



Chatoyer & the Garinagu: A story of survival by David A.J. Wells

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## Introduction

The Caribbean is the birthplace of some of the most intriguing example of human integration in the world. The story of the Garinagu is perhaps the most extraordinary. Although now largely separated from their homeland, St. Vincent, Garinagu people are still extant in a number of countries and are recognised by their distinctive language, music, food and dance. They are also known to history as the Black Caribs or the Garinagu). (Garifuna is the name of their language and also the singular for a member of the Garinagu). Their story forms a part of the history of the modern nation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, who recognise the most famous member of the tribe, and at one time their Paramount Chief, as the country's first, and currently only, national hero - Joseph Chatoyer.

The story of the Garinagu is not a happy one; it is a story of war, with the Garinagu coming into conflict with the island's indigenous Caribs, with whom they originally integrated, to clashes with French forces from Martinique and, eventually, three short wars with the British. In these three conflicts the Garinagu were aided by their former adversaries, the French, with whom they had established a good relationship. These were wars that the Garinagu largely fought to secure their lands, a mission that ultimately proved to be a failure.

This story also features not one but two exiles: firstly of the Garinagu's African ancestors from their homelands and secondly, the exile of the tribe over two centuries later from St. Vincent, in which this creole tribe evolved, to other shores. As in all such exiles, there was much suffering and death on the way. These exiles had a a new creolised culture, with influences from Africa, the Americas and Europe. The resilience of this culture allowed it to thrive on St. Vincent for approximately 150 years before the second exile. This forced migration, though again filled with pain and suffering, saw the Garinagu thrive in central America, rebuilding their numbers and culture, and contributing significantly to many of the modern nations in that region of the world, most notably Honduras and Belize.

The figure of Joseph Chatoyer is arguably a controversial one. Although little is really known of his life, it is evident that he was a leader, indeed arguably the chief leader, amongst his people for over 20 years. In many respects, he was a dichotomy: to some he fought for his people and their lands, to others he broke treaties signed in good faith and betrayed those who considered themselves his friends. He is viewed as a great liberator against colonial repression, and yet, like his brother, also appears to have owned slaves that worked his cotton plantation.

In the West India Committee collection is a unique artefact that was donated to the charity over a hundred years ago, and is the only item attributed to Chatoyer. It reflects the blend of styles and cultures that gave birth to the Garinagu, whilst being adapted to Western taste. It is believed to have been presented by Chatoyer himself to the British Army in 1773 at the signing of a peace treaty. This punch ladle, made out of thin baby coconut shell, is the only surviving example of pre-exile Garinagu art, making it of global importance and relevance, not only to the nation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, but to those countries around the world where the Garinagu now live. We hope that this work provides a better knowledge and understanding of this unique culture and its history.

## The Kalinago and The Garinagu

The earliest human habitation of St. Vincent occurred somewhere in the region of 5000 years ago. The Salanoid people were the first inhabitants of what we now call the Windward Islands and were overtaken by the Arawaks, who are believed to have originated in Venezuela. The Arawaks, in turn, were pursued and conquered by the Caribs around 1300, thus leaving the Caribs as the dominant people on St. Vincent when Christopher Columbus arrived in the Caribbean in 1492. The Island Caribs are more properly known as the Kalinago (Karifuna in the singular). The name Carib is of uncertain origin, and was first put in written form by Columbus, resulting



A Kalinago canoe, used for sea voyages

in the name Caribbean. It is also linked to the term 'Cannibal', as the Kalinago and, indeed, the other pre-Columbian peoples of the Caribbean were believed to have eaten human flesh on occasion, although how widespread this practice was is hard to say.

The earliest origin of the Garinagu people is lost to legend. Tradition holds that there was a ship, carrying slaves from Africa, that was wrecked nearby St. Vincent on the small island of Bequia. The survivors of that wreck made their way to St. Vincent, either by themselves, or, as is more commonly told in these stories, they were rescued by the Vincentian Kalinago.

More recent historical thought has pointed perhaps to Dutch involvement in the story. The slave ship is traditionally said to have been Spanish, but in the 17<sup>th</sup> century there was quite a strong anti-slavery feeling amongst the Dutch and it was not unknown for them to capture slave ships and either turn the ship over to the liberated or to leave them on the first landmass they reached and keep the ship. The date for this shipwreck is often given as around 1675, but the date of 1635 is also cited and is the far more likely answer, being supported by accounts of 'Black Caribs' on St. Vincent before the later date.

Some stories say that the Kalinago treated these survivors as slaves themselves, and they were brought back to the island for that purpose. However, over time, the Garinagu became the larger population body. There are various explanations given for this. Firstly, it appears that their numbers swelled with escaped slaves from other islands, including nearby Barbados, as the currents and winds can naturally carry a canoe or raft across the twenty-eight miles to St. Vincent. Secondly, they may simply have had more children than the Kalinago. Some French sources recorded that the Kalinago encouraged French intervention on St. Vincent as the Garinagu had a habit of kidnapping their wives and daughters, which might also explain the reduced birth-rate amongst the Kalinago. European observers never truly had an accurate picture of the population of either the Kalinago or the Garinagu, as the tribes successfully repelled invasion for some time, but it was estimated in 1763 that the population comprised 3000 Garinagu and about 100 Kalinago, although these figures are highly questionable. Some think that by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, on St. Vincent at least, the Kalinago and the Garinagu were one and the same people, with a distinction between the two barely recognisable by the people themselves, and existing only in the minds of outside observers. Certainly, our understanding of the Garinagu comes almost entirely from outside observers, be that of the French priest Jean-Baptiste Labat at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or from reports made by both British and French Military officers, and the later influential (but undoubtedly biased histories) of the younger Sir William Young and Charles Shepard.



Jean-Baptiste Labat

The Garinagu of those times left no written records, and

even oral histories are scarce. This bias of surviving sources makes it impossible to create a complete picture of their culture and history. However, several French sources report, around the year 1750, that many of the Kalinago decided to leave St. Vincent, due to a poor relationship with the Garinagu and opted to remove themselves to Trinidad.

An oral tradition, left by Chatoyer's daughter, Gulisi, to her descendants describes six different tribes or groups: the Oreyuna, the Awawaraguna, Oligin, Masiragana, Habaraguna, and Saiwaina. Members of these groups did not intermarry with those of other groups, and were also reputed to have certain characteristics belonging to each group. For example, the Oreyuna were supposed to be the hardest workers. Others were supposed to be lazy, great fighters or to be less clean than others.



A device for flattening a child's forehead and the result on its parent

All sources agree that the Garinagu adopted many of the customs of the Kalinago. Charles Shepard, writing in the early 1830s, claimed that the practice of flattening children's foreheads by binding them up when the children were young, practised through much of the Pre-Columbian Caribbean and South America, was only adopted by the Garinagu particularly when the French settled with Black slaves on the island, as a way for the Garinagu to differentiate themselves from the slaves. This also apparently led to the slaves referring to the Garinagu as 'Flat Heads'.

The Garifuna language is also derived heavily from the Carib tongue, as is evident from the similarity between their names 'Karifuna' and 'Garifuna', but has its own distinctiveness. They named the island St. Vincent as Yurumein, meaning *"the beauty of the rainbows in the valleys"*. It is also logical to assume that some of the Garinagu's practices were also adopted by the Kalinago, but there is no surviving evidence to verify this.

## St. Vincent, the island

The island of St. Vincent, which is about 133 square miles in size, is located in what the British term the Windward Islands of the Caribbean, although the French refer to the islands as Leeward. It takes its name from St. Vincent of Saragossa. Legend has it that the island was named as such because Columbus discovered it on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1498, the feast day of St. Vincent. This is, however, demonstrably untrue, because Columbus was not in the Caribbean on that date. Its pre-Columbian name was Hairouna, meaning "Land of the Blessed". This may have been derived from the Arawak belief that their principal deity, Jocahu, lived in the land of the volcano, where soil is fertile, thus blessing its inhabitants with plenty. It is believed that the pre-Columbian Kalinago, better known as the Caribs, first inhabited it a century before the Spanish initially arrived in the Caribbean. They had taken the island over from the Arawak people, who, in turn, had replaced the Ciboney. The Pre-Columbian people of the Caribbean were not, as is sometimes thought, wiped out by the early Spanish expeditions and settlers in the region, but still survive today, particularly on Dominica, and there are still people of Kalinago descent on modern St. Vincent.



St. Vincent of Saragossa

Although the Spanish obviously knew of the island's existence and gave it a new name, it appears that they never made an attempt to settle on the island, possibly due to its volcanic nature, and it became a stronghold for the surviving Carib population over the course of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Greater European, and indeed African, interaction with the island would evolve over the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.



Unbeknownst to the Caribs, several European powers were laying claim to St. Vincent without even so much as setting foot on the island. The English first made a claim under King Charles I, who in 1627 granted several islands, including St. Vincent, by charter to the Earl of Carlisle. The British still maintained the claim, granting the islands to Lord Willoughby in 1672, after the Earl's death. However, at no point were the British in actual possession of St. Vincent, nor did they make any serious physical claim to the island until 1722, when a Captain Braithewaite was sent to survey it, and was met with hostility by the indigenous peoples.

Portrait of Caribs by Agostino Brunias The French had a far better relationship with St. Vincent, in part due to their possession of nearby Martinique. In 1678, the French signed a treaty with two Vincentian Carib chiefs, known as Jonana and Pierre Moigna, in order to protect their holdings on Martinique. As a result, the French were the first Europeans known to settle on St. Vincent. This, at first glance, seems to take the form of missionaries being sent there, to attempt to convert the inhabitants to Roman Catholicism. It is known that a French Jesuit missionary, Friar Adrien Le Breton, was resident on St. Vincent in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century (1693-1702), and it is clear that the gentleman had not had much, if any, success in his task, although he did maintain a generally amicable relationship with the inhabitants of the island.

The association with the French was sufficiently strong for the Kalinago, who had continued to have a poor relationship with the Garinagu, to ask for French for help from Martinique circa 1719 as they felt threatened by the Garinagu practice of kidnapping. The French agreed to help and planned to send a force of some 1000 men to St. Vincent to aid the Kalinago. However, in the end, the force amounted only to a mere 300 men, which proved ineffective against the Garinagu, who used the hilly, jungle-covered terrain to ambush them.

Sir William Young claimed that the expedition was actually the result of a Monsieur de Bucq convincing the Governor of Martinique to seize the island in order to establish plantations and reduce the Garinagu to a state of slavery. He also thought that the Kalinago had been asking for French aid for a much longer time, and had invited the French to settle amongst them even earlier, with a notable French presence being established as early as 1710.

Regardless of the motivation of the French expedition, the Kalinago did sign a treaty of friendship with the French in December 1719, which they later renewed in 1727. The Garinagu, for their part, sent a delegation to the Governor of Martinique to protest against their treatment by the French. Here they were able to reach an agreement with the French, promising that they would be allies and return escaped slaves to their owners, and settled into what would be a long-term alliance. Gifts were thus exchanged, and items taken from the French expedition to St. Vincent were also returned. The Garinagu even invited the French to live on the island. Hence, some French colonists from Martinique settled on St Vincent during this period, and some sources claim that it was at this time that the Garinagu first adopted the practice of binding their heads to distinguish themselves from the black slaves that the French brought with them, although the practice may have arisen much earlier.



It was claimed by Sir William Young and historian Bryan Edwards in their respective writings that the Treaty of Aix-La-Chappelle in 1748, which ended the War of the Austrian Succession, stipulated that St. Vincent would be a neutral island between the French and the British. However, no mention of the island and neutrality is mentioned either in the text of the main treaty or the preliminary agreements signed by Britain and France.

The island's neutral status is in fact older, dating back to an arrangement reached in 1660, which stated that both Dominica and St. Vincent would not be colonised by either European Power, which appears to have been forgotten, or, more likely, ignored by both sides. However, the conclusion of the next major conflict between Britain and France, the Seven Years War, would change the situation permanently.

Bryan Edwards

## The Treaty of Paris and the First Carib War

Although the level of control that the French actually had over St. Vincent is questionable, this did not stop them from ceding St. Vincent to the British as part of the Treaty of Paris 1763 at the end of the Seven Years War. It is important to note that the Caribs, be they the Garinagu or Kalinago, were still in actual possession of much of the island, and were neither consulted about this process, nor even mentioned in the treaty text. This stands in contrast to treaties about lands in North America, where the native tribes' territories were discussed.

#### **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.

A commission was set up to survey the new British possession and to parcel up the land for sale. The price for these new lands was, however, high, with settlers claiming that they were asked to pay triple the standard going rate in the rest of the British West Indies. The Land Commissioners actively tried to encourage Britons and people from other British colonies to settle in St. Vincent, with one of their number, Sir William Young, writing a pamphlet for that purpose. He wrote, in an attempt to assuage those who may have been worried about the presence of the Garinagu on the island: "That when the Black Charaibs' of St. Vincent's are duly apprized of the humanity and generosity of our gracious Sovereign, and assured of the enjoyment of their lands, freedom, favour, and protection, they may be gained over to our cause, and even rendered useful."

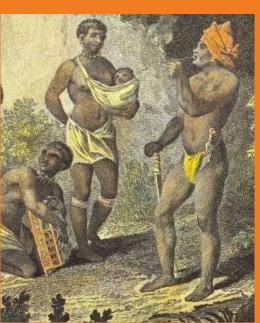
However, the Land Commissioners were given strict orders at first not to survey lands held or claimed by the Garinagu and Kalinago. The Garinagu, when they learned that St. Vincent was to be transferred to British 'control' after the Treaty of Paris, employed a French intermediary called Abbé Valladares to act and negotiate on their behalf. In return for both the sale of land belonging to them, and allowing the building of roads through their territory, the Garinagu were offered the rights and protections due to British Citizens. None accepted this offer and attempts to win them over through other means proved equally unsuccessful. Being unable to bargain with them, the Commissioners thus worked to have the Garinagu removed from the island. This included writing to the Lords of the Treasury in London. The Commissioners' letter of 10th August 1765 claimed, "That the Charaibs are altogether uncivilized, and the Blacks particularly of an idle untractable disposition. They live in huts scattered in an irregular manner, at a great distance from each other, without any established subordination, claiming large tracts of wood land intervening, of which they make no use; and are besides possessed of other lands in the cleared parts of the country, which interfere much with the laying out of plantations for sale. They had hitherto occasioned no disturbance, but still we are in doubt if they ever can be made useful; or whether 'in many instances they may not prove dangerous. The measure that appears to us, from these considerations, to be the safest and most for advantage of the colony, would be as soon as possible to remove as many of them as can be prevailed upon to quit, on terms consistent with the humanity and honour of his Majesty's government: and what seems the most probable for accomplishing that end, would be to buy the cleared land, and cottages, of those who are disposed to sell, satisfying them with money, or whatever else may be acceptable, and offering at the same time other lands in Bequia, where they cannot be hurtful, in lieu of those they quit; but not permitting them to take up any land again in any other part of St. Vincent's, except in such places, and on such terms, as may confine them to proper boundaries, and subject them to some regulations."

In 1768, after one of the Commissioners visited London at the request of British Government ministers, new rules were put in place, allowing for the survey and sale of Carib lands, under the condition that no Carib could be removed from their land unless they had the situation explained to them, that they understood the explanation, and that they were compensated for their land to the value of £10 an acre. When Valladares relayed all this to the Garinagu, one of their chiefs, Joseph Chatoyer, replied that he did not recognise the King of Britain, and that they would only listen to the French Governor of Martinique. Chatoyer was presumably a young man at this point, but was nevertheless amongst the leaders of his people and would become the main Garinagu figure that the Commissioners and British officially dealt with during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, after a meeting of Garinagu chiefs, several of their number visited the Commissioners and claimed that they recognised the King's authority and the proclamation of the sale of lands. Others later also claimed they were willing to recognise the authority of the King and the proclamation.

#### Joseph Chatoyer

Although he is now recognised as the National Hero of St. Vincent, very little is really known about the life of Joseph Chatoyer, including his date of birth. In one document, his father's name is recorded as Legottes and his original name was apparently Satuye. Like many Garinagu on 18<sup>th</sup> century St. Vincent, he adopted a French name.

His surname roughly translates to 'the shining one' in French. He first came to prominence in the 1760s, around the time that another major Garinagu leader, Tourouya, died. He was recognised as the chief of the Garinagu community at Grand Sable. It is clear that, for over twenty years, Chatoyer was very much a leading figure amongst the various Garinagu chiefs of St. Vincent, towards the end of his life being recognised as the Paramount Chief.



He has proven to be a controversial figure in history and is remembered and celebrated for leading his people and fighting against Britain as a colonial power to protect his people's lands. He is recognised as the father of Vincentian independence, over two centuries before the official independence of the modern nation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. He certainly seems to have used his limited resources effectively. Others have criticised him for, at one time, owning slaves and failing to abide by the treaties that he signed, whilst accusing him of brutality against his enemies. Historian Charles Shepard remarked that, "Cruelty rather than courage had always been the principle of this man's conduct."

However, what we know of Chatoyer largely comes from sources that were written by those opposed to him. Sir William Young and Charles Shepard, each colonists, both wrote explicitly in favour of the planters who Chatoyer fought against, and thus cannot be relied upon to provide an unbiased view of the man.

Tensions would once again flare between the Garinagu and the British when the Commissioners attempted to build a road into Carib territory. The proclamation had made no mention of such a road, and the Garinagu resolved to stop it being built through their lands, allowing it no further than the boundary previously agreed with the Governor of Martinique. Captain Wilkie and forty soldiers of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment were stationed at Massaricau, where construction of the road had reached. They were captured by the Garinagu and held hostage. As a condition for their release, the Garinagu demanded that the Commissioners make no further attempts to build roads within their country.

Even though the rest of the armed forces on the island, some extra hundred men, had been assembled, the Commissioners believed they were not authorised to use military force under the terms of the proclamation and so took no military action. The hostages were released, but peace did not return. The Garinagu began to harass British settlements, even attacking the house of Valladares, who they had previously trusted as an intermediary. The Commissioners wrote to London, requesting military



A soldier of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment

assistance to frighten the Garinagu into submission so they could carry out their instructions.

At the end of June 1771, Chatoyer and forty other Garinagu leaders met with the Commissioners and stated once again that they would not sell their land, would not tolerate any European settlers within their borders, nor recognise any King. The Commissioners recommended to the British Government that a road be forced through Garinagu lands. To this end, a military force was assembled in 1772, being finally ready for action in September. The Garinagu were not idle, also preparing for conflict. On 7<sup>th</sup> September, the terms offered the previous year were repeated to the Garinagu, which they refused, despite the military buildup, to the surprise of the Commissioners. Thus, the war commenced.

If you were to believe the writings of Sir William Young's son, also called Sir William, the Garinagu eventually asked for terms after the British successfully established a series of military posts throughout their territory over the five-month course of the war, but the truth is not so simple. The British found it difficult to fight against the Caribs, who made excellent use of the jungle terrain and the mountains and fought a campaign of Guerrilla warfare that the British Army was not trained or equipped to defend against. The Garinagu were by no means the only defenders in the Caribbean to utilise such tactics over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but they were amongst its most proficient practicioners. European armies, trained for fighting based around widescale manoeuvres in open country, stood little chance of success. In addition to difficulties that the army faced, there was also increasing discontent back in Britain about the war, its motivations and implications.

Many people felt that the war against the Caribs was unjust and should cease. Several opposition Members of Parliament, many also looking for a way by which to attack Lord North's Government, spoke against the war, including Lord Shelburne in the House of Lords and Colonel Isaac Barré, a veteran of the Seven Years War, in the House of Commons. Sir Richard Whitworth, the MP for Stafford, said in a Parliamentary debate on 10<sup>th</sup> December 1772 that: *"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." British public opinion too turned against the war, with an anonymous letter in The Scotsman declaring; "Thus is the British Government reviving the Spanish



Sir Richard Whitworth in 1779

cruelties at the conquest of Mexico, to gratify avaricious merchants, landholders, and venal commissioners." The Government thus promised an enquiry into the situation.



The peace neotiations between the Garinagu and the British Army

The end of the war came when General Dalrymple, commanding William the British forces, was ordered by his superiors in London to negotiate with the Garinagu, even if it involved making concessions, whilst also making reference to the welfare and happiness of the Garinagu. The treaty was signed by several of the Caribs' leading chiefs, including Joseph Chatoyer. However, despite what Sir William Young believed, there is evidence that Chatoyer, notwithstanding his prominence, was not the most senior Garinagu Chief at this point in time.

The first of their number to sign the treaty was Jean Baptiste, who Governor Valentine Morris also held to be the key figure, although this did not necessarily mean he was a supreme leader. It must be noted that there were several leading Caribs who did not form part of the negotiations, neither

was the Governor of St. Vincent nor any of the leading Planters involved or consulted. With the lack of input from all the interested parties, and the fact that the treaty was made as quickly as possible, it was perhaps inevitable that problems would emerge in the future.

#### TERMS OF THE TREATY BETWEEN THE CHIEFS OF GRAND SABLE, MASSIRACA, RABACCA, MACARICAU, BYERA, COUBAMAROU, JAMBOU, COLONRIE, CAMACARABOU, OUARAWAROU AND POINT ESPAGNIOL AND HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL DALRYMPLE 1773

- 1. All hostile proceedings to cease; a firm and lasting peace and friendship to succeed.
- 2. The Charaibs shall acknowledge his Majesty to be the rightful sovereign of the island and domain of St. Vincent's: take an oath of fidelity to him as their King; promise absolute submission to his will, and lay down their arms.
- 3. They shall submit themselves to the laws and obedience of his Majesty's government, with power to the Governor to enact further regulations for the public advantage as shall be convenient. (This article only respects their transactions with his Majesty's subjects, not being Indians, their intercourse and customs with each other, in the quarters allotted them not being affected by it.) And all new regulations to receive his Majesty's Governor's approbation before carried into execution.
- 4. A portion of lands, hereafter mentioned, to be allotted for the residence of the Charaibs, viz. from the river Byera to Point Espagniol on the one side, and from the river Analibou to Point Espagniol on the other side, according to lines to be drawn by his Majesty's surveyors, from the sources of the rivers to the tops of the mountains; the rest of the lands, formerly inhabited by Charaibs, for the future to belong entirely to his Majesty.
- 5. Those lands not to be alienated, either by sale, lease, or otherwise, but to persons properly authorized by his Majesty to receive them.
- 6. Roads, ports, batteries, and communications to be made as his Majesty pleases.
- 7. No undue intercourse with the French islands to be allowed.
- 8. Runaway slaves in the possession of the Charaibs are to be delivered up, and endeavours used to discover and apprehend the others; and an engagement, in future, not to encourage, receive, or harbour any slave whatever: forfeiture of lands for harbouring; and carrying off the island a capital crime.

- 9. Persons guilty of capital crimes against the English are to be delivered up.
- 10. In time of danger to be aiding and assisting to his Majesty's subjects against their enemies.
- 11. The three chains to remain to his Majesty.
- 12. All conspiracies and plots against his Majesty, or his government, to be made known to his Governor, or other civil magistrates.
- 13. Leave (if required) to be given to the Charaibs to depart this island, with their families and properties, and assistance in transportation.
- 14. Free access to the quarters allowed to the Charaibs, to be given to persons properly empowered in pursuit of runaway slaves, and safe conduct afforded them.
- 15. Deserters from his Majesty's service (if any) and runaway slaves from the French, to be delivered up, in order that they may be returned to their masters.
- 16. The chiefs of the different quarters are to render an account of the names and number of the inhabitants of their respective districts.
- 17. The chiefs, and other Charaibs, inhabitants, to attend the Governor when required for his Majesty's service.
- 18. All possible facility, consistence with the laws of Great Britain, to be afforded to the Charaibs in the sale of their produce, and in their trade to the different British islands.
- 19. Entire liberty of fishing, as well on the coast of St. Vincent's, as at the neighbouring keys, to be allowed them.
- 20. In all cases, when the Charaibs conceive themselves injured by his Majesty's other subjects, or other persons, and are desirous of having reference to the laws, or to the civil magistrates, an agent, being one of his Majesty's natural born subjects, may be employed by themselves, or if more agreeable at his Majesty's cost.
- 21. No strangers, or white persons, to be permitted to settle among the Charaibs, without permission obtained in writing from the Governor.
- 22. These articles subscribed to and observe, the Charaibs are to be pardoned, secured, and fixed in their property, according to his Majesty's direction given, and

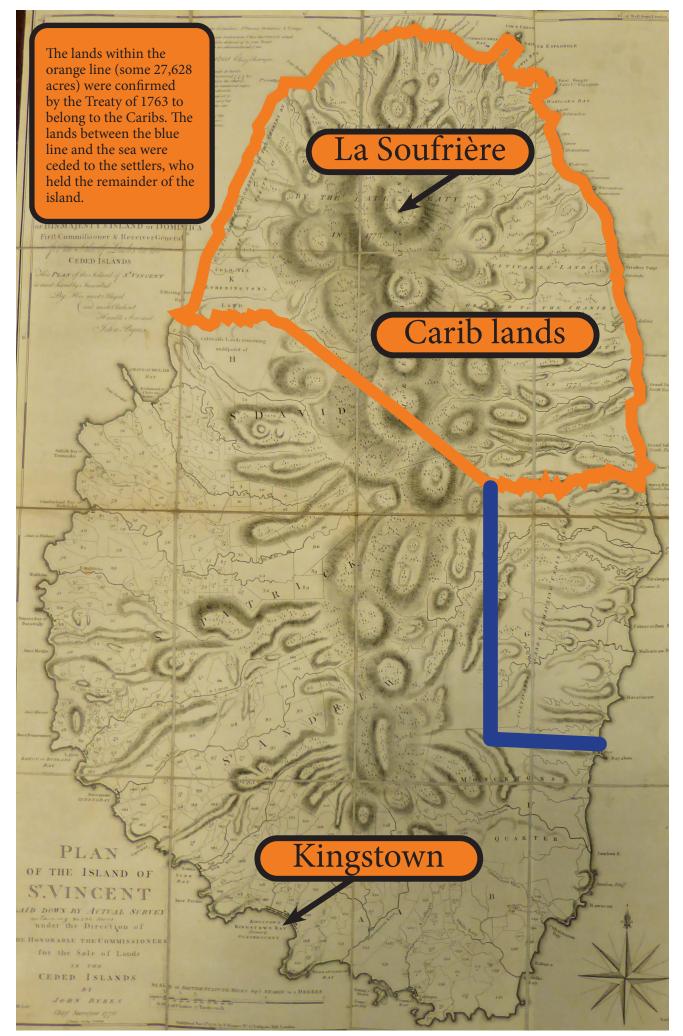
all past offences forgot.

- 23. After the signing of this treaty, should any of the Charaibs refuse to observe the condition of it, they are to be considered and treated as enemies by both parties, and the most effectual means used to reduce them.
- 24. The Charaibs shall take the following oath, viz. We A.B. do swear, in the name of the immortal God, and Christ Jesus, that we will bear true allegiance to his Majesty George the Third, of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, defender of the faith; and that we will pay due obedience to the laws of Great Britain, and the Island of St. Vincent's; and will well and truly observe every article of the treaty concluded between his said Majesty and the Charaibs; and we do acknowledge, that his said majesty is rightful Lord and Sovereign of all the Island of St. Vincent's, and that the lands held by the Charaibs are granted through his Majesty's clemency.

#### On the part of his Majesty, W. DALRYMPLE

On the part of the Charaibs.

| Jean Baptiste.    | Simon.              |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Dufont Begot.     | Lalime, Senior.     |
| Boyordell.        | Bauamont.           |
| Dirang.           | Justin Bauamont.    |
| Chatoyer.         | Matthieu.           |
| Douncre Baramont. | Jean Louis Pacquin. |
| Lalime, Junior.   | Gadel Goibau.       |
| Broca.            | John Baptiste.      |
| Saioe.            | Lonen.              |
| Francois Laron.   | Boyudon.            |
| Saint Laron.      | Du Vallet.          |
| Anisette.         | Boucharie.          |
| Clement.          | Deruba Babilliard.  |
| Bigott.           | Canaia.             |



# **Chatoyer's Ladle**



This item from the West India Committee's UNESCO inscribed Collection is a unique piece of craftmanship, made primarily out of the shell of a young coconut with patterning that is apparently unprecedented in Caribbean art. It was presented to the Committee in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century by a Mr. MacGregor Frame, a member of the Committee. It is said to date from 1773 and to once have belonged to Joseph Chatoyer himself, bearing the insription *Chatoyer 1773* on its silver rim. The exact provenance of the item is unknown; but there are several points which nevertheless support its link with the Paramount Chief of the Garinagu.

The patterns on the bowl, whilst unique in the Caribbean, do bear a resemblance to motifs in African art, specifically that of Benin art, seen on the famous Benin-bronzes. This would lend credence to the belief that the Garinagu's ancestors were from the Bight of Benin. The handle is likely a later addition, and the item may have been a cup before being adapted to become



a ladle. Chatoyer may have drunk punch and served it to European guests, the drink being popular in the Caribbean since the 1660s. There was a fashion in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries for engraved punch ladles like this one. What sets this item apart from other such ladles made from coconuts, is that they were normally carved in Europe, and, as such, feature European motifs and patterns. The clearly non-European artwork again gives credence to a Garifunan origin. Some believed at the time that a coconut, a then exotic curiosity, had special properties that would protect those who drank from it from poisons.

It is quite possible that the item was gifted to the British, maybe even Colonel Dalrymple himself, on the signing of the Treaty between the British and the Garinagu at the end of the first Carib War, hence the date on the rim. The exchanging of gifts during a negotiation, or at the signing of a treaty, has occurred throughout human history. Although there are still questions to be asked about the ladle, which may never now be answered, it is nevertheless the only artefact in existence associated with Joseph Chatoyer.



## The Inter-War Years

With the signing of the treaty, matters did become more peaceful for a time and soon Garinagu traders sold their wares, primarily agricultural goods, in the Vincentian capital, Kingstown. Many Garinagu were not happy with their Chiefs making peace, and some moved back into territory which had been ceded by the treaty as little as three months after the signing. Few Caribs took the oath required by the treaty, whilst the Planters declared that the terms had been far too lenient, and the island's Assembly went so far as to declare the war a 'fruitless expense'. However, a new conflict was looming, not in the Caribbean but on the North American mainland. The ramifications of this conflict would spread far and wide, including St. Vincent. When the thirteen colonies of North America rose in rebellion against Britain, Britain's rivals, France and Spain, took advantage, and allied with the revolutionaries. In the Caribbean, this led to the French and Spanish attacking British colonies, including St. Vincent.

The Garinagu decided, despite the treaty, or possibly because they felt it had not been sufficiently honoured, to side with France in this conflict, allying with them and preparing to attack the British. In some cases, the ammunition and provisions they acquired were British. Governor Valentine Morris had provided them with both to search for runaway slaves, although they never seemed to find any. Morris was convinced that they were passing along information to the fugitives and it may be that these fugitives were welcomed amongst the Garinagu as warriors for the upcoming conflict. The French also supplied arms, with Governor Morris noting that the Garinagu had acquired muskets and bayonets of the sort used by French regular troops.



Governor Valentine Morris



When the French landed on St. Vincent on the night of 15<sup>th</sup> June 1779, the Garinagu, along with a French ally, Percin La Roque, who had already arrived on the island to prepare for the attack, assaulted the British military outposts throughout Garinagu territory. The British Governor, Valentine Morris, wished to mount a resistance, but the military commander, Lieutenant Colonel Etherington, decided that to do so was impossible and opted to surrender the island. Negotiations began on 16th June, with the British receiving a shock when Chatoyer and other Garinagu chiefs entered the negotiations on the French side. Percin La Roque became the new French Governor, but had to act to prevent some of the Garinagu from attacking British settlements after the surrender. The Garinagu also helped the

Lieutenant Colonel George Etherington French to repel British attempts to recapture the from the Royal Green Jackets (Rifles) Museum island, when General Vaughan and Admiral Rodney

sailed from St. Lucia on 16th December 1780 to St. Vincent. However, seeing the strength of the French and Garinagu forces, the General and Admiral decided against an attack. Etherington was later court martialled for his refusal to mount a defence.

When the War ended, the ensuing Treaty of Versailles (1783) returned the island to British control, with no stipulation about what should happen to the Garinagu, although the rights of French settlers were guaranteed. Despite the violation of the Treaty between Britain and the Garinagu, no punitive action was taken against the tribe. French author Alexandre Moreau de Jonnès claimed in his memoir, although he was only six years old at the time, that the British had planned to send four regiments to the island for a punitive expedition, and that it was only by French insistence that Carib lands were protected as per the original 1773 treaty that the expedition was not launched. However, there are many issues with the accuracy of Moreau's memoirs, aside from his age, and the absence of other evidence that this was the case.

#### **Treaty of Versailles 1783 Article VIII**

Le Roi très Chrétien restitue à la Grande Bretagne les isles de la Grenade, et les Grenadins, St. Vincent, la Dominique, St. Christophe, Nevis, et Montserrat; et les places de ces isles feront rendues dans l'état où elles étoient lorsque la conquête en a été faite. Les mêmes stipulations inférées dans l'article précédent au ront lieu en faveur des fujets François à l'égard des isles dénommées dans le présent article.

Following the American Revolution, the French and British Settlers and the Garinagu once again seemed to establish a rapport, and there was discourse between the leading planters and the Carib chiefs. Sir William Young the Younger wrote of welcoming Chatoyer and his brother, Du Valleé, as guests to his home and presented them with gifts. Two of Chatoyer's sons are



Kingstown

reported to have lived with a British family on the island, whilst another was tutored by a Methodist missionary. Garinagu traders sold their wares in the market in Kingstown once again. Some Garinagu established their own plantations, with Chatoyer and Du Valleé acquiring loans from the settlers, allowing them to cultivate more lands and purchase their own slaves. Some Garinagu even owned property and settled in settler territory, such as the Barramont family who

had property in Ribishi in St. George's Parish. In addition, as attested by their old ally, Percin la Roque, like the Maroons of Jamaica, the Garinagu now actively helped the British to retrieve fugitive slaves, in return for a reward. According to one story, Chatoyer even met with Prince William Henry, the future King WIlliam IV, who served as a naval officer in the Caribbean for a time. The story claims that the future King presented Chatoyer with the gift of a silver Gorget.

However, the issues still remained, with some of the settlers reporting that the Garinagu had committed "outrages", likely the destruction of property, and complained about their lack of security. Likewise, the planters kept trying to acquire lands in the Garinagu territory. Another war between Britain and France, the French Revolutionary War, would once again see Britain and the Garinagu bear arms against one another, for what would be the last time.

## The Second Carib War

With the onset of the French Revolution, when the French overthrew their monarchy with the cry of "liberté, égalité, fraternité", they soon came into conflict once again with Britain and other European powers. In 1793 the French declared war on Britain. Victor Hugues, a leader amongst the French revolutionaries in the Caribbean, sent Chatoyer and Du Valleé gifts, including a French officer's uniform, ammunition and a promise of victory over the British. Sir William Young the Younger later wrote in his book on the Black Caribs that there was no indication before the Garinagu attacked the British on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1795 that they would side with the French.

Sir William appears to have taken Chatoyer's actions to not only be a betrayal of the treaty, but as a personal affront. In addition to frequently welcoming Chatoyer into his home as a guest, he had



Victor Hugues

gifted Chatoyer the sword that once belonged to his younger brother Henry, which was found on Chatoyer's body following his death, and he spoke of Chatoyer's use of it in very negative terms in his account of the War. Nonetheless, Chatoyer issued a declaration on 12th March, allying himself and his people with French revolutionary ideals, using the language of the revolutionaries.

#### Chatoyer's declaration, translated from the original French

"Where is the Frenchman who will not join his brothers, at a moment when the voice of liberty is heard by them? Let us then unite, citizens and brothers, round the colours flying in this island; and let us hasten to co-operate to that great piece of work which has been already commenced so gloriously. But should any timorous men still exist, should any Frenchman be held back through fear, we do hereby declare to them, in the name of the law, that those who will not be assembled with us in the course of the day, shall be deemed traitors to the country, and treated as enemies. We do swear that both fire and sword shall be employed against them, that we are going to burn their estates, and that we will murder their wives and children, in order to annihilate their race."

The French and Garinagu forces pushed forward towards Kingstown, destroying properties in their path, including their own plantations. Despite initial progress, Chatoyer died very early in the conflict. The Garinagu and French had taken up a position on Dorsetshire Hill, but the British militia performed a sneak attack on this position at 01:00 on the morning of 15<sup>th</sup> March. Chatoyer was amongst those killed in the attack. In the earliest reports, there is no mention of who killed Chatoyer, but soon afterwards, when Sir William Young published his 'account of the Black Charaibs', he mentioned one Major Alexander Leith of the militia as the man who did the deed.

Later myth seems to have expanded Major Leith's action into a duel between the two combatants, but this is highly improbable for a number of reasons. Firstly, the action was a sneak attack, that took less than 15 minutes, hardly enough time for a formal duel. Secondly, Sir William, who does not talk of a duel, mentions that Major Leith dispatched Chatoyer with a bayonet,



St. George's Cathedral, Kingstown photo by Vicki Telfer

which is not a weapon used in duels, although, as a Major in the militia, it is reasonable to assume that Leith would have been equipped with a sword for a duel should the need have arisen. There is a memorial to Major Leith in St. George's (Anglican) Cathedral in Kingstown, erected by the British.

In previous conflicts, the Garinagu were able to use their superior knowledge of the landscape to their advantage and fight a guerrilla conflict. However, this time matters would be different. On this occasion, they had to defend fixed points and fought in tandem with their French allies, using more traditional European tactics. There was also a new military corps, the St. Vincent Ranger Corps, composed of slaves trained to fight in a similar way to the Garinagu and who were able to penetrate deep into their territories and destroy their provision grounds, thus robbing the Garinagu of their supplies.

The conflict raged on and, after seeing their fortune reversed, the French and Garinagu were

able to turn the tables on the British once again and push them back toward Kingstown. However, the arrival of reinforcements from Sir Ralph Abercromby's expedition to the Caribbean (as part of the overall British strategy for the French Revolutionary Wars), caused the French forces to soon surrender.

The leading Planters of St. Vincent, including Sir William the Younger, called once again for the removal of the Garinagu from St. Vincent. This time, the British Government agreed, and the removal of the tribe became part of Abercromby's orders. When some Carib chiefs came out of the interior to negotiate, hoping to retain control of their lands, they were told that the only concession that would be guaranteed is that their lives would be spared if they surrendered. A group of chiefs that had come to Kingstown were told by Governor Seaton and General Hunter: "Your having been guilty of numerous acts of Treachery, Murder and Treason, and having repeatedly violated your most solemn engagements with the British nation; it is determined you are to be sent from this Island." Some chose to flee the conflict, travelling to Trinidad by using cotton wrapped around the blades of their oars to hide the sound of the departure of their canoes. One chief committed suicide by blowing up his own powder magazine. Many Garinagu, including Chatoyer's son, opted to fight on. But the British tactic of destroying their provision grounds weakened them and forced a surrender.



A medal commemorating the St. Vincent Black Corps, with winged Victory standing over a defeated Garifuna and a slave soldier on the reverse

CONTRACTOR OB

#### THE MEMORIAL OF THE PLANTERS AND MERCHANTS CONCERNED IN THE ISLAND OF SAINT VINCENT TO THE DUKE OF PORTLAND, MR. PITT AND MR. **DUNDAS (1795)**,

#### Humbly represents,

That at the time of the cession of the Island of Saint Vincent to his Majesty's Government by the Crown of France, by treaty, dated one thousand seven hundred and sixtythree, a part of the Island was occupied by a few Red Indians, and by about two thousand descendants of African Negroes, who had escaped from an African slave ship, wrecked on the coast of a neighbouring island, towards the close of the last century.

That it was in contemplation of His Majesty's Government in the first instance to remove off these Negroes, and transplant them to the coast of Africa, or some island adjacent.

That in one thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight, in consequence of representations that they might remain at St. Vincent without prejudice to the colony, instructions were sent to the Commissioners to appropriate and regulate their settlement in a Quarter of the island.

That whatever appearances of loyalty or peaceable demeanour had induced the  $Commissioners \ to \ make \ such \ representations \ against \ their \ removal, \ or \ His \ Majesty's \ Ministers$ to adopt them, the Black Caribs (so improperly though generally termed) quickly shewed a disposition little worthy of the royal favour, or sovereign protection, by withdrawing their allegiance and attacking the King's troops attending the surveyors then marking out the public roads. Such attack was by the Caribs avowed as a measure determined on by them to prevent His Majesty's forces having any passage or communication within the country they chose to occupy, and proceeded to such extremity, that at great charge and expense, an army under General Dalrymple was employed to reduce them, and with views on their being subdued, to enforce the original purpose of their removal. After several months of cruel warfare, it was thought expedient to relinquish the 1dea of removing these Africans, and terms of compromise were entered into in one thousand seven hundred and seventythree, and the chiefs signed conditions and took the oaths of allegiance to His Majesty. From the very date of taking such oaths, and promising to be good and faithful subjects, they have omitted severally, or in the aggregate, no opportunity of treason, or giving assistance to His Majesty's enemies.

That in the last war they called in the French, and assisted them in wresting the Island of Saint Vincent from the sovereignty of Great Britain, but restrained by the then mild and generous tempers of the French officers, did not display their natural and ferocious tempers, the fatal effects of which necessitate the present application of your Memorialists. That during the present war, in April, one thousand seven hundred and ninetyfour, His Majesty's Governor and Council of Saint Vincent, well apprised of the spirit  $\frac{19}{19}$  of perfidy and disloyalty which had ever shewn itself among the Black Caribs, (or rather Negro invaders and destroyers of the original Carib or Indian of the country) called together their chiefs, and giving them a treat in the name of the King, explained to them the nature of the oath of allegiance they had taken, and what was the conduct expected from them, which they promised faithfully to pursue.

That it is apprehended from the very period of their promise, they considered merely how with safety to infringe it; their character of perfidy and deception on the late unhappy occasion, being masked by the most fair and delusive language and conduct to the British colonists in Saint Vincent, when they were on the very eve of setting forth to devastate all property, and declaredly to massacre and extirpate every English white inhabitant.

That this they unfortunately accomplished to a great degree, on the richest and most extensive part of the island, to the great grief of your Memorialists, from the murder of their friends and Negroes, and to their utter ruin, if not assisted in the settlement of their estates, by benevolent measures adequate in their case, to be adopted in this country.

That above all, such re-settlement will not be practicable, or cannot be adopted, or pursued, with credit from the British merchants, or with general safety to your Memorialists, if the African Negroes (usurping the Indian name of Caribs) are permitted to remain on the island; and they humbly call to the recollection of His Majesty's Ministers, the original plan of transporting them to a part of the world congenial to their origin, temper, and customs, has become indispensable to the safety of your Memorialists who have colonized and settled the most beautiful and fertile island of Saint Vincent by purchase from Government, and with much loyalty, industry, and exertion, a benefit, which as they humbly conceive, admits as little of comparison in point of justice, as of competition in point of national service, when contrasted with the conduct of those they plead the alternative of banishment against, for if these Africans remain your Memorialists must be driven from the island. The great losses your Memorialists have suffered in their fortunes, and the considerable loss of public revenue, they will presume humbly to state for consideration when more accurate details arrive; but they could not in justice to themselves, their friends, and their country, omit taking the very first and earliest occasion of soliciting the attention of His Majesty's Ministers to the conduct of the Black Caribs, and for such measures to be taken respecting those people as the wisdom of His Majesty's Councils shall deem right and proper.

WILLIAM YOUNG, Chairman

9<sup>th</sup> May, London, 1795

## The exile of the Garinagu

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 were removed from St. Vincent to the nearby island of Baliceaux in 1796, where they remained for several months before they were transported to the island of Roatàn off the Central American Coast in early 1797. Baliceaux, a small island only 33 kilometres from Kingstown, was chosen as a temporary location due to its proximity.

However, on Baliceaux they faced overcrowding, disease and poor supplies of food and water. The disease, possibly typhus or yellow fever, seems to have been brought by the last of the Garinagu that surrendered and were shipped to the island, where

it proceeded to run rampant through the population; some British soldiers on the island also succumbed. Out of the 4,195 that were exiled to Baliceaux, there were only 2,248 left by the time they were transported to Roatàn. The Garinagu believed that the flour they were provided with to make bread had been poisoned with lime.

The majority of the Garinagu landed on Roatàn on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1797, where they were given six months' supplies, but much of these provisions had been damaged by saltwater when being unloaded, and were insufficient to last until the harvest. Amongst those who made it to Roatàn, were Chatoyer's brother Du Valleé, one of Chatoyer's sons, and Chatoyer's daughter, Gulisi. On the way to Roatàn, one of the transport ships was captured by the Spanish and taken to the nearby Spanish city of Trujillo on the Honduran Coast. The British attacked Trujillo in late April and recaptured the transport, taking the Garinagu aboard to Roatàn. Shortly after their arrival on Roatàn, they were approached by the Spanish, who viewed the Garinagu's presence with hostility, the island having been captured from the Spanish by the British. The Spanish at

first were going to attack the new arrivals, but, seeing that the Garinagu were not British, adopted a new approach.

The Trujillo colony was not thriving, many of the original Spanish settlers having perished. The Spanish therefore offered to assist the Garinagu if they accepted Spanish authority. Alliance with the Spanish offered the opportunity of food rations to replace the inadequate and damaged supplies that the British had left. Thus, the Garinagu accepted, and the Spanish transported them to the mainland, where they initially settled in remote villages, as they had in St. Vincent, some distance from the Spanish communities. In addition to working as labourers on Royal projects in the colony, they were welcomed





as members of the now-undermanned Spanish militia, where their experience with firearms and fierceness in battle were particularly valued.

The Garinagu became an integral part of the Trujillo economy, primarily through agriculture, growing a variety of crops, including cassava, maize and rice, as well as raising chickens and pigs. By 1813, they were almost the exclusive producers in the agricultural sector of the colony. They also fished, selling the surplus at market, and became a mainstay of the timber industry, cutting logwood and mahogany. Many would also become sailors (and indeed smugglers) and their travels helped to establish Garinagu communities in ports in the USA, including New Orleans and New York, particularly when the South American Banana trade was at its height in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Garinagu's population rapidly increased, with as many as 500 to 600 children being born in their first year in Central America. By 1821, they comprised 64% of the population of the city of Trujillo and the nine towns that together formed the colony. This led to a certain amount of population pressure, which led to migration along the coast and inland.

The Garinagu were not immune to the political situation in Central America, namely the

Declaration of Independence from Spain in 1821, the brief rule of the Mexican Empire in 1822, the establishment of the Federal Republic of Central America in 1823 and the relationships and wars between its constituent members. Ultimately, Trujillo changed hands between Guatemala and Honduras. The Garinagu formed a part of the Spanish Royalist forces in the early years of this period.

Later, the tribe also formed part of the counter-revolutions against the forces of President Francisco Morazán of the Federal Republic of Central America, who had ousted President Manuel José Arce. It was in this period of political upheaval that many Garinagu travelled to and settled in what is now Belize, including Gulisi, Chatoyer's daughter. The oral history passed down from Gulisi recounts that she was harassed by the Spanish authorities, who believed she was a spy, and left after an incident in which she was almost killed.



Manuel Arce

Although the Garinagu who were exiled from St. Vincent retained much of their culture, including their unique language, these upheavals nevertheless resulted in significant cultural change. Whilst the French missionaries of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century had failed to convert the Garinagu to Roman Catholicism, in Central America they overwhelmingly converted to the faith. They also integrated with other West Indians, although they still largely married other Garinagu. For a time, there did appear to be animosity between the Creole population of Belize and the Garinagu, which has been explained by some scholars as resulting from the poor relations between the slave population and the Garinagu at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century on St. Vincent, and how the Ranger Corps was used to great effect against the Garinagu.



William Brown

The wider world was not ignorant of what had transpired on St. Vincent. In 1822, the story inspired William Alexander Brown, also known as William Henry Brown. Born in the West Indies, William Brown was America's first black playwright and theatre producer who, after settling on Thompson Street, New York in 1816, composed a play, entitled *The Drama of King Shotaway, founded on Facts taken from the Insurrection of the Caravs on the Island of St Vincent, written from Experience by Mr. Brown.* 

It is the first play that we know Brown to have written, although evidence suggests that he wrote earlier works that have now been lost. There is even some evidence to suggest that he was illiterate; he made his mark on various documents rather than signed his name, but that does not preclude him

from having dictated his work to others, which may explain the phonetic spellings of Chatoyer and Carib in the title of the play, nor have prevented him from directing the performance. Some have theorised that it was not written down at all, and it was largely improvised under Brown's guidance. The play was performed at the African Grove Theatre in Lower Manhattan, which not only staged other original plays, but also renditions of Shakespeare with an all-black cast, otherwise unheard of at that time.

Although details of the play survive, the script did not. It is unclear how William Brown had experience of the war on St. Vincent, and he must have been young, possibly as young as 5 years old, when it occurred. It is unknown from where in the West Indies he originally hailed. Furthermore, early references to the play indicate that it related to events on San Domingo rather than St. Vincent, again calling into question Brown's direct experience of the conflict. What is clear is that the play was an attempt to record a revolt by the indigenous and slave populations of the Caribbean, and likely regarded as an inspiration to a black American audience, given the social tensions of North America at the time.

Before his career in theatre, it is known that Brown was employed as a ship's steward on the

transatlantic crossing between Liverpool and New York, and it is possible that he learned of the Carib wars during his time at sea, maybe meeting some of the participants, which might possibly explain the earlier confusion with San Domingo. The play was performed at the African Grove Theatre in Lower Manhattan, alongside a repertoire of Shakespeare and other works by Brown. Nevertheless, *The Drama of King Shotaway* was one of the first plays, written by a black playwright, performed by black artists in America for an all black audience.



The African Grove Theatre

## Life on St. Vincent

On St. Vincent, some of the Kalinago were transported to Trinidad after the British Government had been convinced to do so by the Planters, even though Governor Seaton believed that they had not acted against the British in the war. French sources indicate that some amongst the Kalinago acted with the Garinagu, but the British sources overwhelmingly decided that this was not the case. One account by a French eyewitness, who claims to have spent three months amongst the Kalinago, recounts some fantastical events which are otherwise impossible to verify, which brings the source into question. A Kalinago man, named Gabriel, successfully petitioned to allow himself and others to settle at Sandy Bay. However, after the eruption of La Soufrière volcano in 1812, many of the Kalinago emigrated to Trinidad. Some Garinagu also remained on the island, although an Act passed in June 1804 ruled that they were no longer entitled to the lands agreed by the 1773 Treaty, and in 1805 those that remained were given a pardon. The same Act of Pardon gave them lands around Morne Ronde on the Northwest coast of the island, where there is still a locale called Carib Settlement. Many later settled around Sandy Bay, and in the town of Grieggs; tradition holds they are descended from those Garinagu who remained after the Second Carib War. However, over time, the Garinagu and Kalinago communities of St. Vincent largely merged into one Carib community.

The next major trial to affect the remaining Kalinago and Garinagu populations on St. Vincent was the eruption of La Soufrière on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1902, the first time it had erupted since 1812. It occurred just two days before the eruption of Mont Pelée on Martinique. The eruption went on for several days. Naturally the devastation in the north of the island, near the volcano, was extreme, and it was reported as being worse on the eastern side of the island where the Carib population resided. In total, it appears that a third of the



La Soufrière shortly after the 1902 eruption

island was devastated. It was initially reported that the eruption caused the deaths of over 2,000 people, but this figure was later revised to 1,327. The vast majority of them were from the Carib population. Indeed, in the early reports of the disaster, it was feared that the entirety of the Vincentian Carib population had been annihilated but some did survive, with reports of some 2,000 people escaping the Carib settlements and reaching Kingstown with other refugees.

The affect of the eruption on the surrounding area was devastating. Some reports listed almost all vegetation as being destroyed, ash being two feet deep, and lava having flowed over the landscape. Bodies of both humans and livestock killed in the eruption were left unburied for days until they could be reached under the deadly conditions. The eruption of Mont Pelée saw the destruction of the town of Saint-Pierre and the death of over 29,000 people in the space of a few minutes. Despite the death and destruction caused by the 1902 eruption and the devastation caused by the 2021 eruption, the Caribs of St. Vincent continue to survive on the island to this day.

## The Modern Era

Today there Garinagu are communities located all over the world, with some 300,000 to 400,000 estimated globally as of 2006. Honduras remains the largest community, with around 200,000, whilst Belize is home to around 24,000. Sizeable communities are also found in America, amounting to 125,000, although it is difficult to give an accurate figure, in places such as Houston, New Orleans and especially New York. The migrant communities remitted money to their families back home. supporting the development of the Garinagu community in Central America. Some Garinagu also now live in Britain, particularly in and around High Wycombe,



The location of large Garinagu communities in the Americas

which has a large Vincentian community.

Descendants of the Garinagu and the Kalinago also continue to live in St. Vincent, particularly in and around Sandy Bay in the north of the island. It is unclear how many of their number there are in St. Vincent today, but it was estimated in the 1980s that there were between 1,100 and 2,000. Today, Kalinago genes count for about 20% of the Garinagu Genome, despite the community's long separation from St. Vincent.

Although the Garinagu culture has largely faded amongst their descendants on St. Vincent, the exiles have maintained their language, music, food and dance, as well as the oral history of their people. The language, music and dance of the Garinagu was first recognised by UNESCO



Garinagu dancers photo by maisa\_nyc via Creative Commons

in 2001, and in 2008 was inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Garinagu music carries both African and Arawak elements, with the most notable instrument used being the garawoun, a drum, which plays a role in both Garinagu spiritual practices and their secular music. The Garawoun and other drums are at the heart of all Garinagu music, and are traditionally made by hollowing out the trunks of hardwood trees such as Mahogany or Cedar, burning out the interior and then chiselling the remains to reach the desired shape. There are usually two drums in Garinagu songs, the *segunda* (providing the bass) and *primero* (providing the treble). The Segunda drummer maintains a constant rhythm through the song, thus providing the beat, whilst the Primero produces faster rhythms.

The most notable style of Garingu music is the *Punta. Punta* is usually, like most Garinagu music, accompanied by dances known as hunguhungu and chumba, with one couple encircled by other dancers. These traditional styles of dance are said to be based on the



Garinagu drummers in Nicaragua photo by Alexander Schimmeck via Creative Commons

mating dance between a cockerel and hen. The dancers on the outside sing the song, which involves patterns such as call and response. For the dancers in the middle, the focus is on movements of the hips, with the upper body remaining quite still. A modern version of *Punta*, Punta rock, was developed in the 1980s and 90s, which has adopted modern instruments such as the bass guitar and synthesizers, bringing the traditions to a modern audience.



A Wanaragua dancer with drummers photo by Francesco Pesciarelli via Creative Commons

Other notable dances include the *Wanaragua* (meaning mask), which is traditionally performed during the Christmas holidays, and is closely related to the wider Caribbean tradition of *Jonkannu*. This has its origins in mocking the slave owners, so dancers wear pink coloured masks, often with a moustache drawn on it. It is traditionally performed by men, and it is notable that dancers are not led by the rhythm of the drums, but instead it is the dancers that lead the drummers, dictating the rhythm of the music by the speed of their dancing.

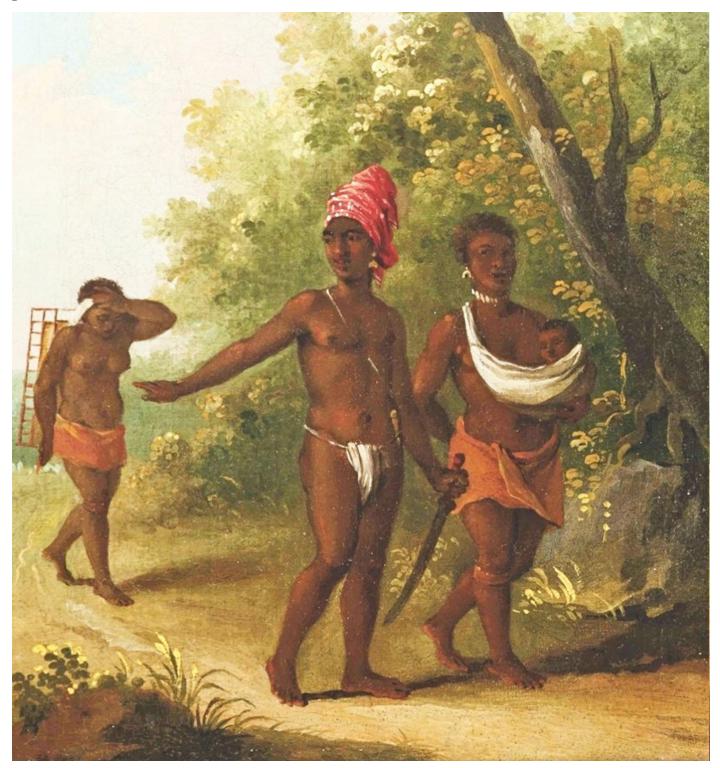
The Garinagu have also a distinct style of cooking,

developed from living on the coasts of Central America. Garinagu cuisine relies heavily on coconut, fish, cassava, plantains, breadfruit, beans and other vegetables. Coconut is used extensively, with both its oil used for frying, its milk used in soups, stews and making breads, and its flesh in a variety of other recipes, including sweets. The quintessential Garinagu dish is hudutu. It is a fish stew, made with a coconut milk base, that is seasoned with black pepper, chicken bouillon, adobo, cilantro, cumin, green peppers, basil and garlic. The fish is lightly browned in coconut oil, before being added to the soup. It is then traditionally served alongside mashed plantains.

Although originally created in 1941 by civil rights activist Thomas Vincent Ramos, in 1977, Settlement Day was established on 19<sup>th</sup> November as a National Holiday in Belize to commemorate the arrival of the Garifuna communities in the country and the contributions that they have made to Belizean history and culture. As part of the day, there is celebration of Garinagu food and dance, as well as recreations of the arrival of the Garinagu in canoes.

Like the Caribs of Dominica, the Garinagu culture provides a direct link with the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean. Similarly the African heritage of the Garinagu, as with the Maroons of Jamaica, provides an uninterrupted insight into African cultures that evolved in response to the dislocation of these peoples and their interaction with other cultures that were imposed upon them by necessity in the Caribbean.

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention. From this premise, we may argue that the unique Garinagu people embody man's desire to survive and were invented by that most powerful of human instincts.



A Carib (Garinagu) family on St. Vincent by Agostino Brunias

## **Garifuna Dictionary**

The Garifina language reflects the unique origin of its people and draws it words from many different sources. Reflecting the origins of the Garinagu from amongst the Kalinago people, approximately 45% of the words of the language come from the Arawak tongue, which was spoken by the wives of Kalinago following the conquest of the Arawaks by the Caribs and the latter taking the former's women as their wives. The Carib language itself, spoken by Kalinago men, comprises about 25% of the language. Other influences can be found from European languages, namely French (15%), English (10%) and Spanish (5%), reflecting the cultures that the Garinagu interacted with in the Caribbean.

Only about five words in the language are believed to be African in origin, including 'mutu' (person) and 'pinda' (peanut), which come from the Bantu languages spoken throughout much of the continent. Instead, the real African influence in Garifuna is in how words are pronounced. This means that if a word was pronounced with a K or C in the original language, it became a G in Garifuna. Words with P become B and words with T are pronounced with a D.

Garinagu is a gendered language, and like French and Spanish certain words are either Masculine or Feminine. In addition, in the same way that the men and women of the Kalinago spoke two different languages, there are different words for men and women to call the same thing.

#### Useful phrases

| Hello – Maburiga                  |
|-----------------------------------|
| Goodbye – Ayóu                    |
| Good morning - Buíti binafi       |
| Good afternoon - Buíti ranbá weyu |
| Good evening - Buíti ranbá weyu   |
| Good night - Buiti guñoun         |
| Welcome - Buiti Achüluruni        |
| How are you? – Ida biangi?        |
| My name is niri bai               |
| I'm from wa kek                   |
| What is your name? – Ka biri?     |
|                                   |
| Please - Fulesi                   |
| Thank you - seremei               |
| You're welcome - Úwati mégeiti    |

You're welcome - Úwati mégeiti Yes – Ayi No - Ino

I don't understand – Úwati gunfarándaná Where do you live? – Halia baganawa? What day is today? – Ka weyu uguñe? What time is it? – Ka ora?

#### Numbers

| 1.  | Aban        | 23    | Wein Ürüwa  |
|-----|-------------|-------|-------------|
| 2.  | Byama       | 24.   |             |
| 3.  | Ürüwa       | 25.   | Wein Seingü |
| 4.  | Gádürü/Gadu | 26.   | Wein Sisi   |
| 5.  | Seingü      | 27.   | Wein Sedu   |
| 6.  | Sisi        | 28.   | Wein Widü   |
| 7.  | Sedu        | 29.   | Wein Nefu   |
| 8.  | Wedu/Widü   |       |             |
| 9.  | Nefu        | 30.   | Darandi     |
| 10. | Disi        | 40.   | Biama Wein  |
| 11. | Unsu        | 50.   | Dimi San    |
| 12. | Dusu        | 60.   | Ürüwa Wein  |
| 13. | Tareisi     | 70.   | Ürüwa Wein  |
| 14. | Katorusu    |       | Disi        |
| 15. | Keinsi      | 75.   | Ürüwa Wein  |
| 16. | Disisi      |       | Keinsi      |
| 17. | Disi sedü   | 80.   | Gádürü Wein |
| 18. | Disi widü   | 90.   | Gádürü Wein |
| 19. | Disi nefu   |       | Disi        |
|     |             | 95.   | Gádürü Wein |
| 20. | Wein        |       | Keinsi      |
| 21. | Wein Aban   | 100.  | San         |
| 22. | Wein Biama  | 1,000 | Mílu        |
|     |             |       |             |

#### Parts of the body Days of the week Verbs head - ichügü Monday - Leindi eat - aiga think - aritagua hair - idiburi Tuesday - Luagu Biamadrink - ata give - ichiga Wednesday - Luagua ear - arigai see - ariha cook - abougua Ürüwa hear - aganba read - alîha eye - agu smell - irimica nose - igiri Thursday - Luagu mouth - iuma Gádürü sleep - arumuga Friday - Wándaradi tooth -ari swim - afuliha hand - uhabu Saturday - Samudi fly - ahamara walk - aibuga arm - arüna Sunday - Dimaasu

#### Nouns

heart - anigi

#### Different words used by men and women

| Man - Eyeri     | belt - beliti     |               | Men      | Women     |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| Woman - Hiñanru | sure - choru      | Ι             | au       | nuguya    |
| Dog - Aunli     | gown - gounu      | you           | amuru    | buguya    |
| Sun - Weyu      | shirt - simisi    | Come here     | Ahu ye   | Higabu nu |
| Moon - Kati     | matches - matchi  | man           | wuguri   | iyeri     |
| Water - Duna    | flour - fluaru    | woman         | wuri     | hinyaru   |
| Rain - Húya     | cup - copu        | path          | uma      | emeri     |
| Fire - watu     | purse - posu      | Older brother | Ibugañaü | ati       |
| cassava - ereba | Mosquito - Marin  |               |          |           |
| turtle - Gadaru | Chicken - Gayu    |               |          |           |
| Book - liburu   | Church - Ligilisi | Family        |          |           |

#### Garifuna Alphabet

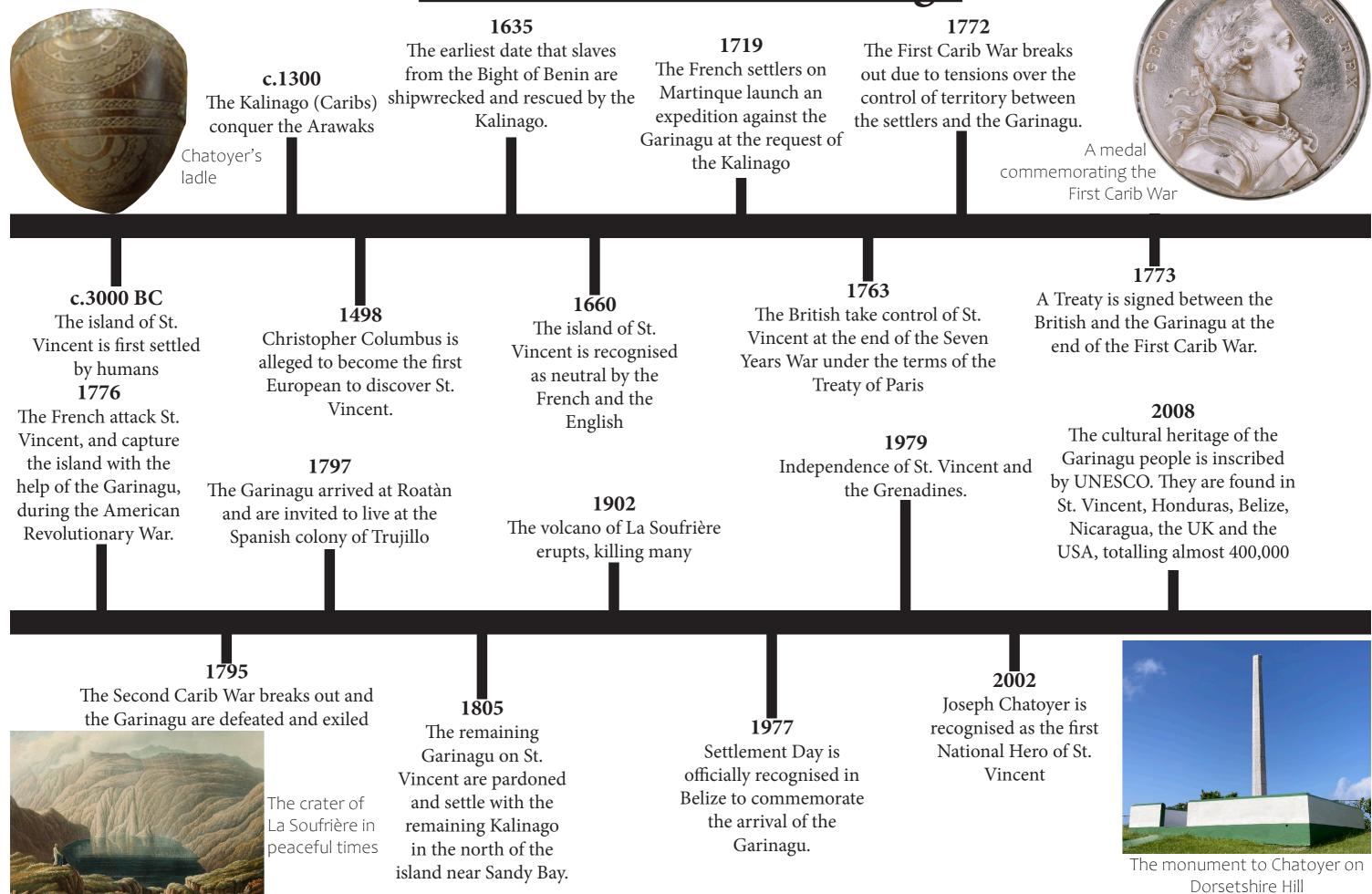
| А  | Garünati | Ν | Na       |
|----|----------|---|----------|
| В  | Ba       | Ñ | Ña       |
| Ch | Cha      | 0 | Gararati |
| D  | Da       | Р | Pa       |
| Е  | Gayumati | R | Ra       |
| F  | Fa       | S | Sa       |
| Н  | Ha       | Т | Ta       |
| Ι  | Gágriti  | U | Máguti   |
| Κ  | Ka       | Ü | Gáguti   |
| L  | La       | W | Wa       |
| М  | Ma       | Y | Ya       |
|    |          |   |          |

#### Family

say - erenga sing - eremuha

Mother - Úguchuru Father - Úguchili Nisanimy - Son/daughter Sister - Itu Brother - Ibiri First born child - Igiramaü Middle child - Iranaguaü Last-born child - Adarahóuni Younger sister - Amuleluaü Younger brother - Amúleñei Grandmother - Agütü Grandfather - Áruguti Uncle - Iáwüritei Cousin - Iduhei Grandson/daughter - Ibari Niece - Ibasei Nephew - Ibawanari Spouse - Úmari

# A Timeline of the Garinagu



# $\mathcal{AV}$ iew of St. $\mathcal{V}$ incent

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AN EXTRACT FROM

### THE ENGLISH EMPIRE IN

### $\mathcal{A}$ merica

BY *Robert Burton* First published 1685

CHAP. XVI.

CT. Vincent lies in 16 Degrees North, and is about 24 Miles long, and 18 broad, wherein are feveal high Mountains, and very fruitful Plains, yielding abundance of Sugar Canes, who grow naturally without planting; it is well water'd with Rivers, and hath. feveral good Harbours and Bays for Shipping ; the Englifb have here some Plantations, but are neither confiderable nor powerful, it being the most populous of Caribeans, of any possessed by them, who have here many fine Villages, where they dwell pleafantly and without any Difturbance, and tho' jealous of the Strangers about them, and stand on their Guard, when they come to their Roads, yet they do not deny Caffavy Bread, Water, Fruits, and other Provisions growing in their Country to them that want them, taking in Exchange Wedges, Hooks, and other Implements of lron, which they much effeem. Their Simplicity is very remarkable in feveral Things, as in admiring our Fire Arms, but especially Fire locks, to which they fee no Rire put as to Muskets, and therefore believe Maboya or the Devil fets them on Fire; when the Moon is eclipfed, they believe the Devil eats her, and dance all Night making a Noife with Gourds, wherein are many Pebble Stones; when they fmell any evil Scent, they cry, Maboya, or the Devil is here, let us be gone from bim.

They have a natural Sentiment of some Divinity, or Superior Power, that hath its Residence in Heaven,

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which they fay is contented to enjoy quietly the De o lights of its own Felicity, without being offended : the ill Actions of Men, and is endowed with i great Goodneis as not to take any Revenge evend Enemies; from whence they render Heaven neithe Honour nor Adoration, interpreting its Liberality and o Long-sufferance, an Effect either of its Weakness of P Indifference toward Mankind; yet they believe thet in are a Number of good and evil Spirits; the good mini their Gods, and every one imagines one of thems v particularly defigned for his Conduct, yet will " acknowledge them Creators of the World, and who he the Chriftians tell them, we adore that God who me in Heaven and Earth, and caufeth the Earth to bring n forth Fruits and Herbs, for Nourishment, they at fwer, It is true thy God hath made the Heaven and and and Earth of France (or fome other Country that they name and causes the Wheat to grow there, but our Gods has h made our Country, and caufe our Manioc to grow : The Manioc is a Root of a small Tree or Shrub, whereof the Caribeans make Bread. When they recover of for for Disease, they set a little Table at the End of the Huts, and upon it their Offerings, but without a h Adoration or Prayers yet invocate their falle GM B when they defire his Prefence, but this is done by fi Priest, upon sour Occasions, To demand Revenge, In the bealed of Difeafes; To know the Event of their Wall the To invocate them to drive away the great Devilor F boya; for they never pray to him; this Invocation e by finging fome Words and burning Tobacco, the See fi whereof is fo pleafant, that it makes this little De appear, and when feveral Priefts call upon their let b ral Gods together, as they speak, these Gods or rather fe Devils rail, quarrel, and feem to fight with each of ther; these Dæmons shelter themselves sometimes P the Bones of dead Men taken out of the Graves at he wrapped in Cotton, and thereby give Oracles, faying ta it is the Soul of the deceased Person, they make p

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of them to bewitch their Enemies, the Sorcerers wrapping up these Bones with something that belongs to the Enemy.

This curfed Spirit inflames them to act fuch Cruelty upon their Enemies taken in War, in relating whereof we need dip our Pen in Blood, being to draw a Picture which must raife Horror in the Beholder; in this there appears nothing but Inhumanity, Barbanim, and Rage; to see rational Creatures cruelly devouring those of the same Kind, and filling themselves with their Flesh and Blood, a Thing which Pagans heretofore thought fo full of Execration, that they imagined the Sun withdrew himfelf because he would net give Light to fuch bloody Banquets. - When these Cannibals or Eaters of Men have brought home 2 Prisoner of War of the Arovagues, he belongs of Right to him who either feized him in Fight, or took him running away : Being brought to this Island, he keeps them safe in his House, and after he has made him fait four or five Days, produces him upon fome folemn Day of Debauch to ferve for publick Sacrifice to the immortal hatred of his Countrymen toward that Nation. If any of their Enemies die on the Place of Battle, they eat them there before they leave it, defigning for Slavery only the young Maids and Women taken in the War. They have tafted of all Nations that frequented them, and by Experience affirm that the French are the most tender, and the Spaniards the hardest Flesh of Digestion, but now they feed on no Chriflians at all.

They abstain from feveral Cruelties formerly used before they killed their Enemies, for whereas at prefent they think it enough to dispatch them with a Blow or two with a Club, and afterward cut them into Pieces, and have boil'd them and so devour them. They heretofore put them to several Torments before the mortal Blow, of which themselves have given this deplorable Relation; the Prisoner of War who had been

fo unfortunate to fall into their Hands, and was a mignorant that he was defigned to receive the molt can be Treatment which Rage could fuggeft, armed hime with Conftancy, and to express how generous a People the Arovagues were, marched very chearfully to the Place of Execution, neither bound nor dragged there, and presented himself with a mild and steady Counter and presented himself with a mild and steady Counter and the Midst of the Affembly, which he know defired nothing fo much as his death, and not feating their Abuses and bitter Discourses, he prevented the result of the formation of the

I know well enough upon what Account you have in brought me to this Place; I doubt not but you are define re. to fill yourselves with my Blood, and that you arein his patient to exercise your Teetb on my Body; but you have a not so much Reason to triumph to see me in this Conditing the C nor I much to be troubled thereat; my Countrymen have go put your Predecessors to greater Miseries than you and is ble to invent against me; and I have done my Partwill and them in managing, massacreing, and devouring your Parks ple, your Friends, and your Fathers; besides that I be he Relations who will not fail to revenge my Quarrel will be Advantage upon you, and upon your Gbildren for the million inhuman Torments you intend againft me : What Torme jos Soever the most ingenious Gruelty can distate to you his the taking away my Life is nothing in Comparison p these my generous Nation prepares for you, therefore lay not the utmost of your Cruelty any longer, and affiles yourfelves I both flight and laugh at it. Somewhat at this Nature is that brave and bloody Bravado which we read of a Brafilian Prisoner ready to be devout by his Enemies: Come on boldiy, faid he to them, and feast yourselves upon me, for at the same time you willing feed on your Fathers and Grand-fathers, who ferved for Nourishment for my Body; these Muscles, this Flesh, at these Veins are yours, blind Fools as you are; do you men observe that the substance of the Members of your Ancello ge

will find they take of your own Flesh.

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The great Soul of our Arovagues was not only in his Lips, but shewed itself also in the Effects which folwowed this Bravado; for after the Company had a mybile en lured his Menaces and arrogant Defiance without touching him, one among them came and " unt his Sides with a flaming Brand, another cut R neat Gobbets of Flesh out of him, and would cut biger if the Bones would have admitted it, then they aft Pepper into his Wounds, others diverted themelves in shooting Arrows at the poor Patient, and every one took a Pleasure in tormenting him, but he fered with the fame unconcerned Countenance, and apressed not the least Sense of Pain; after they had Status sported a long time with the poor Wretch, at last nowing weary of infulting and out-braved by his Contancy, which feemed still the fame, one of them came and at one Blow dispatched him with his Club. This when Usage where with the Caribians heretofore treated their Prisoners of War, but now they think it it enough "put them to a speedy Death. As soon as this unforunate Person is thus laid dead upon the Place, the joung Men take the Body, and having washed it cut in Pieces, and then boil fome Part, and broil fome pon wooden Frames made like a Gridiron for that Purpole. When this deteftable Dish is ready, and aloned according to their Palates, they divide it nto fo many Parts as there are Perfons prefent, and byfully devour it, thinking that the World cannot ford any other Repast equally delicious; the Women ick the very Sticks whereon the Fat dropped, not fo such for the Deliciousness they find in that kind of ultenance, as from the excellive Pleasure they con. eve in being reveng'd in that Manner of their chiefest enemies; and to heighten this Rage and Hatred gainst the Arovagues they fave the Fat that comes from , and keep it carefully in little Gourds to pour fome few

## 166 A View of Antegoa.

few Drops thereof into their Sauces at their folem by Entertainments, fo to perpetuate as much as lies in create their Power, the Motive of Revenge.

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## CHAP. XVII.

#### A View of Antegoa.

Ntegoa lies in the Latitude of 17 Degrees between Barbadoes and Defiderado. In Length about 20 Miles, and much of the fame Breadth. The Access it is dangerous for Shipping by the Rocks which in compais it. It was conceived heretofore not to bein habited upon Prefumption there was no fresh Water in it, but the English who planted it have met with fome, and made Ponds and Cifterns to fupply the Defect, it being inhabited by near 900 Persons. The Commodities this Island affords are Sugar, Indico, Gir ger, and Tobacco. It abounds in tame Cattle, andal Sorts of Fifh, among which the Sbark Fifb defervest mark: It is a Kind of Sea-dog or Sea-wolf, the mot devouring of all Fishes, greedy of Man's Flesh, and dangerous to those that swim; he lives altogetherby Prey, and follows Ships to feed on the Filth caft in u the Sea: These Monsters seem yellow in the Wate fome of a valt Length and bignefs, fo that they a able to cut a' Man in two at one bite; their Skins is rough that Files are made of it to polifh Wood; the Heads are flat, and the opening of their Mouth no just before the Snout, but under it, fo that they and forced to turn their Bellies almost upward when the feize their Prey; their Teeth are very tharp and bros jagged out like a faw, of which some have 3 of ranks in each Jaw-bone, they lie with wishin his Gun

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