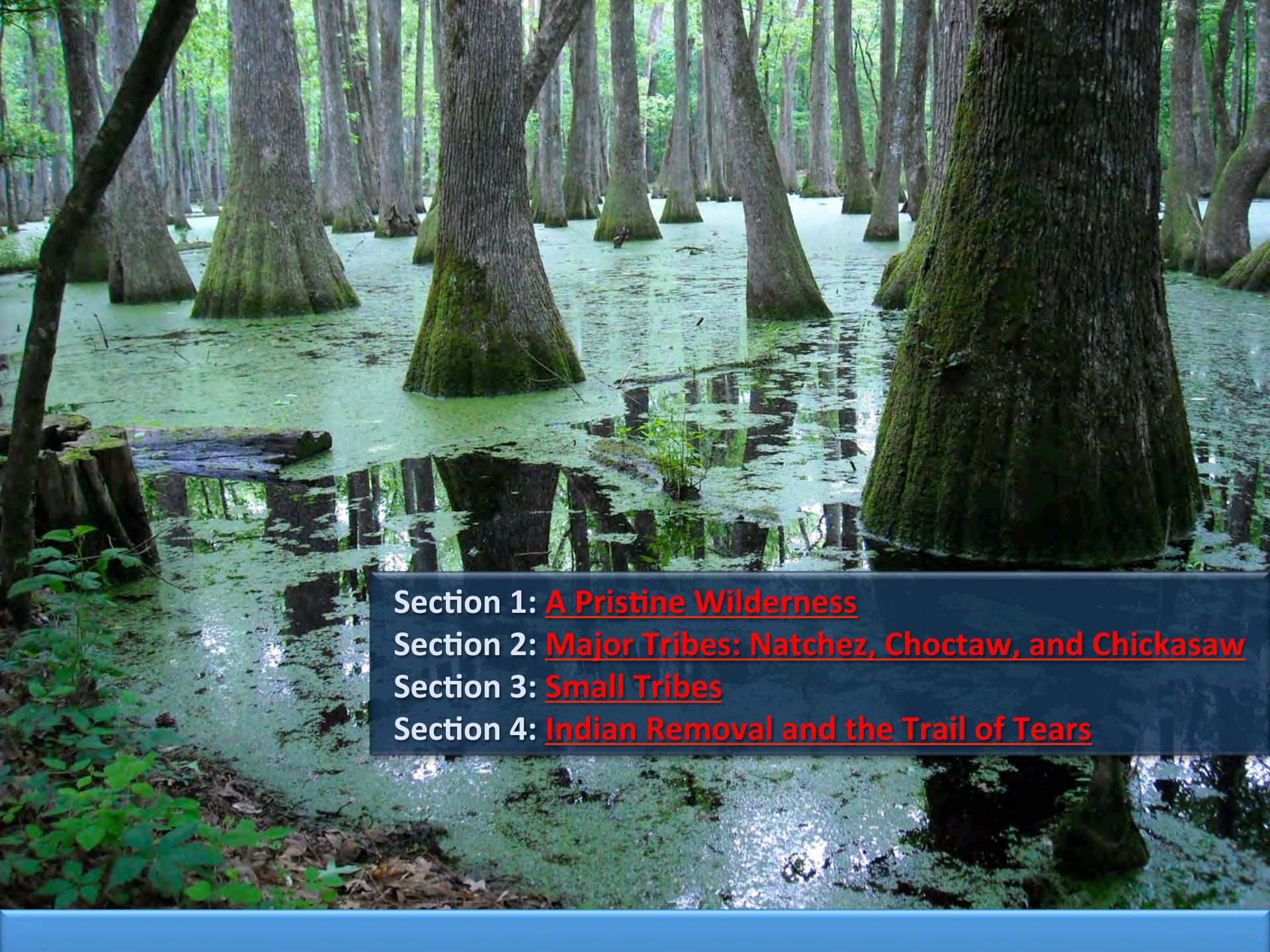


The image shows the Mississippi State Capitol building, a grand neoclassical structure with a prominent dome topped by a golden eagle. The building features a portico with tall columns and a pediment with a relief sculpture. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with some green foliage in the foreground.

# A Place Called Mississippi

Chapter 2: Native Mississippians  
STUDY PRESENTATION





Section 1: [A Pristine Wilderness](#)

Section 2: [Major Tribes: Natchez, Choctaw, and Chickasaw](#)

Section 3: [Small Tribes](#)

Section 4: [Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears](#)



# Section 1: A Pristine Wilderness

- Essential Question: What was life like for Mississippi Natives?



# Section 1: A Pristine Wilderness

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- granary
- razorback
- grabbling
- pictography
- matrilineal
- clan
- exogamic
- green corn
- ceremony
- chunkey
- stickball
- mingo
- calumet



# Food Gathering

- Indians grew beans and squash.
- Their most important crop was maize (corn).
- Not only was maize able to be cooked many different ways, it could also be stored for long periods of time.
- Indians grew their own food and supplemented it with hunting and fishing.



# Food Gathering: Hunting

- Hunters used disguises and their bows and arrows to capture game.
- In 1539, Indians acquired a taste for pork when Hernando de Soto brought pigs from Spain.
- When de Soto refused to trade the pigs, Indians would chase the pigs into the woods and capture them.
- The ones that got away were believed to have started the razorback population in the southern United States.





# Food Gathering: Fishing

- Native Mississippians kicked up mud at the bottom of their fishing grounds. This made the fish swim to the top so they could easily be caught.
- Indians also stunned the fish by crushing certain herbs and spreading them over the top of the water. The fish would then float to the top.
- They also used trot-lines, nets, sieves, and other devices to catch fish.



# Language

- The dominant southeastern Indian language was Muskogean.
- The two major exceptions were the Biloxi and the Natchez.
- They did not have an official system of written communication, although they did use pictography.
- Indians did not believe in land ownership.





# Family Life

- They traced their line of descent through mothers, not fathers.
- Their social classes were based on the clan system.
- Clans were groups of families with common ancestors.
- Clan members had to marry into other clans in huge, ceremonial weddings.
- Weddings were more about a political union of families than a romantic one of two individuals.



# Religion

- All Mississippi Indians had some sort of religion and believed in an after life.
- The spirits they believed in were closely related to their environment.
- Most of their ceremonies were performed to appease the unfriendly spirits.





# Religion: Green Corn Ceremony

- This ritual was conducted in late August in hopes of a bountiful harvest.
- It is believed this ceremony marked the beginning of a new year and that family feuds were settled during this period.
- It often attracted such large numbers of people that temporary shelters had to be made to house everyone.



# Religion: Burial Traditions

- Traditions varied greatly among tribes.
- Natchez required human sacrifice at the death of a chief.
- Chickasaw buried the dead with their most favorite possessions under the floor of their cabin.
- Other tribes used different methods.



The Anna Site is located in Adams County. Construction began on the mounds around 1200.



# Recreation

- Sporting events were highly developed.
- Stickball was a very popular sport and had nearly 300 players on each side. Thousands of people would gather to watch.
- Stick ball was often called “the little brother to war.”
- Women played a less-violent version of the game.



*Ball Play of the Choctaws-Ball Up* from an oil painting by George Catlin.

# Tribal Government

- Most tribes had some sort of local government.
- Mingos ruled with advice from tribal elders.
- In a case of murder, the victim's family had the right of vengeance. If the murderer escaped, their brother or close relative would be killed in their place.





# The Calumet

- Important meetings were started by smoking the calumet, or peace pipe.
- Meetings could only last as long as their calumet lasted.



# Section 2: Major Tribes: Natchez, Choctaw, Chickasaw

- Essential Question: How did the cultures of the Natchez, Choctaw and Chickasaw differ?





# Section 2: Major Tribes: Natchez, Choctaw, Chickasaw

- What terms do I need to know?
  - refugee tribe
  - migration
  - agrarian



# Section 2: Major Tribes: Natchez, Choctaw, Chickasaw

- There were at least twenty Indian tribes that lived in what is now Mississippi.
- The most prominent tribes were the Natchez, Choctaw, and Chickasaw.
- Smaller tribes were either taken over by larger ones or were migratory.





# Natchez

- The Natchez Nation, when first discovered by Europeans, had nearly 4,000 people.
- The Great Sun was their ceremonial leader, but had no power over the tribes– they ruled themselves.
- They were thoroughly tattooed.
- They built sacred mounds where they conducted their religious ceremonies.
- After de Soto's exploration, the tribe stopped building mounds.
- When a Great Sun died, a man from the village would sacrifice himself to accompany the chief on his journey to the afterlife.



# Natchez (continued)

- The Natchez and the French, who settled the area, were hostile at first, but soon, trade began to flourish.
- As the population grew, the French began to take over too much of the tribal land. The Natchez attacked, killed 200 Frenchmen, and took over their settlement.
- Eventually, the French and Choctaw attacked the Natchez and almost completely wiped them out.
- Those who were not killed or sold fled to take refuge in neighboring tribes.



# Choctaw

- In 1700, there were about 20,000 members of this tribe.
- Second largest tribe in Mississippi.
- Most agricultural
- Nicknamed “long hairs” and “flat heads” by the Europeans
- Different Choctaw tribes believed different origin stories.





# Choctaw (continued)

- The Choctaw believed that their history and the Chickasaw Indians history intertwined; this may explain many similar customs.
- The Choctaw were known as the more peaceful of the two nations.
- In the 1830's, Europeans had completely taken over and forcibly removed the Choctaw from their land.



# Chickasaw

- When the British first began to colonize, there was a population of about 4,500 Chickasaw Indians.
- This tribe is remembered for its proud warriors and excellent hunters.
- They were English allies and involved in Indian slave trade.



# Chickasaw (continued)

- The Chickasaw developed their own breed of horse.
- They gave refuge to the Natchez who attacked the French.
- The French didn't like this and attacked, but they lost.
- Eventually, the Chickasaw were forced to move like so many other native people.





# Section 3: Small Tribes

- Essential Question: How are the histories of the smaller tribes different from the Choctaw, Natchez, and Chickasaw?



# Section 3: Small Tribes

- What terms do I need to know?
  - band
  - merge
  - missionary



# Section 3: Small Tribes

- Many small tribes either merged with other tribes or moved outside of Mississippi.





# Acolapissa

- When the tribe was first discovered by Europeans in 1699, there were only about 1,000 members of the tribe.
- The Acolapissa allied themselves with the French.
- Soon, they merged with the Houma tribe of Louisiana.



# Biloxi

- The tribe migrated to the Gulf Coast shortly before the French landed there.
- There were less than 500 members of the tribe, and they migrated several times throughout French colonization.
- When chiefs died, their friends and relatives would eat together for many days, remembering him and telling stories.



# Chakchiuma

- This nation was the little brother of the Choctaw and Chickasaw groups.
- It was often caught in the middle of their wars and it is thought that it was eventually divided between the two larger nations.





# Grigra

- The name for the tribe came from the repeated “gri” and “gra” sounds in their speech.
- There were about 200 in the Grigra nation.
- They were living with the Natchez at the time of the European discovery.
- There is no mention of the Grigra after 1723 when the French burned their temple.



# Ibitoupa

- Their name meant “people at the source of a stream.”
- The 50 people in the tribe had a culture similar to that of the Chickasaw.
- The Ibitoupa moved up the Yazoo River until they eventually met with other tribes.
- It is believed that they merged with the Chickasaw nation.
- They are not mentioned in history after 1730.



# Koroa

- Part of this tribe lived with the Natchez, while the other half lived along the Yazoo River.
- In 1729, the Koroa allied themselves with the Natchez against the French. The Koroa destroyed Fort St. Pierre.
- The Koroa were nearly wiped out when the French retaliated. The remaining people merged with other nations.





# Ofogoula

- The Ofogoula were nicknamed the “dog people” by neighboring tribes.
- They spoke a language similar to that of the Biloxi tribe.
- They refused to attack Fort St. Pierre with the Yazoo and Koroa, instead they joined the Tunica (French allies).
- They later settled near Fort Rosalie and remained there until 1784.



# Pascagoula

- Called the “bread people” after a special type of bread they made.
- Were friends and allies of the French
- For nearly a century, there were members of the Pascagoula tribe on the Red River (Texas).
- It is believed the Biloxi and Pascagoula tribes merged into the Capinan, or Moctoby, tribe.



# Tiou

- Some scholars believe that the nation migrated after French colonization to live near the Natchez.
- The tribe supported the Natchez attack on the French and they were completely destroyed.





# Tunica

- They numbered about 1,500 and were the closest ally of the French.
- Part of their tribe spent time trading salt across the Southeast.
- In 1706, they moved closer to the Houma tribe, who attacked them for supporting the French.
- They survived this attack and moved to Louisiana. They are now known as the Tunica-Biloxi tribe.



# Yazoo

- Close with the Koroa tribe
- Anti-French
- Almost completely destroyed the French settlement at Fort St. Pierre.
- Per French request, the Choctaw attacked the tribe. Not much is known about the outcome, but the tribe is rarely mentioned in the texts that followed.



# Section 4: Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

- Essential Question: What beliefs and ideals led to the removal of Native Americans from Mississippi?





# Section 4: Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

- What terms do I need to know?
  - Indian Removal
  - Trail of Tears
  - Land cession



# Section 4: Indian Removal and the Trail of Tears

- The majority of the white settlers who moved to Mississippi were there as farmers.
- When they discovered Indians occupied the land, they claimed that they weren't using it as they should.
- The settlers put up such a fuss that by the 1830's, Indian tribes were being forcibly removed from their land. It began with the Choctaw.
- Soon, many other tribes were forced out of their homeland and were sent to the new Indian Territory in Oklahoma.
- The long, dangerous journey killed so many Indians that it eventually became known as the Trail of Tears.



# Choctaw and Chickasaw Land Cessions

- The Choctaw either sold or gave up all of their land to the United States by 1801.
- With the money they made from these sales, they bought an area in the Indian Territory.
- The Chickasaw gave up their land in the Treaty of Pontotoc in 1832.
- The Chickasaw received none of the money promised to them by the United States for the sale of their land.
- The tribes believed they had been tricked and when the Civil War began, they sided with the South.
- The government still refused to give them their money because they had rebelled against it.

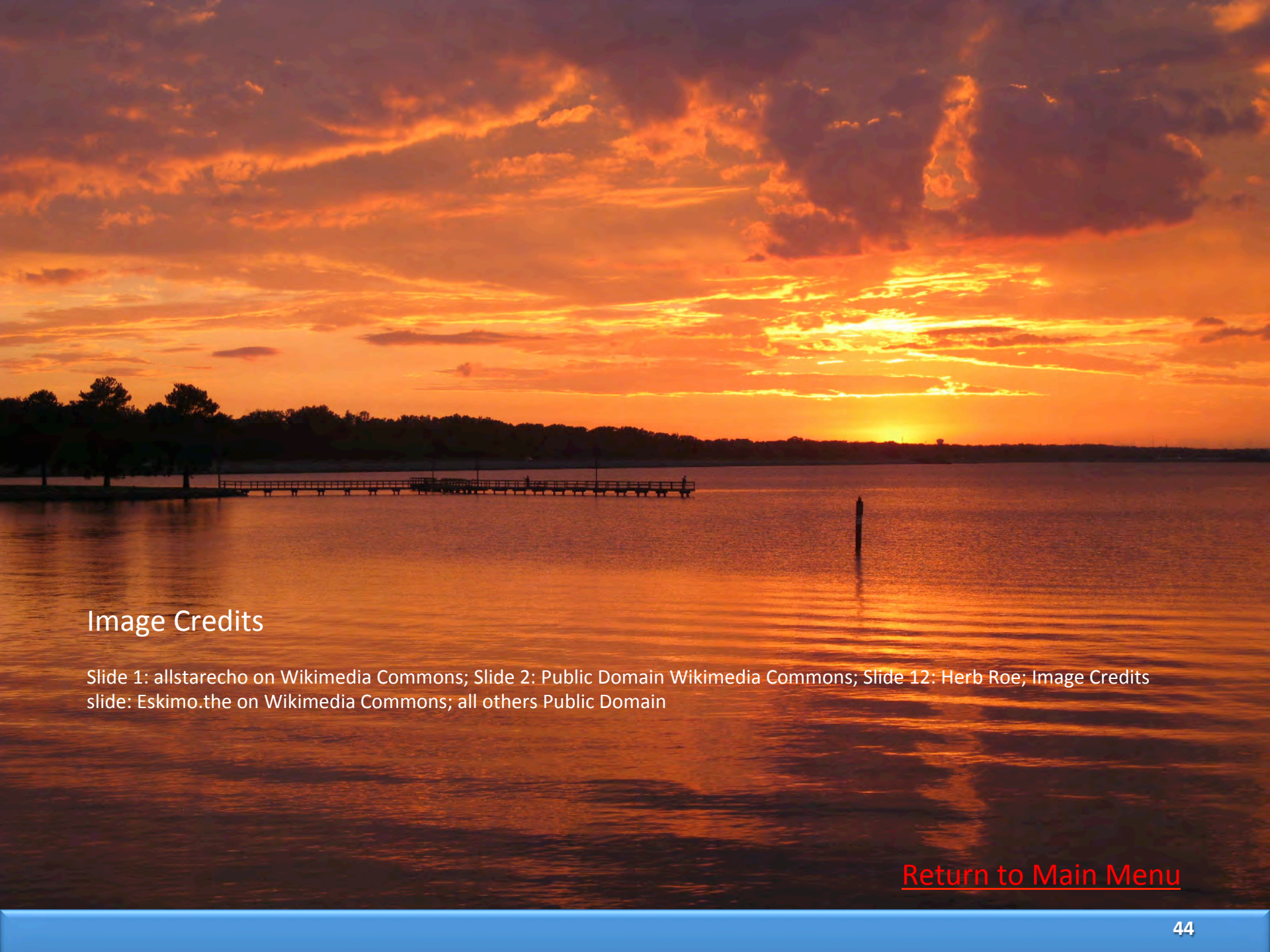




# Mississippi Band of Choctaw

- The small group of Natives that remained in Mississippi endured great difficulties when trying to retain their culture.
- After the creation of the Choctaw Indian Agency at Philadelphia was established, the Bureau of Indian Affairs bought land for a reservation (Nanhi Waiya) on which Indians could preserve their traditions and way of life.





## Image Credits

Slide 1: allstarecho on Wikimedia Commons; Slide 2: Public Domain Wikimedia Commons; Slide 12: Herb Roe; Image Credits slide: Eskimo.the on Wikimedia Commons; all others Public Domain

[Return to Main Menu](#)