or palliative scheme, whose one law is motion and instability expressed as the power of libertinage and manipulation, and whose only conclusion is the terminal repose provided by death."

The Said enthusiast knows that there are two Saids: one is the gutsy, abrasive, oppositional Arab-American critic of Orientalism and its reincarnation as US imperialism; and the other is the cerebral, suave comparatist trained in classical music and philology. If you are a Said aficionado and have been reading this review, you must be wondering if the first Said, known best for his seminal work *Orientalism*, is at all present in *On Late Style*. If that is the case, have no fear, for in his chapter on Jean Genet Said brings his Palestinian preoccupations to the fore in considering the works of the French playwright and novelist.

Said celebrates Genet, the author of *The Thief's Journal*, a work "in the antithetical mode," where this European writer views the Arab, not to exoticize him but to humanize him. In the book we have the rare thing: a western artist supporting the Palestinian resistance and writing about it and its heroes with great sympathy. For Said, Genet is his hero, because in his late work Genet persisted in being unfashionably tied to the cause of the Palestinians. Significantly, Said is also attracted to Genet because of his knowledge that Genet was dying as he was writing this book but was "determined to present death as a weightless and unchallenging thing."

To Said, both Lampudesa's *Leopard* and Luchino Visconti's film version of the novel are tinged with the melancholy of lateness; nevertheless, novel and film represent the waning of aristocracy unsentimentally and pessimistically. The novelist (and the filmmaker too!) works through a technique of unsparing realism, taking a subject apparently ripe for nostalgic *Gone with the Wind* kind of treatment, but treating it ironically and with "scrupulous fidelity" to the truth. Like Adorno, the fixed point of the compass to which Said turns throughout the book in meditating on late style, Lampudesa and Visconti appeared to have arrived at old age wanting "none of its supposed serenity or maturity, or any of its amiability or official ingratiation," opting instead to build a "platform for alternative and unregimented modes of subjectivity" in their winter of discontent.

In Glenn Gould, Said celebrates the virtuoso performer whose rendition of Bach was provocative, exciting, and eccentric. "Aggressing," as Said puts it, Gould goes against audience expectation to enter "a discursive realm where performance and demonstration present an argument about intellectual liberation and critique...radically at odds with the aesthetic of performance as understood and accepted by the modern concert audience." Not satiated by such provocation, Said recalls how, in the last phase of his life, Gould withdrew from public performance to the recording studio to become even more transgressive in his interpretations of Bach, penetrating his score with "idiosyncratic subjectivity" if only to get to the heart of "Bach's creativity."

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Michael Wood's editing of Said's unfinished manuscript is so good that not till the last chapter can one find in it any evidence of its incompleteness. But the final chapter of the book, titled (I think) by Wood "Glimpses of Late Style" and put together from four different pieces of writing, is a bit too miscellaneous in its content. One finds Said moving in it too rapidly from Euripides to productions of his work by the French director Ariane Mnouchkine and the Swedish genius Ingmar Bergman, and from the Greek-Alexandrian poet Constantine Cavafy to Thomas Mann's *Death of Venice* and Benjamin Britten's opera based on it. Nevertheless, Said's essential point is clear throughout the chapter; he is, as everywhere else, celebrating late styles occasioned by exile or terminal situations that have in common "remarkable inventiveness and lapidary calm."

One must be thankful to Wood for painstakingly putting the book together, and for his subtle introduction where he provides its context and points out how the dying Said took up the theme of lateness as a gesture of resistance. Wood is particularly insightful in commenting that the book was left unfinished not because Said ran out of time but because he did not want to pull down the curtain, irrevocably, on his life. As Wood puts it: "For all his deep interest in lateness and his awareness of the shortage of his own time, Said was not attracted by the idea of a late, dissolving self."

As is true of all of Said's major works -- one thinks here of *Orientalism; The World, the Text, and the Critic; Culture and Imperialism; Representations of the Intellectual* and *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* -- *On Late Style* is sure to get its readers thinking. After all, the strength of Said's criticism has always been its power to stimulate and provoke. To provide just one example, for a Bengali reader the book can lead to a heightened appreciation of Rabindranath's paintings. Surely, there can be few better instances of late style, of work that is profoundly original, *disturbed* and expressive and that goes against everything one had come to expect from the lyrical poet, the God-saturated visionary and builder of institutions, than the haunting paintings Rabindranath began to compose late in his life. Said's book on late style can thus lead to a more profound appreciation of other writers and artists, including those in our own tradition.

Dr Fakrul Alam *is Professor of English, University of Dhaka.*