“The politics of Tintin…”
Context, stereotypes, representations, and controversies in the early adventures of Tintin.

By

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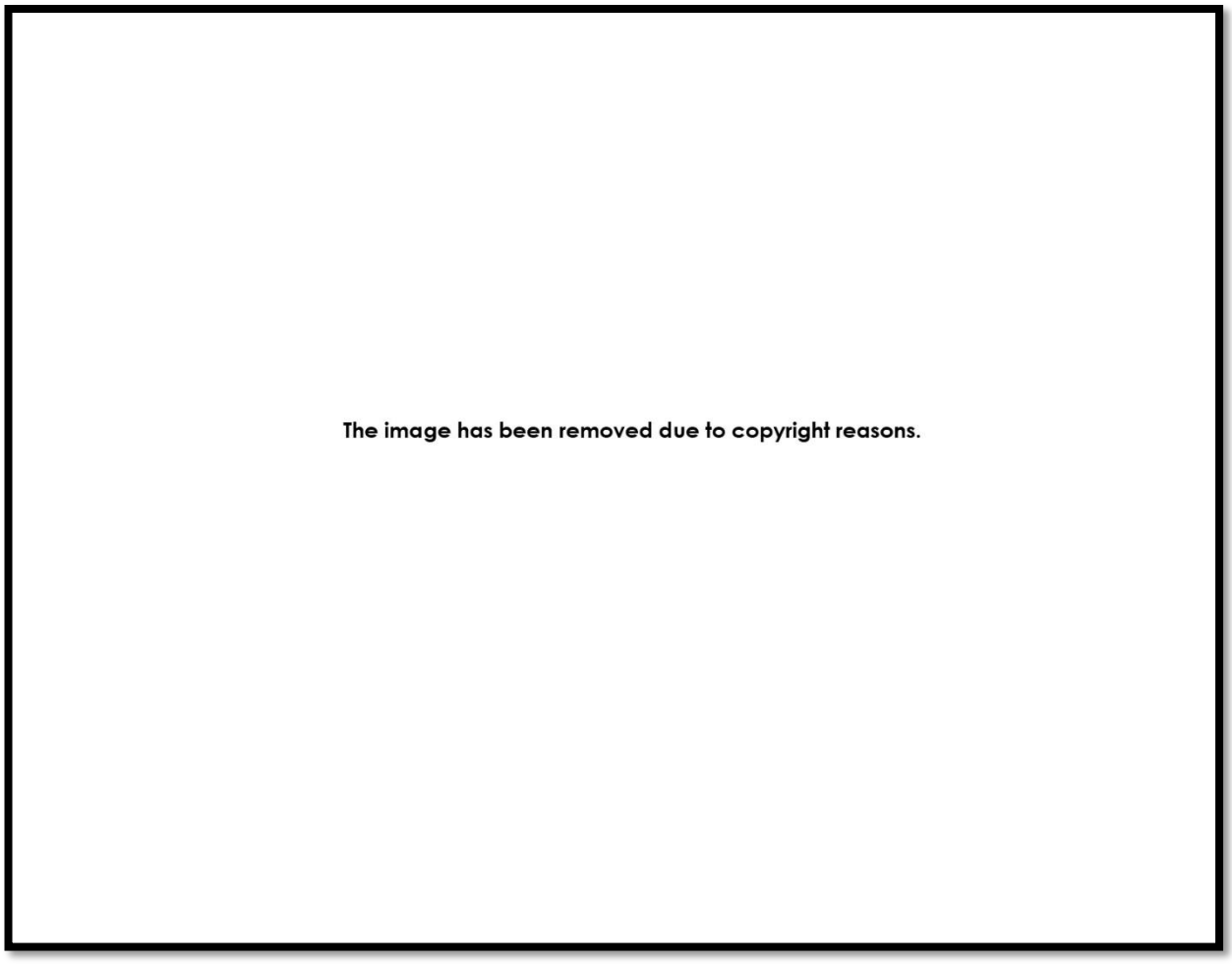

Image 1: Strip from the classic Tintin Adventure; Tintin in the Congo (1931)

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

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Foreword

Since his inception in 1929[1], Tintin and his friends have marvelled the imaginations of children of all ages. Tintin's adventures took him and Snowy, his faithful companion, to exotic locations around the world, primarily as an investigative reporter, but more often than not, the duo or sometimes trio, with the inclusion of Tintin's good friend, Captain Haddock, would become involved in adventures on the high seas, or involved in Himalayan mountain rescues, even in a rocket ship to the moon!

Tintin has a place amongst the original icons of popular culture. The clear line artwork used to illustrate the stories by his creator, Hergé, is fresh, bright and timeless, and provides much enjoyment for many of his avid readers all over the world. The character and his adventures celebrate ninety years in 2019, and what is now seen by fans as 'Tintin Mecca,' The Hergé Museum is located at the city of Louvain-la-Neuve, approximately 40 minutes by car from the Belgian capital, Brussels, and Tintin fans flock all year-round to view artefacts from the character's inception to the present day.

As a fan of the character since childhood, my reason for undertaking this investigation is to present the reader with the fact behind the fiction, and in this case, investigating the controversial elements contained in *The Adventures of Tintin,* and particularly, the early adventures; *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets,* first published in *Le Petit Vingtième* in 1929[2], and *Tintin in the Congo* in 1931[3].

[1] (Assouline 2009, p. 19)
[2] (Peeters 2012, p. 35)
[3] (Peeters 2012, p. 46)

Foreword continued

Human rights in Tintin is a subject discussed not only at academic level, but also among the avid readers of Tintin adventures; Tintinologists, Tintinophiles, are just two of the titles that are used by the fans who dissect the Tintin albums to investigate the backstory of the characters, the scene of the adventure, and of course, the social or political issue or both that may be the inspiration behind the creation of the adventure. Over time, the social and political attitudes of the global community have changed. The Tintin adventures were created during an era of great social, cultural and political change, and what was viewed once as an acceptable cultural artefact for the youth, and a product of its time is at present-day being judged by a different, more socially informed type of reader.

Image 2: Stuart Blair at the Hergé Museum in the City of Louvain-la-Neuve

Chapter one

Introduction

1.1: The importance of bande dessinée as literature

In the world of popular culture, the Franco-Belgian comic strip[4] (BD or bande dessinée franco-belge) evolved into a legitimate genre of literature. It offers narrative and graphic possibilities which are far from exhausted. The drawing animates a story to explain situations and provoke emotions. The storytelling techniques are unique: it is possible to use the ellipse, the panorama, the zoom, the scenography of the detail, the stories in parallel, dialogues, variations of points of view, and introspection, among other techniques commonly used in cinema and literary fiction. To draw is to tell, and to tell is to make one understand. BDs have found their place at the university[5] in science departments, in schools of journalism, in schools that specialise in the '9th art;' the Fine Arts institutions of Paris, such as the Decorative Arts of Strasbourg, and the European School of Visual Arts in Angoulême in France, to name a few. The term 'Franco-Belgian comic strip' means a publication that is unique in France and Belgium.

The comic book industry is a feeder of material for the film industry with movies produced either being inspired by a comic book character or an adventure that has been adapted from a comic book story. The age of the comic book reader is open, and you only have to visit a comic bookstore or attend a pop culture convention to bear witness to the many demographics that are represented. Boys, girls, their parents, grandparents, and their friends are all sharing an interest that allows the community to communicate within a common frame of reference.

[4] (Grove 2010, p.16)
[5] Laurence Grove, *Bande Dessinée Studies, French Studies*, Volume 68, Issue 1, January 2014, Pages 78–87, https://doi.org/10.1093/fs/knt228

1.2: Comic books are expressions of narratives

As with a traditional non-picture book, a comic book represents a story, but it is expressed via a series of storyboards with each board filled with an image or a scene and a passage of text that reveals its message. The characters, objects and scenery are used to specify the universe in which a comic is created, with an element of narrative to maintain reader interest and to be curious about the proceeding storyboards. The message could be comedic or dramatic, fictitious or in many cases related to a past world event or a current world issue. The comic book is a powerful medium for relaying a political or a social message to a readership of any age. Hergé's *The Adventures of Tintin* in particular, have been the subject of great debate and discussion since the character's inception in 1929, specifically, in relation to issues pertaining to human rights, racism, and the mistreatment of animals.

1.3: The power of illustration

The creator of Tintin, Hergé, created a style of images for his stories known as 'clear line.' The clear line[6] or 'ligne claire' is a graphic technique that gives a precise outline to characters, objects and scenes that are stripped of superfluity or shading. Thanks to this technique, all the portions of the illustrations are of equal importance to present a graphic clarity in the narration so that the story progresses from image to image. This clarity even gives children the opportunity in selected BD titles to follow the story without the use of words, just by following the depicted actions.

[6] (Assouline 2009, p. 22)

1.4: Hergé's inspiration for his stories

Importantly, Hergé wrote his early adventures of Tintin without having travelled to the countries he depicted in his stories; twenty-four in all, twenty-three complete adventures with the twenty-fourth and incomplete adventure titled, *Tintin and Alph-Art*[7] was published after the death of Hergé though only forty-five pages in length and consisted mainly of conceptual sketches, doodles and a small number of storyboards outlining the adventure. Hergé has received much criticism for his work, particularly for his early adventures: In *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*[8] for example, Hergé obtained information for his stories through his contacts with the Catholic Conservative Party and, more particularly, thanks to his colleagues at *Le Vingtième Siècle*[9], a catholic conservative newspaper, at which members of the party worked. As it will be argued in Chapter 4. Hergé's drawings portrayed the Russians coldly, without emotion and voiceless, Tintin was not permitted to investigate the rich culture of the Russian arts, its music, and theatre, which could have provided a more balanced representation of the country during this period. The adventure could be interpreted as disjointed or lacking cohesion in the story's plot compared to other Tintin stories. Typically, *The Adventures of Tintin*, share a common theme in each story; Tintin the reporter is sent on assignment by his newspaper to uncover mysteries and solve crimes, although, oddly enough, he is rarely seen filing a report. Each story's formula is the struggle of good versus evil with Tintin saving the day and always being victorious over his adversary.

[7] (Grove 2010, p.122)
[8] (Assouline 2009, p.19)
[9] (Peeters 2012, p.27)

1.5: Controversy

Hergé used his imagination as well as a combination of radio broadcasts and newspaper articles, and articles written by foreign correspondents to create his adventures, specifically the early adventures of *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*, *Tintin in the Congo*, and *Tintin in America*. In *Tintin in the Congo*, Hergé illustrated the African natives in a more animated version using overtly enlarged eyes and large white mouths, a common stereotype that was used at that time to describe indigenous peoples, example; from the late 1920s through to 1950[10], American film companies and producers of animation including Walt Disney Corporation, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Warner Bros., and Looney Tunes had created animated works that included images of ethnic minorities and African Americans in a less than respectful and demeaning manner. Controversy in BDs is not limited to Hergé's adventures of Tintin, as we will find out in Chapter 3. Helen Bannerman's classic adventure of the *Little Black Sambo*[11] (1899), Florence Kate Upton's storybook, *The Golliwoggs Auto-go-cart*[12] (1901) and the animated cartoon adventure *Hittin' the trail for hallelujah land*[13] (1931) all attracted critical analysis of their representation of the blackface character portrayed in their adventures as seen through the contemporary readers' eye.

Hergé's adventure in the Congo, created in 1931, has been clouded with the controversy surrounding accusations of racism[14], and the fictional mistreatment of the Congolese people, and local fauna. In *Tintin in America*, a similar cultural offering is presented, particularly the illustrations of native American Indians drawn in the adventure who are represented in a similar theme as the

[10] (Online reference, viewed, January 29, 2020 https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/antiblack/
[11] (Primedia E-launch LLC, (1961)
[12] (Longmans, (1968)
[13] (Online reference, viewed, June 21, 2019 https://cartoonresearch.com/index.php/the-censored-11-hittin-the-trail-for-hallelujahland-1931/)
[14] (Stanard 2019, p.70)

natives in *Tintin in the Congo* example; exaggerated facial features and portrayed as less than intelligent human beings. At the same time, through these stereotypes and representations, Hergé casts Tintin as a defender of the oppressed minorities.

This is the apparent tension that I seek to investigate in this thesis. Furthermore, I will elaborate on the issues of controversy that have surrounded these early adventures of Tintin and investigate the cultural attitudes of the time attached to colonialism, as well as the narrative technique of the stories illustrated in the Tintin albums as they have represented key periods of world history. Tintin's adventures, and particularly the issues of controversy that have been sparked by a number of albums, is the subject of much discussion on matters of racism, anti-Semitism, animal cruelty and more generally, of human rights issues.

The analysis of the early Tintin albums, of how societies and cultures are represented by Hergé will allow us to investigate how these albums fit within the pre-World War to colonial framework; it will also allow a succinct study of the style that Hergé applied in each adventure in support of cultural and racial representations. I will also compare Hergé's Tintin adventures with other icons of la bande dessinée[15] and their adventures where the issues of human rights and racism have been represented through image and story. Finally, I will present an analysis of the controversial graphic and textual elements that are featured in the two albums this study is focusing on.

[15] (Grove 2010, p.1)

Chapter Two

Introducing Hergé, Tintin, and the early albums

This chapter will provide some historical background into Hergé's upbringing and youth, including information about his early works as an illustrator/storyteller. This information will allow an investigation of Hergé's influences during his early years, who were his peers, his mentors, and close friends as well as his relationship with his family.

2.1: Hergé's early childhood and early work as an illustrator

Born in 1907, in Etterbeek, Brussels, Hergé spoke French as his first language but also learnt Flemish being in a bi-lingual Belgium. Hergé's childhood was a modest one, his father was Walloon and mother Flemish. However, he was a francophone in a time in which French was considered the acrolect in Belgium[16]. Hergé was five years senior to his brother, Paul. Together, the family lived quite a reserved lifestyle and the parents were proud [17] of their children. Books and music were not available to the children in the house but Hergé found many of the great classic titles in literature in a box up in the family attic, and he began reading titles like *Huckleberry Finn*, *Treasure Island,* and *Robinson Crusoe*. He also read illustrated book titles such as *Fables of La Fontaine* including *the Fox and the Crow*[18].

[16] (Assouline 2009, p.4)
[17] (Assouline 2009, p.3)
[18] (Assouline 2009, p.5)

Hergé was a quite solitary but overactive child. To control his hyperactivity, his parents gave him paper and pencils for drawing[19]. As his skill level increased from stick figures to more complex forms, Hergé started drawing wartime scenes of the German occupation of World War I[20]. Hergé's interests included scouting and films[21]. He was a fan of Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, and Harry Langdon[22]. It was his time in the scouts that taught him a sense of duty and honour and what it meant when one gave his word and stayed true to it[23]. Hergé travelled to Switzerland, Austria and Spain, as well as participating in a 200 mile hike across the Pyrenees in 1923[24]. His time with the Scouts provided him with moral qualities, a purpose of doing good deeds and honouring one's word. It was these qualities that made scouting a very important part of Hergé's life.

Indeed, there is a close connection between Tintin the adventurous reporter, and Totor the Boy Scout, not just in their likenesses, but because both characters represented young, vibrant and dynamic adolescents that readers of all ages could aspire to become, or at least follow the moral principles displayed by the two iconic characters. This artistry was encouraged by his then scoutmaster, Rene Weverbergh, who had become involved in the publication of the newsletter of the boy scouts, known as '*Le Boy-scout Belge'* [25].

[19] (Assouline 2009, p.6)
[20] (Assouline 2009, p.6)
[21] (Peeters 2012, p.11)
[22] (Assouline 2009, p.7)
[23] (Assouline 2009, p.9)
[24] (Assouline 2009, p.8)
[25] (Nattiez 2016, p.135)

Image 3 Caricature of Totor the Boy Scout (1926)

Image 4: Tintin from Tintin in the Land of the Soviets (1929)

In 1926, Hergé enlisted for military service in Schaerbeek. Prior to the end of his military service in 1927, Hergé met Abbé, Norbert Wallez, Editor of *Le Vingtième Siècle*[26] (a Catholic-supported newspaper in Belgium). This meeting was going to be significant because it is under the mentorship of the newspaper's editor, that Hergé produced his Tintin comic strips for the supplement to *Le Vingtième Siècle*, known as *Le Petit Vingtième* (a children's or youth journal). Hergé listened to the suggestions and recommendations offered to him by Norbert Wallez[27], and he was greatly influenced by the Abbot's example; It was Wallez who suggested to Hergé to send Tintin to Soviet Russia in the first Tintin adventure and then to the Congo in the following album.

It must be pointed out that from his early childhood, Hergé believed his true family origin was related to King Leopold II, though this was never confirmed. His father, Alexis and Uncle Léon were born to a woman by the name of Marie Dewigne, who had taken up a post as a chambermaid to the Countess Hélène Errembault de Dudzeele, herself of noble descent. King Léopold II was a guest who frequently stayed at the house and the two boys were raised in the house and educated with the privileges of that received by the Countesses' two daughters, Germaine and Valentine[28].

[26] (Peeters 2012, p.27)
[27] (Assouline 2009, p.12)
[28] (Assouline 2009, p.5)

Hergé supported the king and his decisions, including the king's colonisation of the Congo which could have been the inspiration for his second Tintin album set in the Congo as well as the pre-World War Two album, *King Ottokar's Sceptre*[29] which features a caricature of Hergé dressed in a regal costume in a scene in the story, as well, King Muskar XII (a character in the story) is said to be King Léopold III[30], though this is not confirmed.

Hergé, who was 33 years old at the start of the Second World War, became unemployed as a result of the closure of *Le Vingtième Siècle*: but after a short period of time, he was contacted by *Le Soir* and was offered work as an illustrator. At the time of his commencement with the paper, he was advised to continue with his Tintin strips by his mentor, Norbert Wallez and Raymond De Becker[31], the editor of *Le Soir*. The Second World War occurred at a pivotal time in Hergé's life. Loyalty was a word that was tested during this period. Being loyal to one's countrymen during a time of occupation meant questioning one's values when faced with important decisions. Hergé was still young and at the start of his career when the war broke out in Belgium, and he too had to make difficult decisions to preserve his professional future.

Much has been written about Hergé and his association with leaders of fascist movements and key public figures who were confessed supporters of a new world order, promoted at the time of the Nazi occupation of Belgium from 1940 to 1944[32].

[29] (Farr 2011, p.80)
[30] (Peeters 2012, p.100)
[31] (Peeters 2012, p.116)
[32] (Assouline 2009, p.67)

It was a time when Hergé's Tintin strips started to gain in popularity, and *The adventures of Tintin* were acquiring a growing loyal following with each new instalment of his character's latest journey.

It was a difficult period for anyone living under the occupation, let alone an artist attempting to keep his dream of success and reputation alive. Despite his success, Hergé was accused of collaborating with the enemy during World War II when he was offered work with *Le Soir* [33], a Belgian newspaper that had been taken over by the Nazi occupation forces, and henceforth was used as a propaganda[34] newspaper. Belgian citizens who worked for *Le Soir* during the occupation years were frowned upon for suspicion of collaborating with the enemy as *Le Soir*, the publication, was accused of collaboration. Collaborating with the enemy was a choice made by many citizens as a possible means of surviving the war.

Because of his identification with Tintin, his central character in the popular imagination of his readers all over the world, how could he be accused of collaborating with the Germans during WWII and even face execution alongside most of his journalist friends? He had worked with this group of journalists during the war years, and due to the status of Tintin as a popular hero across ages and political divides, it is possible that Hergé had the foresight of knowing that he would not be held accountable for his actions in working for a collaborist paper. It is possible that he was counting on the popularity of his hero to exonerate his actions in order to secure a future for Tintin.

[33] (Assouline 2009, p.69)
[34] (Kennedy 2007, p.767)

Many of the journalists resigned due to the Nazi take-over of *Le Soir*. Hergé saw the advantage of writing for the publication due to its large readership of over 300,000 which could only enhance the exposure of Tintin to the public[35].

According to his biographers, during this period Hergé made little reference to the current affairs of the time to avoid himself getting into trouble with the Nazis, so he pointed Tintin away from Europe and had him travelling to exotic places like the Sahara Desert on great adventures[36]. This strategy of Hergé kept the editor of *Le Soir* onside, as much of the paper was filled with images of Hitler and the anti-Jewish propaganda it was supporting.

Hergé's employment with *Le Soir* whilst under the control of the Germans was a most difficult decision for him to make, as the consequences were made clear for anyone contributing to the enhancement of the German propaganda machine. *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* was primarily a publication of anti-communist propaganda[37].

Hergé's mentor, the Abbot, Norbert Wallez, himself a supporter of right-wing ideals, and at the helm of *Le Petit Vingtième* used his influence on Hergé to communicate an anti-communist sentiment to the young reader. In Belgium, the Catholic right and the Rex Party[38] in Belgium shared a similar ideal and were openly expressing their support of a fascist regime.

[35] (Assouline 2009, p.111)
[36] (Assouline 2009, p.79)
[37] (Grove 2010, p.122)
[38] (Assouline 2009, p.55)

Hergé never openly admitted where he stood politically, preferring to remain neutral[39]. However, in *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets,* he illustrates a soviet system that is draconian in its treatment of its people.

Tintin's popularity increased as each new story was published[40], and Hergé was drawing praise for his comic strip artwork and storylines, many of which were centred around real-world events like *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*. Through the eyes of Tintin, the world could read a story that described the socio-economic climate of 1920s Soviet Union, totalitarianism, the famine that was experienced by the Russian citizens as well as the threat of Bolshevism.

The Tintin character prior to the wartime stories produced during Hergé's employment with *Le Soir* portrayed Tintin as a saviour of the weak or the oppressed. For Hergé to be working for a paper accused of collaboration, this created a contradiction, by being a person who was now being viewed as a traitor by his fellow peers that had put down their pens in protest of the Nazi occupation of their country as well as the general population, as he worked for *Le Soir* [41]. Hergé did not openly offer an opinion when it came to the subject of politics and had once stated, 'to throw my heart and soul into an ideology is the opposite of who I am[42].' He was guided by his mentor, Norbert Wallez, and during his time working for *Le Petit Vingtième*, Hergé included material that was pro-fascist and anti-Semitic in its theme under instruction from Wallez[43].

[39] (Lofficier and Lofficier 2007, p.16)
[40] (Lofficier and Lofficier 2007, p.14)
[41] (Peeters 2012, p.121)
[42] (Peeters 2012, p.89)
[43] (Assouline 2009, p.64)

Hergé also designed illustrations for Léon Degrelle, who according to himself, was the inspiration behind the Tintin character[44]. Léon Degrelle, the founder of the Rex Party, had the illustrations, designed by Hergé, placed on his political pamphlets[45]. He made a remark post-war, 'I recognise that I myself believed that the future of the West could depend on the New Order... In light of everything which has happened, it is of course a huge error...[46].' There is no evidence of Hergé supporting the fascist movement other than simply having performed a favour for a friend in Léon Degrelle. One could argue that Hergé's choice of friends was commensurate with his naivety when making choices during a most unsettling period and it is necessary to investigate Hergé's friends and their affiliations and see if Hergé was influenced by them.

Hergé's choice of friends during the Second World War drew suspicion toward him of supporting the fascist right-wing movement. His mentor and closest friend, Norbert Wallez was a quasi-fascist and proud of his association with Italian dictator, Benito Mussolini and was said to have an autographed photo from Mussolini on his desk[47]. Hergé saw Norbert Wallez as a person of great influence and he would always be grateful to Wallez for his start in *Le Soir*. Wallez encouraged Hergé to join the staff at *Le Soir*, whose editor in chief was an old friend of Hergé's by the name of Raymond De Becker who shared the same political views as Wallez[48].

[44] (Assouline 2009, p.45)
[45] (Assouline 2009, p.64)
[46] (Peeters 2012, p.117-118)
[47] (Assouline 2009, p.13)
[48] (Peeters 2012, p.48)

Another of Hergé's friends and fellow illustrator of caricatures was Paul Jamin, who had produced work for Raymond de Becker including a cover design for an unpublished book, and he had also worked for *Brüsseler Zeitung,* one of the occupation newspapers[49]. Hergé said of Jamin, that his characters 'had done more for Rex than all of Degrelle's speeches put together[50].' Jacques Van Melkebeke was a wartime colleague of Hergé at *Le Soir* who assisted Hergé with his work and was particularly helpful in adding cultural references to his stories. He became a friend of Hergé's during their time at *Le Soir*. As the Second World War came to a close, Raymond Leblanc[51], a respected member of the Belgian community, was one of only a few Belgian citizens who did not require a certificate of good citizenship[52] (a mandatory requirement by all Belgian citizens at the end of the war).

Leblanc's war record as an infantry officer and a leader of a Belgian resistance unit during the occupation spoke for itself[53]. He was younger than Hergé and was an avid reader of Hergé's strips in *Le Vingtième siècle* before the journal was closed down. Leblanc started his own publishing house with two associates, a fellow resistance fighter during the Second World War, André Sinave, and Albert Debaty, a former journalist. He had the idea of producing a weekly journal for children and it was a suggestion by Mr Debaty that they approach Hergé. Upon receiving his certificate of good citizenship, Hergé was permitted to commence his employment with Raymond Leblanc and associates, and in September of 1946[54], the *Tintin Journal* went into publication.

[49] (Peeters 2012, p.117)
[50] (Peeters 2012, p.117)
[51] (Assouline 2009, p.109)
[52] (Assouline 2009, p.109)
[53] (Assouline 2009, p.109)
[54] (Peeters 2012, p.173)

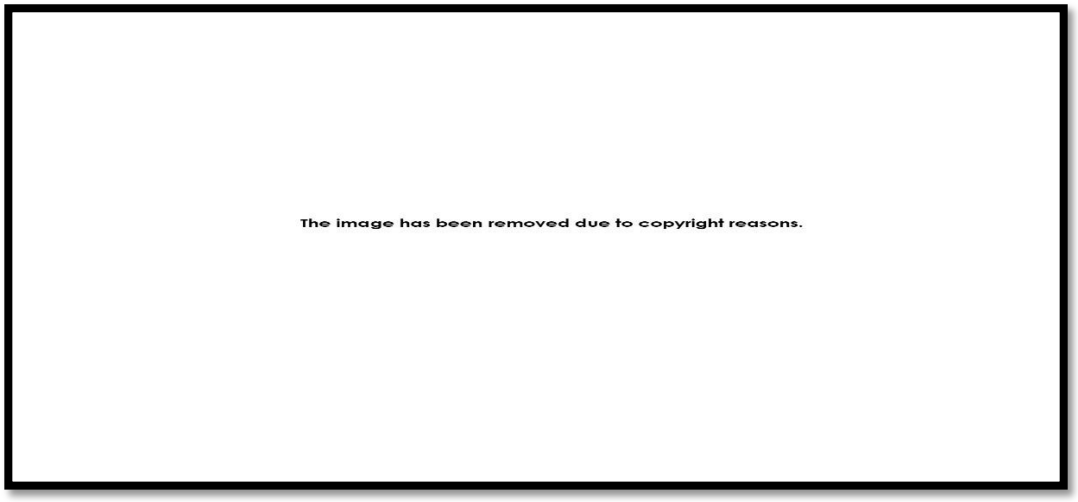

Image 5: Left to right, Hergé and Raymond Leblanc

2.2: The Tintin characters

Having highlighted Hergé's biographic background and his personal and professional associations, let's move to Tintin's fictional acquaintances and introduce the main cast of *The Adventures of Tintin*. Tintin is an investigative reporter who is always on the go and with faithful companion Snowy, and close circle of friends; Captain Haddock, Detectives Thompson and Thomson, Professor Calculus, and the opera singer Bianca Castafiore. And of course, with each great hero, comes an adversary; in this case, it is the sworn enemy of Tintin, Roberto Rastapopoulos.

Tintin and Snowy

Tintin is a hero of the people, a doer of good deeds and he sometimes finds the time to squeeze in some work for his paper; *Le Petit Vingtième.* Unlike most other heroes, Tintin is not characterised by any remarkable traits. He is intelligent, versatile and quick, but when he is investigated more closely, he is quite simple and one dimensional.

His name is a simple repetition of syllables and is difficult to ascertain if the name is a term of endearment, a nickname, or his first or last name. He doesn't have a surname. The real-life inspiration behind the Tintin character was a melange of two individuals; a young Danish amateur actor and world traveller; Palle Huld[55], who rode a motorbike and wore 'plus four trousers' like that of a golfer, and Hergé's brother, Paul[56], who bore a striking resemblance to Tintin. The character seems distant, he has no defined age, and he does not have friends his age, nor does he have a girlfriend.

Tintin is the one to whom everyone, whatever their age, their country, can identify oneself. As Robin is to Batman (commonly known to the fans as the dynamic duo[57]), Snowy is so strongly associated with Tintin, that for a long time, the series was titled *The Adventures of Tintin and Snowy*. As a result, the role of this little white fox terrier is most prominent in the first albums when Snowy is still the only companion of the hero. The dog plays with his master in real conversations, occupying a place identical to that of a confidant. Snowy is much more down to earth than Tintin. He does not share Tintin's level of obsession with each assignment. His taste for adventure is more moderate than that of his master but the faithful companion does not hesitate to show great courage and ingenuity to pull Tintin from danger, however, it often happens that Snowy's gluttony makes him hesitate between enjoying a delicious bone and saving Tintin.

[55] (Online reference, viewed July 26, 2019 http://en.tintin.com/news/index/rub/0/id/3646/0/tintin-turns-80)
[56] (Peeters 2012, p.34)
[57] (Danesi, 2017, p.30)

The cast of principal supporting characters

Captain Haddock enjoys his role as master of his stately residence; Moulinsart, and he is content with a bottle of whiskey and a pipe. Unlike in the case of Tintin, there is no direct real-life inspiration behind the Haddock character other than the classic 'old sea dog' described in pirate adventures on the high seas. The standout peculiarity of the Captain is above all that language that he has made famous and being credited in delivering more than two hundred insults! Cuthbert Calculus is a lodger at Haddock's Moulinsart and with the creations of his marvellous inventions, he has aided Tintin during his many adventures.

To create Calculus, Hergé was inspired by the scientist; Auguste Piccard[58]. Calculus is a character full of anachronisms and he plays an important role in the series as it is thanks to him that Haddock arrives to buy Moulinsart before finding the treasure in the Tintin adventure, *Red Rackham's Treasure*. Of all Tintin's friends, he is the one who most appreciates the opera singer; Bianca Castafiore, that said, he is hard of hearing! Castafiore is one of the rare female characters featured in the Tintin universe and she was inspired by the American-born Greek soprano; Maria Callas[59]. Detectives Thomson and Thompson maintain curious relationships with the other characters, although they do not belong to the family, they are always close by and take pride in calling Tintin, their dear friend. The inspiration for the classic comedy duo is Hergé's father, Alexis and his uncle, Léon.

[58] (Farr 2011, p.107)
[59] (Farr 2011, p.86)

2.3: *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*

Tintin in the Land of the Soviets was published in 1929. This is the first adventure of Tintin by Hergé. The album was conceived as an anti-Marxist propaganda work under the direction of his Mentor, Norbert Wallez. The story revolves around the young Belgian reporter and his dog, Snowy who go to Berlin to reach the Soviet Union. The objective is for Tintin to report on the political situation of the Bolshevik government but an agent from the Soviet secret service agency known as the OGPU[60], seeks to prevent him from doing so.

The Bolsheviks are setting traps to get rid of him, but Tintin succeeds in discovering the secrets of the Bolsheviks, how they stole the food from Soviet citizens and faked elections by assassinating those who opposed the regime. In 1920s Russia it was very difficult for Russian citizens, especially for people who were not members of the Communist Party. Unfortunately, his interpretation does not reflect the life in Russia at the time. Some of Hergé's images have been interpreted as a misrepresentation of the government of Soviet Russia. *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* was published 12 years after the October Revolution, Lenin had died, and Josef Stalin had begun to exercise his authoritarian rule in the country, and the state took control of everything from agriculture to energy production.

Image 6: A chase scene from Tintin in the Land of the Soviets (1929)

[60] (Peeters 2012, p.39)

2.4: *Tintin in the Congo*

Since the first publishing of the jungle adventure in 1931, more than 10 million copies have been sold worldwide. Hergé's second album provoked a discomfort which caused the delay or even the prohibition of the publication of the album in several countries and forced Hergé to make changes to certain passages of the album. A Belgian citizen in 2007 had asked for the ban on the sale of the album *Tintin in the Congo*[61], with the support of the Representative Council of Black Associations (CRAN)[62], qualifying the album in question as 'racist and xenophobe.' The issue was in the courts through to 2012 with the Belgian courts ultimately rejecting the case.

The Brussels Court of First Instance rejected the plaintiffs' claims that Casterman and Moulinsart had not been guilty of violating the 1981 Belgian Act aimed at suppressing certain acts inspired by racism and xenophobia. Yet, several decades after its first publication in the pages of the magazine *Le Petit Vingtième*, the album remains controversial. As well, the English publishing house representing Casterman, refused to translate[63] and publish the Congo adventure unless Hergé made changes to the story, to make it less controversial to the reader.

Image 7: A scene from Tintin in the Congo (1931)

[61] (Buettner 2016, p.464)
[62] (Buettner 2016, p.464)
[63] (Landau and Kaspin 2002, p.93)

2.5: Chapter conclusion

The illustrations he had created for his book gave not only a negative interpretation of Russia at that time, but also gave the reader the impression that history was a method of anti-Soviet propaganda, affirming Wallez's control of *Le Petit Vingtième* (the children's supplement) had on Hergé. The same criticism can be applied to *Tintin in the Congo*, where Hergé developed a paternalistic view of the colonisation of the Congo by Belgium. In this story, Hergé allowed Tintin to explore all regions of the Congo without restriction. He allowed him to hunt animals and use their skin, to disguise himself and avoid other animals in the jungle. We have also seen that Tintin plays the role of teacher to educate the local inhabitants to bring 'civilisation' to them.

The actions of Tintin can be interpreted as an act of interference with the consequence of perhaps, to contaminate the evolution of this culture by forcing the Congolese to adopt a new country, (Belgium) and speak the language of that country as well as learn its customs and way of life. The style of art that was used by Hergé in this story is the most critical aspect of the controversy. The caricatures are stereotypical of black people drawn in cartoons and stories of the era but are not a real representation of the Congolese. Hergé also has a similar style in *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets.*

In another story produced during the Second World War, *King Ottokar's Sceptre*, Hergé displayed an open denouncing of fascism by using Tintin to defeat the occupying forces in the story, who used aircraft that bore a striking resemblance to German warplanes, and soldiers that looked like German SS officers, with a leader whose name was a composite of two-real life fascist leaders in

Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, to create the character's name of Müsstler[64].

Image 8: An Iron guard officer, pictured left side of Tintin

[64] (Assouline 2009, p.62)

Chapter three

BD, comics and representations

It is important at this point to present a selection of other BDs that have been produced prior to, and around the same time as Hergé's adventures of Tintin. The purpose of this presentation is to investigate other works that contain racial and cultural stereotypes and representations that may have influenced Hergé during the creation of *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*, and *Tintin in the Congo*. This chapter will also look at the evolution of the socio-cultural attitudes of the reader as BDs created post-1970s are also presented in this investigation.

3.1 Racial and cultural stereotypes and representations in comics / popular media

The BD character of Bibi Fricotin[65] was created in 1924 by Louis Forton[66] (who also created *Les Pieds Nickelés*[67]), who died in 1934. In 1936, illustrator, Gaston Callaud[68] took over Bibi Fricotin and continued to create the Bibi Fricotin adventures until the start the Second World War when the publication was interrupted. Production of the stories recommenced in 1947 thanks to illustrator Pierre Lacroix[69] and took a new direction with the creation of a new character, a black boy called Razibus Zouzou. The character is illustrated in a stereotypical style like that of Hergé's Congolese natives complete with the simple use of language, his attitude and simplistic methods of reasoning which in today's moral standards could be viewed as controversial. Hergé's representation of the African indigenous was generally subordinated to the adoption of clichés and preconceived ideas

[65] (Blanchard 1969, p.183)
[66] (Blanchard 1969, p.183)
[67] (Blanchard 1969, p.183)
[68] (Online reference, viewed on September 1, 2019 https://www.lambiek.net/artists/c/callaud_gaston.htm)
[69] (Online reference, viewed on September 1, 2019 https://www.lambiek.net/artists/l/lacroix_pierre.htm)

of the time. Many European cartoonists and screenwriters had never been in contact with Africa and were content to perpetuate similar stereotypes in their works. This is particularly the case of the comic book, *Bécassine*[70], the first female character in BD who appeared for the first time in 1905 in the premiere issue of *La Semaine de Suzette*[71] on February 2. The publication was a weekly magazine for young girls. Bécassine is a French woman who leaves the rural misery of nineteenth-century Breton along with other native Bretons, to work as a nanny for a bourgeois family in Paris.

The character was a spur of the moment creation to fill space in the weekly journal by the journal's editor, Jacqueline Rivière[72] and illustrator, Joseph Pinchon[73]. Bécassine and other Bretons are depicted as a simple or docile people who speak the French language at a basic level and as a consequence, are treated with similar regard to that of their black counterparts in the service industry. Bécassine is drawn without a mouth and the reader is asked to interpret her emotional responses during her adventures by the positioning of her eyebrows. The absence of a mouth could be interpreted as a moment in time where the female, specifically one in her position, and social status, was to be seen but not heard.

Bécassine's status improves over time to that of a governess, but Bretons denounced the impact of children's literature in the formation of colonial-type prejudices against the province. Even today,

[70] (Miller 2007, p.2)
[71] (Miller 2007, p2)
[72] (Miller 2007, p.2)
[73] (Blanchard 1969, p.183)

Bécassine has long been a favourite among children and the character could be seen as a role model[74] as she was seen in her adventures as a go-getter of that era, example, driving a car, being a working woman and travelling around her country and others.

Sam et Sap[75] published for the first time in 1908 by Rose Candide[76] who was the first in France to use speech bubbles. It features the comical adventures of a little black boy named Sam and his Sapajou monkey, both brought back from Africa to serve a white French family. Sam is unaware of the social graces of the white bourgeois society that he meets and with whom he is often in conflict as a result and being seen to be 'simple and wild.' The ambivalence of the representations of the 'negroes' in the comic strip has always been present (although there is a clear preference for the disapproval of the caricature on the scale of the history of comics). A significant number of caricature representations are still visible, more or less explicitly. This was particularly the case in the album *Le Nègre Blanc*[77] (1952) which portrayed the graphic stereotypes of Africans speaking 'petit nègre[78].'

The adventures of Blondin and Cirage[79], by Joseph Gillain in 1939, who wrote under the pen name, Jijé[80], created his two main characters as equals. Blondin is a white boy and Cirage[81] is his black sidekick who, unlike other black characters of the era, is more outspoken and courageous

[74] (Online article viewed, September 21, 2019 http://riviera-buzz.com/on-the-town/entertainment/item/becassine)
[75] (Miller 2007, p.3)
[76] (Miller 2007, p.3)
[77] (Delisle 2008, p.26)
[78] (Online article viewed September 22, 2019 https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Petit-N%C3%A8gre)
[79] (Delisle 2008, p26)
[80] (McKinney 2008, p.171)
[81] (translation from the French language: shoe polish, https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/french-english/cirage)

with language skills on the same level as his white friend. This BD series is an example of not all illustrators during this era sharing the stereotypical opinion of black caricatures in their adventures.

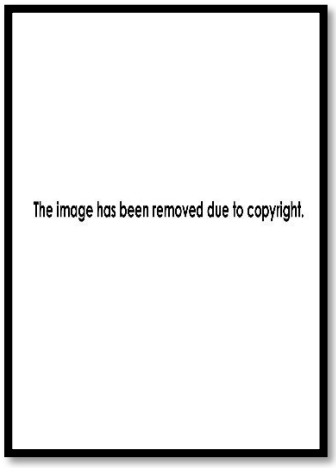

Image 9: Bibi Fricotin

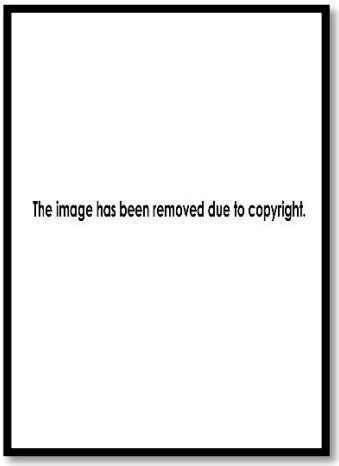

Image 10: Sam et Sap

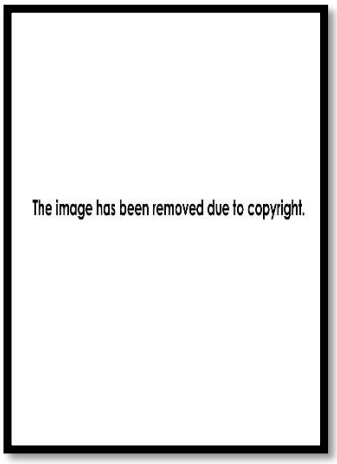

Image 11: Bécassine

The volume, *Postcolonial Comics: Texts, Events, Identities*[82] (2015), edited by Binita Mehta and Pia Mukherji, they refer to Alan McKinney's book, *The Colonial Heritage of French Comics* (2011), and its exploration of the evidence of racism and imperialism in BDs created by Alain Saint-Ogan[83] in the 1930s, in which McKinney investigates a specific volume of the series, *Zig et Puce aux Indes*, that presents an exoticized India full of snake charmers, elephants and sacred cows.

[82] (Mehta and Mukherji 2015, p.10)

[83] Saint-Ogan (the father of the French comic book and who created the BD adventures of *Zig et Puce.*

Hergé was greatly influenced by Saint-Ogan[84], as he routinely applied exaggerated facial features to the black Congolese natives in *Tintin in the Congo*.

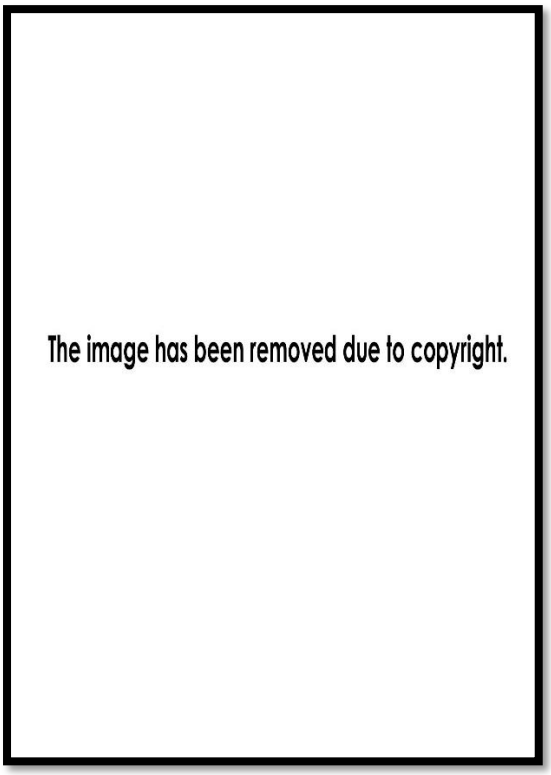

Image 12: The BD Album Zig et Puce aux Indes

3.2: An evolutional change of public opinion

From the 1980s, the social attitudes began to evolve in the western world, as did the black representations of Franco-Belgian comics. An article written in the *New York Times* by Mary Blume[85], reports that the breakfast drink product, Banania[86], since 1917, has used a

[84] (Lofficier and Lofficier 2007, p.21)
[85] 'by Mary Blume' Blume, M. (2006, Feb) *A French tempest in a breakfast cup.* Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/16/arts/a-french-tempest-in-a-breakfast-cup.html
[86] (Bloom 2008, p.42)

caricature of a smiling Senegalese soldier on their product box since 1917. The picture is accompanied by the slogan, 'Y'a Bon![87],' a fractured pidgin language similar to petit-nègre. Senegalese soldiers were recruited to the French Army during the First World War, and their spoken word is closely associated with the simplified use of the French language. The caricature of the smiling soldier is stereotypical of the era but the 'ungrammatical slogan,' which ceased to be included on the product since 1977, was the subject of a class action by the Collectif des Antillais, Guyanais et Réunionnais[88], a French association which defines itself as an apolitical lobby for Overseas France, and was founded in April 2003 by Patrick Karam to defend in Paris, the interests of people from the French West Indies, French Guiana, Mayotte and Reunion, who fight against the discriminations of which these people could be the object despite their French nationality. The association objected to the slogan as racist and an internet petition to cease the use of the slogan was implemented.

The president of Nutrimaine[89], (the company who produces) Banania, Thierry Henault, removed the slogan from the copyright list as a gesture of goodwill as the slogan had already been removed as aforementioned, and the protesting association withdrew their class action. Though not a BD, it is important to recognise the change of the cultural attitude by the company concerning their use of a stereotypical caricature and slogan being used to market their product.

[87] (Bloom 2008, p. 41)
[88] (Clark Hine, Keaton, Small 2009, p.22)
[89] (Bloom 2008, p.64)

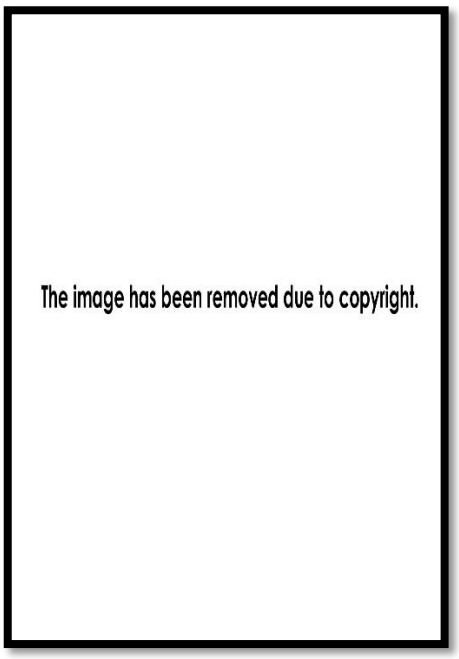

Image 13: Banania logo pre-slogan removal

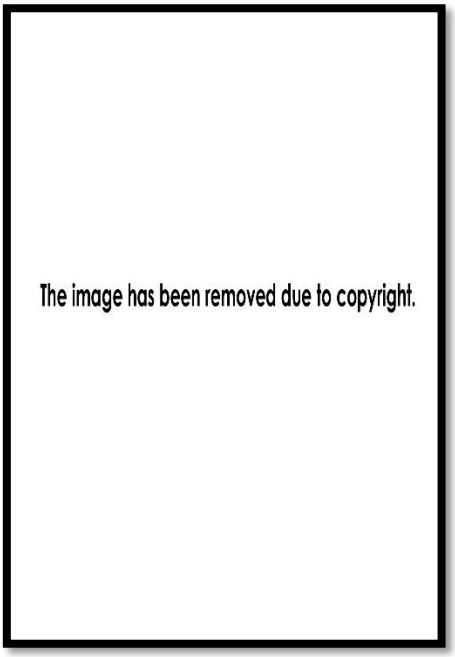

Image 14: Banania logo 'post' removal

The BD, *Les passagers du vent* created by François Bourgeon[90] in 1979, addresses the issue of slavery and the slave trade. This more realistic presentation captures the complexity of this issue much like Éric Warnauts' *Congo 40*[91] created in 1988, which takes place during the colonisation of the Congo by Belgium. *Congo 40* is a story about Laurence, a girl who returns to the African village of her childhood after having spent many years away. But her presence upon returning, seems to displease the Belgian colonisers because of past events that had involved her.

It is important to note that many of the black characters from the Franco-Belgian comic strips that were created before the decolonisation process prior to 1946 have more or less maintained the same physical and behavioural features to present day.

[90] (Delisle 2013, p.174)
[91] (Delisle 2013, p.177)

The character of Razibus Zouzou, for example, has the same facial features through to the end of the publication of *Bibi Fricotin* in 1988. On the other hand, there are also black African characters who have detached themselves from the canons of this earlier era. The Franco-Belgian comic strip series, *Comanche*[92] (1969-2002) by Greg Rodolphe and Hermann Michel Rouge is a case in point for several reasons. Set in the United States of the Wild West during the early 1900s, the series features a young woman called Comanche, who is responsible for the management of a ranch after the latter was handed down to her by her father. To help her in her task, she hires a disorderly crew of farm boys.

Within this group of farm boys, the most prominent is Toby, a former African American slave who will become the ranch foreman. Toby is not stereotyped, and the mere fact of his presence undermines the Hollywood vision of a Wild West with a Caucasian-looking male who is usually portrayed as the hero. Today, the world of Franco-Belgian comics offers fans a variety of black characters and adventures much larger than before. The adventures of a black French commissioner in *AD Grand Rivière* created in 2000 by Al Coutelis[93] and *La Grippe Coloniale* created in 2003 by Serge Huo-Chao-Si[94], which, amid the immoral behaviour toward the end of the First World War and the arrival of the Spanish flu on the island of Reunion, addresses issues related to the ethnicity and social status of war veterans.

[92] (*La Grande Aventure Du Journal Tintin* 2016, p.408)
[93] 'Al Coutelis' (online reference viewed Sept 8, 2009 https://www.bdtheque.com/main.php?bdid=2567)
[94] 'Serge Huo-Chao-Si' (online reference viewed Sept 8, 2009 https://www.lambiek.net/artists/h/huo-chao-si_serge.htm)

The evolutions of representation in the United States, for the most part, have been determined by the history of the country. The main changes took place from the end of the Second World War, when Black veterans returned from Europe after fighting in the US Army and were still experiencing segregation in the southern states. Since then, militant associations like the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP[95]) have campaigned against caricatures of African Americans in cartoons and comics, particularly, *Amos and Andy*[96] and *Calvin and the Colonel*[97].

It was the 1960s and 1970s that brought a redefinition of the patterns of representations used until then through the advent of a market for comics for adults. The latter is deeply marked by the counter-culture and grouped under the name of underground comix[98] in order to separate them from the rest of the production and to highlight the 'x' for Adults *only*[99].' In the comic strip, new representations have also appeared through the publication of comic books featuring black super-heroes such as *Black Panther* (1966) and *Luke Cage* (1972) who illuminated their protagonist's experiences under a more social angle than ever before. This revolutionary trend is gradually fading in the 1980s.

The late 1990s are much more prolific in this area, and an artistic revival is undertaken by young black cartoonists like Aaron McGruder[100] and his comic strip *The Boondocks* created in 1996 that

[95] (Lehman 2007, p.32)
[96] (Lehman 2007, p.32)
[97] (Lehman 2007, p.32)
[98] (Hatfield 2005, p.7)
[99] (Hatfield 2005, p.7)
[100] (Dong 2012, p.26)

deals with sensitive topics such as racism and the black condition in an America that is defined as post-racial.

The image has been removed due to copyright.

Image 15: Strip of The Boondocks

3.3: Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, a selection of BDs has been discussed, most of which were in circulation prior to Hergé's adventure of *Tintin in the Congo,* as well as titles created post-1930s to 2000 and beyond. The purpose was to investigate the presence and evolution of stereotypes and representations of the black African character in comic books and observe the style of illustration used, and how they can relate to the characters illustrated by Hergé. A similarity exists between each of the investigated comic books, with the characters being illustrated stereotypical of the classic black face character seen more in a role of light comedy relief, and rarely playing a part in a more serious or meaningful role in the story. Hergé's Congolese natives are illustrated in the same style and show a pattern between many illustrators of the time.

An attitude of paternalism is commonplace in the adventures. The black characters are portrayed as being simple-minded, and happy-go-lucky, to describe their mannerisms, they seem content to be followers of their white leaders/companions who lead them. The socio-cultural attitudes of the time accepted this style of BD to be the norm. It has also been observed as time passed, so did the style of illustration of the black characters and their social status in some of the albums. Cultural attitudes also changed and what was considered an acceptable norm in the early 1900s, is now being called racist. Hergé's *Tintin in the Congo* has attracted much criticism for his portrayal of the colonisation of the Congolese to the extent of the book being removed from the shelves in libraries in the United States[101].

[101] (García González 2017, eBook, no page heading, or page number offered)

Chapter Four

The politics of Tintin

Since 1929, there has been much written on *The Adventures of Tintin,* including in scholarly articles, thesis investigations, magazine and books specifically focusing on various aspects of the main character, his backstory and that of his fellow characters, the evolution of the illustrations and story content, created by Hergé. A series of biographies have also been written on Hergé, and a selection of the books has had the approval of the Hergé Foundation[102] and other books that have been written independently of the foundation by authors and tintinologists. The purpose of this chapter is to present the scholarly resources that I have obtained on Hergé and his albums which are of direct relevance to our topic and which will allow us to focus specifically on Hergé's early years and his political influences during the production of *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* and *Tintin in the Congo*.

4.1: The controversial years in the Hergé literature

Part of the controversy surrounding *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* and *Tintin in the Congo* is undeniably due to Hergé's style of illustrations in both albums which has attracted criticism, example, in Michael Farr's book, *Tintin: The Complete Companion*, which makes mention of Hergé's recollections on writing the Soviet adventure. According to Michael Farr, Hergé said 'One should remember that *Le XXe siècle* was a catholic newspaper, and whoever said 'catholic' at that time meant 'anti-communist[103],' A clear example of the paper's influence with regard to the theme as to how Hergé was to write his Tintin adventure.

[102] (Booker 2014, p.827)
[103] (Farr 2011, p.12)

A similar example can be offered in relation to *Tintin in the Congo,* with Hergé, at the request of his mentor[104], and more importantly, his employer, Norbert Wallez, who at that time was Hergé's medium for marketing Tintin albums. Wallez knew that children in Belgium were aware of colonisation efforts in the Congo and that a Tintin adventure could promote great enthusiasm for the colonisation of the region. Hergé wanted to send Tintin to America, as he was greatly interested in the North American Indians but Wallez made all the decisions[105]. Consequently, his American adventure would have to wait until Tintin returned from the Congo. The politics of the time will also be discussed and drawn from the literature that has formed my research corpus which comprises of a series of Hergé biographies that chronologically follow Hergé's life and his work, as well as academic articles published in scholarly journals and books discussing Tintin and his creator. I will also look at similarities between Hergé's Tintin universe and current real-world events of the time.

I have selected a series of biographies, each of which provide a particular focus on Hergé's early life and his association with Norbert Wallez. The controversial war years from 1940 to 1944 will be briefly discussed as Wallez's influence on Hergé continued for a great period of time after Hergé's first two albums which had an effect on Hergé's decision-making process. The biographies have been written by Pierre Assouline, author of *Hergé, The Man who created Tintin*[106] and by Benoît Peeters who has written *Le Monde d'Hergé*[107] and *Hergé, Son of Tintin*[108].

[104] (Assouline 2009, p.26)
[105] (Assouline 2009, p.26)
[106] (Assouline 2009)
[107] (Peeters 2004)
[108] (Peeters 2012)

This research will also draw on excerpts from Numa Sadoul's 1971 book of interviews with Hergé; *Tintin et Moi entretiens avec Hergé*[109]. The interview excerpts display Numa Sadoul's obvious admiration for Hergé, however, it also provides a relevant analysis of the character's universe. There is a plethora of written, audio/video content resources looking at Hergé's life, interestingly, Sadoul briefly talks with Hergé about the controversies surrounding *Tintin in the Congo*, specifically, the issues of human rights and racism featured in the story. Respected Tintinophile, Philippe Goddin and his book, *The Art of Hergé, Inventor of Tintin Volume one*[110], part of a three-book series that analyses Hergé's illustrations chronologically from his Tintin albums will also be discussed, as Goddin offers a judgement of Hergé's drawings from his early years onwards which includes Tintin's adventure in Soviet Russia, and the Congo.

I will begin by discussing the biography of Pierre Assouline, who when researching his book, was provided with much material that formed the basis for his research via Hergé's widow, Fanny Rodwell[111], as well as the Hergé Foundation, the company that ensures the integrity of the works of Hergé. Pierre Assouline delves deep into the politics of the time, particularly Hergé's association with the Catholic right, demonstrating how powerful its influence was on Hergé during the time of his adolescence. I also discuss Hergé's close relationship with his mentor, Norbert Wallez whom one could argue that Wallez, was in fact, a father figure to Hergé. The book is critical of Hergé's war years and of his time with *Le Soir* and demonstrates Hergé's naivety with regard to the politics of the war.

[109] (Sadoul 1983)
[110] (Goddin 2008)
[111] (Assouline 2009, preface)

Assouline was in constant contact with Fanny Rodwell, Hergé's widow, who not only gave him access to the archives of the Hergé Foundation but also shared with Assouline, her own experiences[112] with Hergé. His research contains the Tintin albums, personal books belonging to Hergé, and his work, newspaper and academic articles. The biography is extensive in its content and gives the reader the impression that Assouline is seeking to cover as much ground as possible with regard to pleasing Hergé's fans across the board.

Readers who do not already know the work, and are seeking an analysis of Hergé's illustrations and a more candid presentation of his life and his political beliefs and affiliations, can find the book a challenge because the book is rather dense and does not contain any illustrations from the Tintin albums. Assouline, however, presents each Tintin adventure in great detail and he investigates the controversies surrounding Hergé's employment during the Second World War, specifically the allegations of collaborating with the Nazis during the Belgian occupation. As well, Hergé's support for the colonisation of the Congo by Belgium is analysed, and the examination of Norbert Wallez and his almost theatrical promotion of the album via a media launch of the time to create interest about the goings-on in the Congo, as well as the triumphant return of the character complete with a Tintin 'look alike' appearing to a packed attendance at Gare du Nord[113]. Assouline's association with the Hergé Foundation seemed to be quite amicable providing him an open access to archival material.

[112] (Assouline 2009, p.61)
[113] (Assouline 2009, p.28)

Numa Sadoul had a similar opportunity with regard to his research, as he also was granted access to the Hergé Studios on one occasion. On closer examination of his book, Sadoul looks at Hergé's testimonies and a series of stories that he located during his brief visit to the Hergé Studios. His work represents a minimalist approach compared to Assouline's which amassed all the information available to him and then to rearrange in a logical, sophisticated, and readable way. In the main, Sadoul's book lacks direction or a logical order. Hergé admits in the interviews with Numa Sadoul[114] on speaking about Tintin's adventure in the Congo, that to a certain extent, there would be no falling victim to the conservative attitudes of the time. *Tintin in the Congo* was to present the reader, at that time children, with an array of events and opinions with a clear intent to inform.

An article written by Serge Tisseron titled: Family Secrets and Social Memory in *Les Aventures de Tintin*[115]*.* Tisseron states that Tintin's adventures were an accurate depiction of Hergé's mindset of the era. 'A quick survey of the iconography of the turn of the century does indeed demonstrate that when it came to racism, Hergé 'reproduced the xenophobic mood of his time, especially in *Tintin in the Congo*. Unfortunately for him, as it were, most of these documents have disappeared into oblivion[116], while *Les Aventures de Tintin* have remained.' From the classic Chinese adventure *The Blue Lotus* onward, Hergé chose to refer to more concise documents as a reference source for his stories than that of what he had heard[117] or seen.

[114] (Hague 2015, p.163)
[115] 'An article written by Serge Tisseron' (Tisseron, S., & Harshav, B. 2002 online article viewed Aug 1, 2019. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3090597)
[116] (Tisseron, S., & Harshav, B. 2002 online article viewed Aug 1, 2019. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3090597)
[117] (Tisseron, S., & Harshav, B. 2002 online article viewed Aug 1, 2019. https://www.jstor.org/stable/3090597)

Benoît Peeters, author of the article: *A never ending trial: Hergé and the Second World War, Rethinking History: The Journal of Theory and Practice*[118]. (2002) The article comments on one of Hergé's biographers, Pierre Assouline and his 1996 biography of Hergé: *Hergé, the man who created Tintin* and the political and historical[119] analysis that was undertaken by Assouline. His book was eagerly anticipated by readers who were hoping to receive answers in relation to the controversy and rumours that surrounded Hergé and the accusation of collaborating with the enemy during the Second World War. Peeters stated that the Assouline investigation 'was undertaken with so much rigour, it did nothing to quash the rumours[120] about Hergé.' Peeters also focussed on a correspondence between Charles Lesne from the *Casterman* publishing house and Hergé, at a time when there were signs of the war coming to an end. Lesne was asking Hergé to think carefully about where he was placing his stories, particularly those that were seen to be supporters of the occupation. A response was offered by Hergé to *Casterman* stating that 'now is the time to appear in the greatest numbers of newspapers possible, even if these papers were to disappear or change direction after the war[121].' The article failed to investigate the early albums and the controversy surrounding their racial and social content, but it did show consistency in describing Hergé's attitude concerning the production and distribution of his stories.

An article by Rachel Langford, 'Photography, Belgian Colonialism, and Hergé's *Tintin in the Congo,'* (2008) Langford states that Tintin and Snowy are the 'Archetypal seeing men' of Belgian

[118] 'author of the article' (Peeters Benoît, 2002 article viewed August 18, 2019 https://doi.org/10.1080/13642520210164490)
[119] (Peeters 2010, p 261-271)
[120] (Peeters 2010, p 261-271)
[121] (Assouline 2009, p.95)

colonialism in Africa[122]. During all of Tintin's adventures, he journeys to around the world to the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc nations like the fictitious Syldavia, the Congo, America, Asia, the Middle East, South America, the Moon, and Tibet. A common mission in each of these regions shared by Snowy and Captain Haddock is the act of freeing a people from the oppressor. With such good intent by the heroes, one could argue that Hergé was writing his stories as a tribute to the oppressed, and to study their culture in each adventure without taking into account any repercussion that could be vented by his critics.

In his book, *The Art of Hergé, Inventor of Tintin Volume one,* Philippe Goddin is of the opinion that Hergé did not intentionally make fun of or 'mock[123]' as he states in his book, it was more an expression of paternalism. A remark that has been mentioned earlier in this investigation.

Harry Thompson, author of *Tintin: Hergé and His Creation:* describes *Tintin in the Congo* 'as another youthful transgression[124]' which refers to a statement by Hergé in Thompson's book.

> 'For Tintin in the Congo, the fact is that I was fed on the prejudices of a bourgeois society I lived in. It was 1930. The only things I knew about these countries were what people said about them at the Time. African's were no more than big children. It's lucky for them that we're over there,' and so on. I drew African's along these lines in the purely paternalistic times in Belgium[125].'

[122] 'The article by Rachel Langford' (Langford, Rachel. 2008 Online article Viewed Sept 18, 2019 https://doi.org/10.3828/jrs.8.1.77)
[123] (Goddin 2008, p.75)
[124] (Thompson 2011, eBook, no page heading, or page number offered)
[125] (Thompson 2011, eBook, no page heading, or page number offered)

Valerie Kim-Thuy Larsen argues in her doctoral dissertation[126], '*Still the heart of darkness? Performing Congo on the Western stage,'* that when Tintin first arrives in the Congo, he turns down the offers by several international (American, English, Portuguese) newspaper representatives who wish to purchase the rights to his Congo story (presumably because of his amusing hunting expedition). One of these figures is from the '*London Daily Paper*.' Tintin refuses the contract offers, claiming his allegiance to '*Le Petit Vingtième*,' his Belgian employer.

'Blatant nationalism aside, the legal and political switch from the private property of a monarch to a colony administered by the Belgian state (in 1908) seems to have swept away the question of African labour in favour of a focus on African 'civilising.' Thus *Tintin in the Congo*, within its story line, as an object circulating within the symbolic economy of Tintinology, and as part of global journalistic iconography, functions to naturalise and suture the heart of darkness to Congo geography, explaining (away) the presence of the West in Africa, providing the rationale for colonial administration, and perhaps most importantly, laying the groundwork for the international journalist's national allegiances[127].'

In comparing the comments by Hergé and his biographers, and scholars, Hergé's naivety or lack of sensitivity, and inexperience as a researcher during these early years as an illustrator could be viewed as 'the sins of his youth[128]' as stated by Hergé himself.

[126] (Larsen 2007, p.152. Thesis viewed Aug 17, 2019 https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.flinders.edu.au/docview/304902007)
[127] (Larsen 2007, p.153. Thesis viewed Aug 17, 2019 https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.flinders.edu.au/docview/304902007)
[128] (Farr 2011, p.14)

But what of his mentor and closest confidant, Norbert Wallez, as Hergé's editor, one would assume that he would have been in a position to advise Hergé on matters of detail during the production of albums?

4.2 The politics of Tintin through 'Soviets' and 'Congo'

Hergé's early years as an illustrator and storyteller travelled along a bumpy road as he set out to forge a career and increase the readership of his Tintin albums, not just in Europe but around the world. However, Hergé's lack of knowledge of the world and limited source of research for the first adventures led to negative perspectives against the Soviet regime. Hergé stated that the adventure was a product of his youth, which he thought not worthy of being coloured as were all his other Tintin albums except for *Tintin in the Congo* which would be colourised during a reworking of the album.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, contact between Europe and the Congo was limited to the slave trade[129]. Europeans were content to stay on the coast away from the country, until the subsequent abolition of the slave trade. The first to explore the interior of the country in the second half of the nineteenth century was David Livingstone[130], a Scottish missionary, himself, long believed dead, so the *New York Herald* newspaper sent Henry Morten Stanley[131] an English journalist, to conduct research in the Congo. Stanley wants to include the Congo in the British Colonial Empire, but finally, it is the Belgian King Leopold II, who was interested in settlements.

[129] (Buettner 2016, p.478)
[130] (Dugard 2004, p.15)
[131] (Dugard 2004, p.23)

All the time, Hergé's main sources of information were from the great explorers as aforementioned, such as Henry Morten Stanley, who explored the Congo for the King of the Belgians, Leopold II, as pointed out by Philippe Goddin, Tintinologist, and the author of the book: *Les Tribulations de Tintin au Congo*[132].

During the production of *Tintin in the Congo*, Belgium colonised and created the Belgian Congo, a vast territory 80 times larger than Belgium[133]. Tintin is sent to the Congo to educate the Congolese people about their country, Belgium[134]. The objective is to civilise the natives, teach them to read and write, and generally, improve them. The actions of Tintin can be interpreted as an act of interference with the consequence of perhaps, to contaminate the evolution of this culture. It could also be interpreted as an act of arrogance on the part of Hergé, because at the time, the Belgian explorers were convinced that 'adopting Belgian ways' would be beneficial to the Congolese.

In an interview with Numa Sadoul in his book; *Tintin et Moi entretiens avec Hergé*, Hergé states that 'the blacks[135] in the Congo are oppressed and Tintin defends them because he is against oppression.' Two criticisms that have often been made to Hergé about the album, are first that he describes the blacks as being lazy[136] and that they do not know how to speak French properly.

[132] (Goddin 2018)
[133] (Farr 2011, p.21)
[134] (Farr 2011, p.25)
[135] (Sadoul 1975, p.49)
[136] (Assouline 2009, p.28)

Hergé's paternalistic attitude toward the Congolese is displayed throughout the adventure, for example, Tintin assumes his superiority over the natives, as he has been sent to the Congo to educate them, and his right to give orders without acknowledging with whom he is dealing with can be interpreted as condescending. His placing the wants and needs of his dog, Snowy, over that of the local human inhabitants, could also be interpreted that he thinks more highly of his dog than the natives. Hergé allowed Tintin to explore all regions of Congo without restriction. He allowed him to hunt animals and use their skin, to disguise himself and avoid other animals in the jungle.

As already mentioned, Hergé's research methods were questionable because he was inspired by outside resources with little balance and validity, and he was less travelled concerning the countries of Tintin's adventures. As a result, his stories were not accurate and created controversy. In the album, we also see that Tintin plays the role of teacher to educate the local inhabitants on being civilised. The actions of Tintin can be interpreted as an act of interference with the consequence of perhaps, to contaminate the evolution of this culture. It can also be interpreted as an act of arrogance on the part of Hergé, because at the time, the Belgian explorers were convinced that Belgian socio-cultural norms were the best way of life for the Congolese. Comparisons can be made with regard to the caricature of the Congolese people illustrated in *Tintin in the Congo* and the 1944 adventure by Enid Blyton; *The Three Golliwogs*[137], who's main characters bear a striking resemblance to Hergé's renditions. The story, like Hergé's, has attracted much controversy in modern society and is now regarded as a racist publication.

[137] (Blyton 1944)

The same could be said with Hellen Bannerman's story; *Little Black Sambo*[138] which has been censored on numerous occasions due to accusations of racism[139] with regard to the portrayal of the African-American character in the story.

There is an element of the representation of cruelty to animals. Tintin hunts several species of animals. He kills a monkey to wear his skin as a disguise to permit a safe passage from a dangerous area where a rhinoceros had marked it as his territory, and the rhino had cornered Snowy without an avenue for escape, so Tintin created a plan to blow up the rhinoceros with dynamite in an attempt to save Snowy from danger. Despite this, Hergé declared that he was not a supporter of hunting for sport or in general and that he was against the slaughter of wild animals and certainly against this form of recreation[141].

Father Wallez was encouraging Hergé to create for his readers a sense of achievement and self-pride about what Tintin and Belgium were doing for the Congolese people. There were also too many references being made directly to Belgium which could make the story too insular with regard to marketing the book internationally, so Hergé made a series of changes to the story, for example, the boat that Tintin and Snowy board to journey to the Congo does not depart from the port of Antwerp[142], the name of the port is not stated in the illustration.

[138] (Bannerman 1899)
[139] (Weldy 2011, p.245)
[141] (Thompson 2011, eBook, no page heading, or page number offered)
[142] (Farr 2011, p.25)

The religious leaders of the Aniota[143], a secret religious society , chose their recruits, young boys, who, among others, dressed in leopard suits, had to kill their relatives to be introduced to the group. The Aniota were at the same time dreaded and respected by the people. They committed killings during local power struggles. During the Belgian colonisation, the Aniota murdered many local leaders, their mission being to 'maintain the wavering power of traditional structures.' It is obvious that Hergé had knowledge[144] of this secret society since he took the leopard skin from the Congo and changed it to resemble an African werewolf whose only reason for being is to scare the local tribes' people, and this caricature and wolf-like pose is featured on page 44[145] of the original published black and white edition.

Image 16: *The Aniota caricature from Tintin in the Congo (1931)*

In my opinion, the censored reprinting of *Tintin in the Congo* deflated the story's impact of an era gone by. Should Hergé be exonerated for the issues that have been recorded in his first two adventures *Tintin In the Land of the Soviets* and *Tintin in the Congo*?

[143] (Farr 2011, p.27)
[144] (Goddin 2008, p.75)
[145] (Hergé 1931, *Tintin in the Congo,* p.43*)*

One must take into account the amount of time that has passed since the original publishing of the adventures, the cultural attitudes of the late 1920s and 1930s are dramatically different from our era. We no longer think like our forbearers, and we have learnt from the past and have become more accepting and appreciative of diversity in culture.

The Congolese people are caricatured in the comic strip as is the Belgian coloniser, Hergé's caricatures represent the white man as someone who thinks he is superior to the blacks, shouting at the villagers, calling them idiots. Can we analyse, with regard to our current values conveyed in Belgium that this comic book demonstrates paternalism and colonial ideals as they existed at the time or, conversely should we analyse the latter in the context of the time, from a colonial imagination? An examination of the first album, there is a similar theme of Hergé and his stereotype of the Soviet System and its people.

Prior to the commencement of *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets,* Hergé received a copy of a book[146] to assist him with his research of the Soviet adventure. The book was written by Joseph Douillet, titled *Moscou sans voiles*[147]*,* and the book was given to him by Norbert Wallez. If one was to

measure the degree of influence that Douillet's book had on the creation of *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets,* one need only look at the images used in *Moscou sans voiles* and compare them to the illustrations created by Hergé for his story.

[146] (Peeters 2012, p.35)
[147] (Douillet 1928)

The purpose of our discussion of Douillet's book is not so much a criticism of how the book was written, but rather to understand the degree of influence the book had on Hergé and how he used it to create his Tintin adventure. Hergé was in his early twenties when he created the first Tintin adventure, as a writer/illustrator still developing maturity in his work. Douillet's book, with a subheading: 'Nine Years of Work in the Land of Soviets' was written by the once consul of Belgium in Rostov-on-Don in Communist Russia. Douillet was arrested by the Soviet authorities and imprisoned. His book was published in 1928, three years after his expulsion from Russia. One year before Hergé's first Tintin adventure was published. He writes of the scrutiny that follows visitors as they enter the country who are under surveillance and permitted to only visit certain regions away from the 'real Russia' that the authorities wish to maintain closed to foreigners.

Douillet documents an incident with a group of English businessmen who were interested in observing and learning about the advantages of the Soviet System and how it could be incorporated into their way of life in the United Kingdom. He had organised a tour by train to an industrial area where factories are seen to be bellowing smoke and displaying the signs of great production, and of course, the English group was impressed.

Image 17: Tintin and Snowy approach a guided tour of an industrial area from Tintin in the Land of the Soviets (1929)

Image 18: Guided tour from Tintin in the Land of the Soviets (1929)

Hergé incorporated this tour in his adventure but with a little added drama featuring Tintin and Snowy on a train heading to Moscow on assignment by the editor of his newspaper. Alerted of his journey, the Russian secret police had boarded the train and planted a bomb on the train in an attempt to either kill Tintin and prevent him from proceeding to Moscow. After having survived the explosion, and then an interrogation by the secret police upon arriving in Russia, Tintin is accused of causing the destruction of the train and the disappearance of the passengers resulting in his being incarcerated at the secret police headquarters.

Tintin and Snowy manage to escape via subterfuge, and follow the train line and observe a group of people looking at an industrial complex from a distance. Tintin and his reporter's instinct tell him that all is not what it seems, so he decides to investigate the factories a little closer and discovers that all is a ruse. The factories are deserted, and the billowing smoke is a result of hay being burnt by workers to create the illusion of mass production.

Image 19: Strip of Tintin uncovering the ruse

The strip could be interpreted as professing an anti-Soviet sentiment based on Douillet's experience that he documented in his book. Hergé's methods of research conducted during this first adventure relied on the accuracy of the events in *Moscou sans voiles.* As aforementioned early in this chapter, Hergé stated that an anti-Soviet sentiment was commonplace at *Le XXe siècle*[148]*.*

4.3 Chapter conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to draw on selected biographies, scholarly resources, independently published books, and the Tintin albums to focus on Hergé's personal and political influences whilst producing *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* and *Tintin in the Congo*. We have highlighted the extent of influence of Hergé's mentor and employer, Norbert Wallez was the one who advised Hergé to send Tintin to Soviet Russia, and also, provided Hergé with his principal piece of research to create the adventure.

[148] '(Farr 2011, p.12)

The book, *Moscou sans voiles,* itself, controversial due to its inaccuracies of described events of the time as well as its anti-Soviet sentiment commensurate with the attitude of Hergé's employer, *Le Vingtième Siècle.* We have also seen the influence of Wallez continue with the second Tintin album, *Tintin in the Congo*, with the recommendation by Wallez that Hergé creates an adventure about the colonisation of the Congo by Belgium and its king, to educate the children of Belgium, and the world. Hergé's statements in retrospective, that the mistakes that were made during the production of the first two adventures were the 'sins of his youth' and that he did not want to make fun of or 'mock' the cultures that are featured in his albums, particularly the latter, concerning his Congo adventure, was more an expression of paternalism.

We have seen that the political and cultural attitudes of the time differ greatly to what is considered acceptable by today's standards. It is, therefore, necessary now, to examine the elements of controversy as they appear in Hergé's first two Tintin albums, *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* and *Tintin in the Congo,* and analyse the scenes, illustrations, and the language that is included to the speech bubbles of each adventure.

Chapter 5

An analysis of representations and stereotypes in *Tintin in the Congo* and *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*

Following our investigation of the controversial aspects of the early Tintin albums, I will now focus my analysis of the adventures that best represent the issues of representations included in Hergé's early work, and which have led to social-political controversies that are included in Hergé's work during this period. An analysis of a selection of panels from each adventure will be presented, specifically, the scenes and the accompanying language inserted to the panel's speech bubble, as well as the overall layout of the page.

5.1 Analysis of *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*

At the time of creating Tintin's soviet adventure, Hergé had introduced a new feature to his strips with the inclusion of speech bubbles[149]. The speech bubble is normally circular with an indicator directed at the subject within the box to denote the direction of speech or description of the scene and containing a passage of text to either describe the scene or act as the voice of the character. Prior to this new technique, Hergé placed his text, generally below his illustrations. Hergé discovered[150] the technique upon viewing American newspapers that contained a comic strip page as he had observed this technique being used was commonplace in the United States. The papers had been made available at *Le Vingtième Siècle* via one of the paper's journalists, Léon Degrelle[151]. At the time of this exciting innovation, motion pictures were also experiencing a transition from the silent movie to films with a voiced dialogue.

149 (Farr 2007, p.31)
150 (Farr 2007, p.31)
151 (Assouline 2009, p.17)

In Scott Mcloud's book; *Understanding Comics*, the author defines the comic strip as 'juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or produce an aesthetic response in the viewer[152].' McCloud also states that comic strips can be seen as 'sequential art[153].' Hergé applied this method to his Tintin adventures. It is important to examine this technique as it offers an insight into the message that Hergé was attempting to present to the reader. We will now examine a series of panels from *Tintin in the Land of the Soviet*s.

On January 10, 1929[154], *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* was first published, and Tintin and Snowy commenced their journey to soviet Russia in issue number eleven[155] of *Le Petit Vingtième.* Hergé was creating his illustrations drawing upon incidents documented in *Moscou sans voiles,* and I will use the illustration that is located on page 32[156] of the adventure, where a group of communist officials are speaking to an assembled audience in a public area. In this strip below, we can see a contrast of emotion in both the communist party officials and the local village people. Hergé has illustrated the top scene with the local villagers looking quite amicable, one character is drawn with a smile on his face, while the others have blank expressions on their faces. The speaker, and his deputies, on the other hand, appear to be quite agitated as we can see evidence of weapons clearly visible whilst the official speaks to the crowd.

[152] (McCloud 1994, p.9)
[153] (McCloud 1994, p.7)
[154] (Assouline 2009, p.22)
[155] (Assouline 2009, p.22)
[156] (Farr 2011, p.14)

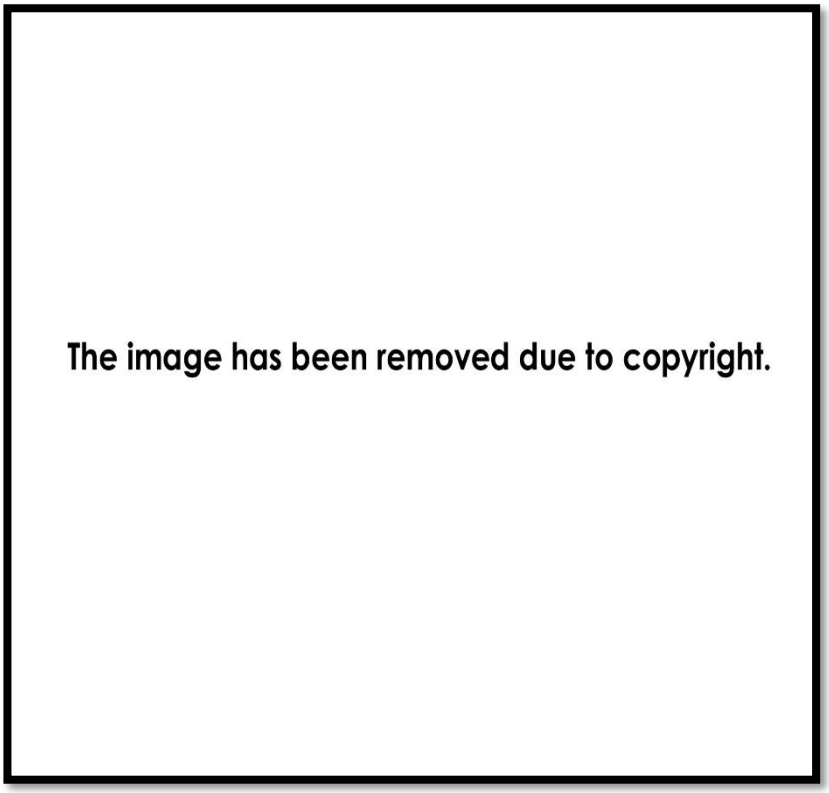

Image 20: Tintin and Snowy witnessing a local communist election in Tintin in the Land of the Soviets

The second scene demonstrates the power of the Soviet regime over its people who are threatened and reduced to submission as Hergé's powerful image of the forced voting process complete with each communist party official pointing their weapons at the villagers and waiting for any opposition that may arise during the spot election. The language used by Hergé is clear and concise and sends a message to the reader about the harsh conditions that are faced by the citizens of Soviet Russia, and to add extra power to the scene, the villager's heads have been drawn in a pose of submission.

In Benoît Peeters book; *Hergé, son of Tintin,* Peeters includes a publisher's note[157] discussing the politics of the *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* and other early adventures by Hergé:

> 'This is the path followed by the 'reporter' with the tuft of hair and by his spiritual father. Who is he? A young 'Bourgeois' raised in the Catholic faith, working for a rightist newspaper. He is necessarily influenced by his education and professional environment, and by the ideas of the time. […] To launch his *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* (1929), he even took up a resolutely partisan pen. Inspired by the book *Moscou sans voiles* by a former Belgian consul in Rostov-on-Don, Joseph Douillet, the young Hergé depicts a Russia that looks caricatural to us today as caricatural as his Congo of *Tintin in the Congo* (1930) and his America of *Tintin in America* (1931)[158]. Moscow has changed a great deal since then! As have colonial-era Africa and the Prohibition-era United States!'

The concern expressed by the publisher in his note is written in an almost anti-Hergé sentiment, and Peeters also writes about an article written with a similar opinion of Hergé by Michele Nieto in the journal, *Le Point*[159] in 1973 about the extreme violence illustrated in the Tintin albums.

[157] (Peeters 2012, p. 311)
[158] (Hergé 1931)
[159] (Peeters 2012, p.311)

If we look at the series of panels on this page, Tintin and Snowy are observing what looks like an act of charity being conducted by the Soviet authorities, by offering food to the poor. Hergé has the reader observing the scene from afar as if we are using a tripod and filming the scene. The reader is presented with a simple visual description of the event that looks quite amicable between both parties.

Image 21: Panel from Tintin in the Land of the Soviets, Tintin observing a distribution of food.

Image 22: Soviet brutality against its citizens witnessed by Tintin and Snowy

Hergé's message is demonstrated in the second panel. The anger expressed by the food distributor upon the hearing of non-compliance by the citizen is extreme.

The smiles on the first few onlookers as the citizen is being assaulted, display their support of communism, and as we look further down the line there are blank expressions from most of the people, no doubt in fear of retribution should they offer a similar response when their turn is up to beg for food. Tintin is clearly distressed about the incident, calling the official a brute, but it is Snowy who seeks to attack 'the beast' for his brutality against a fellow human being.

The panels that we have looked at, each document a similar theme about the evils of communism. A system that abuses and demoralises its citizens, where active participation in politics, specifically, filing one's vote in an election, and the promotion of democracy is non-existent. Hergé presents the reader with an impression that if you are not communist you are a second-class citizen, and that you will be beaten or shot if you do not pledge your support of the Soviet system be it at a local election or begging for food. Hergé's use of a simple tiered system[160] of panelling and scene layout is straight forward and uncomplicated for the reader. The framing angle that Hergé uses is front on, and generally includes full body shots, and as I mentioned earlier, this style of illustration keeps the reader at a distance, almost as an observer complete with camera and tripod and filming the event. Hergé uses this style in most of his Tintin adventures, and I will elaborate on this style as we take a look at a series of panels from *Tintin in the Congo.*

[160] (Heer, Worcester 2009, p.153)

5.2 Analysis of *Tintin in the Congo*

Tintin in the Congo presented Tintin and Snowy with a position of authority over the Congolese citizens, as teachers to the children of the village about the re-education of the villagers, specifically about their new country, Belgium.

Image 23: Tintin teaching to Congolese children

The above image continues with Hergé's front on style of illustration. Important to the scene is the stereotypical representation of the Congolese students. Tintin is quite amicable to the class as he calls them his dear friends, but if we examine the rest of Hergé's text in the speech bubble, we can see that he places an exclamation mark at the end of his introduction. We can also observe Snowy, with his distaste of some of the children as they are 'chattering.' Hergé has also drawn Snowy's eyebrows in an angry demeanour. Snowy's involvement in the adventure is important, specifically, his position of authority over the Congolese, and we will observe this in the next series of panels. This position of authority being given to a dog over 'blacks' could well be misinterpreted as racism too.

In our second panel, we observe Tintin and Snowy being portered through the Congo by the local habitants of the village dressed in a loincloth. The scene is interesting as Hergé has drawn the Congolese porters in different emotional states, example, the front two porters have quite blank expressions on their faces, as if they are simply going about their business of transporting their masters, while the two at the rear are drawn with expressions of anger, specifically, the inward slant of their eyes to illustrate the emotion. The panel could be interpreted that there is dissension within the ranks of the villagers and that they have a distaste for the Whiteman's interference in their culture.

Image 24: Tintin being carried by Congolese porters

Hergé's drawing of Tintin and Snowy with blank, almost bored expressions on their faces, as if this form of transportation that has been provided to them, is a mode of transport that they are used to could also interpret our duo a 'high born,' or superior, especially when compared to the half-naked porters. As mentioned in chapter two, Hergé had thought that he was of royal descent, this illustration could be an expression of Hergé's own belief of being of noble blood?

In the following panel, we observe Tintin involving himself in an argument between two villagers who are arguing ownership of what appears to be a white man's hat. Hergé's use of the large question marks inside the speech bubbles, combined with the surprised facial features of the villagers, and rightly so, as Tintin proceeds to cut the hat in two pieces so the hat may be shared by both men, who, upon receiving their piece of the hat, go on their merry way, even praising their 'white master' and King Solomon[161] for finding a solution to their argument.

Image 25: Tintin finds a solution to an argument between two Congolese

The panel could be interpreted as being condescending toward the Congolese, possibly to the extent of making fun of them, as they proceed to walk through the village, each with a portion of a hat that has no function and therefore unknowingly to them making them look ridiculous. We have discussed several panels of 'Congo' that have involved Tintin and Snowy's interaction with the villagers, and we will now look at a series of panels that describe the controversial treatment of wildlife that is featured in the adventure.

[161] (Shapira 2018, eBook, no page heading, or page number offered)

The large-scale slaughter[162] of various species of wildlife featured in *Tintin in the Congo* is well documented in Michael Farr's book; *Tintin: The Complete Companion.* We can see in this series of panels that Hergé has provided Tintin with the opportunity to create a disguise using the skin of a monkey so he can track down another monkey who has taken Snowy captive.

Image 26: Tintin skins a monkey

Tintin's blasé attitude in selecting, shooting, and skinning the monkey, could be distressing to a certain reader demographic, that combined with Hergé's text in the speech bubbles, specifically, the lower-left panel where Tintin is complaining that his newly skinned costume does not fit him well, displays an insensitivity toward the animal that he has just killed.

[162] (Farr 2011, p.22)

5.3 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the stereotypes and representations of the Soviet system and the colonial Belgian Congo. Worlds apart, but both persecuted peoples from each adventure, suffered under a brutal regime, one under communism, the other at the hands of a King who was eager to make his own Belgium rich through the resources that were available to him in the Congo.

Hergé's illustrations, 'the sins of his youth', as admitted by him, and recorded earlier in this thesis, display an immaturity and simplistic political and cultural views on his part in offering an inaccurate analysis of both of the historical events of the early twentieth century. With each of our selection of panels in this chapter analysis, stereotyping, particularly, in *Tintin in the Congo,* is obvious, and if one was to judge the book by today's moral standards, it may be interpreted as racist, and open to controversy, as could the scenes of animals being slaughtered, considered as animal cruelty. The adventures are a product of colonial time and as such, should be judged by the morals of the era.

Conclusion

The first stories of Tintin were written by Hergé during a time when he was searching for his identity as a writer. His advisor, Fr. Norbert Wallez has had a great influence on Hergé since his childhood when he was a member of Scouts. Hergé had great respect for the Abbot who served him as a guide. But the question we can ask ourselves is: 'Was Father Wallez the best choice as an adviser? Father Wallez has always supported the ideology of the Catholic Right because he was against the Soviet system.

At that time, Wallez had a position of authority in *Le Vingtième Siècle* that influenced the stories of Hergé. Hergé's naivety is illustrated in the Land of the Soviets and the Congo. Later, he said that the two stories had been based on the information Norbert Wallez had given him. Unfortunately, he admitted that he did not do his own research. In truth, life in the Soviet country was not as bad as it was told in its history. The illustrations he had created for his book gave not only a bad interpretation of Russia at that time, but also gave the reader the impression that history was a method of propagating anti-Soviet propaganda, affirming Wallez's control of *Le Petit Vingtième* (the children's supplement), had on Hergé.

We have also seen that the other source of research by Hergé was the book *Moscow sans voiles* which was only a skewed option of the author on the Soviet system. Using this book, Hergé made another mistake because he had never travelled to Russia and had not experienced the life of the people himself.

Hergé could not judge the validity of the information given to him. The same criticism can be applied to *Tintin in the Congo*, where Hergé developed a paternalistic view of the colonisation of the Congo by Belgium.

It can also be interpreted as an act of arrogance on the part of Hergé because, at the time, the Belgian explorers were convinced that Belgian life was the best way of life for the Congolese. The style of art that was used by Hergé in this story is the most critical aspect of the story. The caricatures are very animated but are not a real representation of the Congolese. Hergé also has a similar style of illustration in *Tintin the Land of the Soviets*.

We have also seen that Hergé's research methods were questionable because he was influenced by outside resources with little balance and validity and he had never travelled. As a result, his stories were not precise and did not allow him to create a story without controversy.

During Hergé's early years, the method, responsibility, and profession of one's persuasions in comic book literature had not yet been socially scrutinised. Reading comics was not critical, but intuitive and spontaneous. They were not scholarly reference books but simply comics, which were a new literary medium of the time, of which only two strips appeared weekly. It should be remembered that despite his wanderings and his controversial remarks, Hergé sought to be a man of good standing. Hergé did describe the socio-political events of the twentieth century in a subjective and polarising way, but we must not forget the era in which he lived, the influences are

almost entirely that of the conservative Catholic arena in which he lived, and the number, and the quality of the sources of research that were available to him, are exposed in his work. Hergé did not question what was taking place around him.

Hergé could be accused, and possibly ridiculed, for describing the Congolese natives as children to be educated, for blindly trusting dubious sources of information to create both Congo and Soviets and the opinions of others close to him. Should the two adventures, specifically, *Tintin in the Congo,* be removed from the shelves of bookstores and children's sections of libraries? Stereotypes exist in our global community, they are commonplace, and they are used to relay a message, as mentioned earlier in this thesis, be it social, cultural or political. The stereotype is difficult for one to shield oneself from when one is being exposed to the stereotype in today's social media.

The Tintin adventures were written in an era when the types of stereotypes and representations featured in the Tintin stories were considered the cultural norm. Compared to today's moral standards with such saturated cultural views being represented, Hergé's first two adventures should be recorded as a historical product of the time.

If there is a limitation in this study, it is in the area of political correctness and the scrutinization of the politics of Tintin, and the judging of the early works of la bande dessinée, including *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets* and *Tintin in the Congo.*

Public opinion is a powerful medium, and we have seen a demonstration of this, in this thesis, where bookstores and public libraries had deemed Hergé's Congo adventure too sensitive for children to read, resulting in the album being either removed or placed in an adults-only section of the bookstore or the library. The English publishing house representing Casterman, refused to translate and publish the Congo adventure unless Hergé made changes to the story, to make it less controversial to the reader. Should these early works be judged by today's moral standards, which are worlds apart, as we as a global society have evolved through learning from the mistakes that have been made from the past.

If one is to censor a publication due to the sensitive material that it may be deemed as containing, how is a society to teach a new generation of reader, or comic book writer, or illustrator, about what is considered to be politically and culturally acceptable to a global audience?

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