

## **The Early History of Chavacano de Zamboanga (1635 - 1718)**

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June 23, 1635 should be symbolically known as “Dia del Chavacano de Zamboanga.” Why you might ask? This was the day that a permanent foothold was laid on Zamboanga by the Spanish government with the construction of the San José Fort, and the subsequent evolution and proliferation of a unique dialect/language based on ancient creole Spanish that is called Chavacano de Zamboanga. This is our history, this is our culture...

Let us begin the account by saying that as a result of continued Moro Pirate attacks on the Spanish controlled Visayas and Luzon Islands, a lingering plan to take possession of the strategic Mindanao peninsula and its town of Jambangan in the center of Moroland would be finally commenced at the urging of Bishop Fray Pedro of "Santissimo Nombre de Jesus" (Cebu) to the interim Governor-General of the Philippines, Don Juan Cerezo de Salamanca.<sup>1</sup> Governor Salamanca resolved to take possession of this strategic peninsula, hoping in this manner to strike a heavy blow on to the Moro power. A fortress in Jambangan (Samboanga) would command the Basilan Strait, the waters of which was the ordinary course of the Moro Pirate vessels infesting the coasts of the Visayas. Salamanca hoped to divide the unbroken front between the Sultans of Sulu and Mindanao, and his efforts would prove successful.<sup>2</sup>

After due preparation for their voyage, a conquering force of about three hundred (300) well armed Spaniards from Luzon Island and around one thousand (1,000) Cebuanos with a few of their Jesuit priests from the Visayan Islands under the command of Captain Juan de Chaves landed at Jambangan on April 6, 1635. There, de Chaves temporarily founded the town of Bagumbayan, which was the first Spanish-given name for Jambangan, and from this station he soon attacked and cleared the town of Recodo in Caldera Bay, and eventually the rest of the Jambangan peninsula, of Moro Pirates. Their two-month long campaign would provide them a temporary relief from the Moro Pirates and allow them to start construction on the fort. Upon careful choice of locating the fort at the southern-most tip of the peninsula for its military vantage point of the Basilan Straights, the waterway of popular use by the Moro Pirates for their raids in Visayas and Luzon, the foundation of the grand fortress of Fuerza de San José was laid by Father Melchor de Vera, a Jesuit priest and engineer for the Spanish army, on June 23, 1635, establishing a permanent Spanish/Chavacano presence here brick-by-brick.<sup>2</sup>

Before we proceed with the happenings after they laid the foundation for the fort, we will take you back just a little farther to the time of their respective preparation for the voyage enroute to Jambangan. We will present to you a short chronological scenario of how the events that transpired resulted in the creation of a new Chavacano dialect. There were three (3) principal groups of people who made up the trip to Jambangan, and they are itemized below in their manner of contribution to the creation of a new dialect in Zamboanga.

The representatives listed below were the **PRIMARY CONTRIBUTORS**, and consequently became the founding fathers of the "Chavacano de Zamboanga" (CDZ). We will group them in the following order:

### **1. The Cebuanos**

They were indigenous people mostly from the island of Santissimo Nombre de Jesus, or Cebu, who numbered about one thousand (1,000), according to historical accounts<sup>2</sup>, and tasked mainly as laborers in building the fort for the Spaniards. History, as it is vaguely recalled or theorized, however never gave due diligence to the importance or makeup of these numerous Cebuanos, and thus we hereby present that they would be consisted of the best warriors and craftsmen that the Christianized "Datu" of Cebu could recruit for this mission, in coordination with the Bishop of

Cebu, Fray Pedro, and Governor Juan Cerezo de Salamanca. It was evident to us that because of his dwindled resources from constant Moro Pirate attacks, and especially worst the year previous, the Datu of Cebu alone could not muster the type of force needed for the Jambangan attack. Foremost as a military mission, the Datu of Cebu may have strategically called upon his other Datu friends of the neighboring Visayan Islands to help contribute some of their best warriors and craftsmen towards a united front against their arch enemies, presenting a formidable Visayan force. Historically, the valiant warriors of Bohol Island, located about twenty-five (25) kilometers east of Cebu Island, and of Dapitan in Northern Mindanao Island, were known to be victorious against Moro Pirate attacks on their islands when others failed, and were likely to be part of the Visayan contingent.<sup>3</sup> The language these Bohol Islanders and other contingents derived from nearby islands will at this time be categorized simply as Bisaya.

The Visayans were all too familiar with the numerous and incessant atrocities the Moro Pirates inflicted upon their people during the past century, and were not about to let this opportunity to deliver vengeance fail them. It must be remembered that the primary focus of the voyage to Jambangan was military conquest. These chosen Visayan warriors will initially help the well-armed Spanish soldiers in eliminating the Moro Pirate stronghold upon arrival in Jambangan, and later on when the fort construction is initiated. Everyone was cognizant of the battle prowess of the Moro Pirates, and will not let this mission fail. Other accounts of a much smaller Visayan invasion force would have met their match against the Moro Pirates, and would not have been successful in their mission, making the larger number more viable.

The Cebuanos will inevitably take with them their primary language called Bisaya and their long-standing Spanish creole dialect we will refer to as Visayan Chavacano (VC). We reason that Cebu was the first island to be established by Spain under Miguel Lopez de Legaspi on April 27, 1565, and as a result the locals there have already been Christianized and schooled by the Spanish priests in the resultant VC, for the past seventy (70) years (1565-1635). VC was the common dialect that the Cebuanos and the Jesuit priests took with them to Zamboanga, along with their respective native tongues - Visayan and Spanish.

Although there is no trace of the Visayan Chavacano, it does not preclude its past existence. Since the Visayan language is the predominantly spoken language in the Philippines today (over fifteen million), it is our conclusion that the VC was absorbed very early on into the native Bisaya before or after the Spanish influence waned.

It is a known fact that anytime you combine two different types of people and their foreign languages, the prolonged evolutionary result will be an emergence of a cross-language (creole is the term linguists use to describe it today) that will be used to communicate between each other, and will eventually rise up to be the main language of both groups of people if everything between them are equal, and if not, the dominant language will prevail. Therefore, we consider VC to be the oldest form of Chavacano or Chabacano (another terminology used to describe the end result of a convergence of any language with Spanish) in the Philippines, albeit non-existent. However, we present that it has been totally absorbed into the modern-day Bisaya. Any trained linguist can readily find the existence of many Spanish root words in today's Visayan language, that resulted from ancient VC ( a creolized evolution that spans a remarkable four-hundred thirty-seven (437) years! ).

## 2. The Jesuit Priests, Order of the Society of Jesus

Along with the Cebuanos came just a "few" of their island's Jesuit priests who were "given" and "entrusted" by Bishop Fray Pedro of Cebu the "spiritual affairs" to do the religious conversion of the natives in "Samboanga," and provide religious guidance to the Spanish troops and their Cebuano people.<sup>5</sup> Surprisingly, historical accounts also show that the Jesuits did go to battle with the soldiers, acting as spiritual guides to the troops. We present that they also acted as translators between the Spanish soldiers and the Visayan warriors. The most recent common dialect they had experience with was the VC, and it would be their logical choice as a precursor to the creation of

the CDZ. The Jesuits would, for some time now, also be experts in Bisaya.

Eventually, after laying the groundwork for the type of communication they will use with their new subjects in Zamboanga, we conclude that the Jesuits would subsequently teach everyone else how to communicate with each other in the best logical way they can devise - the Chavacano de Zamboanga. Other theories erroneously presented the fort workers to be uneducated and unable to understand each other (fellow Cebuanos!) or the building instructions given to them by the Spaniards. However, we contend that Father Melchor de Vera, the preeminent fort engineer of the Spanish government and a Jesuit-trained educator, will have none of it happen under his excellent leadership and management of the fort construction. To think otherwise would have led to the early failure of the recently victorious Cebuanos and Spaniards under the retaliatory attacks by the numerous Moro Pirates, and a change in the history of Zamboanga.

The Jesuits are historically known to be one of the most educated and diversely trained missionaries in the world, and are credited for saving the Roman Catholic Religion from its early demise in assuming a prominent role in the Counter-Reformation defense and revival of Catholicism, with Saint Ignacius of Loyola as their spiritual leader and founder. Their legendary emphasis on education and missionary work instilled in them tremendous knowledge of language and effective education, as many Jesuit school graduates can attest today, and was also relied upon by the Bishop of Cebu, and certainly the Pope. The Jesuits' rapid growths numbered them to be over 15,000 by early 1600, and were working throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and the New World. It is therefore our conclusion that the Jesuits have mastered the many local languages as a result of their above skills, and in return taught their subjects the King's Spanish, and/or the simpler Chavacano dialect.

Fathers Antonio Sedeño and Alonso Sanchez, both priests and grave members of the Society of Jesus, are officially credited for establishing the first Society of Jesus order in the Filipinas (in 1580), when Don Fray Domingo de Salazar, of the Dominican order, was appointed first bishop of the Filipinas by the administration of Governor Don Gonzalo Ronquillo, and since that time, their population "has been steadily growing, to the great profit and fruit of the teaching and conversion of the natives, consolation of the Spaniards, and the education and teaching of their children in the studies which they pursue."<sup>11</sup>

In 1595, thirty (30) years after Cebu was established, the Society of Jesus founded a grammar school there that was later named "Colegio de San Ildefonso" in 1606, and which today is called the University of San Carlos.<sup>6</sup> This much needed school allowed the Jesuits to educate the Cebuanos in many lessons, including Latin.<sup>3</sup> The early emphasis on education by the Spanish missionaries only strengthens our reasoning that contrary to popular theories, there existed many various forms of creole Spanish/Chavacano around the Philippine Islands used by the various Catholic priests to educate and communicate with their already literate Filipino subjects. Majority of the Cebuanos who went to Jambangan would have been, or will be, well educated by the Jesuits, and already adapted to reading and writing. It must be emphasized that there were numerous scholastic work being done in the Philippines during this early period on the culture of the island folks that pre-existed the arrival of the Spaniards, and below are a few of them:

In 1610, a Visayan translation of St. Robert Bellarmine's catechism was published in Manila by Cristobal Jimenez.<sup>8</sup>

A Visayan vocabulario was also compiled by Mateo Sanchez during this time frame but it was not published until 1711, after his untimely death in 1618.<sup>9</sup>

The first Jesuits to arrive with the conquering force were Father Alejandro Lopez and Father Melchor de Vera<sup>7</sup>, who was degreed as an engineer/architect and the premiere builder of some of the most historic forts around the islands for the Spanish army. We hereby submit that Father de Vera spent valuable time training his crew of Cebuano craftsmen in fort building skills before they made the journey to Jambangan from Cebu, and consequently did not recruit any "skilled" fort builders from Manila, as other theories would want us to believe. Father de Vera came prepared to build a mighty fort, and his people were properly trained to deliver it. Manila/Luzon will mostly provide the well-armed Spanish troops.

The only two known Jesuit fathers who helped establish Zamboanga were quite busy with their varied tasks, and incredible as it may seem, they both were able to baptize many of their new-found subjects ("the heathens") who numbered in the "many thousands," according to a letter sent to King Philip IV from the Archbishop of Cebu on October 17, 1635 - 4 months after construction began on Fort San José. It is doubtful that the two Jesuit priests spoke Spanish to their local converts, leading us to believe that some variant of VC and whatever local language they deduced were used as the main mode of conversation and religious conversion, leading up to the eventual creation of the CDZ. We submit that the consequential interaction between the fort residents and the local laborers and residents were made easier by the linguistic acumen of these unsung Jesuit priests of Zamboanga, paving way for future inter-marriage amongst these new Chavacanos. Fort Pilar and its city still stands as a testament to their creation.

The numerous Jesuits, numbered around forty (40), who were later recruited by the Bishop of Cebu to help further establish Zamboanga and the neighboring areas would mean that they became the key to the proliferation of the CDZ, and we contend that they could methodically be considered its "creator."

The Jesuits and the Chavacanos of Zamboanga share a very long and special symbiotic existence, through good and bad times, even after they were recalled and expelled from their local mission-posts, and their eventual return. Once under the Bishop and Diocese of Cebu, Zamboanga was elevated into its own Diocese on April 10, 1910, with the "Right Rev. Michael O'Doherty, D.D., rector of the Irish College of Salamanca," consecrated as its first bishop. The Jesuit's presence can still be experienced in Zamboanga today with the establishment of their school, Ateneo de Zamboanga, since 1916.

### 3. The "Castilian" Soldiers

The armada of Spanish ships originating from their main Naval Shipyard in Cavite bound for Jambangan via the island of Cebu would carry these well-armed Castilian soldiers numbered around three hundred (300), according to historical accounts, with plenty of room to spare for their one thousand (1,000) Cebuano warriors and craftsmen, and a few Jesuit priests. As conquerors, the Castilian Soldiers' aristocratic and superiority tendencies will place them in charge of the mission and will consequently influence the CDZ to be heavily based on ancient Castilian Spanish, as the case is today. Their position in the Zamboanga hierarchy will dictate that the locals learn more of their dominant Spanish language in order to understand them, and a little less of the opposite for them, leaving the Jesuits to fill in the rest.

The influx of Spanish soldiers into the newly built San José Fort will be increased as the victorious Governor Corcuera took personal command of the Zamboanga campaign and declare a "Holy War against the Mohammedans" in 1637.<sup>2</sup> As author Vic Hurley sums up:

"In all the history of the Spanish conquest, these two names stand out to eclipse all others. Corcuera and Arolas, the first in 1635 and the second in 1885, were the only two Spaniards to command the whole-hearted respect of the Moros. They were fighting men of the first caliber and equal to the best traditions of the conquistadores."<sup>2</sup>

The effect of this concerted Zamboanga campaign would bring forth the heavy influence of ancient Castilian Spanish into the vernacular of the early CDZ as hundreds of additional Spanish soldiers will arrive and be based here, and the influx will continue for many years to come amounting to a few thousand soldiers.

Contrary to other linguistic theories, we conclude that there were no other forms of Philippine Chavacano that would influence the CDZ at this time period because the soldiers from Luzon were mostly pure Castilian (Spanish) and that any form of Chavacano they knew from their exposure to natives of Luzon would not be transferable or applicable to their new co-habitants from the Visayan

Islands and Jambangan, who themselves spoke totally different languages than the natives of Luzon Island.

It is however believed that a sizeable number of local laborers from the Cavite fort area who had experience in fort building, came together with the Spanish soldiers to help build the Zamboanga fort, and brought along with them their brand of Chabacano. We however challenge the logical or historical validity of their numbers and experience with the argument that seasoned soldiers were what was needed from Manila to help Father de Vera defeat the Moro Pirates in order for him to build the fort, and not non-combatants. More importantly, the preeminent fort builder of the Spanish military was residing in Cebu under the guidance of Bishop Fray Pedro - Father Melchor de Vera. As a Jesuit, engineer, architect, and expert builder, Father de Vera would logically have his own fort-building training facility in Cebu funded with the blessings of Bishop Fray Pedro, in order to prepare his Cebuano warriors for the task of helping him build the all-important fort in Jambangan.

As a matter of course, the only intelligible language they could use to communicate with the numerous Cebuanos would initially be their native Spanish, and later on the CDZ. It must be noted that during the early stages of the Zamboanga occupation, life of the Spanish troops, the Jesuit priests, and their Cebuano warriors were mostly centered inside the guarded walls of the fort, providing for a closed environment that was conducive to the growth of the CDZ. We therefore conclude that the early CDZ will subsequently become an independently created Chavacano dialect, void of influence from any other forms of Philippine Chavacano or Chabacano, except for the VC.

As far as we can gather, the number of Spanish soldiers who influenced the CDZ can be traced to the following countries of origin or recruitment/reinforcement named below, but may not necessarily be natives of those countries. For many years, the Spaniards regarded the Indios (the name they gave the conquered locals whom they generally referred to as Indians) in the lowest social position possible, and not fit or trusted to become a Spanish soldier. (IMPORTANT NOTE: Regardless of where these soldiers came from, the only language contribution they brought with them into Zamboanga during this time frame would be Spanish):

A.) Spain - The original source of almost everything, including the dominant Castilian Spanish. The Spanish territory at this time was vast, and recruits for the Spanish Army may have possibly consisted of people from the various provinces of Spain and other European countries under Spanish rule. These Castilian Soldiers surely brought their own regional dialects with them. It must be noted further here that the dominant and regional languages of Spain were under the tremendous influence of some nine hundred (900) years of Moorish conquest and occupation.

Interestingly, modern-day Spanish, even Castilian Spanish, has changed so much over the past 368 years that if juxtaposed with its founding ancient Castilian Spanish today, will be unintelligible to both speakers. However, if an ancient Castilian Spanish speaker were to speak to a Chavacano-speaking Zamboangueno today, they both would understand each other very well. This is due to the fact that ancient Castilian Spanish words, the basis of over eighty percent (80%) of CDZ, have been frozen in time for over 368 years in the isolated City of Zamboanga. Go ahead, give it a test.

B.) Nueva España (Mexico) - The Viceroy of which The Philippines was under, and main trade partner of the Manila Galleons. Numerous reinforcements for the Philippines will come from here, but may have originated from elsewhere. For now, we will establish that Nueva España was the only major embarkation point of new, and possibly some returning, recruits for The Philippines. It must be emphasized that The Philippines during these times was not a favorite place to be as a result of constant attacks from the Moro Pirates that depleted local populace for slaves and killed many defenders. The coffers of the King was being depleted as not much wealth was exiting the islands. The major push was made by the religious order in converting the locals to their religion. The King was convinced of the future benefits of taxes to be collected from this conversion.

C.) Peru - They arrived in June 25, 1635, via Acapulco, Nueva España, along with the new Philippine Governor Don Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera. Their possible involvement will have to

be placed post-settlement of Zamboanga, during the time Governor Corcuera personally commanded the "holy war" against the Moro Pirates.

In an effort to isolate a reference term for the three major groups of people mentioned above (1,2, & 3), we will call them the Zamboanga Conquistadores or ZC for short. The ZC first got acquainted with each other on board the Spanish war ships enroute to invading Jambangan. During their maiden voyage, the Jesuit priests would become the de facto translators between the Castilian soldiers and their Cebuano people when needed.

It is logical to conclude that this first meeting amongst the ZC was not all that awkward language-wise, and their communication was more rudimentary than difficult, thanks to the VC. The Visayans who spoke VC would logically try their best to help the other Visayan warriors, who did not speak it, understand the Spanish language, if the Jesuits were not around to help.

The SECONDARY CONTRIBUTORS to the CDZ will be grouped in the following order:

#### 4. The Subanons and Lutaos of Jambangan

The second wave of language infusion to the CDZ would come from the founding fathers of Jambangan - the resident Subanons who numbered in the "thousands." The Muslims' attempt to convert the Subanons into their Islamic religion was met with fierce resistance, and would never take root in their society. On the other hand, the Christian precepts of the Jesuits' preaching would find in them some form of acceptance, and provide the Jesuits an eventual ally in their religious conversion of Zamboanga. The Jesuits were quite successful in converting the Subanons and their counterparts - the Lutaos (Badjaos), the non-Islamic peoples of Zamboanga.

They would also be hired as additional laborers for the construction of the fort. Their intermingling with the primary contributors would help infuse their language into the CDZ, and more so later on when the colonizing of Zamboanga will continue.

#### 5. The Yakans of Basilan

The third wave of language infusion to the CDZ would come from the Yakans, when the Jesuits commenced their conversion of the Basilan (Bacilan) Island nearby, a year or so after they arrived in Zamboanga. The early contact made with them by the Jesuits will make their contribution to CDZ a collective part of the whole evolution of early CDZ.

The Subanons and Lutaos of Zamboanga, and the Yakans of Basilan, have been trading and socializing with each other for hundreds of years, and their contribution to the CDZ is still evident today with the presence of many words from their respective language.

We shall then combine and call the result of the aforementioned five (5) groups of language contributors the "Early Chavacano de Zamboanga" (ECDZ), and will call these peoples the new "Chavacanos." The ECDZ lasted for over eighty-three (83) years (1635-1718), until a new wave of language infusion was brought in when the San José Fort was retaken and rebuilt in 1718.

It must be properly noted here that Cavite Chavacano (CC) and/or Ternate Chavacano (TC) will not play any historical role in establishing the ECDZ, as some theories have presented them to have done so in the past. However, they would eventually come into play much later during the Middle History of CDZ ( 1718-1899 ). The only "Chavacano" to influence the ECDZ during this time period will be the Visayan Chavacano.

Conversely, we deduce that the "Early Chavacano de Zamboanga" (ECDZ) will provide a measurable role in influencing the Cavite Chavacano and the Ternate Chavacano when the hundreds of Zamboanga's recalled garrison troops along with the new Chavacanos brought with them the ECDZ and subsequently introduced it into the lexicon of the Cavite fort, and imbedded its

footprint into the area's early Creole development for the next fifty-six years. This aspect of deductive research has never been presented in the growth and history of CC and TC, and the sublime stealth of ECDZ's early influence on the CC and TC.

Year Zamboanga, Philippines Cavite, Philippines Ternate, Moluccas

1662 May 6th, Spanish garrison troops leave Zamboanga to reinforce Cavite, Manila against threatened Koxinga attack, taking with them a large group of locals, along with their new Chavacano lingo.

May 6th, Fort Cavite and its Chabacanos prepare to receive all recalled Spanish garrison troops from Ternate and Zamboanga, to help defend Manila Intramuros against Koxinga's threat. Their Chabacano dialect will be historically influenced by the Chavacano dialects of Zamboanga and that of Ternate.

May 6th, Jesuit priests abandon Ternate, taking a group of locals (Chabacanos) and their Spanish creole, along with all the Spanish garrison troops, to Fort Cavite outside Manila Intramuros against Koxinga's threat.

The convergence of all these Spanish troops and their hundreds of locals will introduce a new infusion and influence of Chavacano into the already existing Cavite Chavacano, creating a new creole. The Early Chavacano De Zamboanga (ECDZ) will provide the historical influence in lexicon of the Cavite fort, and imbedded its footprint into the area's early Creole development for the next fifty-six (56) years.

Governor Sabiniano Manrique de Lara signed a decree on May 6, 1662 ordering the military evacuation of the fort in Zamboanga, and of other Spanish colonies, including that of Ternate in the spice islands of the Moluccas. The Spanish garrisons, along with a number of priests and their chosen local people, evacuated and returned to fort Cavite to help defend Manila intramuros from a threatened invasion by Chinese pirate Koxinga, which never happened. The Zamboanga fort was finally abandoned sometime in 1663 by the last remaining Spanish troops.

Ironically, Koxinga's threat became his contribution to Philippine Chavacano.

After the first twenty-seven (27) years (1635-1662) of colonizing Zamboanga and the surrounding areas, and spreading the ECDZ to many towns and people, the Jesuits and the other Chavacanos, who were both already numerous and influential by this time, will decide and be left behind to tend to the religious and governing affairs of their new found home and try to "hold the fort down" until the troops returned. The troops however would not return.

As fate will have it, the ECDZ and the Chavacanos, Jesuits included, will amazingly endure another fifty-six (56) years (1662-1718) of isolated existence and proliferation amidst the hostile threat and return of the Moro Pirates who overtook and destroyed the abandoned fort. The Chavacanos who stayed behind, including many of the founding Jesuit priests who vowed to never forsake their thousands of converted subjects and their new-found religious outpost (prized as the southern-most Catholic stronghold in the entire Philippine islands), were by this time already living within the confines of Zamboanga and its people. The Jesuits, belonging to the aggressive religious expansionists' Society of Jesus, who remained in Zamboanga were historically credited for reconstructing the damaged fort in 1666, three years after the last Spanish soldiers vacated their walled post in 1663.

We hereby conclude that ECDZ prospered into a uniquely independent Chavacano language during its early twenty-seven (27) years (1635-1662), heavily weighted with ancient Castilian Spanish, and then extended its growth into the next fifty-six (56) years (1662-1718) of isolated transformation, subsequently infused with the majority languages of the secondary contributors.

It must be emphasized that NO reinforcement was sent to Zamboanga by the Spanish government in fifty-six years, after the troops were pulled out due to the Koxinga threat.

Therefore, the people who were left behind co-existed with the natives as new Chavacanos, fusing their Castilian based Spanish or Chavacano more heavily with the natives' majority language, creating the ECDZ Creole.

In an unusual twist of common beliefs and logical history facts, we digress it was the ECDZ that rose up to become the unsung influence in the further development of Cavite Chavacano and Ternate Chavacano during the time period of 1662-1718, and possibly further on. We will expand on this serious lapse of accountability after further research is consummated. For now, we would like to say that all Zamboanguenos should feel proud in knowing that their Chavacano was an historical and influential contributor to the development of other major Philippine Chavacanos, and is a testament to its continued growth and influence today in its birthplace and beyond.

It also needs to be emphasized here that the major languages of The Philippines now were once creolized Spanish/Chavacano, or "bastardized Spanish" based on their original language form, primarily Tagalog and Bisaya. Both these dominant forms of language in The Philippines are heavily laded with ancient Spanish root words that have been severely manipulated, or "bastardized," in their respective and distinct manner of speech. There is no such thing as "pure" Tagalog or Bisaya. The first three known Philippine Chavacano originated from the most important outposts of the Spanish government in Cebu, Manila, and Zamboanga. Although Cebu and Manila reverted back their distinctive Chavacano into their present day vernacular, Zamboanga was the only place in the entire Philippine island to maintain its Castilian Spanish based Chavacano language up to the present.

Curiously, there will exist a fragile cessation of hostilities between the Moro Pirates and the Spanish troops during this time period, with none wanting to irritate the other for retaliatory reasons. The Moro Pirates would somehow turn against each other and continue their fighting ways. Although Koxinga died about a year after his veiled threat to invade Manila, which caused the recall of Spanish troops to defend it, there was no formal reason given as to why the Spanish government refrained from returning their troops to Zamboanga. The year 1718 will change it all.

Your comments are welcomed: [chavacano@zamboanga.com](mailto:chavacano@zamboanga.com)

Chavacano de Zamboanga (1635 - 2004): 369 Years of History

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