

オンダーチェの『イギリス人の患者』と原爆

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Abstract. In Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, books play an important role. The patient's copy of Herodotus's *Histories*, which is twice as its original thickness with cuttings from other books glued into the text and his own writings in its margins, suggests a contrapuntal reading, to use Edward Said's terminology.

Rudyard Kipling's novel *Kim* is read by the two protagonists in the novel, and another character, Kirpal Singh, a young Sikh with the Royal Engineers, was created as a counterpart to Kim. The narrative of *Kim* echoes in that of *Kip* and invites readers to focus on the issue of identity and to reread *Kim* in a new perspective.

The peaceful life of the four expatriates in a near ruin in Florence, which Ondaatje calls an Eden, is destroyed by the news of the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. For *Kip* it symbolizes an undeniable striation which divides the world between East and West. It triggered him to question his identity as a sapper of Royal Army. By creating a counterpart to Kipling's *Kim*, Ondaatje succeeded in enhancing the issue of identity in the striated world, against which the patient fights all through his life.

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