



From *Amazon Adventure*: Mundurukú gather around the fire

The Native Tribes in *Amazon Adventure*: A Time of Change

Henry Bates spent 11 transformative years in Brazil from 1848 to 1859 where he met many tribes along the Amazon River. These natives taught Bates to adapt to the untamed rainforest and, in exchange, they relished the chance to learn about life beyond the Amazon. It was a time of change. With less intertribal wars, young men left their homes searching for opportunities working in river trading and lumber mills. Some of these tribes were the Camúta, Mauhé, Tacúna, Shumánas, Jurís, Passés, Caishaná, Cucáma, Marauá and Mundurukú.

The Mundurukú in particular had a curiosity that rivaled Bates' own. For example, during one of his visits, they insisted he show them all of the hundreds of pages in *The Pictorial Museum of Animated Nature*, carried everywhere by Bates during his journey. The drawings of animals and small curiosities like shells and fossils from around the world captured the imagination of the Mundurukú people. Original copies of the two volume book were used in *Amazon Adventure*. The film focuses on this tribe because Bates described their encounters in detail in his book *The Naturalist on the River Amazons*, published in 1863.



From *Amazon Adventure*: The chief's daughter "Yara", wearing clothing traditional to Mundurukú women, sits with Bates

The Mundurukú Tribe

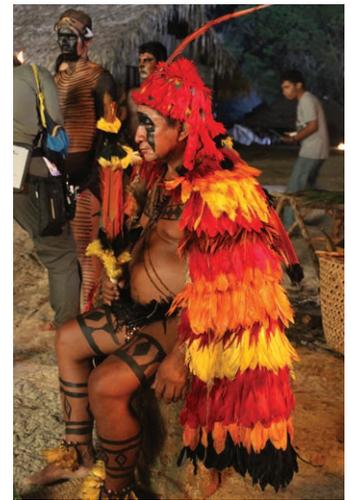
In the 16th century, during Portugal's early years of colonization, the Mundurukú culturally dominated the valley of the Tapajós river region, then known as Mundurukânia. They called themselves "Wuy jugu" meaning "our own, our people"; the Parintintins, another tribe, named them "Mundurukú" meaning "red ants" because they fought in large groups. The Mundurukú are best known for their reverence of and spiritual connection to their tattoos and feather work from headdresses to scepters. They used genipap fruit juice to make the dark lined tattoos, a process that began at a young age and symbolized their creator Karusakaibo. The Mundurukú are believed to be the most heavily tattooed indigenous group living in the Amazon at that time.



Actor Begê Muniz as Tando with a fishtail tattoo on his lip and spiral tattoo on his shoulder, reflective of Tando's Parintintin heritage

The Parintintin Tribe

Tando, Bates' main companion, is a Parintintin aboriginal with a mixed background. Officially, he's a "mameluco", which means he had one Parintintin parent and one non-native parent. The Parintintins live in the Amazon and called themselves "Kagwahiv" meaning "our people". They were often referred to as "black-mouths" because of their corn line wheel and fishtail tattoos at the corners of their lips. As they got older, more lines were drawn on their faces to indicate age, wisdom and status. Tando's simple tattoo represents his youth. Like the Mundurukú they made these tattoos with genipap fruit juice.



From *Amazon Adventure*: The Mundurukú chief wears many vibrant feathers to indicate his high status

Languages in *Amazon Adventure*

Bates learned to communicate in many languages during his journey; the film will hear him and Tando speak Portuguese, Mundurukú and Língua Geral. Both Mundurukú and Língua Geral are from a larger language family called "Tupi". Língua Geral (also known as "Nheengatu") was not a language spoken by the aboriginal peoples of Brazil until after the Portuguese first arrived in 1500. It was born out of the contact between white and native peoples, through both the marriage of the early colonists to indigenous women and the increased river trade. Língua Geral quickly became the common language used by explorers traveling upriver to communicate with the tribes they met. Although not as popular as Portuguese, Língua Geral is still used in Brazil today.

Another universal language in *Amazon Adventure* is that of music. The Mundurukú in particular had a richly lyrical culture with a vast repertoire of traditional songs and poems about nature and the stars. They played bamboo pan flutes daily and men would blow trumpets during rituals, both of which are depicted in the film.



From *Amazon Adventure*: Two native actors wear ceremonial Mundurukú clothing

Words in Mundurukú

Xipat [sh-ee-pat] = All good
Obure [oh-b-uh-é] = My friend
Parawa [Par-ah-wah] = Macaw

Words in Língua Geral

Yasú anal! [Ja swāna] = Hurry!
Maã taã kwaá? = What is it?
Intíkuri xaxari indé = I won't leave you

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