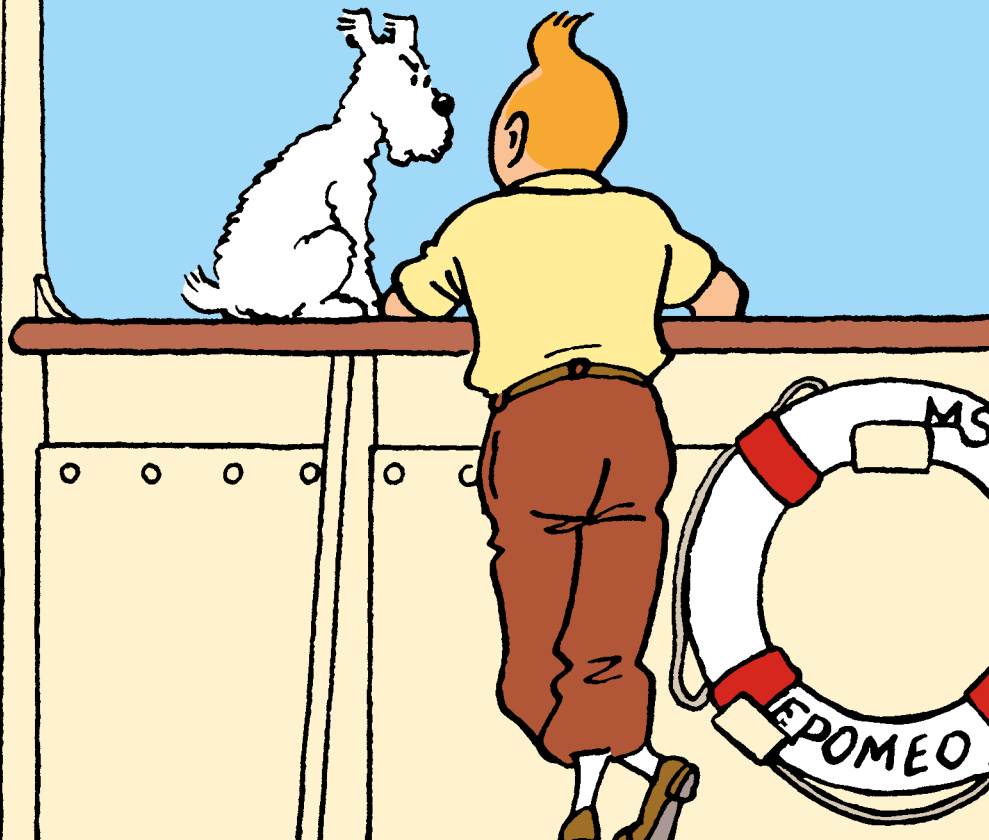




# Travelogue **EGYPT**



# Synopsis

In *Cigars of the Pharaoh* (1934), Tintin finds himself involved, by chance and in spite of himself, in a drug trafficking operation that will take him as far as India. Meanwhile, he will have crossed paths with X33 and X33A later named Thomson and Thompson. Two policemen whose roles will gradually assert themselves. His peregrinations also lead him to meet other characters whom he would often encounter again on his adventures: scoundrels, like the sailor Allan Thomson or the enigmatic Rastapopoulos, but also future companions, such as the Senhor Oliveira da Figueira.

With *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, a new element also appears in the story of *The Adventures of Tintin*: the notion of mystery is added to the geographical dimension of the three previous adventures. This one has the additional dimension that holds an important place in the course of the story. The story: from the strange curse, (inspired by that of Tutankhamun, which would have struck the «raiders» of his tomb), to the existence of a very powerful secret organisation, through to the use of a poison that makes you crazy.



# The year 1934

## around the world

**T**he year 1934 was still dominated by the economic crisis, which had started in 1929 with the collapse of Wall Street, the Stock Exchange in New York. It was reflected throughout the world by a general impoverishment.

For example: the dollar was only worth 59% of what it had been in 1928. The price of raw materials had collapsed: down by 70% for copper, and the same downward curve for rubber, and other raw materials. Wages followed suit, while unemployment was at an all-time high.

When he came to power, one year earlier, Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) locked up Germany. While on the nights of June 29th and 30th, known as the «Night of the Long Knives», more than a thousand Nazis were murdered... by other Nazis. No one dared to oppose the claims of the German dictator, who was planning an invasion of Austria.



Torchlight parade, Brandenburg Gate, 30 January 33

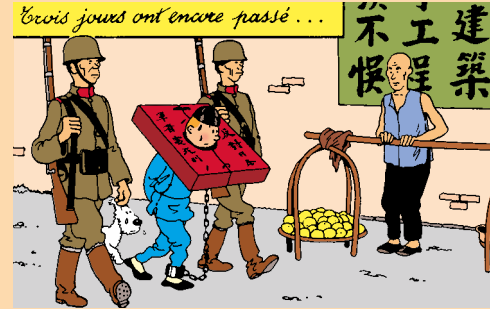
To this end, he planned to have the chancellor Engelbert Dollfuss (1892-1934) assassinated, but the Austrians managed to prevent a coup (we can establish a parallel with the adventures of *King Ottokar's Sceptre*). This will not prevent Hitler from being proclaimed «Führer» (German leader), on August 2nd.

On the other side of the world, civil war raged in China. Mao Zedong (1893-1976) was replaced by Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975), in the Jiangxi region. For its part, Japan suffered a typhoon that ravaged Honshu. Who said *Blue Lotus*?

France is shaken by a corruption affair, known as the «Stavisky affair», named after the initiator of this plot. A large anti-republican demonstration, incited by extreme right-wing groups threatened the French Republic.

In the United States, John Dillinger (1903-1934), public enemy number 1, was shot by the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), on July 22nd. In September, the United States renewed a treaty of friendship with Cuba, while in Great Britain, the Labour Party celebrated its electoral victory on November 1st.

Belgium had a new King, Leopold III (1901-1983), who succeeded Albert I (1875-1934) on February 23rd. Belgium was still present in the Congo, which was in stark contrast to the independence movements which were emerging here and there.



*The Blue Lotus*, frame from plate 7



Photograph of Chinese prisoners, Hergé's documentation

In Tunisia, 1934, was the year of the foundation of the political party, Neo Destour, led by Habib Bourguiba (1903-2000), who would lead his country to independence, nearly thirty years later.

A famine hit Ethiopia. On December 27th, Persia became Iran. And in the same month the first Afro-Brazilian Congress is held in Recife (Brazil), where Getulio Vargas (1882-1954) was elected president for four years on July 16th.

And we must also mention that on May 1st, Hergé (1907-1983) met a young Chinese art student, Chang Chong-chen (1907-1998).

1934? A key year for a world in turmoil!



Hergé and Chang ,  
rue de Knapen  
in Schaerbeek,  
Brussels (Belgium)



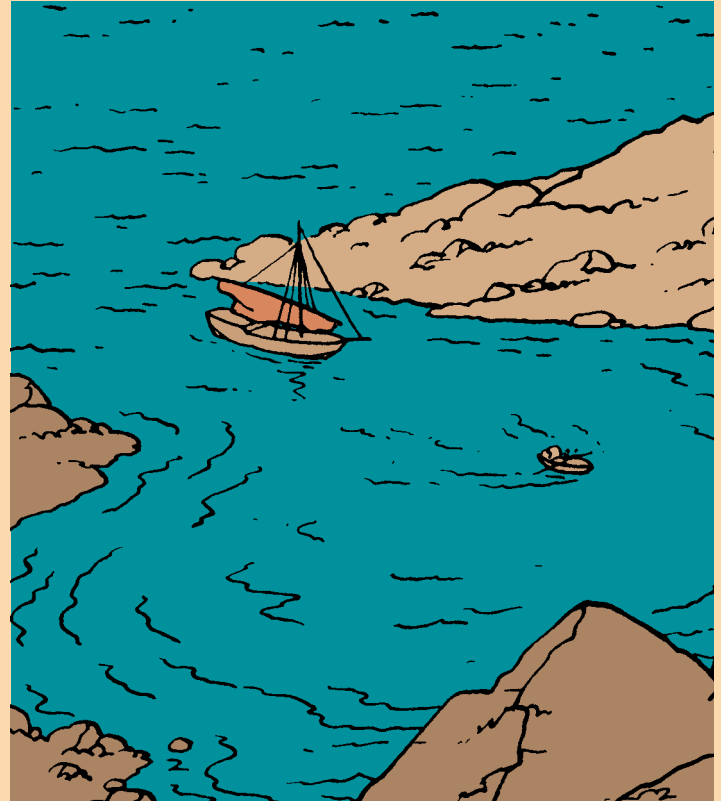
Old map  
made from  
topographic  
surveys  
carried out by  
the Commission  
of Egypt  
(1798-1829)

# Egypt

## GEOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

**E**gypt is located in the North-East of the African continent, surrounded in the North by the Mediterranean Sea, in the South by Sudan, to the West by Libya and to the East by Israel.

The Nile is a 6,400 km long river which splits the country into two unequal parts. It finishes in the Mediterranean Sea by forming a delta (a landform shaped like a triangle, created by deposition of sediment that is carried by a river and enters slower-moving or stagnant water. It is consequently called Delta after the letter  $\Delta$  in the Greek alphabet). Further upstream, it flows into a narrow green valley in the middle of the desert, creating real oases. Apart from this valley and the delta downstream, a desert plateau occupies most of the territory. The Suez Canal also forms a separation from the Sinai Peninsula, a real link between Africa and Asia.



*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 14*



## RELIGIOUS OVERVIEW

It is very difficult to summarise the ancient Egyptian religion in few words because it was polytheistic. It is necessary to wait for the reign of Amenhotep IV – who took the name of Akhenaten (1372-1354 BC) – to see appearing, thanks to the cult which was dedicated to him, one of the very first manifestations of monotheism. Some even go so far as to see in it the origins of Judaism.

Like all the first religions, the Egyptian religions were based on different cycles: by phases of the Moon, the succession of the seasons... The fusion of man and animal within nature was also essential, as in other religions practised at that time around the Mediterranean Basin.

In fact, each Egyptian god is associated with a species according to the values and virtues it represents. The god Apis, for example, takes the appearance of a bull to represent strength (the silhouette of his horned head also gave birth to the letter A in ancient and modern alphabets). For Horus, sym-

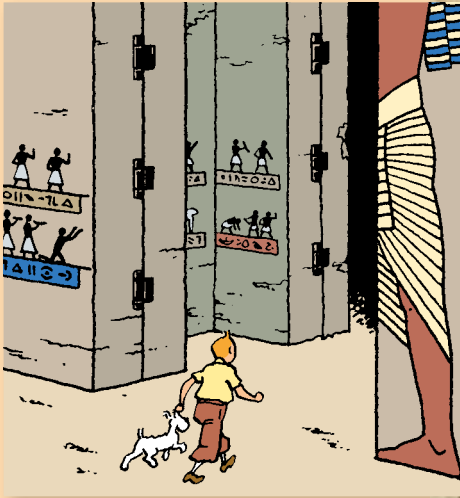


Anthropomorphic statue of the goddess Hathor, Hergé's documentation



Detail of a carved decoration, Hergé's documentation

bol of the monarchy, it is the falcon or the winged sun that is used, while for Anubis, who accompanies the dead into the other world, it is the jackal. Even the cat is the object of a religion, under the name of Bastet, the goddess of the home and fertility!



*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 8*



*The tomb of Ramses IX at Thebes, postcard from Hergé's documentation*

The Egyptians believed in the hereafter, that is to say the afterlife. This is one of the reasons why they mummified their deceased, but only the richest were entitled to this special treatment. A certain number of very sophisticated rites ensured that the deceased had a smooth passage to the other world and a carefree existence. To this end, the «Book of the

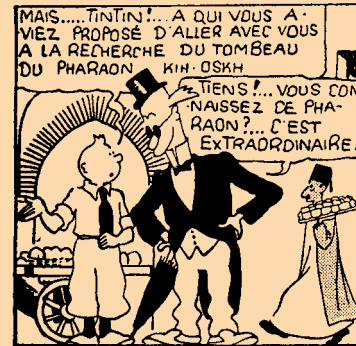
Dead» gave instructions to be followed: prayers, incantations, and evocation of the positive facts of death. In the tombs of kings, the deeds of the reign were represented in murals: they were at the same time biographies skilfully «enhanced», but also a code known to priests and, of course, the Gods.

## TINTIN'S JOURNEY OVERVIEW

*Cigars of the Pharaoh* is the fourth adventure of the series. After Russia, Congo and North America, Tintin continues his exploration of the planet and this time turns towards the East. Embarking on a cruise ship bound for Shanghai, Tintin also discovers Egypt and India.

When Hergé began *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, in 1932, the cultural, financial and political stakes linked to the Middle East were enormous. The tomb of Tutankhamun had been opened in November 1922, revealing an invaluable treasure. For the adventurers from all over the world, it was between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea that everything was played out and that fortunes were made and lost.

On the liner that takes him to India, Tintin takes stock of his itinerary. After a stopover in Port Saïd, the liner must travel on the famous Suez Canal to reach the Red Sea before continuing its journey to India. Tintin prepares for a long journey but his meeting with Professor Sarcophagus, will upset his programme somewhat...



*Cigars of the Pharaoh*, frame from plate 5



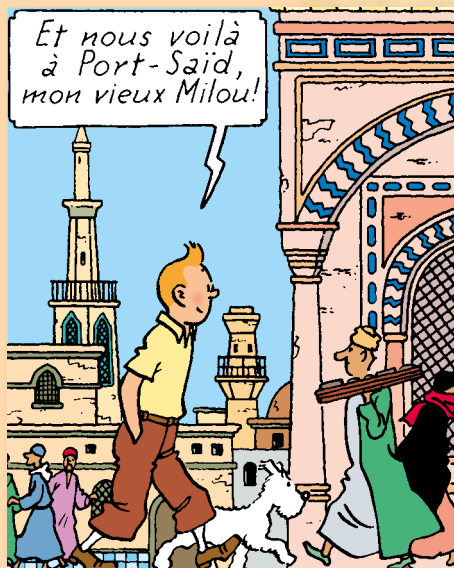
*Cigars of the Pharaoh*, frame from plate 1



## PORT-SAÏD

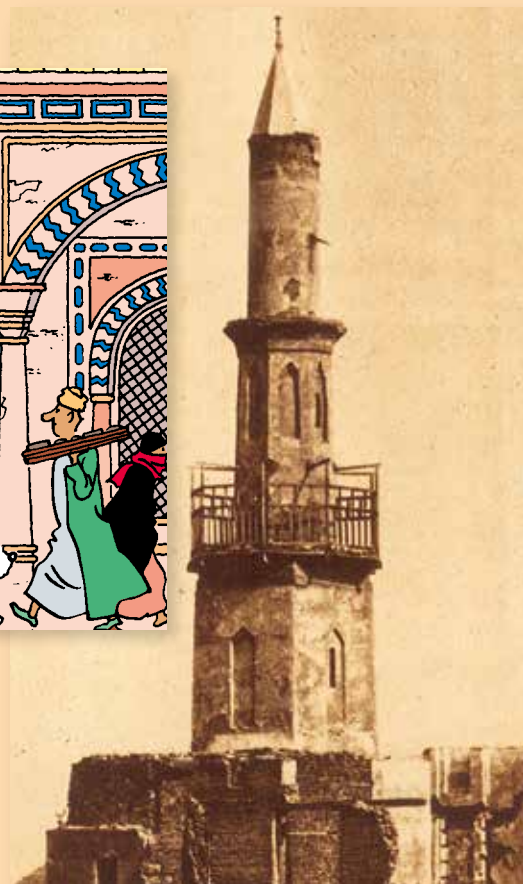
The city of Port Saïd marks the entrance to the famous Suez Canal, a 173 km long structure inaugurated in 1869, which connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea to prevent ships, bound for the Indian Ocean, from circumnavigating the African continent.

The place is in fact only vaguely mentioned. We can see cranes and boats. In the colour edition, the monuments that could be towers, lighthouses or mosques don't correspond to any real buildings in Port Saïd, except for some small details. Hergé was inspired by a minaret in Cairo which served as a background for the very detailed drawing of the city. This city preserved traces of the past, and one can find there many richly decorated wooden houses, the last vestiges of a bygone era. Tintin must make a stopover there to travel on the famous Suez Canal.



Above: *Cigars of the Pharaoh*,  
frame from plate 1

Opposite: minaret (Cairo),  
Hergé's documentation



# The Pyramids

## the builders of eternity

**W**ho is or has not been amazed or fascinated by the pyramids? When Hergé started *Cigars of the Pharaoh* the excitement linked to the discoveries made in Egypt, and especially that of the Tutankhamun's tomb was far from over.



During Ancient Egypt, the pyramid, «a monument with a quadrilateral base that rises to a triangular point,» served as a royal tomb and was «considered the place where the spirit of the deceased pharaoh ascended.» In its definition, the World History Encyclopaedia (source: <https://www.worldhistory.org/trans/fr/1-89/pyramide/>) also states that «in the popular imagination, the pyramids (are often summarised as) the three solitary structures on the Giza Plateau, on the edge of the Sahara Desert. And it was precisely in this area that Hergé imagined and located Kih-Oskh's tomb, as suggested by the story on page 6 – «later in the vicinity of Cairo» – and the panning shot in the same frame where the pyramids are visible in the background.

*Cigars of the Pharaoh*, frame from plate 6

The pyramid appeared during the Third Dynasty (2700- 2600 BC) to succeed and gradually replace the mastabas (almost rectangular funerary construction with a single floor). The first generation of pyramids known as “degree pyramids” had four and then six floors. The second generation are those of pyramids with different angles (rhomboidal).

The pyramids that appear in the background of some of the vignettes on page 6 of the colour edition of *Cigars of the Pharaoh* are pyramids with smooth walls, a square base and monumental dimensions. These pyramids constitute the architectural achievement initiated by the scholar Imhotep who was the «inventor» of the first generation pyramid. Those of Giza (including Cheops) are perfect examples.

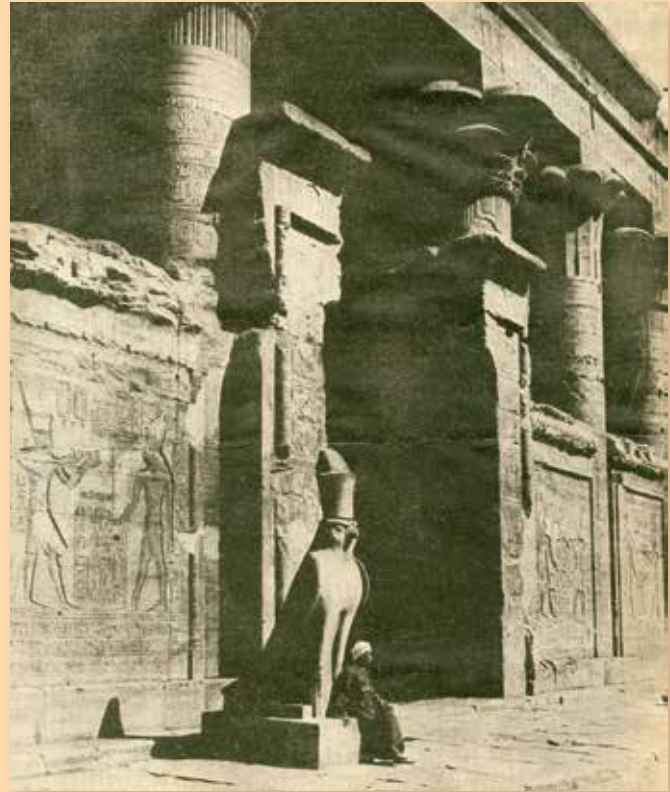


The Sphinx and the pyramids of Giza, Hergé's documentation

# Egyptian architecture

**A**ncient Egypt spans several millennia. A long period favourable to architectural creation. And in this field, God knows if the Egyptian builders excelled! They conceived and expressed themselves through an extraordinary diversity of constructions. Considering that life on this earth is only an ephemeral passage, they hardly dwelt on the houses and buildings linked to daily activities which are, for the most part, made of light structures (adobe, wood, bricks, and so on). In addition to this pragmatic approach - but totally mastered on the technical level - they were especially concerned with leaving a lasting and monumental imprint - no doubt to preserve their place in the eternal sun. For the Egyptians are renowned for their imposing buildings, as richly decorated as they are indestructible, and whose mysteries have not yet been revealed...

View of the Temple of Horus at Edfu  
showing a monumental statue  
of the falcon god,  
Hergé's documentation

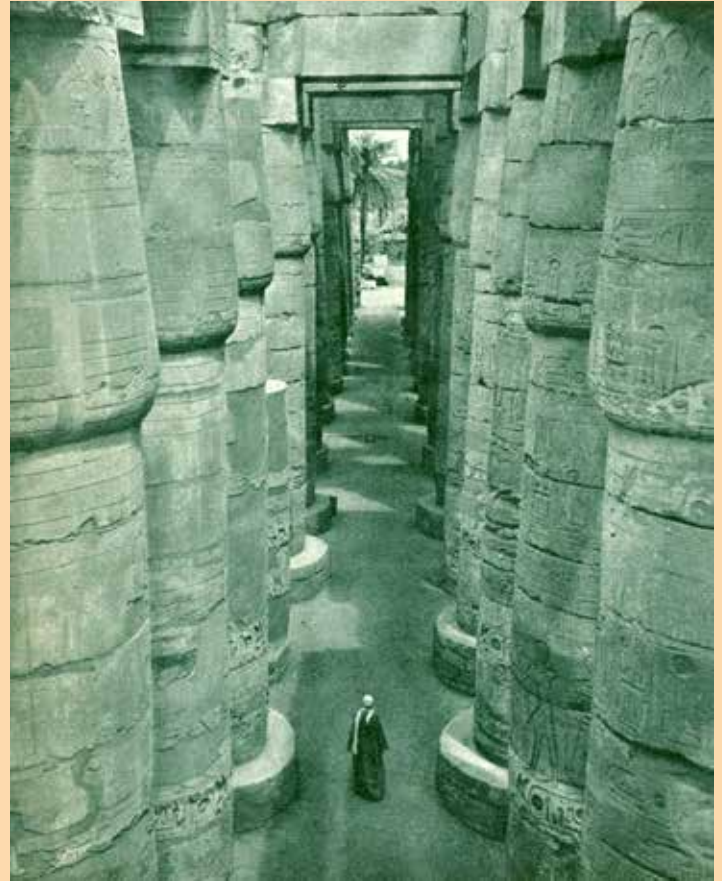


*Cigars of the Pharaoh,*  
frame from plate 7



In addition to a perfect technical mastery of materials, Egyptian architecture is characterised by its diversity of achievements: obelisks, columns, temples, tombs, houses and palaces.

Colonnades of the Temple of Karnak in Luxor,  
Hergé's documentation



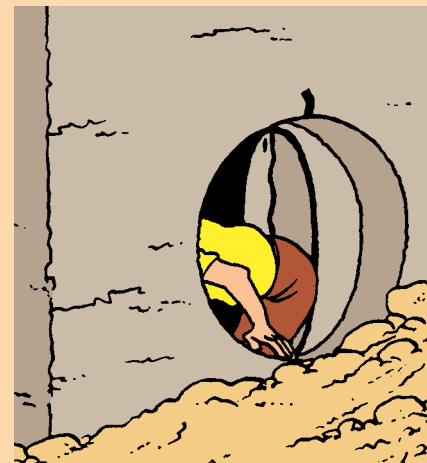
# The tomb of Kih-Oskh

As usual, Hergé drew his ideas from his own documentation. So, when he designed the tomb of Kih-Oskh, he borrowed structural and decorative details from Egyptian funerary architecture, seen in his precious corpus of newspaper cuttings and brochures.

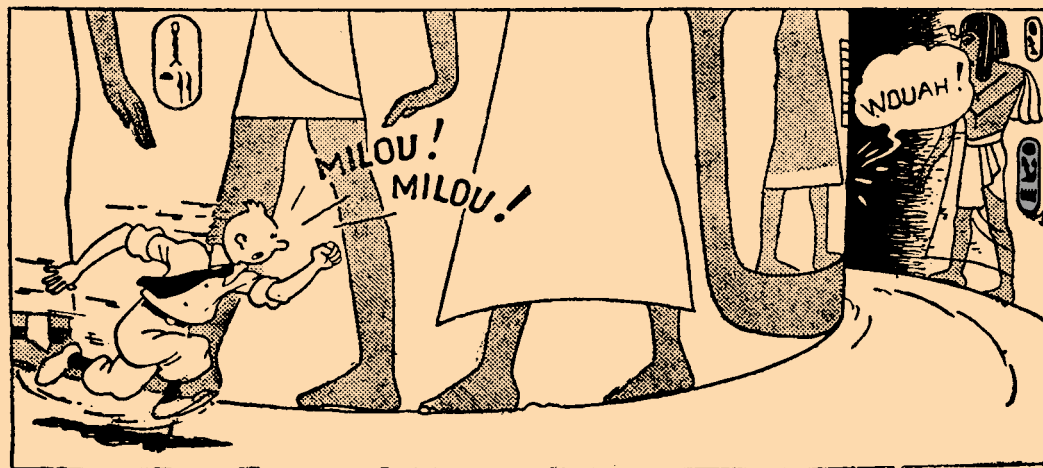
Once reinterpreted by him, they obviously take on a whole new dimension. The magic happens because, although completely fake, the tomb of his pharaoh - also fictitious - looks as real as life.

This sepulchre which emerges from the sand is therefore the pure fruit of his imagination. There is no pyramid there, but an architectural monument which has been inspired by the shape of the mastaba. A pivoting block at the

entrance which provides access to a descending corridor – rather well-lit by the way! – which leads Tintin directly to the underground chamber. This entrance «portico» is more than original. Although this principle was used by the Egyptians themselves, it is however very different from them, both from the point of view of its shape (porthole) as well as its style.



*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 7*



*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 18*

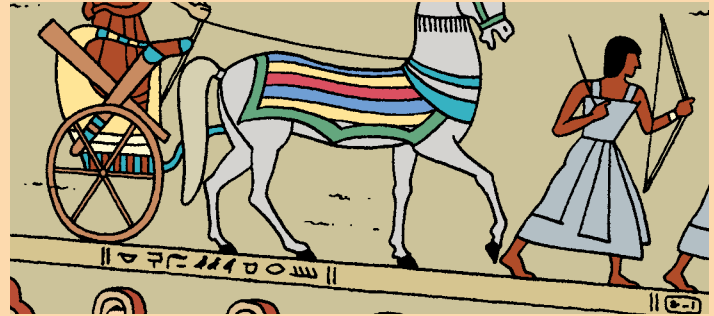
In the first version of *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, the tomb dates from 2500 BC according to Frédéric Soumois, a Belgian journalist and author of the book *Dossier Tintin* (ed. Jacques Antoine, 1987, p.66). Hergé was inspired by the tomb of Seti I (pharaoh of the XIXth dynasty, who reigned around the 13th century BC).

Frédéric Soumois bases his assertion on the cartouche that appears on a wall drawn on page 18: «the cartouche placed

on the extreme right clearly reads, «ra-maat-men» and is the exact cartouche of Seti I, the other cartouches are either fanciful or partial ».

Concerned with the detail, Hergé reproduced a series of hieroglyphs to make the sequence featuring the tomb even more plausible. In the colour version, the hieroglyphs are sometimes authentic and sometimes created from scratch.

Hergé continues the work of immersion by reproducing, in a fresco, the chariot of Ramses II – also called Ramses the Great (the third pharaoh of the XIXth dynasty). This mural can be seen at the great Temple of Abu Simbel. Therefore, it's no coincidence that later in the story, that Sophocles Sarcophagus, who has gone mad, thinks he is Ramses III!



*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 7*



Archive document used by Hergé to decorate the tomb of Kih-Oskh



The chariot of Ramses II, extract from a press clipping kept by Hergé

The same principle is also found in the dreamlike vignette of the Thom(p)son's smoking cigars, which is a replica, reinterpreted by Hergé, of a richly decorated wooden ornament carved on one of the thrones in Tutankhamun's tomb: the one with a young royal couple on the back.

This throne was discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon in the antechamber of the tomb of the young but famous pharaoh: «Over three thousand years have passed - wrote Carter - since a human foot trod the ground on which you are standing, and yet all around you, you notice signs of recent life: the mortar container, that was used to build the door, the blackened lamp, the finger marks on a freshly painted surface, the farewell garland thrown on the threshold... You breathe the same air, unchanged for centuries, as those who led the royal mummy to its resting place.

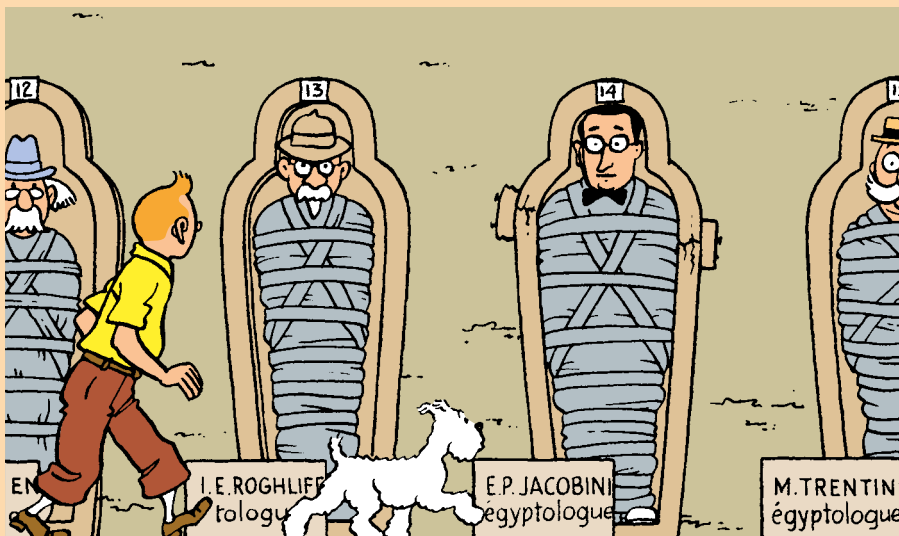


*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 16*

Hergé amuses himself when he mummifies a series of characters, victims of the famous curse of the pharaohs.

To protect their tombs, the Egyptians warned, as soon as they entered, looters and intruders of the curse that would befall them if they did not respect the place and the deceased... The curse of the tomb of Tutankhamun was greatly publicised because, on April 5th, 1923 – five months after its discovery – Lord Carnarvon, the sponsor of the mission, died in strange circumstances!

In addition to his death, twenty-seven «mysterious» deaths of people who had approached from near or far from the pharaoh's tomb were counted. As for Howard Carter, he died of natural causes, even though he was the first to defile the tomb. This subject was later taken up by Hergé to serve as the main theme of the dyptic formed by *The Seven Crystal Balls* (1948) and *Prisoners of the Sun* (1949).

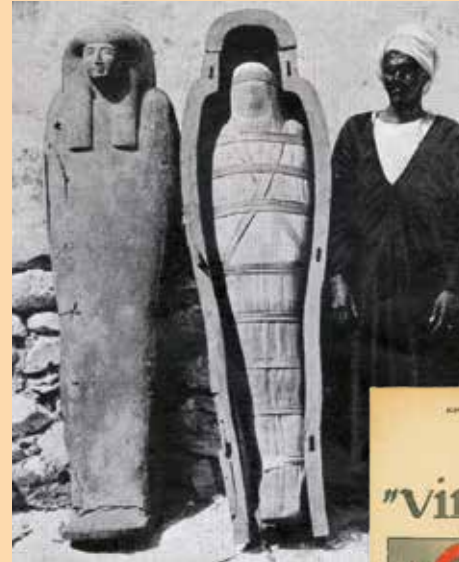


*Cigars of the Pharaoh,*  
frame from plate 8

Hergé will change the names of his mummies as new versions are published. The cast, whose secret Frédéric Soumois is trying to unravel, includes Lord Carnavon (alias Lord Carnaval who will become Lord Carnawal) and E.P. Jacobs (alias E.P. Jacobini).

Hergé even goes so far as to prepare the sarcophagus (in view of an imminent mummification) of Tintin and Snowy. The dates written on them are those of the first publication of the illustration plates in *Le Petit Vingtième*.

The mummy participates in the (ancient) Egyptian conception of death. The body – quite real – has an identical – invisible – double that inhabits the body during life but also after death, if this body is preserved. Hence the need to resort to the process of mummification. The embalming was carried out by professionals who placed the viscera in canopic vases, before macerating the body in a mixture based on natron (sodium carbonate) for more than two months before then placing long strips of linen on the body.)



Sarcophagus and its mummy,  
Hergé's documentation



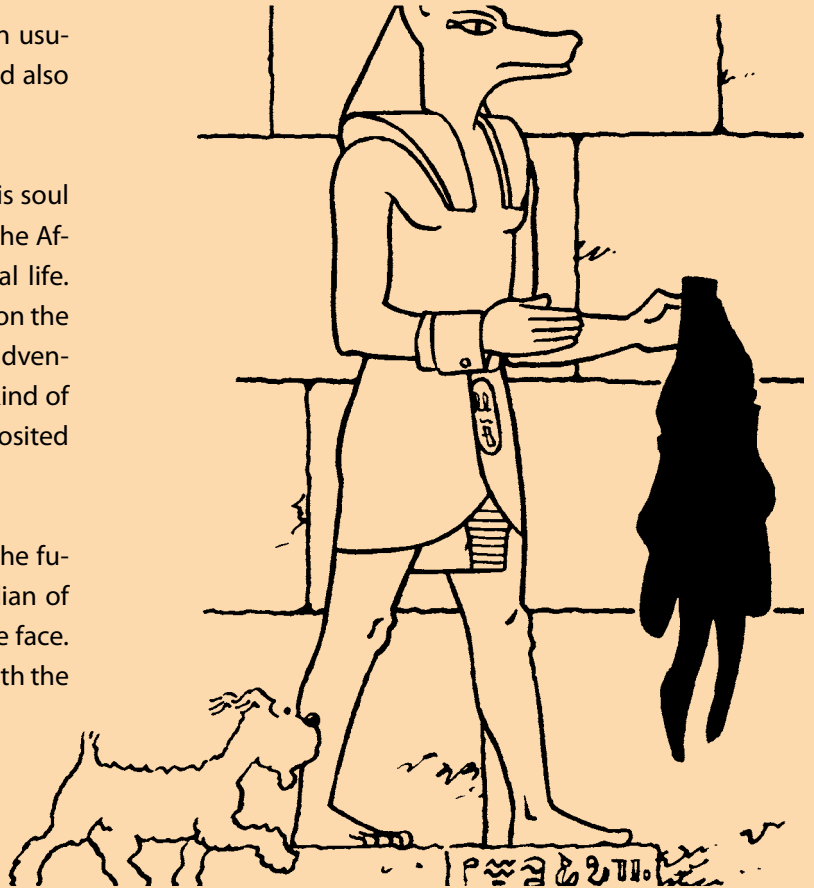
*Le Petit Vingtième*  
of 26 January 1933

The mummy was deposited in a sarcophagus or coffin usually having a human form. Statues and bas-reliefs could also serve as a support for the soul as a last resort.

At death, the double of the deceased – that is to say his soul – is submitted to the judgement of Osiris, the King of the Afterlife, the only deity who can grant or cannot eternal life. Judged guilty, the soul is immediately annihilated but, on the other hand, if it is absolved, it continues its celestial adventure in the fields of Aaru, also as the Field of Reeds, a kind of Egyptian paradise, with the goods and offerings deposited by the family and the entourage.

Anubis depicted as a statue by Hergé, participates in the funeral service and the protection of tombs. This guardian of the necropolises can be recognised by his wild dog-like face. He is often represented as a black canine or as a man with the head of a jackal.

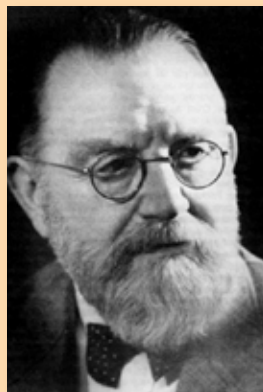
*Cigars of the Pharaoh,  
frame from plate 8*



# Egyptology

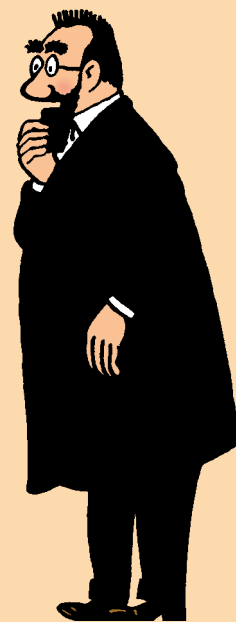
**E**gyptology in all its dimensions (history, art, religion, writing, and so on) and this, thanks to the numerous excavations undertaken by archaeologists-egyptologists like the Belgian Jean Capart (1877-1947). It is interesting to note that the subject of Egyptology took off with the Egyptian Campaign led by Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) between 1798 and 1801. This expedition aroused a lot of interest, especially among the British. From then on, a frenetic race for antiquities (via looting, in particular) raged throughout the 19th century.

For his documentation, Hergé would have been inspired by the works of Capart (alias Professor Hercules Tarragon in *The Seven Crystal Balls*). The latter was a lecturer in numerous institutions and universities and in 1911, was appointed chief curator of the Royal Museums of Art and History of Brussels (today called the Royal Museums of the Cinquantenaire). Although a keen Egyptologist, Jean Capart was also interested in civilizations originating from South America where he went in 1936. The man also made many other trips that were



Jean-François-Désiré Capart

recounted in 1974 in a book written by his niece, Anne-Marie Brasseur-Capart, entitled: *Jean Capart ou le rêve comblé de l'Égyptologie*. Hergé himself praised the latter's research and synthesis of this work in a letter he sent to her on February 5th, 1975.



*The Seven Crystal Balls*,  
Detail from plate 27

As previously mentioned, the curse of the pharaohs left a lasting impression on Hergé's imagination. Probably because the world's press never ceased to relay this legend to maintain its mystery long after the discovery of the tomb.

Back in 1914. In June, to be precise. The date on which Lord Carnarvon, a rich subject of Her Majesty, fond of photography and archaeology, obtained a permit to excavate in the Valley of the Kings. He did so with the help of a fellow countryman, Howard Carter, a scholar and Egypt enthusiast like himself. The latter made a major discovery, on November 4th, 1922, by bringing to light the inviolate tomb of the pharaoh Tutankhamun. His backer witnessed his discovery despite his failing health but did not have the chance to attend the highlight of the show: the opening of the burial chamber. He died of a mosquito bite in Cairo on April 5th, 1923. His body was brought back to England to be buried in the grounds of Highclere Castle.

Detail of the sarcophagus  
of Tutankhamun  
Hergé's documentation

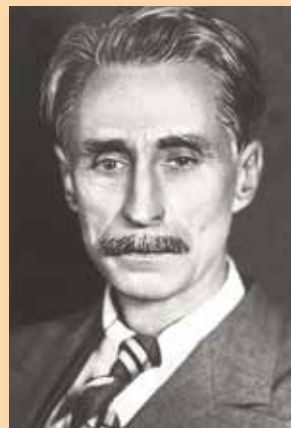


# Henry de Monfreid

## the smuggler of the Red Sea

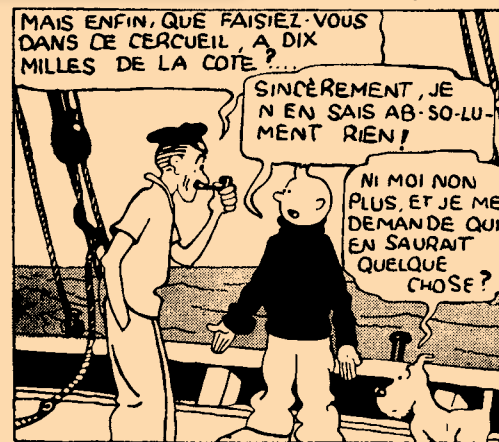
**H**enry de Monfreid (1879-1974) was one of the most important figures at that time: drug trafficker, arms smuggler, pearl fisherman, he was a disreputable man...nevertheless he doesn't really manage to be unpleasant. Having embarked for Djibouti in 1911, Henry de Monfreid sailed the seas for more than twenty years, and quickly realised the interest of arms trafficking in this region ravaged by tribal wars. So, in this way he contributed to the instability of the Middle East.

At the same time, he converted to Islam and took the name of Abdel-Haï, which means «Servant of the Living God». Hergé confessed his fascination for this adventurer and represented him in the guise of the captain of the dhow on which Tintin is stranded, after drifting at sea in a sarcophagus ten miles from the Arabian coast. But for the occasion, the cartoonist presents him as younger by making him about thirty years old, whereas in 1932 he was actually fifty-three years old. Hergé had become aware of his adventures thanks to French satirical magazine, *Le Crapouillot* which had published one of his short stories, *La Flèche empoisonnée*, in April 1932.



Original photo of  
of the adventurer-writer  
Henry de Monfreid

*Cigars of the Pharaoh,*  
frame from plate 21



For although the man was an adventurer, he was no less a writer: more than seventy works relate his «exploits» on the seas. In addition to the short story, Hergé had also read *Les Secrets de la mer Rouge*, published in the same year.

The Red Sea, precisely. This long strip of salty water partly surrounds the Eastern coast of Egypt, just after the Gulf of

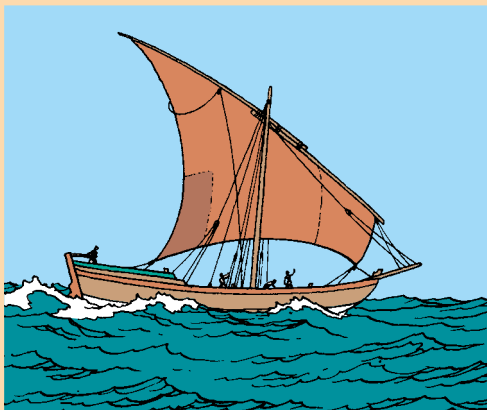
Suez. It is in this area that Tintin and Professor Sarcophagus, who went in search of the tomb of Kih-Oskh, find themselves sailing on the waves in half a sarcophagus, after having been kidnapped.

Later Hergé made his hero return to these places: they are the animated sequences of *The Red Sea Sharks* (1958).

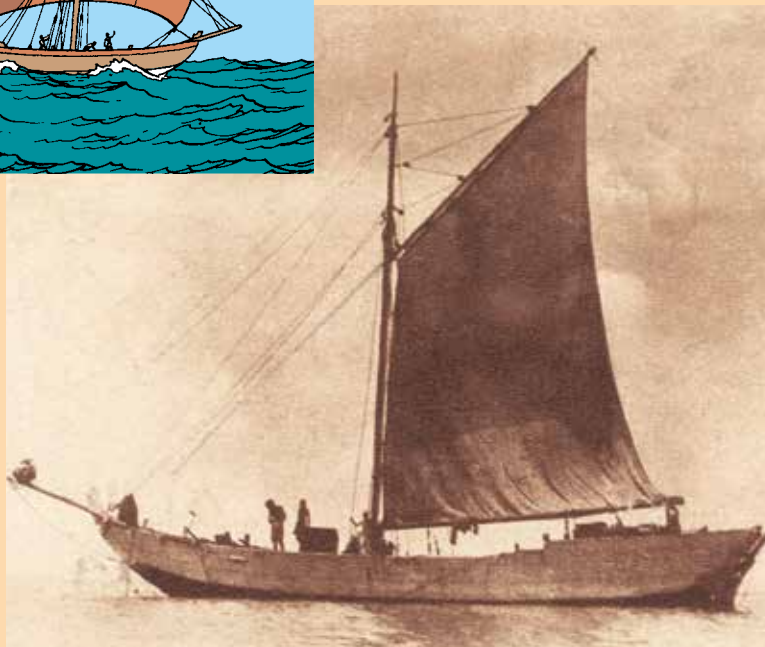


# The Dhow

**T**his sailing boat, equipped with one or more masts, differs from the felucca – another well-known Egyptian boat – by its geographical origin. The felucca is designed for navigation on the Nile and is lighter. In spite of many differences in terms of use, length and weight, they both share a common feature: trapezoidal sails, called «Arab sails».



*Cigars of the Pharaoh,  
frame from plate 13*



Photograph of a dhow,  
Hergé's documentation

# Bedouin hospitality

**A**fter having tasted the mysteries of the Red Sea, Tintin discovers the desert and meets the Bedouins. These indigenous people are particularly familiar with these hostile regions and their many traps, such as the mirages that await travellers in search of the oases that are the source of life. Their hospitality to strangers, a characteristic feature of their culture, is also praised.

Like Arabia, Egypt is inhabited by sand and Nomads. Even if, once again, the scene imagined by Hergé had been located on the Eastern shore of the Red Sea, the fact remains that the nomadic way of life is more or less the same in Egypt as it is in Arabia.



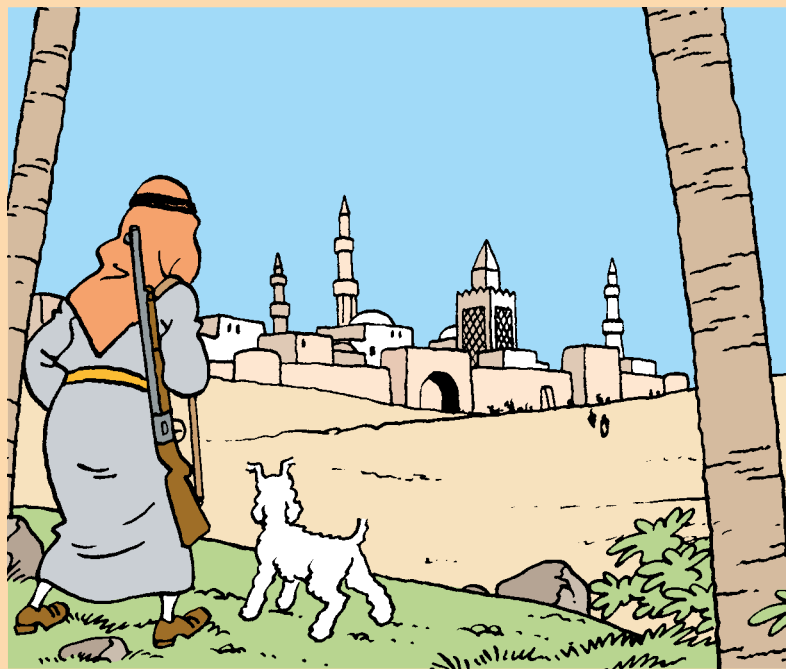
*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 15*

# Fortified city and Oasis

## in the desert

In the black and white version of *Cigars of the Pharaoh*, the fortified city located in the desert is an archetypal transposition of the Muslim holy city of Mecca. In the colour version, Hergé manages to water down any explicit reference to location, even if the action is rather located on the Eastern shore of the Red Sea – i.e. towards the Arabian Peninsula (which became, in 1958, Khemed in *The Red Sea Sharks*) – than on the Western bank, at the level of Egypt.

In this fortified city in the desert, Tintin stumbles across full intertribal conflict. He is enlisted by force, then arrested, before fleeing in extremis. Tintin, an apprentice Lawrence of Arabia, plays a spy among the Bedouins and the citadel of Dakhla – the oasis of natural springs – located in Egypt, which offers an astonishing setting for his investigations.



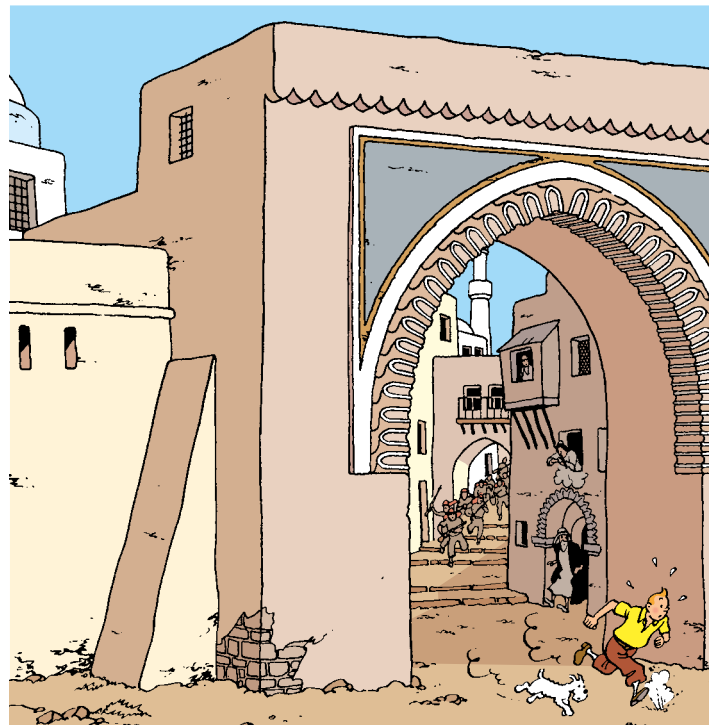
*Cigars of the Pharaoh*, frame from plate 25

# Once upon... the end

Tintin's Egyptian stopover stops at the gates of the fortified city, which he will later leave at full speed, flanked – as usual – by the ever faithful Snowy. Luck is on their side and saves them, in extremis, from the clutches of their pursuers as a plane is waiting to take them to other country. In this case, India.

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*Cigars of the Pharaoh, frame from plate 31*