



## Travels with Herodotus

*Ryszard Kapuściński, Klara Glowczewska (Translator)*

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From the master of literary reportage whose acclaimed books include *Shah of Shahs*, *The Emperor*, and *The Shadow of the Sun*, an intimate account of his first youthful forays beyond the Iron Curtain.

Just out of university in 1955, Kapuscinski told his editor that he'd like to go abroad. Dreaming no farther than Czechoslovakia, the young reporter found himself sent to India. Wide-eyed and captivated, he would discover in those days his life's work—to understand and describe the world in its remotest reaches, in all its multiplicity. From the rituals of sunrise at Persepolis to the incongruity of Louis Armstrong performing before a stone-faced crowd in Khartoum, Kapuscinski gives us the non-Western world as he first saw it, through still-virginal Western eyes.

The companion on his travels: a volume of Herodotus, a gift from his first boss. Whether in China, Poland, Iran, or the Congo, it was the “father of history”—and, as Kapuscinski would realize, of globalism—who helped the young correspondent to make sense of events, to find the story where it did not obviously exist. It is this great forerunner's spirit—both supremely worldly and innately Occidental—that would continue to whet Kapuscinski's ravenous appetite for discovering the broader world and that has made him our own indispensable companion on any leg of that perpetual journey.

### Travels with Herodotus Details

Date : Published June 5th 2007 by Knopf (first published September 28th 2004)

ISBN : 9781400043385

Author : Ryszard Kapuściński , Klara Glowczewska (Translator)

Format : Hardcover 288 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, History, Travel, Writing, Journalism, Autobiography, Memoir, Cultural, Africa

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## From Reader Review Travels with Herodotus for online ebook

### Bach Tran Quang says

2 hành trình song song, 1 của nhà báo tr? Ryszard, 1 của tay "ph??t" - phóng viên - ng??i ghi chép - ??u tiên của th? gi?i Herodotus.

2 hành trình g?n bó m?t thi?t v?i nhau, và qu? là Ryszard ?ã th?t s? thay ??i quan ni?m của ng??i ??c v? tác ph?m phi h? c?u là nh? th? nào.

Cu?n sách này có quá nhi?u trích ?o?n hay, và nh?ng trích ?o?n ?y ???c "trích ?o?n" l?i b?i m?t nhà báo v?i ?ôi m?t ?? sáng su?t, m?ng m? và t?ng tr?i. Có th? gói g?n ? trong m?t câu th? này v? hành trình của con ng??i:

"Nh?ng con thuy?n t? ?âu mà ??n?". Và hãy gi? trí tò mò của m?t ??a tr?, b?i ch? có ??a tr? m?i ??t ra nh?ng câu h?i "c?c k? quan tr?ng". M?t hành trình tuy?t di?u. M?t Herodotus v? ??i không ch? của riêng Ryszard, mà gi? còn là của tôi n?a.

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### Emanuela says

Non avrei avuto il coraggio di affrontare "Le Storie" di Erodoto anche se ne sono sempre stata incuriosita. La mediazione che ne fa Kapuscinski merita perché l'autore le inframezza alle proprie esperienze di reporter che desidera con tutte le proprie forze varcare i confini e vedere cosa c'è oltre la propria nazione, la Polonia.

Così le guerre persiane raccontate dal greco si alternano ai primi viaggi del polacco in India, Cina, Africa nella seconda metà del secolo scorso caratterizzata, come nell'antichità, dalla contrapposizione tra Oriente ed Occidente.

Le conclusioni vedono l'analisi e l'esaltazione della personalità del viaggiatore antico, Erodoto, che vuole scoprire e capire altri popoli e costumi con l'umiltà di chi racconta la Storia pur sapendo che non corrisponde a fatti realmente accaduti, ma passata da voce in voce, da mito a mito ed egli è solo colui che mette nero su bianco per non permettere che la memoria si estingua.

Kapuscinski accetta e condivide questa visione riconoscendo in Erodoto la modernità di visione della Storia che non parla del "passato" terminato, ma è una successione continua di attimi di presente che si ripropongono come suoi figli.

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### James Murphy says

My copy of the book--Vintage International--labels Travels with Herodotus as memoir/history, and it is, but it touched me more as a simple meditation on Herodotus and his The Histories. Kapuscinski is a Polish journalist and traveler who writes here about his 1st trips outside Poland in the mid-20th century. He was given a copy of Herodotus as a companion on his 1st assignment abroad. It touched him deeply, as his own book touched me.

Kapuscincki uses The Histories as a way to gauge his own sense of wonder as he travels, as his own sense of

being an other in strange societies. He tries to see his own reactions to strangeness in light of the way he thinks Herodotus reacted. In seeing himself intently observing the places to which he travels--India, China, Iran, much of Africa--he uses Herodotus as a guide in how to see and understand, even though Herodotus traveled and wrote without maps and without a large collection of written resources. Kapuscinski constantly reminds us how deep in history Herodotus lived and chronicled his travels--he writes that the Persian armies described in *The Histories* existed 24 centuries before Napoleon, that the Middle East written about was one a thousand years before the arrival of Islam--yet still finds ways to see their experiences as similar.

One of the elements he learned from *The Histories* was contrast. The ancient world in which Herodotus traveled could easily be seen as divided into east-west, Asia-Europe, Persia-Greece. Kapuscinski observes contrasts of his own. Besides his own obvious east-west, that of the Cold War, he compares the open character of India's population with the closed nature of the Chinese. In Algeria he sees 2 Islams, those of river and desert, or the new vs the traditional. The book itself is halved between Kapuscinski's travels and Herodotus's.

The final chapter is thoughts on history, which he sees, like Herodotus, as created by people through the continuous flow of their everyday lives. And the history created today is mirrored by the history Herodotus found because human nature is a constant. This chapter on the meaning and uses of history is terrific.

Thanks to my Goodreads friend Lyn Elliott whose review of *Travels with Herodotus* was the inspiration for my coming to the book. Kapuscinski writes late in his book that Herodotus was a discovery for him but that he came to think of him as his Herodotus. Similarly, I now know I have Kapuscinski and that this is only my 1st of his books.

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## Yann says

Ryszard Kapuściński est un journaliste polonais qui a roulé sa bosse à travers le vaste terrain d'affrontement et de rivalité pour la guerre froide qu'a offert le tiers-monde décolonisé. Dans ce livre, il entremêle des allusions à ses différents voyages avec une présentation de l'œuvre d'Hérodote: l'Enquête, *Historie* en grec. Je suis un admirateur de l'œuvre d'Hérodote, car elle a été pour moi la clef par laquelle j'ai découvert l'antiquité, l'hellénisme et les belles lettres. Mais si je partage avec l'auteur une même admiration pour cet ouvrage, le sien me laisse bien plus circonspect et dubitatif.

La partie relative à Hérodote est, au mieux, une paraphrase des passages les plus connus et les plus célèbres. Mais les réflexions que cela inspire à Kapuściński sont pour la plupart oiseuses, naïves et parfaitement dispensables: elles n'apportent pour ainsi dire rien. Même reproche à faire aux récits que l'auteur fait de ses propres voyages: tout reste collé à l'anecdotique et au banal. Ici il se fait détrousser par un voleur en Égypte, là il fume un joint avec un Soudanais, puis un Congolais lui demande des cigarettes. Surtout, il ne comprends jamais rien à ce qu'il lui arrive, ne parle pas la langue des autochtones, plaque une compréhension étique des affaires du monde à ce qu'il voit. On s'ennuie ferme, on s'agace. On passe du coq à l'âne d'un tableau à l'autre, avec la désagréable impression que notre journaliste n'a rien vu ni rien compris d'important, et n'a donc rien à nous dire de particulier sinon qu'Hérodote est passionnant, et que le monde est vaste, ce que l'on savait déjà.

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## Maria Beltrami says

Il grande Kapuscinski ripercorre i suoi primi anni di giornalista e inviato speciale, anni trascorsi con collega e maestro di eccezione, ovvero Erodoto, che con le sue Storie traccia la via a cui si deve attenere il vero inviato, duemila anni fa come oggi.

E così scaturisce una narrazione parallela tra le vicende del giovane inviato, gli errori, gli intoppi e le scoperte, e il resoconto di avvenimenti antichi raccontati con tale maestria da non perdere un grammo della loro attualità e del loro fascino.

Grande libro.

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## William2.1 says

This is part exegesis of *The Histories* and part memoir of the author's own experiences as he traveled to the places Herodotus visited and wrote about. Kapuscinski always carried a copy of Herodotus with him and it's interesting to get his views of Egypt or Lybia or Persia or Scythia more than 2,400 years after those of the 'Father of history.'

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## Alex says

I read Herodotus earlier this year, and among other things I thought, "What the hell just happened?" It's a long book, y'know? Everything happens in it. I mean literally everything: Herodotus's goal was to write down everything known about the world, and over 700 pages, that's what he did. It gets mind-boggling.

I needed someone to help me process all that, so I turned to Kapuscinski, the great travel writer and philosopher responsible for *The Emperor*, a neat oral history of Haile Selassie, as well as some other books I haven't read. Kapuscinski, who died in 2007, has come under occasional fire for making some shit up; he's not exactly a travel writer, or not only a travel writer. Adam Hirsch, a great writer himself, called his brand of whatever-it-is "magic journalism", a reference to the magic realism genre that seems as good a way to describe Kapuscinski as any.

So *Travels With Herodotus* isn't exactly about Herodotus, any more than *The Emperor* was exactly about Haile Selassie. It's not *not* about Herodotus either; there's plenty about him, and I actually do understand his *Histories* better now. Kapuscinski explains how Herodotus spends the first half of his book setting the stage: placing all the players known in the world, describing them. Then the action narrows down, focuses to the Persian / Greek conflict. Kapuscinski, whose name I am spelling out every time, btw, in case I ever need to know how to spell it, showed me a structure.

He also insists on talking about the reality of the things Herodotus describes. When a man is forced to castrate his four sons, Kapuscinski says, can you imagine what that was actually like, as it was happening? What did the man do? Did he beg? Did he grovel? Did he get it over with? When an army drinks a river dry, what does that actually mean? How many people does that look like? If you read a lot of history, sometimes you can forget to do this; it's exhausting, and besides, half of your mind is wondering if you should make tea. Kapuscinski never forgets.

And the book is also about himself: his experiences wandering the world, to places Herodotus never imagined the existence of. What it means to be among strangers. "I have only felt true loneliness," he writes,

"when I have stood alone face-to-face with absolute violent power." He's just encountered two soldiers in the war-torn Congo. They asked him for a cigarette; each party was fully aware that if they shot him and took the cigarettes, that would work just as well. I've never experienced true loneliness, apparently. Kapuscinski learned a lot in his travels; here is some of it.

This is a strange book. It's neither fish nor flesh, or maybe it's both fish and flesh. If you want to read about Herodotus, maybe parts of this will frustrate you. If you don't want to read about Herodotus, maybe the other parts will. Once I gave in to the fact that it must be allowed to set its own terms, I loved it.

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## George K. says

Μετ' απ' πολ' καιρ' διαβ'ζω non-fiction βιβλ'ο και η αλ'θεια ε'ναι ?τι δεν ξ'ρω γιατ' δεν ?χω διαβ'σει περισσ'τερα τ'τοια βιβλ'α. Θ'λω να πω, κυκλοφορο'ν πολλ' ενδιαφ'ροντα εκε' ?ξω, απ' βιογραφ'ες και ιστορικ' μ'χρι ταξ'ιδιωτικ' και δημοσιογραφικ' ρεπορτ'ζ. ?μως αποφ'σισα ν'αρχ'σω να διαβ'ζω περισσ'τερα, γ'αυτ' και ?πιασα το βιβλ'ο του Καπισ'νσκι.

Αυτ'ς ο Πολων'ς συγγραφ'ας ?ταν απ' τους μαιτρ του ρεπορτ'ζ και στο βιβλ'ο αυτ' ανακαλε' κ'ποια πολιτικ' και ιστορικ' γεγον'τα στην Αφρικ' και την Ασ'α, ?ντας στα πρ'τα χρ'νια στον τομ'α του ρεπορτ'ζ και φυσικ' αυτ'πτης μ'ρτυρας, μιας και ταξ'δεψε σε δι'φορες περιοχ'ς και χ'ρες των δυο αυτ'ν ηπε'ρων. Συντροφι' στα ταξ'δια του υπ'ρξε το βιβλ'ο "Ιστορ'ες" του μεγ'λου ?λληνα ιστορικο', Ηροδ'του.

Εμε'ς οι αναγν'στες διαβ'ζουμε τ'σο κομμ'τια απ' το σημαντικ' ?ργο του Ηροδ'του (κυρ'ως αυτ' που ?χουν να κ'νουν με τους Ελληνοπερσικο'ς πολ'μους), ?τσι ?πως τα διαβ'ζει και τα κατανοε' ο Καπισ'νσκι, ?σο και περιγραφ'ς απ' τα μ'ρη που επισκ'φτηκε ο Πολων'ς συγγραφ'ας και δημοσιογρ'φος κατ' την δεκαετ'α του '50 και του '60. Μ'σω αυτ'ν που δι'βασε στο βιβλ'ο του Ηροδ'του ?σο και μ'σω των περιγραφ'ν των ανθρ'πων, των τοπ'ων και των ιστορικ'ν γεγον'των που ?ρθε σε επαφ' ο Καπισ'νσκι, βγα'νουν στην επιφ'νεια δι'φοροι προβληματισμο' για τον κ'σμο γ'ρω μας.

Απ'λαυσα σε μεγ'λο βαθμ' τα κομμ'τια που αφορο'σαν τις αφηγ'σεις του Ηροδ'του (?τσι φρ'σκαρα κ'πως αυτ' που υποτ'θεται ?τι μ'θαμε στο σχολε'ο και μπ'κα στην διαδικασ'α να ψ'ξω περισσ'τερα για τα ιστορικ' αυτ' γεγον'τα), ?πως επ'σης και τις περιγραφ'ς απ' τις εμπειρ'ες του Καπισ'νσκι που αποκ'μισε απ' τα ταξ'δια που ?κανε. ?μως θα ?θελα να υπ'ρχαν περισσ'τερες τ'τοιες περιγραφ'ς, ?σως και περισσ'τερα κοινωνικοπολιτικ' σχ'λια γ'αυτ' που ε'δε. Δεν ?χω παρ'πονο ?μως, δι'βασα ?να πραγματικ' πολ' καλ' και ενδιαφ'ρον βιβλ'ο, εξαιρετικ' καλογραμμ'νο και ευκολοδι'βαστο, που με δυσκολ'α το ?φηνα απ' τα χ'ρια μου.

Τ'ρα θ'λω να βρω και να διαβ'σω και ?λλα βιβλ'α του συγγραφ'α, ειδικ' το "?βενος: Το χρ'μα της Αφρικ'ς", που ε'ναι και το πιο γνωστ' του, αλλ' και το "Ο π'λεμος του ποδοσφ'ρου". Ε'ναι και τα δυο εξαντλημ'να, οπ'τε θ'λουν γερ' ψ'ξιμο.

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## Richard says

(The review in the *Economist* which recommended this book to me is here, and their obituary of Kapu?ci?ski is also available, here.)

I've recently been categorizing my reading material into "fast" and "slow", but after reading Kapu?ci?ski's *Travels with Herodotus* I think I need to rethink the "slow" category.

*Fast* books are those that pull you along without any effort — page-turners. *Slow* books are those that take more time. Sometimes when I glance at the stack of books waiting their turn on the bedside table that seems to be a bad thing, but it really isn't. I like it when my book forces me to pause, stare into the middle distance, and ponder. If I'm reading fiction, that's one of the ways I define the difference between "literature" and just-plain-fiction.

But *Travels with Herodotus* revealed a problem with this. It's slowness is hidden. It would be fairly easy to read the book as one might read an article in some airline's in-flight magazine. On the face of it, this is a memoir of a famous reporter who witnessed some very dramatic events in what we often think of as "troubled" areas of the world. His previous books have taken us behind the scenes that we might see in the evening news, and he is justly famous for showing the human side of this history.

Of course, there is the curious inclusion of Herodotus, but it would be easy to see this just as a gimmick, an unusual device. He tells us that Herodotus was the first witness to globalization. And that he was not really what we consider a historian today, but more of a chronicler, or even a reporter.

But Kapu?ci?ski is writing a book that also works at a deeper level. He doesn't require this. It is conceivable that he isn't even aware of it, but he coyly makes the point on page 219:

... one must read Herodotus's book — and every great book — repeatedly; with each reading it will reveal another layer, previously overlooked themes, images, and meanings. For within every great book there are several others.

Kapu?ci?ski undoubtedly suspected this would be his last book, and it seems certain he wanted this to be a "great" book. In this context, Herodotus has a further role to play: to show how little has changed for the individual when great events crash in like a breaking wave — or seep in like a rising flood.

However, when looking for the subtext here is that one can never be certain it is there at all. It isn't as though there's a great white whale that is symbolic of something or other. When Kapu?ci?ski is telling us a story about Herodotus, sometimes if you pause and consider what Kapu?ci?ski was living through at the time, parallels creep in. Or the link might be to the place, not the time.

Just one example: near the end of the book Kapu?ci?ski is in Algiers discussing the clash between east and west, between Islam and Christianity, between the tolerant Islam of the merchants and traders and the xenophobic faith of the shepherds and nomads of the desert. Then in the next chapter, on page 232, he tells us he is now in the Eastern Mediterranean and conveys Herodotus's record of the despair of a warrior, about to die in a superfluous battle between east and west, and knowing how useless his death will be: ***There's no more terrible pain a man can endure than to see clearly and be able to do nothing***. As I'm reading this, the region is yet again in the headlines, with blood being shed in the chronic conflict. Perhaps it is just a coincidence that this anecdote is told while the author is in this area, but I'm fairly sure the author deserves a lot more credit than that.

But there isn't always a connection — sometimes the bigger picture is the point. Herodotus was exploring a

world that no one had yet documented. And Kapu?ci?ski's first explorations are equally naive — his first visits to India and China have an almost Kafka-esque surrealness in his lack of any knowledge of his surroundings.

What *Travels with Herodotus* reminded me of, oddly, was Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. Both books can be read at a superficial level, as mere stories of what happened as recorded on the page. But to a modern reader, these books read in this way will be slow, dull things. Pedestrian, quotidian, and disappointing.

Which gets back to the distinction among slow books. Some are slow but still do the work for you, still draw you back into a plot that is inexorably moving forward. *War and Peace*, for example, or *Jude the Obscure*.

But Kapu?ci?ski's memoir, like Proust's, isn't so yielding of its secrets. There are two old men here, neither of which was interested in the ephemeral, and whose stories told in conjunction have a depth, like layers of shellac, that goes beyond the shiny surface of the written text. You'll have to decide on your own when to pause and reflect, when to recall what you know of history, of geography, of the cultures that might illuminate or be illuminated by the story. If you simply turn the page without asking, you'll only get the passive story.

This is not a book for the impatient reader.

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## Xαρ? Z. says

\_Travels with Herodotus\_

What an amazing journey that was <3. I enjoyed this, i loved this and i hoped it would never end. I wanted more of it.

This book was really interesting. Its structure was beautiful following two stories. One was Herodotus' trek to the lengths of that era's world and the actual author's journey as a reporter and a war correspondent in this era's world.

Some parts of the book are autobiographical. And so, so vivid. He only gives us small glimpses of the places he visited but he does it in such an expressive way. He was in India at first. I felt, i smelled, i could see India in front of me. I travelled with him. Then he was sent to China. The same feeling, that i was there with him, strolling on the Great Wall.

What i really liked about it is that he is not trying to analyze Herodotus. It's more of a process of externalization of his inner thoughts and feelings about him. Seeking answers about him as a person, as a human being.

And at some points he is presenting to us parts of the Greek Historian's work. When he does that his narrative is flat, like it should be. His main goal is to give us Herodotus and his stories and the author is just there in the corner, possessing elegance and discreteness. He is there just to pass the stories to us. He is not the protagonist, the protagonist is Herodotus.

He knows when to give us much and he knows when to give us less. He is letting the substance of the story to be the story itself and not him or his writing style. He knows when to give us something of his. He is granting us with exactly what we need, when we need it. He has the capacity to move from present to past and vice versa without affecting the flow of his narrative.

I mean, i travelled from the battles of the Persian Empire to the coup in Algeria.

That was just amazing and awesome and i highly recommend :D. I will definitely read more of Mr.

Kapuscinski in the future for sure :D

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## Jim says

This, the last book by its author, is one of a kind. It is merely by chance that, earlier this month, I re-read Herodotus's **Histories**, so it is so fresh in my mind that I recognized most of the quotes from the 5th century B.C. Greek historian instantly.

But what if I had *not* read Herodotus recently? Then this would be a rather boring work, an extended commentary on someone with whom I was not familiar.

Kapuscinski and Herodotus shared many traits in common. Both had traveled the world (as they knew it) from one end to the other. Just by chance, before the Polish journalist left on his first foreign journey -- to India -- a colleague had handed him a copy of the **Histories** to take with him as reading material. (That unnamed editor was unknowingly his great benefactor.)

Over the decades of his long career and across many thousands of miles, the book became Kapuscinski's *vade mecum*. He referred to it constantly and constantly saw parallels between the Persians and Greeks and all the other peoples involved with them during the upheavals of that time, with the post-colonial turmoils in Africa and Asia of our own time.

In the end, reading Herodotus helped Kapuscinski become one of the great travel writers and foreign correspondents of the twentieth century. Toward the end, he concludes:

There is no way around this divergence of purpose and means [i.e., between the objective and subjective viewpoints]. We can try to minimize or mitigate it, but we will never approach the objective ideal. The subjective factor, its deforming presence, will remain impossible to strain out. Herodotus expresses an awareness of this predicament, constantly qualifying what he reports: "as they tell me," "as they maintain," "they present this in various ways," etc. In fact, though, however evolved our methods, we are never in the presence of unmediated history, but of history recounted, presented, history as it appeared to someone, as he or she believes it to have been. This has been the nature of the enterprise always, and the folly may be to believe one can resist it.

This fact is perhaps Herodotus's greatest discovery.

Earlier, he says:

The first to realize the world's essential multiplicity was Herodotus. "We are not alone," he tells Greeks in his opus, and to prove this he undertakes his journeys to the ends of the earth. "We have neighbors, they in turn have their neighbors, and all together we populate a single planet."

As one who envies Kapuscinski for his many great books about his travels, and as one who has read Herodotus twice (for apparently good reason, and now I know why), I can see that I could form a similar attachment to the Greek historian.

The first time I read Herodotus, I was a Freshman in Ned Nabors's class on Greek Literature in Translation at Dartmouth College. I was in my teens then and dreamed of a life of travel. I have traveled to many places, but something in me keeps saying, "Not enough!" I think, next time, I will take Herodotus with me.

## Beth Bonini says

Years ago, I remember reading *The English Patient* and becoming aware, for the first time, of Herodotus. In that book, the character of Katharine Clifton was reading Herodotus's *Histories*. I've still not read Herodotus, but after having read this book -- which is full of references and quoted text from what Kapuscinski describes as "world literature's first great work of reportage"-- I fully understand why it was such a apt choice of reading material for an English woman trapped in Cairo during WWII. Herodotus writes about the constant state of war in the ancient world, of power-mad rulers and the clash between East and West, Muslim and Christian. It must have put the 20th century cataclysm into some sort of context. As bad as it was, it was nothing the world hadn't seen before. There's always some megalomaniac determined on conquering other people and their resources.

This is a far-ranging book in which the Polish journalist travels the world and learns his trade -- all the time musing on the lessons of Herodotus (how to observe people with interest and curiosity, and then to report objectively on those observations). The book begins with his impoverished childhood in post-war Communist Poland and then follows his travels in a rather rambling fashion -- from India to the Middle East to Africa. Much of the book takes place in the post-colonial period, as those ancient countries are throwing off their European rulers and struggling to redefine themselves. All the while, Kapuscinski -- cut off from home, family, native language -- cleaves to Herodotus as a fellow traveller attempting to make sense of the world.

I doubt that I will ever bother to read Herodotus in the original, and I certainly won't go to most (if not all) the countries that Kapuscinski visits in this book, but as an "armchair traveller" I enjoyed my exposure to far-off lands.

## Jimmy says

Sometimes here on Goodreads I'll read a review that combines an actual review of the book and a personal narrative (where the reviewer might tell you a story of how they came upon the book, or some experience they had a while ago that has parallels to the book they are reviewing). The strategy has its advantages, and it usually at least makes for an entertaining read.

Reading *Travels with Herodotus* was like reading such a book review about *The Histories* by Herodotus. But much longer.

Ryszard Kapuscinski alternates between telling his story as an upstart young journalist and re-telling stories from *The Histories*. Sometimes he even dedicates entire chapters to summarizing wars and other happenings, often directly quoting Herodotus himself for pages on end. Because I have not read Herodotus, I found these chapters interesting. But if I had read him, these chapters would have little meaning. Why not just read the original? I did feel a little guilty when reading this, as if I were reading the cliff notes version of this classic text.

The parts about his own experiences were also a little disappointing in that they often didn't add up to much. They were entertaining, but didn't seem that significant. I understand that he is trying to show us what he learned about journalism through Herodotus, but most of these lessons are so basic and simple (check your sources, try to go behind the story, remain objective, etc.) that it is anti-climactic. Also, he often makes the same points over and over again.

Even worse, I think a lot of what he praises in Herodotus might just be what he *wants* to see in Herodotus. It's pretty hard to get a clear picture of how someone reported on events thousands of years ago, so I don't blame him for using his imagination in this respect. However, I don't always buy it.

For instance, he spends many chapters talking about how Herodotus would check his sources, or he would explore the questions himself through travel, or that he wouldn't always believe what his sources said. This is based solely on the fact that Herodotus used phrases such as "This is what I heard..." and "[nobody] I have spoken to claimed to have a definite answer..." and "there is no reliable information to be had about it" (p. 104) etc.

But after stressing this point many times, Kapuscinski goes on to talk about a village that according to Herodotus resorted to strangling almost all their own women in order to win a strategic war. Kapuscinski questions this sentence for two or three pages, asking questions like 'this must've been a huge massacre, where did they store the bodies? what did the women think when they found out the men decided to do this? was there a rebellion? were there men who didn't want to carry out with the plan?' (not verbatim, I couldn't find the exact quote). But then he says that all Herodotus recorded was "And then the women were strangled" or something short like that. All those details fall to the side. Why didn't Herodotus tell us more? Why weren't these questions asked in the original *Histories*? What does it say about Herodotus that he just skipped over these points? Kapuscinski remains silent on this point.

Another example:

"[Herodotus] calculates that this army--infantry, cavalry, and naval crews--numbered some five million men. He exaggerates, of course." (p. 198)

So here we have Herodotus obviously exaggerating, and Kapuscinski is just mentioning it offhand instead of

saying "OK let's re-examine what I said earlier about Herodotus's flawless methods of journalism". No, he just mentions it as if it's totally OK, a minor quibble. Of course, I don't blame Herodotus: he was one of our first recorders of history, so kudos to him for at least trying. But I found it kind of disingenuous for Kapuscinski to hold Hero(dotus) up as this gold standard, and then ignore everything that doesn't fit into his theory.

Overall, this book was an entertaining and easy read, and it exposed me to Herodotus whom I've never read before, so that's definitely a plus. Even taking into account the book's many flaws, it's still generally well written, and I'm willing to venture out and read another one of his books.

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## Daren says

This was Ryszard Kapu?ci?ski's last book, written shortly before he died in 2007.

It is a work of retrospect - he isn't writing about recent events, or his recent thoughts, but writes about his own past and ties it to a book which inspired him - The Histories, by Herodotus.

It is a book written from a position of knowledge, often about the times where he was far from knowledgeable - a young Polish journalist, sent from the recently opened East to India - a place he had no former knowledge of, and similarly to China - where he was no longer welcome due to a political change which occurred the day he arrived - although the Chinese left him to work this out.

He was given a copy of Herodotus' newly translated (into Polish) book as a gift on the eve of his first departure from Poland, and it was a travelling partner for him over the years, and as well as analysis of the book, and drawing inspiration for his reportage, he feels an affinity with the author.

The writing is a combination of his experiences (albeit a short version of most) in India, China and Africa, amongst other places, and his retelling, or examination of The Histories, where he draws comparison and takes lessons from the writing of Herodotus.

As other reviews point out the writing is, at times, a little self indulgent, but some of the anecdotes are wonderfully written, and some of the points are poignant enough to overcome this.

I have only read one excerpt book of Kapu?ci?ski's before - The Cobra's Heart - and enjoyed that a lot (5 stars). I will be keeping an eye out for more of his work.

For this book - 4 Stars for me.

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## Quân Khuê says

Ch? có ??c l?i m?i ?áng k? - m?t nhà nào ?ó ?ã nói v? vi?c ??c sách, chính xác l?i là "??c l?i sách", nh? th?.

M?t nhà nào ?ó khác ?ã nói, n?u m?t cu?n sách không x?ng ?áng ?? ??c l?i, thì m?c m?i gì ph?i c?m nó lên và ??c l?n ??u tiên.

Tôi, m?t m?t "quán tri?t" nh?ng l?i thông thái trên; m?t khác do tính ham c?a l? nên hay ??c t? tung, tuy v?y h?ng n?m ??u dành th?i gian ?? ??c l?i m?t s? cu?n mà tôi th?y ?áng ?? ??c l?i. Hi?n, tôi ?ang ??c l?i cu?n Du hành cùng Herodotus c?a nhà báo Ba Lan Ryszard Kapu?ci?ski, qua b?n d?ch t? ti?ng Ba Lan c?a Nguy?n Thái Linh.

H?i ??c l?n ??u n?m 2009, t?i c? n?i ??u ?? r?ng n?u b?n ch? ??c m?t cu?n du ký duy nh?t thì n?n ??c cu?n này. Gi? ??c l?i, t?i th?y g?i cu?n này là du ký e có ph?n l?m l?c. T?i không có v?n ?? v?i th? lo?i du ký, nh?ng có v? nh?ng cu?n xu?t s?c nh?t trong th? lo?i này ??u ??ng trên, v??t ra ngoài th? lo?i. Ngoài ra, du ký nh?t là ? Vi?t Nam g?n ?ây h?u nh? ai c?ng vi?t ???c. ?i m?t tí, ng? nghiêng m?t tí, wiki m?t tí, thêm vài chuy?n nh?ng nhít ng? ng?, là l? th? ?ã thành sách du ký r?i. Vì v?y, t?i không mu?n g?i Du hành cùng Herodotus là du ký n?a.

V?y n?n g?i nó là gì? T?i th?y nó là m?t bài review sách kh?ng l?, ch?a ??ng m?t kh?i t? mò kh?ng l?. Vâng, ?úng là trong cu?n sách này, RK s? d?n ta ??n ?n ??, Trung Hoa, Ai C?p, Congo và r?t nhi?u ??a danh khác .v.v.. Nh?ng ph?n quan tr?ng nh?t c?a cu?n sách là nh?ng trang review cu?n S? ký c?a Herodotus, giúp ta gi?n ti?p ??c cu?n sách ?t là k? thú này.

Cách làm c?a RK là nh?n nha l?t m?t trang S? ký, chép l?i cho chúng ta vài ?o?n, và r?i ??t ra vô s? câu h?i, h?t nh? m?t c?u bé có óc t? mò vô h?n. Ch?ng h?n nh?, RK thu?t l?i chuy?n Herodotus k? v? ng??i Babylon ch?ng l?i ng??i Ba T?, ?? làm vi?c ?ó, ng??i Babylon ??ng ý v?i nhau là b?p ng?t các thành viên n? trong gia ?ình, tr? m? và m?t ng??i mà h? ph?i ch?n, ?? ti?t ki?m th?c ph?m trong công cu?c ch?ng ng??i Ba T?. H? bàn b?c v?i nhau nh? th? nào? có ai b?t ??ng không? có ai phát ?iên không? làm th? nào h? ch?n b?p ng?t v? hay con gái, bà hay em gái? r?i h? x? lý xác nh? th? nào, nh?ng vài ch?c ngàn xác ng??i cùng m?t lúc? b?p ng?t xong r?i, h? c?m th?y nh? th? nào? RK s? ??t ra nh?ng câu h?i nh? th?, xuyên su?t cu?n sách. Du hành cùng Herodotus do ?ó là t?p h?p c?a c? hàng tr?m câu h?i, nh?ng câu h?i n?i ti?p nhau không có câu tr? l?i?

T?i nh?t ???c r?t nhi?u th? trong l?n ??c l?i này. Có quá nhi?u th? hay ho, quá nhi?u th? g?i suy ngh?. T?i th?m chí ngh? n?u các t?ng th?ng M? ?ã ??c cu?n này thì h? s? không làm tan hoang Iraq hay Syrie, b?i giá tr? c?a m?t nhà ??c tài mà cu?n sách có nh?c t?i, trong khi trích d?n Herodotus.

Sách in n?m 2009, không bi?t ngoài ti?m có còn không. N?u ai ch?a có n?n tìm mà ??c; n?u có mà ch?a ??c thì ??c ?i, không ph?i h?i ti?c ?âu.

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## Lyn Elliott says

Curiosity about humanity permeates this book, an interweaving of memoir, readings and reflection. Listening, recording, acute observation, inquiring, wanting to understand what was happening in the present and the past drove both Herodotus and Kapu?ci?ski, 2500 years apart.

Ryszard Kapu?ci?ski's career as a Polish reporter posted in foreign countries began in India, followed by China then Africa. India was his first encounter with otherness, the experience of a different world. It was then he realized that cultures don't easily reveal their mysteries; 'one has to prepare oneself thoroughly and at length for such encounters'.

A colleague gave him Herodotus to take with him on his first journey, the beginning of a life-long companionship.

In India, Kapu?ci?ski was 'cast into deep water ...didn't want to drown... realized that only language could save him and started to think about how Herodotus, wandering the world, had dealt with foreign languages'. In Herodotus' world Greek was widely spoken. Now, it was English and Kapu?ci?ski set out to learn it, using Hemingway, an 1816 guide to Hindu manners and customs, street signs, anything to develop the language. He realized that he was only seeing and remembering things for which he knew the names, and that 'the more words I knew, the richer, the fuller, and more variegated would be the world that opened before me and which I could capture'.

He recounts his difficulties as a young man raised in 'the spirit of brotherhood and individual equality', appalled by servitude of any sort, coming to grips with India, where emaciated men waited to carry him in rickshaws and where sewing on a shirt button would be to deprive someone of a job.

After a brief return to Poland, his next assignment was to China, where the brief period of openness between the 'Let One Hundred Flowers Bloom' campaign and The Great Leap Forward froze over very rapidly and his activities were tightly circumscribed. China's walls led him to reflect:

A wall protects against outsiders and helps control those inside. It is 'simultaneously a shield and a trap, a veil and a cage'. Its worst aspect 'is to turn so many people into its defenders and produce a mental attitude that sees a wall running through everything, imagines the world as being divided into an evil and inferior part, on the outside, and a good and superior part, on the inside. A keeper of the wall need not be in close proximity to it; he can be far away and it is enough that he carry within himself its image and pledge allegiance to the logical principles that the wall dictates....With each passing day I thought of the Great Wall more and more as the Great Metaphor' (p59-61).

Daunted by the mighty Asian civilisations he knew he could barely begin to understand, Africa began to draw his attention. Africa was 'more fragmentary, differentiated, miniaturized by its multiplicity, and thus more graspable, approachable'. In Africa, he begins to realise the importance of developing an understanding of what underlies catastrophe and destruction, not just to report the moments of explosion. He began to reach out and talk to people, to observe, to read – to use the Herodotus model, traveling and experiencing what he could.

Kapu?ci?ski connects his readings of Herodotus to his own career – how did Herodotus conduct his enquiries? What sources did he use? How would he have traveled, who would he have talked to, where did he tell his stories –who was the audience? He sees Herodotus as the first to realise the world's 'essential multiplicity', which came as a gradual learning process for Kapu?ci?ski.

Herodotus is a story teller who knows the rules of the market place, includes a bit of spice. He is endlessly curious, like Kapu?ci?ski himself. Why are things different from place to place? Where do beliefs (eg in gods) come from?

Herodotus had a mighty purpose: 'to prevent the traces of human events from being erased by time, and to preserve the fame of the important and remarkable achievements produced by both Greeks and non-Greeks...in particular, the cause of the hostilities between Greeks and non-Greeks.'(p74). Why is the world split between East and West? Why do the two worlds fight each other unto the death?

The first crime is the abduction of a woman. Revenge abductions, raids, murders, theft and war. Cycles of crime and punishment, injustice and revenge follow each other, and humiliated people will subsist on dreams of revenge. 'As it is in relations between individuals, so it is between nations. Whoever starts a war, and therefore, in Herodotus' opinion, commits a crime, will be revenged upon and punished, be it immediately or after the passage of time. This relation, this inexorable pairing, is the very essence of fate, the meaning of irreversible destiny' in this ancient world.

Extracts from Herodotus appear throughout the book. Kapu?ci?ski both retells his narrative of the Greco-Persian wars and interrogates it. For instance, he asks, how could the Babylonian men decide to strangle all women except one in their households to conserve supplies during a siege? Which men decided? Who did the killing? Did the men kill the women in their own families? Their daughters? The women would have known what was to happen. The children? And after Babylon's eventual fall, Darius orders that 50,000 women from nearby peoples be gathered into the city to rebuild the population. All related without remark by Herodotus, but Kapu?ci?ski is, and we are, appalled.

Kapu?ci?ski regards them both as reporters who depend on encounters with other people: 'reportage is

perhaps the form of writing most reliant on the collective' (p177). In Herodotus' time there was no other form of communication but direct personal contact, a culture of oral transmission, relying heavily on memory. He knows memory is fragile, unreliable but collects, is open about uncertainties, tells a good story even when he knows it's fantasy, for instance 'about the Neurians' ability to turn themselves into wolves: Personally I do not believe this, but they make the claim despite its implausibility, and even swear that they are telling the truth.'

Inquiring into the present and the past relating what sources tell you even if you doubt what they say, recognizing diverse viewpoints, seeking the truth in so far as it can be known, these are connections that Kapuscinski regards as the greatest legacy of Herodotus values and sought in his own work.

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## Zaara says

Every journey begins with a reckoning, a stocktaking, an analysis of where one is. And each trip consists of two parts: the inner journey and the outer one. This book of travel/reportage/historical commentary/philosophy/anthropology is no different. Only it contains several trips. Or perhaps just one BIG trip. Depends on how you want to look at it, I guess.

In fact, I hesitate to use the word 'book' after my motley categorization. This is more a collection of images accompanied by the patchwork musings of a mind at once extremely curious, intensely empathetic, and infinitely wondering about the way things were and are.

It would be more accurate if I were to call *Travels with Herodotus* a coil of rope woven with double strands. These twin strands are inescapable and everywhere in the narrative – past and present, myth and reality, war and peace, nature and civilization, East and West (yes, I use the capitals consciously), and the lives of kings and ordinary people. And above and beneath, inside and outside it all are the shadow twins Herodotus and the author himself.

But this is not merely a study in duality or paradox. It also a longlist of running questions. Of putting oneself in different spaces, places and times. Perhaps this is a given with any book in this genre, but distinguished journalist Kapuscinski's sometimes jarring leaps across the pages of world history (both current and ancient) evoke feelings that you instinctively understand in childhood but forget as you grow older. They say nobody ever 'loses' their inner child. The author himself understands this.

*"Only children pose important questions and truly want to discover things,"* he says.

And during his variegated questing and questioning one can see the boy who became the man/traveler/reporter/writer who never really lost that cloud-castle building self. A boy who, like all boys, once played with wooden soldiers and paper boats.

More than once Kapuscinski appears wistful for old times, lost eras, a more communal sense of living, a less rushed pace. He is more gripped by the colours of ancient myths and ceremonies and the bloodthirstiness of conflicts thousands of years old than by the immediacy of the time and place he is in. He is wearied by the present and says so himself in several instances.

*"Everything in the present keeps repeating itself."*

The narrative intersperses difficult, timeless, and often tectonic questions and observations with startlingly simple answers, stories, and opinions. These are presented across tangential thought lines and images both vibrant and muted. Though this is in no sense a 'difficult' read, at times I could literally feel my mind bulging. Mostly though I could feel the ancient certainty within me roar, with an approval born of that nameless knowledge which is shared by all humanity.

This is a book you can dip into now and then, reading a chapter or even part of one. It is not necessarily a sequential read.

And it should have had five stars since it more than deserves it. But I am a piddling, critical, human reviewer who sometimes found the leaps between past and present too jerky (he is reluctant to leave the old and only too eager to leave the new), certain thought trails too hastily dismissed (child-like abandonment of one thing for another), some outlines not fully delineated (he is TOO intensely interested in TOO many things ALL at once). This sometimes leaves me bereft and wanting as a reader.

But let me say this – this ‘book’ is a questing beyond the stars. To the HOW of being human. And sometimes...just sometimes...to the WHY.

Deep respect, Ryszard, wherever you are.

PS - Whenever I read a translation I always ask: perhaps the faults in this book could be due to the translation. I was reading in English, translated from the Polish original but on the whole, in this case, I think not. The prose is too honest and yet too lyrical and just ‘too Ryszard’ to be anything but faithful. Kudos to Klara Glowczewska.

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## Martine says

I love travelogues. I love classical antiquity. So I really expected to enjoy Ryszard Kapuscinski's *Travels with Herodotus*, an attempt to mix modern literary reportage with the writings of one of the greatest travelling reporters of all time, Herodotus. Sadly, however, the book was a bit of letdown. The old and new stuff didn't blend well, so the final result, while occasionally poignant and insightful, was a little underwhelming.

Maybe I went in with the wrong expectations. When I bought the book, I was expecting it to be something like *Travels with a Tangerine: A Journey in the Footnotes of Ibn Battutah*, a frightfully erudite book with quotes so absurd that they frequently made me howl with laughter (in public, which was rather embarrassing). *Travels with a Tangerine* is a very focused author's attempt to follow in the footsteps of Ibn Battutah, visiting the places the great fourteenth-century Arab traveller visited and trying to recreate the experiences he had there. It is a genuinely interesting, genuinely insightful and ever so entertaining book. I naively assumed *Travels with Herodotus* would be a similar read, only focusing on the places Herodotus described: Persia, Egypt, Eastern Europe, etc. Sadly, Kapuscinski took a different approach. *Travels with Herodotus* is not an attempt to retrace Herodotus' steps (admittedly a tall order, as Herodotus was probably the best-travelled man of his age, or many another age for that matter). Rather it is a loving tribute to the book Ryszard Kapuscinski, a Polish foreign correspondent working in Africa and Asia for most of the second half of the twentieth century, calls his greatest inspiration, his main source of sustenance and his favourite travelling companion: Herodotus' *Histories*. In between recollections of his own travels, many of them beautifully written, Kapuscinski quotes from the *Histories*, analysing Herodotus' method and explaining how it came to shape his own views of the world and travel reportage. Sometimes the quotes are tenuously linked with places Kapuscinski himself visited or historical events Kapuscinski himself witnessed, but most of the time they seem randomly chosen, with nary an attempt at contextualisation or analysis. In the end, I grew rather weary of this method. I found myself increasingly skipping the Herodotus quotes, not because they were dull (they weren't), but because I failed to see their relevance to Kapuscinski's muddled narrative. I finished the book thinking I would rather have read Herodotus without Kapuscinski's asides, or Kapuscinski's memoirs without his constant digressions on Herodotus. Judging from other reviews of the book, I'm not the only reader who feels this way.

It's a pity Kapuscinski chose such an ill-thought-out approach to his last book, because when he is not losing himself in overambitious homage, he is a fine writer. *Travels with Herodotus* contains some excellent reportage, most of it dealing with the African countries where Kapuscinski spent a considerable part of his life. Like Herodotus before him, Kapuscinski is an objective reporter who seldom judges the people he meets

(even when they rob him). Also like Herodotus, he has an eye for telling detail, recounting small stories as well as monumental ones, and often instead of monumental ones. His Socialist background adds an interesting touch. And he does really understand the subjects he is dealing with. On the rare occasions when he does go into analysis, he makes interesting observations on life and politics in developing countries, observations of which Herodotus himself would be proud. Unfortunately, however, most of the analyses and anecdotes recounted in *Travels with Herodotus* are too fragmented and disjointed to be truly memorable or insightful. They focus so much on isolated moments in Kapuscinski's travels that they fail to provide an insight into the greater picture. There are some great anecdotes in the book, but since they don't really go anywhere, they ultimately leave the reader unsatisfied. I myself ended up feeling that I would have liked to read more about Kapuscinski's time in the Sudan than merely his recollection of a Louis Armstrong concert he attended there, and more about his experiences in civil-war-era Congo than just his nerve-racking meeting with two soldiers who walked up to him all menacingly, only to humbly ask him for a cigarette. I also would have liked to read more about his experiences in 1960 Egypt (which was just then in the grips of an anti-alcohol campaign) than his nervous attempt to get rid of an empty beer bottle while being watched by people who might well be police informants. Because as evocative as these anecdotes are (they are!), they don't tell the whole story of the place and the age, nor even a tenth of it. They are fragmented impressions -- interesting and well-written, but fragmented nonetheless. In short, I guess I'll have to read some of Ryszard Kapuscinski's *other* books to find out why he is considered one of the greatest reporters of the twentieth century. I'm sure he has written books in which he does go into detail, sticks to the topic at hand and really *reports*, rather than leisurely recounting disjointed memories. Unfortunately, *Travels with Herodotus* isn't one of them.

As for Herodotus, I'll obviously have to reread his *Histories*, for whatever the shortcomings of *Travels with Herodotus*, it did most definitely whet my appetite for more Herodotus.

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## Bettie? says

Description: *From the master of literary reportage whose acclaimed books include Shah of Shahs, The Emperor, and The Shadow of the Sun, an intimate account of his first youthful forays beyond the Iron Curtain.*

*Just out of university in 1955, Kapuscinski told his editor that he'd like to go abroad. Dreaming no farther than Czechoslovakia, the young reporter found himself sent to India. Wide-eyed and captivated, he would discover in those days his life's work—to understand and describe the world in its remotest reaches, in all its multiplicity. From the rituals of sunrise at Persepolis to the incongruity of Louis Armstrong performing before a stone-faced crowd in Khartoum, Kapuscinski gives us the non-Western world as he first saw it, through still-virginal Western eyes.*

*The companion on his travels: a volume of Herodotus, a gift from his first boss. Whether in China, Poland, Iran, or the Congo, it was the “father of history”—and, as Kapuscinski would realize, of globalism—who helped the young correspondent to make sense of events, to find the story where it did not obviously exist. It is this great forerunner's spirit—both supremely worldly and innately Occidental—that would continue to whet Kapuscinski's ravenous appetite for discovering the broader world and that has made him our own indispensable companion on any leg of that perpetual journey.*

**Opening: Before Herodotus sets out on his travels, ascending rocky paths, sailing a ship over the seas, riding on horseback through the wilds of Asia; before he happens upon the mistrustful Scythians, discovers the wonders of Babylon, and plumbs the mysteries of the Nile; before he experiences a**

**hundred different places and sees a thousand inconceivable things, he will appear for a moment in a lecture on ancient Greece, which Professor Bie?u?ska-Malowist delivers twice weekly to the first-year students in Warsaw University's department of history.**

The best part of this book is where us readers get a glimpse at the times when Kapu?ci?ski is setting out on his fledgling career

*Herodotus's opus appeared in the bookstores in 1955. Two years had passed since Stalin's death. The atmosphere became more relaxed, people breathed more freely. Ilya Ehrenburg's novel 'The Thaw' had just appeared, its title lending itself to the new epoch just beginning. Literature seemed to be everything then. People looked to it for the strength to live, for guidance, for revelation.*

I overheard a conversation in the adjoining room and recognized Mario's voice. I would find out later that it was a discussion about how to dress me, seeing as how I had arrived sporting fashions à la Warsaw Pact 1956. I had a suit of Cheviot wool in sharp, gray-blue stripes—a double-breasted jacket with protruding, angular shoulders and overly long, wide trousers with large cuffs. I had a pale-yellow nylon shirt with a green plaid tie. Finally, the shoes—massive loafers with thick, stiff soles.

Here he is, in his yellow shirt!

First stop Delhi, where Kapu?ci?ski starts to learn English via a secondhand Hemmingway picked up in a bazaar, then a trip to Benares to catch the sunrise from the steps.

At Sealdah train station, Calcutta, Kapu?ci?ski encounters poverty and distress that beggars belief:

*They were refugees from a civil war, which ended but a few years earlier, between Hindus and Muslims, a war which saw the birth of independent India and Pakistan and which resulted in hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of dead and many millions of refugees.*

At this point I mentally digress into the thought that it is everyone's duty on this speck of dust in the universe, to help other star children in every which way one can and leave the law to deal roundly with any criminals.

Hyderabad

It is blatantly clear to this reader now, and to K back then, that he was out of his depth when it came to informative, objective reporting at this early stage:

*Later I traveled to Madras and Bangalore, to Bombay and Chandigarh. In time I grew convinced of the depressing hopelessness of what I had undertaken, of the impossibility of*

*knowing and understanding the country in which I found myself. India was so immense. How can one describe something that is—and so it seemed to me—without boundaries or end?*

India was my first encounter with otherness, the discovery of a new world. It was at the same time a great lesson in humility. Yes, the world teaches humility. I returned from this journey embarrassed by my own ignorance, at how ill read I was. I realized then what now seems obvious: a culture would not reveal its mysteries to me at a mere wave of my hand; one has to prepare oneself thoroughly and at length for such an encounter.

So K comes home and bones up on English language, Herodotus, and all things culturally Indian, whereupon he is promptly sent to China! The result is the same, he is so overwhelmed at the vastness of the subject. How I would love to go back to that young man as he wrings his hands at his desk back in Poland, and whisper in his ear that not one ounce of travelling and research was wasted, for in a few years all you will draw upon this broadening of the mind to become one of the world's best known travel journalists.

And so our intrepid green-stick flies to Africa: Cairo, Khartoum, smokes a little ganga for the first time, goes to a Satchmo concert, then into the Congo, all the while reading Herodotus, which I now have a burning urge to revisit.

- 5\* The Shadow of the Sun
- 3\* Travels with Herodotus
- 4\* Imperium

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## **Kobe Bryant says**

I know its called Travels with Herodotus but there was too much Herodotus

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