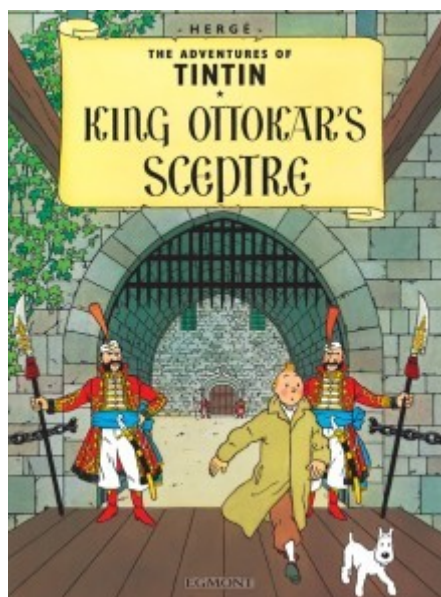




King Ottokar's Sceptre

Hergé , Michael Turner (Translator) , Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper (Translator)

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Tintin finds a lost briefcase and returns it to the owner, Professor Hector Alembick, who is a sigilographer, an expert on seals. He shows Tintin his collection of seals, including one which belonged to the Syldavian King Ottokar IV. Tintin then discovers that he and Alembick are under surveillance by some strange men. Tintin's flat is even bombed in an attempt to kill him. Suspecting a Syldavian connection, Tintin offers to accompany Alembick to Syldavia for research.

On the plane Tintin begins to suspect his companion. The Alembick travelling with him doesn't smoke and doesn't seem to need the spectacles he wears, while the Alembick he first met smoked heavily and had very poor eyesight. During a layover, Tintin fakes a fall and grabs Alembick's beard, thinking it is false and Alembick is an imposter. However, it is (for Alembick) painfully real. Tintin decides to let the matter drop but then, while flying over Syldavia, it is the pilot of the plane who opens a trap door and Tintin drops out, landing in a haywagon.

Tintin has a hunch that a plot is afoot to steal the sceptre of King Ottokar IV. In Syldavia, the reigning King must possess the sceptre to rule or he will be forced to abdicate. Every year he rides in a parade during St. Vladimir's Day carrying it, while the people sing the national anthem. Tintin succeeds in warning the reigning King, Muskar XII, despite the efforts of the conspirators. He and the King rush to the royal treasure room to find Alembick, the royal photographer and some guards unconscious and the sceptre missing.

Tintin's friends Thomson and Thompson are summoned to investigate but their theory on how the sceptre was stolen proves bad and painful for them. Later on, Tintin notices a spring cannon in a toy shop and this gives him the clue. Professor Alembick had asked for some photographs to be taken of the sceptre, but the camera was a spring cannon in disguise, which allowed him to catapult it out of the castle into a nearby forest.

Searching the forest, Tintin spots the sceptre being found by agents of the neighbouring country, Borduria. Following them all the way to the border, he wrests the sceptre from them. In the wallet of one of the thieves he discovers papers that show that the theft of the sceptre was just part of a major plan for the taking over of Syldavia by their long-time political rival, Borduria.

Tintin steals a Me-109 from a Bordurian airfield (whose squadron is being kept ready to take part in the envisioned "Anschluss" of Syldavia) to fly it back to the King in time. He is shot down by the Syldavians who have naturally opened fire on an enemy aircraft violating their airspace. He manages to make the rest of the journey by foot.

Meanwhile the Interior Minister informs the King that rumours have been spreading that the sceptre has been stolen and that there have been riots against local Bordurian businesses, acts which would justify a Bordurian takeover of the country. The King is about to abdicate when Snowy runs in with the sceptre (which had fallen out of Tintin's pocket).

Tintin then gives the King the papers he took from the man who stole the sceptre. They prove that the plot was masterminded by Müsstler, leader of the Iron Guard, a local political party. The King takes action by having Müsstler and his associates arrested and the army mobilised along the Bordurian frontier. In response, the Bordurian leader pulls his own troops back from the border, though he stresses his own country's "desire for peace" and criticises Syldavia's "strange" behaviour.

The next day is St. Vladimir's Day and Tintin is made a Knight of the Order of the Golden Pelican, the first non-Syldavian to receive such an honour. Further inquiries by the authorities reveal that, in a classic Ruritanian plot device, Professor Alembick is one of a pair of identical twins: Hector Alembick was kidnapped and replaced with his brother Alfred who left for Syldavia in his place.

Tintin and Snowy return home by a flying boat with Thomson and Thompson, who suffer momentary panic when the aircraft appears to be falling into the sea at the end of the flight. The reader is treated to a rare "wink to the camera" from Tintin, who points out their error, and they laugh about it so much that they do indeed fall into the sea as they disembark.

King Ottokar's Sceptre Details

Date : Published 1997 by Mammoth (first published 1939)

ISBN : 9780416605105

Author : Hergé , Michael Turner (Translator) , Leslie Lonsdale-Cooper (Translator)

Format : Hardcover 62 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Bande Dessinée, Adventure, Fiction

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From Reader Review King Ottokar's Sceptre for online ebook

Ashley Capes says

I felt *Ottokar's Sceptre* was 'only' good rather than great.

It's not that there are any clear faults – and we're treated to another absent-minded professor, as Herge continued to warm up for Calculus' eventual appearance – but the adventure was missing some tension for me. It might have been a case of expectations not quite being met, as I wanted a little more depth to the mystery of how the sceptre is stolen I think, more detail to that plot.

The premise I really enjoyed – the theft of a royal sceptre as a per-cursor to war between 'Syldavia' and 'Borduria' with Tintin having to thwart various war-mongers and duplicate professors, but I think the scale of the conflict implied didn't really come off in the space of a single volume.

There were some great mountain-based panels at the Syldavia border but again, for me, the range of colour and settings appeared a little repetitive this time around. Perhaps Herge put more effort into creating the warring countries in the story as stand-ins for Germany and Austria?

Still, no Tintin adventure is terrible and this one is notable for the first appearance of Bianca Castafiore and her...powerful voice.

Anuradha Alwis says

If my memory is correct this is the first TinTin book I read. I still can remember being lost within the pages of this book as a small child (I think I couldn't even read then). I loved the part when TinTin's plane was shot down and Snowy walking down the red carpet majestically with the sceptre held in its mouth.

Biondatina says

Tintin get again in trouble after finding a briefcase on a bench in the gardens. Tintin thinks that the main character Professor to whom the briefcase belonged, was kidnapping and the one Tintin accompanied to the mythical Balkan country is a clone. After a rough landing, getting in prison, falling in a trap, getting in trouble multiple times he investigates the robbery of King's sceptre.

My favorite scenes the one's with Snowy, especially when it walks on red carpet with the sceptre held in its mouth.

Sam Quixote says

King Ottokar's Sceptre is one of only two Tintin books I surprisingly never read as a kid (the other being In the Land of the Soviets) and, having read it now, I can say I didn't miss out on anything back then!

Set in the fictional country of Syldavia (I think it's based on Albania), if the King doesn't brandish his sceptre on St Vladimir's Day, he must step down - and some nefarious neighbouring country is sending agents to steal the sceptre for just that to happen! Tintin stumbles across another witless old geezer who's inexplicably a professor (he seems to attract this type likes flies!) and gets involved with what he's doing in Syldavia because there wouldn't be a book otherwise!

This one feels like Herge on autopilot. The contrived nature of the storytelling was really apparent to me now I'm no longer an uncritical-thinking kid. The plot points are very clunkily assembled and fit awkwardly with one another to get to where Herge wants things to be. I could list all the silly moments but I know this is meant for kids so I won't overkill with the criticisms. Suffice it to say that it's a very repetitive and boring read with Tintin being captured, escaping, getting re-caught, escaping again, etc. for most of the story.

I've revisited Tintin as an adult and found some of them still hold up (like The Calculus Affair), and it's nice to see Herge's beautiful ligne claire art again, but King Ottokar's Sceptre is definitely not one of the great books in the series.

Sherrymoon says

Since i am living wit a cute Shih Tzu girl Snowy is my principal actor in these comics. Excellent how Herge draws attention to that lovely dog! Of course i like tintin with his knickebockers too very much. As i was in the age of 8 to 10 years, we boys used to wear such knickebockers in wintertime! (* in the 50's)

Struppi-Milou-Snowy for ever!<http://espacemilou.over-blog.com/albu...>

Sara Forsberg says

I love Tintin and grew up reading all the books - but in Swedish. This is the first I've read in English, but it didn't really change my experience of it, probably because I know it so well. This is one of the more interesting and complex Tintin books but still one of my least favorite stories. It still gets 4/5 stars, though =). I love how Hergés adventures are so tied down in the real world with its complicated politics. This book takes place in Syldavia, one of two made-up countries in an otherwise very real world Tintin inhabits. The author's personal political and societal preferences are made quite clear in the way Syldavia is set up and it's quite amusing to read 50+ years after it was written. Lovely!

Gary says

irst published in French in 1939, and written at the time that Europe was under the thumb of totalitarianism: Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin.

Tintin is taken through a sequence of strange vents to the mythical Kingdom of Syldavia, which we learn much about in this book. The drawings and information which bring this country to life : a combination between Zenda and Albania , are amazing .

A plot by Fascists based in neighboring Borduria is hatched to unseat King Muskar, involving the seizure of the symbol of the Syldavian monarchy, the mediaeval King Ottokar's Scepter.

Tintin is called to the rescue. Once more these charming comics are an interesting commentary on events at the time, through the eyes of Herge.

Harish Challapalli says

Interesting book!! Very nicely narrated!! The book has some stuff which is not needed!! It gives some boredom feeling to the reader! The plot begins to unfold slowly but it can be guessed quite well by a regular reader!!

Certainly not the best of the franchise but a good read is definitely assured!!

Desiree Koh says

When I was a little kid, I owned every Tintin comic book adventure and I read all of them, then re-read them all over again, laughing at the same jokes and used "Billions of bilious blue blistering barnacles" as my curse-phrase.

I am exploring the world of Tintin again after my Belgian jaunt, in the homeland of the artist Herge and where comics are highly regarded as literature. Beneath each vividly drawn and colored panel is a moral about the way the world lived in 1950.

In this chapter, Herge creates two fictional Eastern European countries and weaves an intricate plot about rebellious revolution and an attempted forced abdication. Today, it sounds like a historical fantasy and the stuff of role-playing computer games. Back in the 1930s when these comics were published, there was nervous laughter and an abject fear of lands on the wrong side of the Berlin wall. To gain a common man's perspective of the way they lived then, try re-visiting it through block lettering, bright colors and a boy reporter with a little tuft of hair.

Andrew says

Seems like a very typical Tintin book, not that that's a bad thing.

Tintin helps prevent a plot to overthrow the current King of a fictional Eastern European country.

Many hijinks and misadventures happen along the way in the typical Herge fashion.

Brendon Schrodinger says

In usual Tintin style everything is set up by mere coincidence. Tintin finds a briefcase in his local park that belongs to a Professor of sigillography, the study of seals - the stampy kind, not the animals. The Professor is travelling to the Eastern European country of Sylvia to study royal seals and Tintin accompanies him on the trip. But what happens when there is a theft of the royal sceptre? Only Tintin, Thomson and Thompson can save the day, albeit with a lot of screw ups and a lot of narrow escapes.

I love how the countries and their histories are entirely fictional in this story. The mystery and the intrigue are all classic trying to take over the throne stuff. No surprises there. But it is still fun Tintin, just not the best. Snowy saves the day in a major way this time, as opposed to his previous alcoholic ramblings in the previous book. Must have been to dog AA.

A nice little predictable Tintin that is good, but not great.

Karel-Willem Delrue says

'k Weet niet wie 't taaltje heeft bedacht van dit album, maar 't heeft iets.

Tom Loock says

Part 8 of my (intended) big re-read of the whole Tintin-canon after decades ...

I had read this one before - and enjoyed it maybe even more than the first time around because of the info found in Michael Farr's excellent 'Tintin - The Complete Companion' which I am reading parallel to the Tintin-books.

In this case Farr makes a good case to show how Hergé uses fictitious countries (in 1938) to comment on the volatile political situation and pretty much predicts the German attack on Poland by means of instigating a faked attack on a German radio station.

My advice: Read it! This is one of the better Tintin-books.

Alireza says

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it'chy says

thompson and thomson steal the ending

David Sarkies says

Our first journey into Syldavia

5 February 2012

There have been some who have suggested that this album is where Tintin is finally developed, though as I

have suggested, I consider that album to be the Cigars of the Pharaoh. This album though develops a number of elements that are going to reappear in later albums, the most important being the country of Syldavia, as well as introducing the Milanese Nightingale, Bianca Castafiore.

Syldavia is a fictional country that Herge developed, and I suspect that it was so that he could move away from the criticism doesn't truly understanding other cultures. As such, the best way to escape from that is to develop a culture all of your own. Syldavia is basically a small monarchy located somewhere in the Balkans and borders the country of Borovia, which is a military dictatorship. This album actually has a three page spread, as well as beautifully drawn pictures, of this country that Herge created.

I originally believed that Syldavia and Borovia were supposed to represent Eastern and Western Europe, however having noted that this album was completed in 1939, before Europe was split between the Eastern and Western block, I suspect that there is a little more to it. Obviously, being Belgium, Herge could have been using the two countries to represent the Third Reich and the rest of Europe, with Syldavia being your average small European nation. It is also noticeable that the portrayal of Borovia is nowhere near as extensive as that of Syldavia.

This album contains a lot of political intrigue. The story is that the king of Syldavia has a sceptre, called King Ottokar's Sceptre, which must remain in his possession. It is suggested that if he is not able to produce the sceptre on St Vladmir's Day then he must abdicate the throne. As can be expected, there are a number of elements that seek to remove the king from the throne, most particularly Borovia. I note that the intrigue includes starting riots that target Borovian interest to give them an excuse to invade.

This album was completed on the eve of World War II. Hitler had already added Austria and Czechoslovakia to his empire, and was now eyeing off Poland. There was a lot of intrigue in Europe at this time as the various countries began to shift the alliance towards the coming conflict. Already Italy and Romania had joined the German camp, and Russia had made it clear that they were not interfering. Similar intrigue happened prior to World War I, in particular with the spies that were travelling between the belligerents, and I suspect that the same was happening here.

This was probably the first Tintin album that I ever read as a kid, though it does not rank as high as some of the other ones. It is still quite entertaining, and very amusing when Tintin first encounters the Milanese Nightingale.

Tetty Marlinda says

#36 for 2018

Genre: Children Comic

Di buku ini Madame Castafiore muncul.

Maria Carmo says

These adventure get more and more funny... King Ottokar's Scepter recovery had a main role for Milu! But in order to find out which exactly, you will have to read the book! Tin-tin goes on in his globe trotter activities, where he is also forced to face danger and malevolence... And our already customary friends, the Dupond and Dupont, continue to be completely absent minded, falling over and tripping all over the place and never understanding things at first sight...

Maria Carmo,

Lisbon, 7 January 2015.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Le sceptre d'Ottokar = King Ottokar's Sceptre (Tintin #8), Hergé

King Ottokar's Sceptre (French: Le Sceptre d'Ottokar) is the eighth volume of The Adventures of Tintin, the comics series by Belgian cartoonist Hergé. Commissioned by the conservative Belgian newspaper Le Vingtième Siècle for its children's supplement Le Petit Vingtième, it was serialised weekly from August 1938 to August 1939. Hergé intended the story as a satirical criticism of the expansionist policies of Nazi Germany, in particular the annexation of Austria in March 1938 (the Anschluss). The story tells of young Belgian reporter Tintin and his dog Snowy, who travel to the fictional Balkan nation of Syldavia, where they combat a plot to overthrow the monarchy of King Muskar XII.

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Immie says

En af min ynglings-Tintin.
