), for many Armenians, Manila was not often seen as a final destination, despite its importance for their business.¹⁵ As there was perhaps intention to return, the family stayed behind. Apart from his immediate family, Baboom's supposed valet, Manuk Zorab came to Manila, and he might have been a relative. Whatever the case, both the names, Manuk and Zorab (and their variants) are those of Armenian families, and in fact count among the wealthier ones in India.

Many Armenians in the Philippines, like Baboom, might have proceeded from various parts of India, but ultimately are related to Armenians coming from Persia (Iran). For example, of the 26 Armenian "reconciled to the Catholic faith" investigated from 1734 to 1772, except for two (one being born in India, the other of unknown provenance), all indicated birth in New Julfa, the Armenian section of the Safavid capital, Isfahan, in Iran. However, these Armenians did not arrive directly from Iran, but had been to many places, including India—Surat, Bengal and especially, Madras—prior to their stay in the Philippines (Baena and Lamikiz 2014, *passim*).

While recognizing their minority status, attitudes towards Armenians in general had been rather ambivalent; it fluctuated between tolerance—

because of their role in the Philippines' economy—and disdain, precisely because such advantages were seen as a type of “commercial tyranny” (Baena and Lamikiz 2014, 718). Moreover, during the 18th century, the wheels of the Spanish Inquisition were still grinding, and people belonging to the Armenian faith were seen as schismatic. These circumstantial instances show the difficulty of being Armenian, which Baboom might have known prior to his decision to move to the Islands. While he might have been spared more stringent discrimination because he had embraced the Catholic faith, his Armenian ethnicity endured. In venturing to Manila, connections with the local Armenian community and the local elite would certainly be an advantage.

The World of Commerce

Historically, Armenians have been known to be traders. Consider this description from a 17th- to early-18th-century source:

The Armenians are civil and polite, and have a great deal of good sense and honesty: they apply themselves very much to trade, which they make their chief business... They are not only masters of the whole trade of the Levant, but also have a great share in that of the most considerable towns in Europe; for it is very common to meet with some Armenians at Leghorn, at Venice, in England, and in Holland; whilst on the other side, they travel into the dominions of the Grand Mogul, Siam, Java, the Philippine Islands, and over all the east... (cited in Baladouni and Makepeace 1998, xiii)

While Armenians did involve themselves in other trades, being a merchant was quite normal. In India, as previously mentioned, the Armenians gained trade concessions—first from Mughal rulers and later from the British East India Company. Moreover, in the trade with the East for spices and silver, Armenians were seen as “neutral” and were good “cover” for English trade.

In the Philippines, despite existing biases, Armenians continued to ply their trade, but by the 19th century, their numbers had dwindled. Clarence-Smith (2004) cites that they may have become unpopular with the Spaniards even early on because they lent 40,000 dollars to the cash-strapped British occupying Manila from 1762 to 1764. He also points out that they might have flocked out of Manila in the early 1820s when silver ceased to flow to the Pacific because of the independence (from Spain) of Mexico and Peru. Certainly, by 1850, the Armenian population had declined drastically (Clarence-Smith 2004, 430).

Despite the decreasing desirability of the Philippines as a destination for Armenians in the 19th century,¹⁶ Armenians like Rafael Baboom continued to come. Santiago pegs Baboom's move to Manila in the 1820s, but later pushes this to the turn of the 19th century.¹⁷ However, evidence suggests that he did come at the later date.

Interestingly, at least three accounts in the *Bombay Courier*¹⁸—1809, 1814, 1817—place a “Mr. Baboom” (cited once) and “Mr. D. Baboom” (cited twice) in India during the turn of the 19th century. It appears now that these trips were done by Daniel Raphael, Raphael's father. The references to D. R. Baboom often pertain to arrivals from certain parts: in these cases, from Madras to Calcutta, from Mauritius to Calcutta, then from Calcutta to Madras, respectively. The trips were most likely done for business, and such arrivals and departures, among others, of “prominent” people were usually mentioned in the paper. Also, an annotation in one document—dated 1813—from the British Library (Asia, Pacific and Africa collections) remarks, “The Madras Government take grave exception to the request of Daniel Raphael Baboom, a Madras merchant, to be allowed to ship Ceylon cinnamon to England, in contravention of the bond entered into by him with the Ceylon government.”¹⁹

Clearly, Raphael's father moved around quite a bit from 1809 to 1817. And what of R.D.Baboom? He is not mentioned in the aforementioned documents, so we cannot ascertain his whereabouts. However, we can assume that perhaps by this time, he was already learning

a trade. If we were to assume that he was born in 1790, he would have been between 19 and 27 at this time, most likely married, and perhaps already gainfully employed.

It is highly possible that R. D. Baboom came to Manila in the 1820s, but most likely after 1821. But why did he come to Manila? One reason might have been personal. Muthiah (2010), probably using Cotton's (1945) *List*, mentions that D. R. Baboom died in Constantinople in 1821.²⁰ By that time, R. D. would have been 31, an age seasoned enough to go into new ventures, especially now that his father had passed away, as had his daughter at a much earlier period.

However, by this time in the Philippines, the galleon trade would have officially ceased, many East India companies were at their ebb, and trade in Indian textiles—for the longest time, the most important product from India—was already in decline. Was he perhaps thinking that the Philippines offered better prospects? Yet, Santiago (1990) tells us that after establishing the *Factoria de Baboom*, he eventually leaves his business to his partner, Sanz de Vismanos [i.e., Sáenz de Vizmanos]. While called a *Factoria*, this was not your “factory” in the terms we usually understand: as a place for fabricating products, i.e., a *fabrica*. Baboom's *Factoria* appears to have been a ‘trading post;’ it dealt with the import and export of fabrics. All the same, the decision to engage in the cloth trade might still have been associated with its commercial viability, even if it had already gone past its peak. This could probably explain why, even in India, the older Baboom was also venturing into spices.

Baena and Lamikiz (2014, 703–04) describe the *factoria* as semipublic establishments of residences (*viviendas*) and storehouses (*almacenes*) set aside for foreign merchants and agents (*factores*). This was a set-up that first appeared in Flanders during the Middle Ages. Biases against the Armenians in the 18th century extended to the descriptions of their compartments in these *factorias*. They were composed of more than ten principal houses (*casas principales*), where they lived with their many other comrades (*camaradas*) and companions, including their Armenian and

“gentile” servants, as well as other “barbarians” (*sirvientes armenios y gentiles y otros barbaros*)(Baena and Lamikiz 2004).

Armenians were also described as being dressed in “gold and silk,” with skirts (*faldones*) and turbans, and enjoyed good horses, boats, music and other entertainments which “modesty omits” (Baena and Lamikiz 2014, 703). The descriptions apparently cast aspersions on the “unChristian” behaviors of these traders. An art work attributed to Juan Ravenet depicts a “typical” Armenian in the late 18th century (Ceres n.d.). Factorias for Armenians, at least at that time, were known to be in the outskirts of Manila—Santa Cruz, Rosario, and San Gabriel, which constituted the general area of the Parián, the Chinese quarter in Manila in Spanish colonial Philippines.

Baboom’s choice of Manila might also have been related to his religious affiliation. Despite prejudices from the Spaniards, Armenians still had a continuous presence, and probably because they were fewer in the 19th century and their earlier role in trade no longer as significant, they were no longer considered threatening.

If Baboom did come to the Philippines in the 1820s and died in 1832, that would have been just roughly a decade of doing business. It is also not clear when he turned over his business to Vizmanos, or how he met him. It might have been possible that introductions were made via the Armenian trade network in Manila; and that it was through Vizmanos that he became a member of the *Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País*.

India records other members of the Baboom clan, the most prominent of them being Gregory (also Gregorio) Marcar Baboom, who died in 1833 and was Secretary of a newly opened insurance office in Canton in 1806 (Canta 2014, 94). His relationship to Raphael Daniel is not established, although a link via Michael (Marcar) Johannes Baboom might be possible. Earlier, we mentioned Michael Joannes Baboom, most likely an uncle of D. R. Baboom. The latter erected a memorial in his favor.²¹ Moreover, Michael Joannes and Michael Marcar are both buried at the

cemetery of the Cathedral of St. Thomé, Mylapore, which was one of the many sites where British and other prominent people of Madras were buried (Cotton 1945, 153).

And who was Matías Sanz de Vismanos?²² Matías was a younger contemporary of Raphael (in fact, some five years younger) and belonged to the Sáenz de Vizmanos family, quite prominent in Manila social circles. From their genealogy,²³ it appears that Baboom's business partner was Matías Joaquin Sáenz de Vizmanos y Lara, who was born in 1795 (death unknown); he was one of three sons of Don Bonifacio and Doña Ana Maria de Lara y Abbarategui. Matías Joaquin had a twin brother, Jose Matías. But in the genealogy, there is no other data on him except for his birth. All the three brothers had double names—Manuel Jose (the eldest), Matías Joaquin, and Jose Matías. While the twins both carry “Matías” in their names, in practice, it appears that the first names were more commonly used than their second names, which makes it more likely that it is Matías Joaquin, rather than Jose Matías, who became associated with Baboom.²⁴

Matías Joaquin's partnership with Baboom appears to have no documentation; but records attest to his being *Socio-Secretario* of the Real Sociedad in 1833 (after Baboom's death), at which time he moved to establish a *casa de moneda* (mint) in the Philippines (Diaz Arenas 1850, 8). In the 1840s, he was also recorded to have engaged in the Spanish government's legalized opium trade (Bamero 2006, 61) and in 1846, was listed as a *comerciante matriculado* (Buzeta y Bravo 1850, Vol. 2, 255), i.e., a registered trader. The older sibling, Manuel Jose, born in 1792, served as the Philippine representative to the Spanish Cortés from 1822 to 1823 (Llobet 2012).²⁵ In his “Testamento” (see Appendix 1), Baboom assigned Sáenz de Vizmanos as executor of his will (and his mother, Eulabier and Abraam, his brother-in-law, as co-executors), a confidence that perhaps went beyond business partnerships.

Baboom's Personal World

Santiago, who had first reported of Baboom's "Testamentario,"²⁶ or will, was able to reconstruct some details of Baboom's life, but revisiting this information might perhaps clarify some other things about his personal circumstances.

Baboom would only live to the age of 42. Because little is known of him and his life, he was described as a "loner given to aesthetic pursuits atypical of a businessman" (Santiago 1990). He was also said to have lived his remaining years alone in his house in Binondo, with only his Armenian valet, Manuk Zorab, in attendance (119). Yet from the little data we have on Baboom, we are not given such a sad picture. While a daughter's death at an early age might have been tragic (assuming that he was married between the young ages of 15 and 20, as was traditional among Armenians, and had a child soon after), so would a father's. D. R. Baboom was reported to have died in 1821, yet we suspect that soon after, R. D. Baboom, in his thirties, arrived in Manila where he managed to strike a partnership (and perhaps friendship) with Sáenz de Vizmanos. He established his business there, and managed to earn enough to leave an inheritance for his family in Madras. In between, he was also said to have visited his family in Madras; if not, he was assumed to be travelling around the country "observing and picking up interesting examples of native apparel to expand his collection" (Santiago 1990, 119). Of course, for a journey which would take considerable time, we wonder how often Baboom actually travelled to visit his wife and mother in India; or to make his cloth-hunting trips. He also meets Damian Domingo (who was assigned the directorship in 1826, of the relatively newly opened *Academia de Dibujo*) and "commissions" him to do the *tipos del país*. These activities would certainly have involved quite a lot of socialization.

When we recall how the *factoria* in the 18th century was described as a complex of principal houses shared by their owners with others (although circumstances might have changed within a century), it is likely

that while they lived in individual houses, neighbors were acquainted with each other. Moreover, in his “Testamento,” Baboom instructs his executors to return *encomiendas*²⁷—which had been entrusted to him for safekeeping—to their respective owners. This means that contacts, whether business or social, continued to be a part of Baboom’s life despite living in the house (most likely also the Factoria de Baboom) with his valet.

The isolation might indeed have come towards the end of his life, when he was confined to his bed because of sickness (“Testamento”). At any rate, he did have Zorab to attend to him. Santiago (1990, 119) describes him as a servant, but in the will, he is referred to as a *dependiente*. According to the *Diccionario de la lengua española* of the Real Academia Española, the term may be understood in two senses: (1) as an employee who attends to clients in a store (*empleado que tiene a su cargo atender a los clientes en las tiendas*); or (2) as a person who serves another or is subaltern of someone in authority (*persona que sirve a otra o es subalterna de una autoridad*).

Zorab may have functioned as both; in the “Testamento,” Baboom mentions that his executor (Saéñz de Vizmanos) will be informed by Zorab of all business-related transactions. Moreover, Baboom also says that Zorab knows of the *encomiendas* which should be returned to their respective owners. Zorab was clearly more than just a servant.

The exact worth of Baboom’s estate has not been ascertained,²⁸ but we surmise that there was “enough” to be inherited to necessitate a will. Of those mentioned, we find the following:

Two reales each (for *mandas forzozas*, a type of estate tax meant to indemnify expenses related to the War of Independence)

Two hundred pesos (for Masses for his soul)

Jewelry (brought into the marriage by his wife, but which were by then in the possession of his mother)

Cash and goods

In the distribution of his estate, he assigned “*el tercio y el quinto*” of his cash (*caudal liquido*) and all of his goods (*de todos sus bienes*) to his wife; for all other remaining goods (*de todo sus bienes restantes*), he assigned his mother as “sole and universal heiress.”²⁹

Curious as well were the names of the two women who inherited his estate. His wife’s name as rendered in the will was Marian Aratun Ysaac Aganur de Daniel Baboom. As previously mentioned, it was practice to include the father’s name in the names of the children, so that we see “Ysaac Aganur” attached to Marian’s name, at the same time that the name of the husband “de Daniel Baboom” is also appended. The mother’s name is simply rendered as Eulabier Daniel Baboom. Lacking the “de” as in the name of Marian, we nevertheless assume that “Daniel Baboom” was Eulabier’s husband and Raphael Daniel’s father, who had died in Turkey in 1821.

And now, the matter of the albums or was it perhaps just one album copied by others? What were these paintings for? The *tipos del país* that Baboom commissioned Domingo to paint, especially of scenes depicting mother and daughter, and those of women grieving, might have helped “the sensitive Baboom mourn rather than run away from his haunting past” (Santiago 1990, 118). Moreover, he might have been collecting local cloth as patterns for fabrics, and also as a hobby (119). In another source, the albums were seen as guides to taste and dressing style to determine which fabrics would be successful in the local market (Joaquin and Santiago 1990, 18–19). Wanting his collection of textiles immortalized, Baboom encounters Damian Domingo and commissions him to do the paintings (Santiago 1990, 120). However, Carlos Quirino (1961, 96) believes that these paintings might have been sent to Spain as part of the report of the activities of the Real Sociedad Económica, and surmises that Baboom might have been an official, although he finds no mention of Baboom’s name in the Society’s records.³⁰

Publicly, R. D. Baboom appears to have cut the figure of a “successful” trader, even by the time of his death. His death in Manila as “Esq. of Madras, merchant” was reported in the *Asiatic Journal and*

Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China and Australasia.³¹ Yet unlike many Armenians in the Philippines who returned to their homelands, Baboom did not, but it is not clear why. Apparently, he was still in touch with his family. By 19th-century standards, he lived a full, gentleman's life.³² His "everyday" world, while tested by family circumstances and the biases of ethnicity, did not hinder him from adventuring into a new world—a different place, a different race, a different culture. By so doing, he managed to form new friendships, and established himself into a trade he might have been familiar with, given the circumstances. Such were the fortunes of Raphael Daniel Baboom.

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End Notes

¹ Originally delivered as part of the Alumni Lecture Series, UP Asian Center, 25 November 2019. Considerable parts have been edited and updated for purposes of publication. Certain materials of this essay have also been taken from a section, "Focused Study: Don Raphael Daniel Baboom: An Indian-Armenian Merchant in Manila," of the author's dissertation, "Indian Textiles in the Philippines: Contexts of Encounter and Traces of Practice" (Canta 2014). The findings from this study have also been revised and updated, based on new information.

² See *The World of Damian Domingo*, Nick Joaquin and Luciano P. R. Santiago, 1990. Manila: Metropolitan Museum.

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- ³ Damián Domingo established the first formal fine arts school in the Philippines as a personal initiative. Called the Academia de Dibujo (1821), this was later merged with an Academy of the same name established by the Real Sociedad Economica de Amigos del Pais (1823). He also became director of this Academy.
- ⁴ Florina H. Capistrano-Baker (2004, 2017) contends that only the album at the Edward E. Ayer collection at the Newberry Library was painted by Damian Domingo. The rest were copies made by Chinese artists.
- ⁵ See Santiago 1990.
- ⁶ Santiago (1990) pegs Baboom's birth year as 1790. In a later book (2010), Baboom's year of birth is 1770.
- ⁷ Traditionally, Armenian marriages were arranged. The bride could be between 14 and 16; and the groom, between 15 and 20.
- ⁸ Baena and Lamikiz (2014, 711–13) mention 26 Armenians who, between the years 1734 to 1772, reconciled with the Roman Catholic faith, although only one was of Indian birth (the rest being born in New Julfa, Isfahan, Iran).
- ⁹ Unverified sources in the internet mention that until the Philippine Revolution of 1896, non-Roman Catholic churches were prohibited from being established in the country. Actual Orthodox churches (to which the Armenian Catholic churches belong) were established only in the 20th century.
- ¹⁰ Santiago (1990/2010) mentions that the names (Daniel Raphael and Raphael Daniel) were interchangeable, and I went along with that. However, it now appears that Daniel Raphael and Raphael Daniel were distinct persons. In Raphael Daniel's "Testamento," he names his mother as "sole and universal heiress." The mother's name is listed as Eulabier Daniel Baboom. Following custom, the name of the husband is attached to the wife's name (as would also the father's name). In this case, however, only the husband's name, "Daniel Baboom," is attached.
- ¹¹ Syndic refers to an independent layman, who is actual owner of land, but loans it to a church.
- ¹² The rough translation of the epitaph also mentions that Michael Joannes was 56 when he died in 1793 (and was thus born in 1737), and that the tombstone was erected by his nephew, Daniel Raphael, who would have been 20 at that time (following a birth date of 1773). See also note 21.
- ¹³ In Baboom's will, the name is actually rendered as Aratun.
- ¹⁴ Variants of Baboom: Babon, Babonan, Babonaw, Baboneau, Babonna; of Aratum: Arathoon, Aratoon, Arrathoon and Arratoon; and Agamur: Aganoor, Aganoore, Aganour, Agner, Agnoor.
- ¹⁵ This differs largely from other Southeast Asian states (Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar), where Armenian communities continue to thrive to the present.
- ¹⁶ Baena and Lamikiz (2014, 718) think that this "golden age" of the network of Armenians coming from Julfa (as was true also of other commercial diasporas led by ethnic minorities) had already reached its final stages by the end of the 18th century.
- ¹⁷ Santiago erroneously writes 18th century.
- ¹⁸ See *Bombay Courier* in the reference list.
- ¹⁹ British Library. Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections. IOR/F/4/452/11079 Feb-Dec 1813.
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- ²⁰ Data from the *List of Inscriptions on Tombs or Monuments in Madras Possessing Historical or Archaeological Interest*, vol. 1, p. 153, by Julian James Cotton (1945) mentions that D. R. Baboom died in Constantinople on 21 January 1821 at 48 years old (and was therefore born in 1773). The closeness of the year that he died and his supposed move to the Philippines is uncanny. In an earlier work (Canta 2014, 92), I even suggested that perhaps the death in Constantinople was generated by the Madras rumor mills to explain his absence. Apparently, D. R. Baboom—not to be confused with R. D. Baboom—did, in fact, die in Constantinople.
- ²¹ The epitaph reads, “HIC JACET MICHAEL JOANNES BABOOM VERA FIDE CLARUS, IN DEO OPTIMO SPE CLARIOR SUIS ENIM ELEEMOSYNIS DIVES FACTUS, EXTERIS SUIS QUE NOTA CHARITATE CLARISSIMUS; CLERO PUERIQUE QUET ET QUANTA DEDIT, TOT ET TANTA SUAE RELIQUIT BONA FAMILIAE, ANNO AETATIS SUAE 56 PIE OBIT MADRAS DIE 20 MARTII 1793. TAM BONO PARENTI HOC POSUIT MONUMENTUM EIUS NEPOS DANIEL RAPHAEL BABOOM.”

There are two versions which I saw, one from the Chater (n.d) genealogy; and another from Cotton (1945, volume 1, 153). The above text is a consolidation of the two texts which I checked against an online application (yandex.translate), which corrected some of the Latin words. A rough translation done on the Chater text was done in 2013, and roughly reads, “Here lies Michael John Baboom, famed (clarus) for his true belief, great of faith in God Almighty, made rich by his (?)... so much goods did he leave to his family. Died in the year of grace 20 March 1793 at Madras, aged 56. To his beloved memory, his grandson Daniel Raphael Baboom erected this memorial.” I thank Bruce John Graham for his translation—via personal communication (e-mail)—22 February 2013. The contentious term here is **NEPOS**. Graham translated it to “grandson,” which is how some translation sites have also translated the term. However, some other sites have translated it to “nephew.” See also note 12.

- ²² Santiago, in his essays, writes out his name in this manner, but it is clear that in Baboom’s will, it is written as Matías Sáenz de Vizmanos.
- ²³ A genealogy of the descendants of Don Bonifacio Sáenz de Vizmanos (b.1750s?) up to the sixth generation was graciously made available to me by Gonzalo Velasco Berenguer (n.d.).
- ²⁴ In my earlier essay on Baboom (Canta 2014), without the benefit of this genealogy, I was able to find citations on Matías Sáenz de Vizmanos, and suspected these might be namesakes, as it appeared that he had a very long life. At any rate, here are the members of the Bonifacio Sáenz de Vizmanos family who have carried the name “Matías:

First generation:

Matías Joaquin Sáenz de Vizmanos y Lara (b. 23 Feb 1795)
 José **Matías** Sáenz de Vizmanos y Lara (b. 23 Feb 1795) } sons of Bonifacio

Second generation:

Matías Sáenz de Vizmanos y Regidor (b. 17 Sep 1827) } son of Matías Joaquin,
 grandson of Bonifacio

Fourth generation:

Matías Sáenz de Vizmanos y Lecaroz (b. 1856) } son of Matías SdV y Regidor,
great-grandson of Bonifacio

Note, too, that in Baboom's will, Matías is assigned Executor (*Albacea*), while his brother, who signs his name as Jose Sáenz de Vizmanos, appears as one of the witnesses.

- ²⁵ In Velasco Berenguer's (n.d.) genealogy, notes indicate roles that some descendants of the Sáenz de Vizmanos family have played in Philippine life, while from the fourth generation onwards, many will have been born in Spain. Bonifacio's descendants, for example, will be recorded to hold positions in different offices of the government (e.g., the Hacienda, in the Office of the Governor-General, as *Consejero de Estado*). Matías SdV y Regidor was with the Banco Español and in more recent history, Matías SdeV y Lecaroz was a well-known lawyer (Canta 2014, 68). One of the granddaughters of Manuel (brother of Matías Joaquín), Maria de los Angeles SdV Mihura married into the nobility, the house of the Condado de Fuente el Salce (Alberto Fernandez de Salamanca y Castilla VIII) (Velasco Berenguer). The current title holder (Alberto Fernandez de Salamanca y Castilla XI) is a direct heir ("Condado de Fuente el Salce," Wikipedia).
- ²⁶ This appears to be a different one (which he found in the *Bienes de Difuntos*) cited in his "Rainbow" essay (Santiago 1990) from the "Testamento" that I have transcribed. I have not seen this "Testamentario."
- ²⁷ It is quite uncertain what constituted these *encomiendas* which could be kept in Baboom's house for safekeeping. The Real Academia Española's (n.d.) *Diccionario de la lengua española* mentions annuities given from property (*merced o renta vitalicia que se daba sobre un lugar o territorio*), while its *Diccionario del español jurídico* identifies it as a commercial deposit (*depósito mercantil*) or *condesijo* (a term which has come into disuse but means the same thing); or, as used in maritime law in previous times, as a contract to facilitate the loading of vessels which did not have sufficient cargo, which could be from the ship, merchandise, or money (*en el antiguo derecho marítimo, contrata para facilitar el cargamento de buques que no tenían carga suficiente, pudiendo ser de buque, de género o mercancías, o de dinero*).
- ²⁸ Santiago cites the "Testamentario de D. Rafael Daniel Baboom" at The National Archives among the "Bienes de Difuntos" Legajo no. 63. Perhaps a re-examination of this document could give us an idea of what constituted his estate.
- ²⁹ Santiago mentions that Baboom assigns his mother as "sole and universal heiress" (Santiago 1990, 120), but does not qualify that this was for all the remaining goods after a third and a fifth had been bequeathed to his wife.
- ³⁰ In Quirino's note to this item, he mentioned that Baboom's name was not in the list of members in the *Memoria del Sr. Socio Secretario de la Real Sociedad Económica Filipina de Amigos del País*. As this was published in 1877, obviously Baboom's name would not be there (Quirino 1961, 96), as he already died in 1832.
- ³¹ Vol. 10, 1833, 164.
- ³² Demographic research suggests that at the beginning of the 19th century, no country in the world had a life expectancy longer than 40 years. Back in 1800, a newborn baby could only expect a short life, no matter where in the world it was born (Roser, Ortiz-Ospina, and Ritchie 2013).

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Appendix: Transcription of Rafael Daniel Baboom’s “Testamento” (Last Will and Testament)

I have transcribed the manuscript—found in the National Archives of the Philippines—as written, and have only added notes, in brackets, to clarify some terms. Note that even in the manuscript, many words have variant spellings or do not carry their usual tildes (accents).

[At the left margin of the page]

Testamento otorgado por Dn. Rafael Daniel Baboom y a pedim¹⁰ del Alb^a [Albacea] Dn. Matias Saenz de Vizmanos se dio testimonio en papel competente del sello de Yllustre. Notolo p^{ra} q conoce y de ello doy fee (sgd) Aguirre.

[The main body]

El Pueblo de Binondo a veinte y dos de septiembre de mil ocho cientos treinta y dos años. Ante mi el Escrivano y testigos que al final irán firmados Don Rafael Daniel Baboom natural de Calcuta a quien doy fee, conosco, dijo=Que por quanto se halla enfermo en cama; pero en su sano juicio y entera voluntad, temeroso de la muerte que es natural a toda humana criatura a fin de no cogerle desprevenido, sin disposicion alguna, y protestando vivir y morir como fiel cristiano y verdadero Catolico Apostolico Romano, creyendo como firmemente cree en el Misterio de la Santisima trinidad, Padre, Hijo y Espiritu Santo, tres personas distintas y un solo Dios verdadero, y asi mismo cree en los demas Misterios y Articulos que enseña y predica Nuestra Santa Madre Yglesia y dije por su Protectora y Abogada a la Reyna de los Angeles la Virgen Maria Señora Nuestra, al Angel de su Guarda, Santo de su nombre, y demás de la Corte Celestial, para que le defiendan en el Santo tribunal de Dios despues de sus dias; por tanto ordena y manda, se establezca este su testamento y ultima voluntad en la 1a forma siguiente=Primeramente Encomienda su Alma a Dios Nuestro Señor que la crio y redimio con su purisimia Sangre, y su Cuerpo manda a la tierra, de que fue formado, el cual hecho Cadaver; deja a disposicion de sus Albaceas su entierro y mortaja=

2a Yten Deja a las mandas forzosas a dos reales cada una

3a Yten Deja dos cientos pesos para Misas, en sufragio de su Alma

4a Yten Declara ser casado infacie eclesie [i.e., *in facie eclessiae*] con su actual esposa Doña Marian Aratun Ysaac Aganur de Daniel Baboom natural de Bombay, de quien tuvo una hija ya difunta

5a Yten Declara su expresada Esposa no ha trahido cantidad alguna en dinero al Matrimonia [then inserted above dinero: x y si alajas que existen en poder de la Madre del otorgante. This revision is certified in a note at the end of the will]

6a Yten Lega el tercio y el quinto de todo su caudal liquido, y de todos sus bienes a favor de su expresada Esposa

7a Yten Instituye por su unica y universal heredera de todo sus bienes restantes a su Señor Madre Doña Eulabier Daniel Baboom natural del mismo Calcuta y residente en Madras

8a Yten Declara tener en esta su casa habitacion algunas encomiendas de personas que le han fiado, para su Guarda y Custodia, de las cuales, dara conocimiento y señalara su dependiente Don Manuk Zorab para que sus Albaceas procedan a entregarlas a sus respectivos dueños

9a Yten Encarga que sus Albaceas estaran, y pasaran por lo que diga y declare su expresado dependiente Zorab sobre cualquier punto, deuda activa, o pasiva, transacciones, dependencias, y sobre qualquier otro que ocurra, relativo a sus negocios, tratos, contratos, y demas particulares en Manila, siendo su voluntad el que se este a su dicho, y se le de el mismo valor que se declaria al otorgante

10a Yten Nombra por su Albacea en esta Ciudad de Manila a Don Matias Saenz de Vizmanos, para la realizacion de todo lo que le pertenesca en estas Yslas para su remision a Madras, en donde nombra por sus Albaceas a su Señora Madre y a Don Abraam Ysaac Aratun relevando a todos de fianza, por ser ambos de su satisfaccion y confianza

11a Yten Revoca y anula cualesquiera testamento, o testamentos, codicilos, memorias testamentarias y poderes para testar que hubiese otorgado antes de este; y solo quiere que el presente valga por su ultima voluntad. Asi lo otorgo y firmo con los testigos abajo firmantes presentes yrogados de que doy fee=Entre renglon=y si alajas que existen en poder de la Madre del otorg^{te} vale

(Sgd.) Raphael D. Baboom

(Sgd.) Jose Corrales

(Sgd.) Ramon M de Soto

(Sgd.) Joaquin [Viteri?]

(Sgd.) Jose Gab.^{el} Gonzalez

(Sgd.) [Angel Vinuya?]

(Sgd.) Jose Saenz de Vizmanos

(Sgd.) Jose de Aguirre