

Me'etano'ta:
Remembering and Recognizing Native
American History and Resilience
St. Augustine National Cemetery



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration



Department
of History

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA



CONTENT WARNING

DISCUSSION OF RACISM,
GENOCIDE, DEATH, AND
VIOLENCE

***TOUR IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR STUDENTS UNDER 15

Tour Stops

- 1- Main Gate Looking In (Etiquette)
- 2- Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Punta
- 3- Dade Monument (Seminole Wars)
- 4- Section A, grave 316 (Egmont Key)
- 5- Section A, Grave 130 (Buffalo Soldiers)
- 6- Section B, grave 551 (Plains Wars)
- 7- Section B, grave 340 (Henry Pratt)
- 8- Main Gate Facing Water (Apache Incarceration)
- 9- Flagstaff (Ledger Drawings)
- 10 - Rostrum (Reflections and Food)

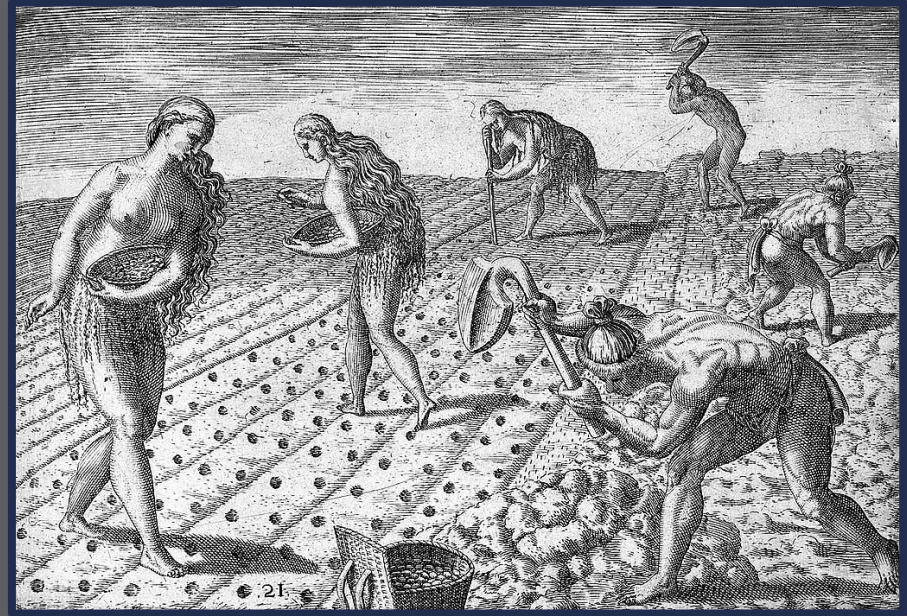


Cemetery Etiquette (Stop 1)

- Remember, cemeteries are sacred spaces. We honor, remember, and memorialize men and women who served our nation through military service. Be respectful at all times.
 - Please walk on the walkways and the grass areas around the graves. It is okay to walk on the grass between the headstones.
 - Use quiet voices as you learn during the tour.
 - Do not sit, stand, or climb on the monuments or headstones.
 - You may touch headstones and monuments, but do so in a respectful manner. You may even sit by a headstone.
- Each grave represents a person(s) who helped to build the community and nation in which you live.

What was Florida like before Colonization?

- Humans arrived to the peninsula sometime between 12,000 and 15,000 years ago.
- There were many chiefdoms who inhabited the area before the Spanish arrived including: the Pensacola, Apalachee, Timucua, Tocobaga, Calusa, Saturiwa, Utina, Potano, Ocale, Tequesta, Ais, Mayaca, Jororo, Chacato and Chisca, among others.
- These groups all had their own languages, cultures, and relations with each other. Often, trading goods like pottery and washed-up European gold from shipwrecks off the coast.



“Florida Indians planting seeds or maize” by Theodor de Bry, 1591. *Courtesy of the Library of Congress*

European arrival in La Florida



“Outina defeats Pontanou with the aid of the French,” by Theodor de Bry, 1591. *Courtesy of the Library of Congress*

- The first European nation to find Florida was Spain. With Ponce de León arriving on the east coast in 1513. They were followed by the French 50 years later.
- Both European nations had complicated relationships with the native peoples who lived on the land they were colonizing. Europeans gained the friendship of some tribes through trade and meddling in inter-tribal politics. Europeans felt that they were racially superior, often treating their Native allies poorly.
- When the Spanish had successfully settled what is today St. Augustine, they relied on the Yamassee, Timucua, and Apalachee to help them transport and farm food in the unfamiliar climate.

Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Punta (Stop 2)

What is Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Punta?

- The La Punta mission appears on many of the city's historical maps, often designating the areas associated with the mission as "Yamassee Village" or "Indian Town."
- Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Punta was one of ten Spanish colonial refugee missions constructed during the 18th c. after the destruction of the La Florida Franciscan mission during the 16th century.



Image depicting Historical Marker for the La Punta Mission on Bonita Bay near the St. Augustine National Cemetery.

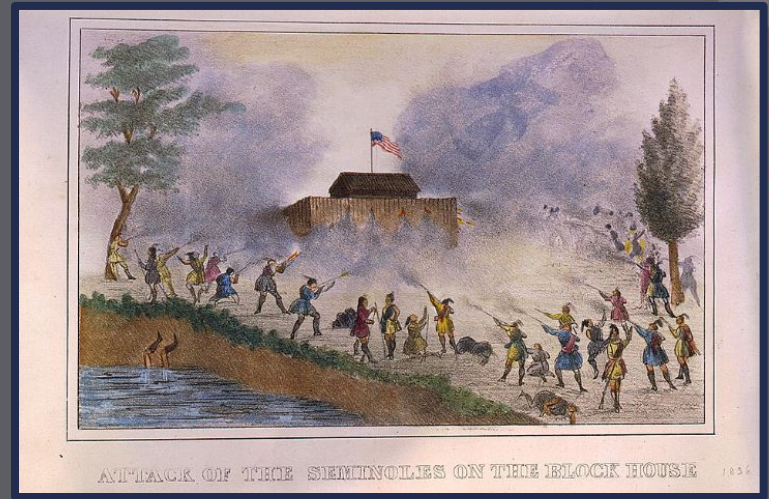
Nuestra Señora del Rosario de la Punta (Stop 2)

Who lived in the mission?

- The indigenous people who lived and worked at the La Punta mission were refugees affected by the violence of colonialism. Disease, abuse, forced conversion, and attacks by British and Spanish forces forced members of local populations and tribes like the Yamassee to seek refuge in Spanish Florida.
- Through archaeological excavation, the burial site of 75 individuals has been discovered. Many of these burials are believed to be Native American, several of them containing the remains of children.
- Historians and archaeologists use the burials and the wealth of artifacts found at the La Punta mission to understand how colonizers and Native Americans came together to make history, shaping the face of St. Augustine as a cosmopolitan settlement.

The Seminole Wars (Stop 3)

- The Seminole Wars were a series of three wars from 1817 to 1858, between the U.S. and the Natives living in Florida. The cause was the encroachment of the U.S. and others on native land which led to clashes and violence.
- Dade's Battle (the start of the Second Seminole War) is remembered with monuments in the St. Augustine National Cemetery (SANC).



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The Seminole Wars (Stop 3) The Obelisk



- A focal point as visitors walk down the central path of the cemetery
- Built in 1844
- In memory of Major Dade and his men that died in the 1835 battle
- Constructed out of marble
- Funded by the soldiers and officers of the barracks
- Each side has an engraved message

The Seminole Wars (Stop 3) The Dade Pyramids

- Dade and his men were reinterred (reburied) at the SANC.
- Three pyramids were built above their burial site in 1842.
- The pyramids are made of coquina.
- They are the oldest known national cemetery memorial.
- The appearance of the pyramids has changed over time both intentionally and through natural weathering (as seen below).



1873



Present Day

The Seminole Wars (Stop 3)

Who is buried here?

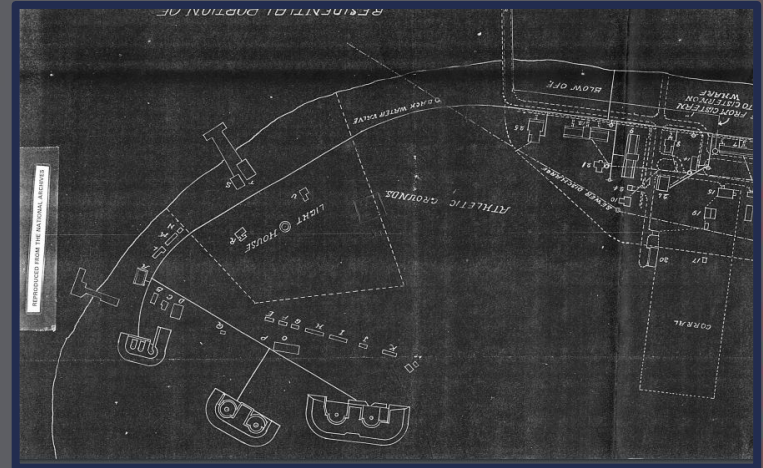
- The marker's wording states that 1,468 men are buried here.
- According to the recent discoveries of Dr. Amy Larner Giroux, there are actually closer to 140 men buried in this location.
- Approximately 2-3 men survived the Dade Battle.
- Identities of the men interred under the pyramids are still being researched.
- As they are named, the UCF Veterans Legacy Program is working to gather information to honor their legacies.



Egmont Key (Stop 4)

What was Egmont Key?

- Egmont Key is an island off Tampa Bay named after an Irish House of Commons Member.
- In the 1830s, a lighthouse was constructed due to an increase in the popularity of Tampa as a trade port.
- It was Seminole territory that was eventually taken during the Seminole Wars.
- Towards the end of the Third Seminole War (1855-1858), camps of captured Seminoles were living on Egmont Key. And by the time of the Civil War, there was a cemetery on the island that had members of the various lighthouse keepers' families, military men, and Native Americans.

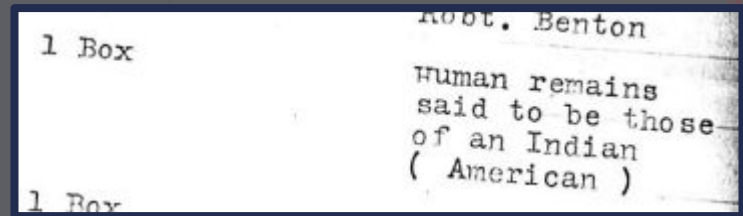


Egmont Key (Stop 4)

What is the connection to SANC?



- Due to erosion on the island, those buried there were disinterred and moved to SANC.
- There were 25 tin-lined wooden boxes of remains, plus the cast iron coffin of Azaline Bahrt, pictured to the left.
- Among the remains was one listed as “Human remains said to be those of an Indian (American)”, pictured below.
- Around 1932, the superintendent of the cemetery moved this Native, along with five others to a combined grave (B-339 - Stop 7) to make room for new burials.
- This was an act of racism and disregard for the Native Americans buried In SANC.



Buffalo Soldiers (Stop 5)

- Before 1866, African Americans were not allowed to serve as soldiers during times of peace.
- Congress formed new cavalry and infantry which allowed African American citizens to serve during peacetime.
- These soldiers were sent to Native territories out west for their duties.
- The origins of the name are unknown but many believe it refers to their bravery and courage.

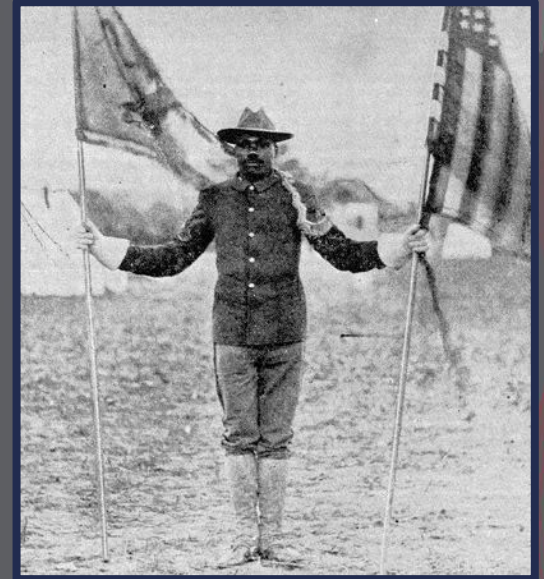


Courtesy of Library of Congress

Buffalo Soldiers (Stop 5)

What did Buffalo Soldiers do?

- Buffalo Soldiers had many responsibilities while on duty: they kept out intruders from Native lands, watched over Natives on the reservations, and enforced common laws throughout the territory.
- The infantry also worked to build and maintain roads, telegraph lines, and forts.
- They assisted the cavalry in military affairs during the Spanish American war, where they played an integral part in many key battles of the war.
- These soldiers experienced racism and prejudice from their white commanding officers as well as violence from local citizens.



Courtesy of National Park Service

Buffalo Soldiers (Stop 5)



Courtesy of National Park Service

Buffalo Soldiers in the Spanish American War

- Troops of the 9th and 10th Cavalry and the 24th and 25th Infantry served on the battlefields of Las Guasimas, El Caney, and San Juan Hill.
- In addition to battling on the field, Buffalo Soldiers worked as nurses in military hospitals caring for sick and injured soldiers.
- Valiantly supported Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders in the San Juan and Kettle Hill battles where they helped bring the war to a close.

The Plains Wars (Stop 6)

What were the Plains Wars?

- The Plains Wars were a series of battles and massacres between the United States and Native Americans that took place from the 1850s to the 1890s.

Why did they happen?

- They were committed for the benefit of American imperialism. As the United States moved west, they began intruding upon Native American homelands. The United States began removing and relocating the tribes, ultimately leading to conflict and retaliation.

How did they get to Florida?

- The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 would allow commercial travel and emigration in the territory of modern-day Wyoming and Nebraska. This treaty forced the concept of “land ownership” upon the Native Americans.
- The United States used this difference in cultures to take advantage of Native Americans often leaving them disenfranchised.

The Plains Wars (Stop 6)

Road to Florida (contd.)

- In 1864, Sand Creek, Colorado was being occupied by friendly Cheyenne and Arapaho natives under military protection. Under orders, Col. John M. Chivington slaughtered the Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment, ultimately killing women, children, and elders as they slept, demonstrating horrific acts of cruelty.
- Three years later, the Medicine Lodge Treaty was introduced in an attempt to resolve conflicts between the Plains Indians and the U.S. government. It would be broken almost immediately due to American encroachment upon Native territory.

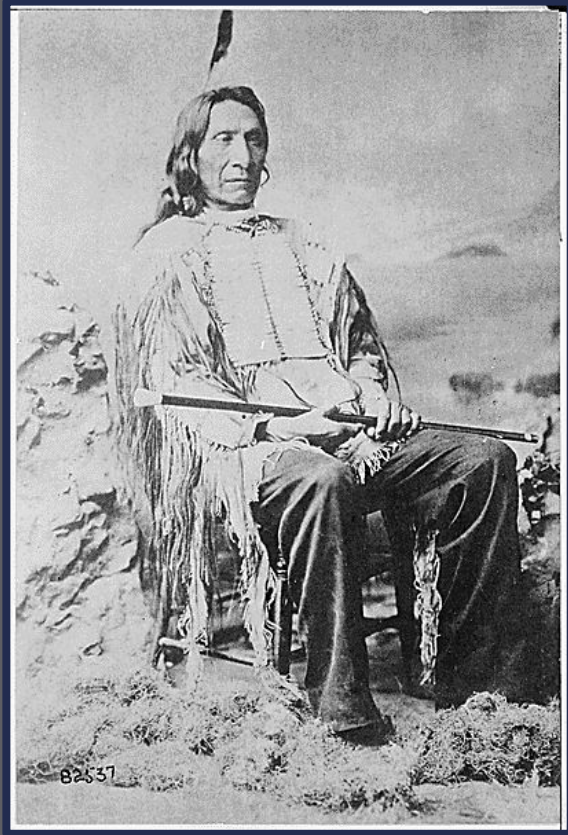


Survivors of Sand Creek



Modern Day Sand Creek

The Plains Wars (Stop 6)



Red Cloud

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

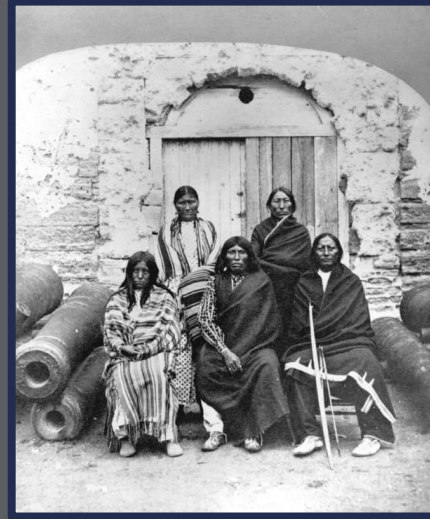
Road to Florida (contd.)

- The US continued to deceive Native Americans, allowing gold prospectors into Sioux territory via the Bozeman Trail. This led to a long period of continuous conflict with Red Cloud's War in 1866 and the Great Sioux War a decade later.
- Despite the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty revisions, Lt. General Custer violated it by exploiting gold in the Black Hills reservation, prompting Native American resistance. As a result of constant deceit, the Cheyenne and Lakota banded together to defend their land ultimately leading to the demise of Custer by a Cheyenne woman during The Battle of Little Bighorn. This battle symbolized their resilience against dispossession.

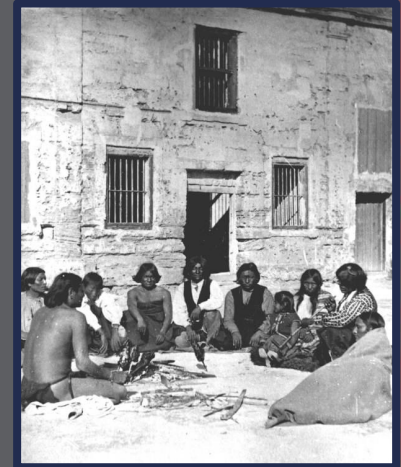
The Plains Wars (Stop 6)

Road to Florida (contd.)

- During the Red River War fought in Texas/Oklahoma/Arkansas, American Buffalo hunters would kill all of the native Buffalo despite the Treaty of Medicine Lodge.
- This led to Native Americans having to leave their designated reservation to find resources. In turn, US forces fought the Southern Plains Indians; rounding up many during battles like Sand Hill. They sent 74 warriors to Fort Marion, in Florida (now known as the Castillo of San Marcos in St. Augustine). Many of those captured were survivors of the Sand Creek Massacre.



Cheyenne Warriors in Fort Marion



Comanche in Fort Marion

Richard Henry Pratt (Stop 7)

Who was Richard Henry Pratt?

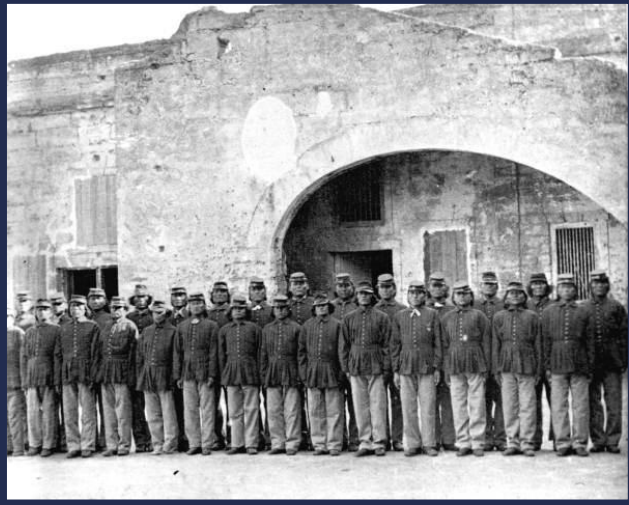
- Pratt was a Union soldier in the Civil War
- After the Civil War, Pratt was sent to the “Indian Territory”, keeping the peace between the Native Americans and the white settlers
- Pratt was promoted to second lieutenant in charge of the 10th Cavalry (Buffalo Soldiers)
- Pratt’s believed that, if given the right environment, American Indians could become “valuable second-class citizens”



Courtesy of Library of Congress

Richard Henry Pratt (Stop 7)

Native American Incarceration at Fort Marion



- After the Red River War ended in 1875, hundreds of Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa and Arapaho chiefs and warriors were sent to Fort Sill in present-day Oklahoma to surrender.
- Lieutenant Richard Henry Pratt was appointed to investigate the supposed war crimes of these men.
- Seventy-two of the investigated were arrested and sent to Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida (presently called Castillo De San Marcos).

Richard Henry Pratt (Stop 7)

Native American Incarceration at Fort Marion (contd.)

- Pratt escorted the warriors to Fort Marion, where they remained prisoners-of-war for three years.
- During this time, Pratt tried to assimilate the captive Natives by educating them in English, labor, and military drills. He cut their hair and dressed them in military clothing as a way to strip them of their culture.
- They attended Christian church services, and performed for audiences at the fort.
- Eventually, many Native Americans worked in the community.



Apache Incarceration (Stop 8)

What led to the incarceration?

- Following the conclusion of the Civil War, aggression of the U.S. Government towards tribes in the West began to grow. Their land was taken, and they were forced to move to ever-shrinking reservations with conditions contrary to what was promised.
- Apache leader Geronimo and others escaped from the reservations and began raiding the southwest U.S. and parts of Mexico. They were eventually found in 1886, negotiated with the U.S. Government, and were sent (along with their entire tribe) as prisoners to Florida.



Apache Incarceration (Stop 8)

Where were they imprisoned?



- Fort Marion was their destination, but the men were separated and brought to Fort Pickens in Pensacola. The city hoped that they would bring attention and visitors. The women and children remained at Fort Marion.
- The Apaches at Fort Pickens were “model prisoners” but were unhappy without their families, so eventually, their wives and children were able to move to Pensacola with them.
- Some of the children were removed to boarding schools for assimilation.

Apache Incarceration (Stop 8)

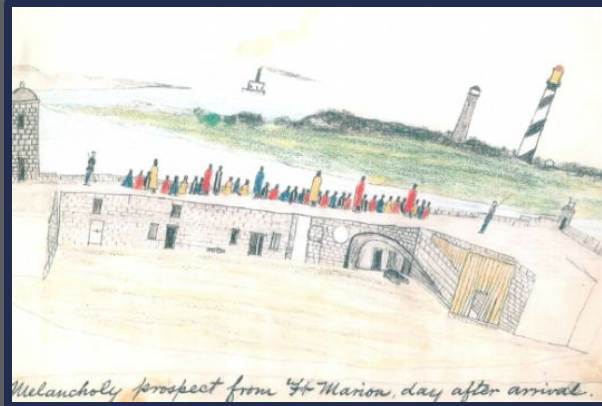
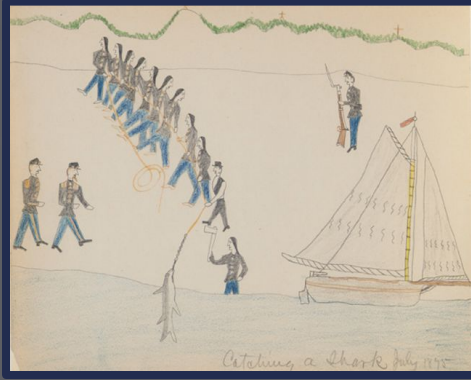
What was the impact?

- Fort Pickens had better living conditions than Fort Marion, where many of the Apache died. Eventually, they were all relocated to Mount Vernon Barracks in Alabama and then to a reservation in Fort Sill, Oklahoma.
- Geronimo died on this reservation and is remembered by many as a fierce fighter who pursued freedom, which he was sadly never granted.
- In 1913, the Chirichua Apaches were finally granted their freedom.



Ledger Drawings (Stop 9)

What are ledger drawings?



- Native Americans used drawings and other forms of art for expression long before the term “ledger drawings” came about.
- Themes of Native American art: heroism, battles, hunting, and daily life
- In the early 1860s - early 1900s, Native Americans were imprisoned, and their memories and observations were drawn in the ledger books available to them. This is where the term “ledger drawings” originated.

Ledger Drawings (Stop 9)

How did the drawings change during incarceration?

- New and different tools
- Ledger drawings and books sold for money, allowing the artists to participate in U.S. economy
- Ledger books often meant spreading drawings over two pages as opposed to a single sheet.



Why are the drawings important?

- Juxtaposition of new and old
- A window into the lives and cultures of the tribes
- Preservation of the past

Reflection (Stop 10)

