

PUNCH LADLE OF
CHATOYER, THE CARIB CHIEF

PRESENTED TO
THE WEST INDIA COMMITTEE
BY

Joseph Chatoyer and the Garinagu

Teachers' Pack

This teachers pack contains some additional information that may prove useful in teaching your pupils about the history of Joseph Chatoyer, the Garinagu and the Kalinago. You can also view our e-book for further information on the subject.

It also contains the answers to the activities in the education pack.



Contents

The History of St. Vincent -	2
The Garinagu and the Kalinago -	3
The French and British on St. Vincent -	4
Joseph Chatoyer -	5
The First Carib War -	6
The Ladle of Chatoyer -	7
The Second Carib War -	8
The death of Chatoyer -	9
After the War -	10
Life in Central America -	11
Garifuna language -	12
Activity Answers-Quiz -	14
Activity Answers-Wordsearch -	15
Activity Answers-Complete the timeline -	16
Activity Answers-Complete the sentence -	18

The History of St. Vincent

St. Vincent is located in the Windward Islands of the Caribbean Sea. It is around 133 square miles in size. Despite its clearly early discovery by the Spanish, they never attempted to settle on the island.

St. Vincent was probably first inhabited by humans around 5000 years ago, by Arawaks, who originated in what is now Venezuela. Another, even earlier pre-Columbian people, the Ciboney, may have inhabited St. Vincent at one time, but they tended to live further north on Cuba and nearby islands.

The Caribs, from whom we get the name of the Caribbean, conquered the Arawak peoples around 1300 AD, only two centuries before the arrival of Europeans to the region.

The term Carib is also linked to 'Cannibal', although it is hard to say how much Cannibalism was really practised amongst them.

Many of the Carib warriors took Arawak wives, which would have an effect on the later development of the Garifuna language.

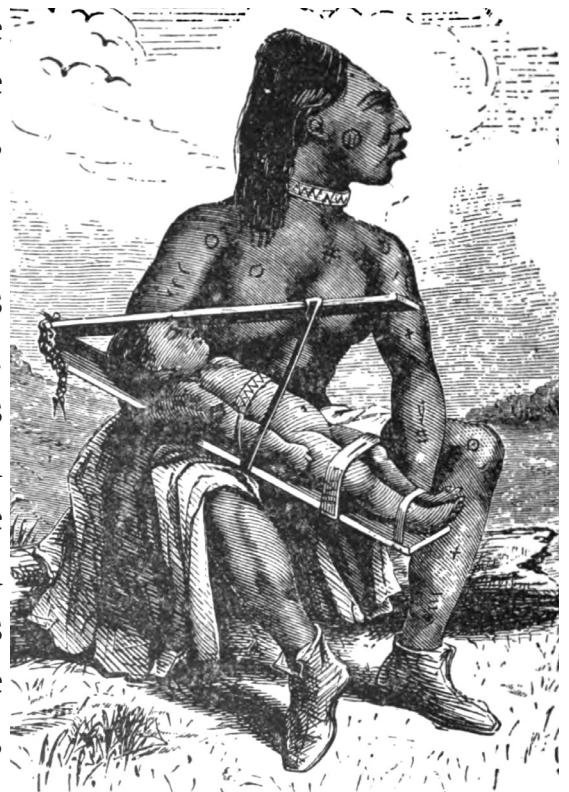


The Garinagu and Kalinago

Part of the problem with our study of the Garinagu and Kalinago on St. Vincent is that they did not write their own sources, meaning that we are left with scanty second-hand evidence for their histories, beliefs and practices. The British sources mainly revolve around the Carib Wars, but some French commentators, who had better relationships with these peoples, provide a greater insight. Some oral histories have survived, and these indicate that there were once six different groups amongst the Garinagu of St. Vincent: the Oreyuna, the Awawaraguna, Oligin, Masiragana, Habaraguna, and Saiwaina. Members of these different groups did not marry other groups.

The relationship between the Kalinago and the Garinagu at the beginning seems to have been largely hostile. Some sources speak of the Kalinago rescuing the Africans and bringing them to St. Vincent as slaves. What is clear is that eventually two separate groups emerged, albeit with intermarriage and cultural exchange. There is still a strong trace of the Kalinago genes in the DNA of modern Garinagu, despite the two centuries that have passed since their exile from St. Vincent. French sources lead us to believe that hostility continued into the eighteenth century. The Kalinago are said to have asked for French help against the Garifuna, leading to the French expedition of 1719. Many Kalinago are said to have emigrated to Trinidad circa 1750, again due to the hostility of the Garinagu.

One tradition practised by the Garinagu was headbinding, producing long, sloped skulls. This was probably taken from the Kalinago, as it was practised by many different peoples from pre-Columbian Latin America. Some believe that the practice was adopted by the Garinagu quite late on to separate them from the slaves brought to St. Vincent by the French. The practice led slaves to nickname the Garinagu, 'flat heads'.



The French and British and St. Vincent

The French military expedition of 1719 resulted eventually in a peace treaty (which was renewed in 1727) that stipulated that the two parties were to be allies and that the Garinagu would return escaped slaves to the French. The Garinagu also invited some of the French from Martinique to settle of St. Vincent, resulting in European settlement for the first time, with the exception of Friar Adrien Le Breton, who appears to have lived on the island between 1693 and 1702.

An agreement, made by Britain and France in 1660, stated that St. Vincent was to be neutral, an arrangement that was often ignored. It is claimed by many authors, including those writing in the eighteenth century, that the island was declared neutral by the Treaty of Aix-La-Chappelle (1748), but there is no mention of this anywhere in the text of the treaty proper or the preliminary agreements.

Although Britain never made a serious attempt to enforce the claim that King Charles I and his successors made to St. Vincent, in 1722 a Captain Braithwaite of the Royal Navy was sent to carry out a survey of the island and was met with hostility by the Garinagu, which fortunately did not spill out into armed conflict. Accordingly, he was not able to complete his mission.

It was noted by several people, particularly later when the British and Caribs fought, that the French were not in full possession of St. Vincent, and thus they could not cede the entirety of the island to the British in the Treaty of Paris, only the portion of which they were actually in control, following their agreements with the Garinagu.

Treaty of Paris 1763 Article IX

The Most Christian King [Louis XV of France] cedes and guaranties to his Britannick Majesty [George III], in full right, the islands of Grenada, and the Grenadines, with the same stipulations in favour of the inhabitants of this colony, inserted in the IVth article for those of Canada: And the partition of the islands called neutral, is agreed and fixed, so that those of St. Vincent, Dominico, and Tobago, shall remain in full right to Great Britain, and that of St. Lucia shall be delivered to France, to enjoy the same likewise in full right, and the high contracting parties guaranty the partition so stipulated.

Joseph Chatoyer

Little is known about Joseph Chatoyer. His surname means ‘the shining one’ in French and his original name seems to have been Satuye. His father’s name is given in one document as Legottes. Chatoyer first came to prominence amongst the Garinagu in the late 1760s, around the time another major leader, Tourouya, died. He was recognised as the chief of the Garinagu community at Grand Sable in the north of the island. Although his elevation to Paramount Chief does not appear to have been until much later in his life, he was still very influential amongst the Caribs. He was regarded by many amongst the planters and colonists as the primary Garifuna to deal with on the island.

At least one of Chatoyer’s sons, also apparently named Chatoyer, survived the Second Carib War and ended up in Central America, along with one of Chatoyer’s daughters, Gulisi. He probably came into possession of the small plantation he owned after the American Revolution, at a time when matters were more settled between him and the British.

The sword that was gifted to Chatoyer, apparently comprised in some part of silver, was given to him by Sir William Young (who bore the same name as his father, who had been one of the land commissioners). The sword had seemingly once been owned by Sir William’s younger brother, Henry who had died fighting in the American Revolution.

Despite his status as National Hero of St. Vincent, Chatoyer is seen by some Vincentians, and others, as a controversial choice; some view him as someone who broke multiple treaties and condemn him for owning slaves himself. In addition, there are reports of brutality towards his enemies, such as executing prisoners of war. Others view him as doing the best he could with limited resources, doing what he could to ensure his people’s independence for a period of almost 40 years.

The main issue in studying Chatoyer is that the overwhelming majority of the sources about his life were written by people explicitly opposed to him, such as Sir William Young after the Second Carib War and Charles Shepard, who was commissioned to write a history based on the planters’ perspective. This makes a balanced view of the man almost impossible to obtain.

The First Carib War

The British had appointed a Land Commission after taking 'control' of St. Vincent, which was tasked with dividing up and selling the land to new settlers. The Commission worked very hard to acquire Garinagu and Kalinago lands in the north of the island, which due to the volcanic soil was very fertile. The British Government prohibited them from doing this for a time, but the Commissioners were eventually able to convince the Government to permit it, although the latter did insist on certain conditions, including reimbursing the Caribs fairly for the land.

Tensions rose when the Commissioners attempted to build a road through Carib lands, an act which was without the endorsement of the British Government, let alone the Caribs. After the standoff, when the Caribs began to harass the settlers and Chatoyer and other leaders refused to recognise the authority of the British King, the Commissioners recommended that the Caribs be cowed into submission by superior military force. Thus, a force was assembled for that purpose, leading to the First Carib War.

The War was ultimately a stalemate, as British military tactics were ill-suited for the dense jungle terrain of St. Vincent, giving the Garinagu a major advantage, despite superior British numbers and weaponry. British military tactics were suited to the wide open battlefields of Europe and large set-piece battles.

In Britain, as the mood turned against the war, many members of Parliament spoke out against the conflict as unjust, forcing the Government to seek a peace. In the words of Richard Whitworth MP: *The French only ceded part of the island to us; that part was their property, and they had the right to cede it; but what claim have we to the other? None. The French could not cede to us what they had not; they by treaty with those people; and upon those conditions, I understand by the terms of the last peace, we are also to live with them. But I suppose some of our traders or planters have taken a fancy to their part of the island for country houses to divert themselves, and to satisfy the rapacity of those adventurers, the British arms are to be employed, and the miserable natives are to be cruelly dispossessed of their habitations and driven from their families and friends.... Nothing but the most wanton cruelty can induce us to dispossess the inoffending natives of their country."*

The Ladle of Chatoyer

This ladle is the only known artefact to be associated with Joseph Chatoyer. It is believed that it was given to the British Army as a gift as part of the negotiations at the end of the First Carib War.

The bowl of the ladle is made from a thin coconut shell and is quite unlike any other such artefact from the Caribbean. Ladles made from Caribbean coconut, used to serve punch and other drinks, were popular and fashionable items in the eighteenth century, in part due to a belief that a drink served from coconut was resistant to poisons.

The Chatoyer ladle is unlike any other, with what are very clearly African style patterns and decorations, either being Yoruban or Benin in origin, which would agree with the tradition that their ancestors came from the Bight of Benin. In particular, you can see similarities between some of the patterns and motifs found on the famous Benin bronzes.

Carved punch ladles were usually carved in Europe, with European-style patterns. It is clear that the handle, and thus its transformation into a ladle, is a much later addition to the artefact, probably added in Europe. The silver rim of the bowl of the ladle is late eighteenth century silver, and is inscribed with “*Chatoyer 1773*”.



The Second Carib War

The peace treaty was found to be lacking by both sides and it is not surprising that later breaches occurred.

The Caribs opted to side with the French when the latter invaded St. Vincent during the American Revolutionary War. This came as a surprise to the British, especially when Chatoyer and his compatriots entered the surrender negotiations on the French side. Thus, when the island was returned to Britain by the Treaty of Versailles (1783), peace reigned again, and there were no known reprisals against the Garinagu; they were 'pardoned' by the British despite breaking the treaty. The Garinagu were apparently surprised by the British return.

Peace then lasted for over ten years. Garinagu traded in Kingstown with the settlers, and Garinagu chiefs were honoured guests in the houses of leading planters, such as Sir William Young, who gave them gifts, and it is quite possible that gifts were given in return. Some Garinagu even purchased property on the British side of the island.

With the French Revolution in the early 1790s, slavery was abolished throughout the French Caribbean. The notion of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* and other French Revolutionary ideals were welcomed in the Caribbean, where there had been so much discrimination based on skin colour. It led to several uprisings on various islands and it is hardly surprising that the Garinagu would once again side with the French. Chatoyer issued a declaration couched in French Revolutionary Language, calling on all Frenchmen living on St. Vincent to side with him or face death as traitors. The Garinagu siding with the French seems to have largely taken the planters by surprise yet again. In Sir William's case, he appears to have taken Chatoyer's actions personally, given that he had welcomed the man into his home and given him his brother's sword.

Although the Caribs were initially successful, British reinforcements, led by General Abercromby, were able to turn the tide and defeat them. Abercromby's force was part of a much larger British expedition to the Caribbean, of which the actions on St. Vincent made up only a small part. Abercromby was successful in turning the war in the Caribbean in favour of the British.

The death of Chatoyer

Joseph Chatoyer died in the early hours of the morning of 15th March 1795. The Garinagu and their French allies occupied a position on Dorsetshire Hill. The British made a sneak attack under the cover of darkness, which succeeded in taking the Garinagu and French forces by surprise. The whole incident appears to have taken less than 15 minutes.

It is said that Chatoyer was killed in a duel with Major Alexander Leith, an officer in the St. Vincent militia who was originally from Scotland. It was not uncommon for the younger sons of wealthy families to seek their fortunes in either the Army or the Caribbean, as they would not have inherited the family estate. The duel was not mentioned in the earliest reports of the incident, nor is the name of Major Leith, although he was accredited with Chatoyer's death by Sir William Young within a few months of the event. Even Sir William's account does not allow for a duel, saying that Chatoyer was despatched by Leith's bayonet, not a weapon traditionally used in duels. A monument to Leith, created some years later, is in the Cathedral in Kingstown, although it is now covered up by a carpet.

Chatoyer's death was a great blow to the Garinagu and their French allies, but they continued the fight. Eventually, however, the British were able to win, thanks to Abercromby's reinforcements, and the St. Vincent Black Corps, a military unit made up of specially trained slaves, who were taught to fight in a similar manner to the Garinagu. The Black Corps successfully destroyed the Garinagu's provision grounds, which eventually forced the Garinagu to surrender, as their food supplies ran low, and Britain's superior naval power meant that communication with the French was prevented so supplies could not come from outside the island.

The Garinagu had hoped that they would be able to negotiate another peace treaty with the British, and some came out of the interior to discuss this, but it was now resolved that they would be exiled, with their surrender only guaranteeing their lives. The planters had been requesting this action since before the First Carib War and the Garinagu's alliance with the French once again was enough to convince the British authorities, although they had previously resisted the move.

After the war

The terms of surrender given by the British promised that the Garinagu were to be sent “to a good country, where there is plenty of water, and a good soil”. The vast majority of the Garinagu, over 4,000, were exiled from St. Vincent to the island of Balliceaux, where many died due to disease and poor nutrition. The disease was probably brought to the island by the Garinagu themselves, but the Garinagu believed that it was the result of poisoned food supplies and a deliberate attempt to get rid of them.

They were later transported to the island of Roatàn off the coast of Central America; only about half the number who had been banished had survived. They were left with food supplies, but they were inadequate to last until the Garinagu could grow and harvest crops of their own. Many of the rations they had received were damaged by seawater when they were unloaded from the vessels.

Some of the Garinagu and most of the Kalinago remained on St. Vincent and continued to fight against the British for a time. In 1805 those that remained were granted a pardon and were granted lands near Monte Ronde. The majority of both peoples who remain on St. Vincent now live around Sandy Bay, near La Soufrière volcano in the north of the island. The eruption of the volcano in 1902 resulted in the deaths of some 1,327 people. The vast majority of these victims were from the Garinagu and Kalinago, and it was briefly feared that they had been wiped out in their entirety.



Life in Central America

From Roatàn, the Garinagu were invited by the Spanish to live near their colony at Trujillo in modern Honduras, receiving assistance in return for accepting Spanish authority. They accepted and almost 1,700 Caribs were taken over the water to Trujillo. Over time, they spread out, up and down the nearby coast and further inland and became farmers, supplying the majority of food to the Spanish colony. This included crops such as Cassava, Maize and Rice. Their numbers rapidly increased, accounting for 64% of Trujillo and the surrounding towns' population by 1823. Their fighting experience meant they served in the local militia.

The Garinagu were affected by the upheaval of the Central American nations declaring independence from Spain in the early 1820s and the subsequent Mexican Empire and Federal Republic of Central America. Many Garinagu fought for the Spanish Crown during these incidents and took part in counter revolutions.

Due to the pressures of this political instability and conflict, many Garinagu settled in what is now Belize, including Chatoyer's daughter, Gulisi. According to what was passed down to her descendants, Gulisi left as she had been accused of spying by the Spanish.

Life in central America also resulted in other changes for the Garinagu, as many of their number intermarried with other West Indians living in the area. It also saw a considerable change in their religious practices for, although they still maintained many traditional religious rites, they overwhelmingly converted to Roman Catholicism.

Today, approximately 24,000 Garifuna live in Belize, with a further 200,000 in Honduras and over 130,000 now live across the USA, particularly in New York and Houston. Communities can also be found in Great Britain, particularly amongst the Vincentian community in High Wycombe, the largest Vincentian community in the UK.

Garifuna language

The Garinagu Language was inscribed by UNESCO in 2001, and noted to be under threat of extinction. Although work is being done to preserve the language, it is still under threat, with the number of speakers decreasing. In many instances in Central American Garinagu villages, it has been replaced amongst the younger generations by Spanish and Creole. Preservation work is being done through the arts, with programmes to encourage Garifuna songs and music, whilst aiming to expand the teaching of the language. It is estimated that under 100,000 people still speak the language.

Almost half of the language comes from the Arawaks, whilst the next biggest contributor is the Carib language. There are also strong French, English and Spanish influences on the language. As a gendered language, the majority of the masculine terms coming from Carib, whilst the feminine words come from Arawak, reflecting the old practice of Carib men capturing Arawak women in order to marry them. The Arawak women continued to speak their own language amongst themselves, which is how it was passed down to their descendants. The African contribution to the language is not in the words themselves, but in how they are pronounced.

To learn more about Garifuna as a language, there are many online dictionaries and videos on YouTube that can help with translations.

<http://www.garifuna.com/garifuna-language.html>

<http://www.garifunaheritagefoundation.com/369.html>

<http://endangeredlanguagealliance.org/main/language-projects/garifuna>

<http://www.garifunainstitute.com/>

Activity Answers

Quiz

Q1. What is the singular of Garinagu?:

Garifuna

Q2. What was the name of St. Vincent before Christopher Columbus came to the Caribbean?

Yurumein

Q3. What British King first laid claim to St. Vincent?

Charles I

Q4. In what year did the Garinagu sign a treaty with the British?

1773

Q5. What was Joseph Chatoyer's original name?

Satuye

Q6. What is Chatoyer's punch ladle made out of?

Coconut

Q7. Where did Joseph Chatoyer die?

Dorsetshire Hill

Q8. Where were the Garinagu first exiled to?

Balliceaux

Q9. In what country do most Garinagu live today?

Honduras

Q10. From what language did feminine terms in the Garinagu's language come?

Arawak

Activity Answers

Wordsearch

H Q T S M D S Q L D W H W M H Y T V X W
J X P Z L E I T H E C A S T R S G R V A
D P T J B Z P R Y S L A V E S R C K V K
J M X R U C R H K A L I N A G O V Z Z E
G D L W U H Y J Q M F L P O U Y Q X W L
R I C P K J A C I G A R I F U N A I L A
O D D E L J I I H P W W X H V U Z E H D
Y E W R P X J L S A V U D X I X T X Z L
U Z K Y Q T I T L K T H O Y S V E I U E
L M R I H T V R H O G O H G X A L L M J
I R P N V Y H E E S C H Y A N T I E D V
W Q E X V N S A Y U R U M E I N G I M G
N C Z D X I P T N P H B H C R R L Y O Y
K H H G X W N Y D U A E J F A I O L B Q
A G Z Z O B P C Z P B L F C W R D U E U
P L A N T E R T E Z V I R Y U Y I M N V
G D S H E N V E Y N V Z G E H O F B I A
C O Z G U L I S I K T E B A T U J T N S
U G R O A T A N M I L I T I A N C Y S H
Z D M O G X F E Z J T G H R T G A U W A

Ladle

Garifuna

Kalinago

Planter

Roatan

Carib

Chatoyer

Gulisi

Trujillo

Hairouna

Young

Treaty

Leith

Yurumein

Vincent

Militia

Benin

Slave

Belize

Exile

Activity Answers

Complete the timeline

Write what significant event happened in each year in the boxes provided to complete the timeline.

1719

The French expedition against the Garinagu

1773

The Treaty between the British and the Garinagu

1635

The earliest date that the slaves could have landed on St. Vincent

1763

The British take control of St. Vincent at the end of the Seven Years War.



A Garinagu family



Chatoyer's Ladle

The crater of La Soufrière in peaceful times



1795
The Second Carib War and the exile of the Garinagu

1805
The remaining Garinagu on the island are pardoned

1776
The American revolution, where the Garinagu side with the French.

1902
The volcano of La Soufrière erupts, killing many Kalinago and Garinagu

A Map of Kingstown and the surrounding islands



Activity Answers

Complete the sentence



1. The African Ancestors of the Garinagu came from Benin.

2. The Garinagu's music, language and Dance are recognised by UNESCO



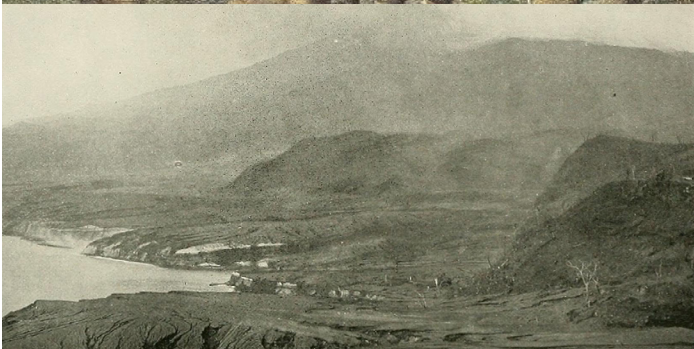
3. Many Kalinago chose to leave St. Vincent and travel to Trinidad.

4. Chatoyer's Ladle is made from a coconut.



5. The Garinagu were allied with the French settlers on Martinique.

6. After Roatàn, the Garinagu settled in Honduras.



7. No Strangers were allowed to settle amongst the Caribs without permission.

8. The Garinagu were allied with the French.

Use the following words to complete the sentences

Benin

Martinique

Dance

Strangers

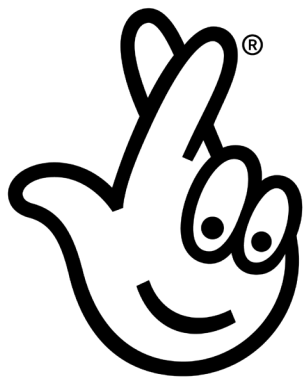
Trinidad

Honduras

French

Ladle

This teachers' pack has been produced with the generous support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



HERITAGE
FUND

