

Title: Ryszard Kapuściński's "Travels with Herodotus": Reportage from the Self
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"Travels with Herodotus" is an extensive report and a colorful tale from Kapuściński's inaugural journeys to foreign lands and the awakening of his reportorial sensitivity to otherness. In "Travels," he crosses the borders of time and of space, with the narration happening simultaneously on several temporal and spatial planes. The accounts of his first foreign reporting trips are interwoven with fragments from "The Histories" by Herodotus, which Kapuściński (apparently) had in tow throughout his entire professional life

A striking feature of "Travels" is that in Kapuściński's account (contrary to Herodotus's model, where chronology is strictly observed) the narrator does not observe any chronological constraints. This results in loosening the grip on narration to the point of narration disappearing almost completely, and defying time's destructive power by engaging in a "dialogue" with Herodotus.

Could we then still call it ethical journalism? Or is it simply a different literary genre? Kapuściński has been often criticized for insisting on calling his writing 'reporting' or 'journalism.'

In "Travels," then, Kapuściński creates a new concept of an author and narrator for himself and retells his narrative of decades of serving the communist authorities while freely drifting between truth and fiction in his books. In "Travels" he lets go of the tyranny of narration and the superimposed layer of ideology and finally allows himself to enter an interesting form of an authorial self-critique. For years he strives to write something that he wants to see as ethical journalism while treating facts selectively and creatively – this effort results in a rupture. This rupture, in effect, turns out to be not damaging. On the contrary, it results in a new literary form of great literary value and significance, titled "Travels with Herodotus."

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