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## **NOSTALGIA AND THE AILING BODY IN NADEEM ASLAM'S *MAPS FOR LOST LOVERS***

Focusing on a small immigrant community in contemporary England, Nadeem Aslam's *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004) narrates the pain and loneliness of cultural isolation and (self-)ghettoization in a cosmopolitanised reality. In that context, Aslam explores nostalgia as a common aspect of the experience of migration, supplying the minutest details of a mingled sense of loss and longing, which translates into physical pain and traps the community in a system of values and expectations that belong in another world. Relying on twenty-first-century cosmopolitan theory and studies of the body, both physical and social, this article wishes to analyse the ailing body as a consequence of falling prey to nostalgia. By examining both the suffering maternal body and body social, it intends to demonstrate how nostalgia can impede adaptation and stand in the way of cosmopolitanism.

*Key words:* body, cosmopolitanism, *Maps for Lost Lovers*, migration, Nadeem Aslam, nostalgia

Nadeem Aslam's novel *Maps for Lost Lovers* (2004), a moving feat of violent yet lyrical prose, records the story of a small working-class immigrant community in contemporary England. As the mystery of a sudden disappearance of two lovers gradually unfolds, the narrative paints a detailed picture of an individual and communal sense of cultural displacement that characterises migrant experience. Charged with profound emotion, Aslam's text brilliantly captures how it feels to be caught between vastly different cultural values and expectations, and composes a eulogy for the natural world and an elegy for what has been lost: home, stability, love, and sense of self. Focusing on a group of Pakistani immigrants, settled in the bleak and aptly named town of Dasht-e-Tanhaii (the Wilderness of Solitude or the Desert of Loneliness), Aslam examines how cultural isolation and nostalgia, experienced "in terms of longing and desire" (Walder, 2011: 4), or grief, translate into the emotional and physical suffering of the physical body and the social body, while also disrupting cross-cultural communication and hindering cosmopolitanism. As such, the novel

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can, of course, be read as postcolonial, but the present article mostly sets aside specifically postcolonial concerns and examines migration and nostalgia within theories of the body and contemporary cosmopolitanism.

The experience of migration is precisely what provided the context for the first usage of nostalgia as a term in a 1688 medical dissertation by Johannes Hofer, who “attempted to describe and name a condition he had observed among young Swiss abroad” (Walder, 2011: 8), a condition that has continued to bear the name of nostalgia, although it has largely been dissociated from its medicalised and pathologised initial connotations. As vague and diverse as nostalgia can be, Aslam’s text associates it with migration and a pervading sense of loss in order to demonstrate what it means and how it feels to be a migrant trapped between tradition and modernity, the old and new worlds, as well as the host society’s cosmopolitan sentiments, on one hand, and persistent racism and xenophobia on the other. Expectedly, *Maps for Lost Lovers* explores the many ambiguities and conflicts of migration, as well as (self-)ghettoization, loneliness and nostalgia through different generations of immigrants, whose levels of adaptation differ. Therefore, the examined rift, the in-between space that they occupy, is not only that between the cultures, values and expectations of the old world and those of the new, but also one between parents and children. In the context of a culture that is particularly demanding on women, who bear the burden of tradition, as we see in Aslam’s novel, it is the maternal body that suffers because of it the most. However, this article intends to show that personal pain and concerns cannot be separated from the communal, nor can the ailing physical and social body be considered without the larger social context, which is characterised by the opposed forces of cultural isolation and cosmopolitanisation.

Aslam’s novel was published only three years after 9/11 had questioned any naïve idea of a mutually tolerant and harmonious cosmopolitan coexistence. Ulrich Beck, Berthold Schoene and Paul Gilroy are among theorists who point out that, in the aftermath of 9/11, contemporary cosmopolitanism has become decidedly realistic: aware of both threats and opportunities in a globally connected world. This post-9/11 variant of cosmopolitanism is variously defined as an “attitude and disposition”, “a strategy of resistance” (Schoene, 2010: 2, 5), “a new conceptual framework to understand the interconnectivity of the world and go beyond national frames of reference” (Delanty, 2009: 3), “a set of projects toward planetary conviviality” (Mignolo, 2002: 157), and “the defining feature of a new era [...] in which national borders and differences are dissolving and must be renegotiated” (Beck, 2006: 2). The concept suggests planetary interconnectedness and an urgent

need for mutual solidarity and responsibility, emphasising that we are connected by both access to opportunity and vulnerability to threat. Our thoroughly cosmopolitanised reality – understood as “latent cosmopolitanism, *unconscious* cosmopolitanism, *passive* cosmopolitanism which shapes reality as side effects of global trade or global threats such as climate change, terrorism or financial crises” (Beck, 2006: 19) – is not without flaws. Any genuinely cosmopolitan sentiment or act is daily contradicted by an increase in racism, xenophobia, nationalism, and a lack of “distributive *justice*” (Tan, 2004: 19) worldwide, and by what can be called a cosmopolitan pose, characterised by a wish to *appear* cosmopolitan (liberal, democratic, tolerant) without *acting* as a cosmopolitan. For all its insistence on solidarity, empathy and justice, even cosmopolitan theory, which for the most part combines sociological, political, literary, philosophical, and cultural approaches, has its limitations. It occasionally reinforces the West/rest binary by promoting the West’s superiority in areas such as human rights or multiculturalism, and makes uncosmopolitan claims, such as Gerard Delanty’s blatant assertion about migrants’ potential in Europe, which reduces the migrant to a body that is understood solely in terms of its reproductive functions. Namely, instead of potential for cultural rejuvenation, Delanty sees in migrants “the best chance for European societies to increase the fertility rate” (Delanty, 2009: 149). In other words, he considers their presence in Europe, commonly experienced as contentious or threatening, in view of their breeding potential. This is the kind of world that Aslam’s characters struggle in and with.

If cosmopolitan theory provides a suitable framework to examine the context of Aslam’s fiction, studies of the body offer insights into how the physical body relates to the social body, and how both are variously shaped by different historical and cultural contexts. This is crucial for understanding how nostalgia becomes a corporeal experience for the individuals and the community in *Maps for Lost Lovers*. In a time when science and technology radically redefine embodiment, overcome the limitations of the body, and push the boundaries of what is possible to do with the body, the body remains an important interface in social interaction. Physical body and body social are inextricably related, which is why theories of embodiment emphasise that the body is physical *and* constructed, personal *and* collective, unique *and* universal. The body is therefore studied from a variety of perspectives, such as medical, psychological, sociological, philosophical, literary, and artistic. If “other cultures have ‘other bodies’, as the anthropologists have shown”, then “[t]he physical body [...] is eminently social” (Synnott, 1993: 37). For this reason, the present analysis relies on sociological insights, particularly on “interactionist frameworks for

conceiving bodies and experiences of embodiment” (Waskul–Vannini, 2006: 2), in order to illuminate the complex intersections between the physical and the social body in Aslam’s novel. Because *Maps for Lost Lovers* can be read as a postcolonial text, the analysis also occasionally calls on postcolonial theoretical considerations of the body.

Since the early 1990s, the body, as well as experiences and perceptions of embodiment have become “fundamental to numerous esteemed sociological interests including gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality, health and medicine, disability, sport, aging, death and dying” (Waskul–Vannini, 2006: 1). Having reviewed a sample of literature on the body, Dennis Waskul and Phillip Vannini conclude that the body is socially constructed, gendered, sexualised, customised, commodified, digitised, objectified, fetishised, fashioned, and subject to different politics, including those of race and ethnicity (Waskul–Vannini, 2006: 2). Even though corporeality is crucial in the representation of the world’s many Others – and Aslam’s novel focuses on cultural, ethnic, migrant, and gendered Others – “the body is always more than a tangible, physical, corporeal object” (Waskul–Vannini, 2006: 3). It is always socially determined, so “the term ‘embodiment’ refers quite precisely to the process by which the object-body is actively experienced, produced, sustained, and/or transformed as a subject-body” (Waskul–Vannini, 2006: 3) in a particular society or culture. “The body is wrought of action and interaction in situated social encounters and often by means of institutionalized ritual.” (Waskul–Vannini, 2006: 7) As a result, the biological body is invested with symbolical meaning: “Our bodies and body parts are loaded with cultural symbolism, public and private, positive and negative, political and economic, sexual, moral and often controversial.” (Synnott, 1993: 1) In discriminatory discourses and practices, cultural meanings of the body become the site of personal and institutional abuse, as explicit discrimination against migrant bodies exemplifies.

To trace the corporeal consequences of discrimination and nostalgia, as well as their social implications, this analysis alternates between examinations of the biological/physical body and the social body. This is necessary because *Maps for Lost Lovers* imagines nostalgia as a personal and communal experience, and a way to express the characters’ relationships with “recalled or remembered pasts they identify with” (Walder, 2011: 3) in an effort to preserve traditions and norms that feel familiar. Dispensing with “the rosy, sentimental glow most commonly associated with nostalgia” (Walder, 2011: 3), the novel conceptualises nostalgia as pain: bodily pain (emotional and physical) and the pain of the displaced community. Like the missing lovers, the entire community seems lost in a space between cultures, unable

to fully adjust, and painfully divided. The novel conveys their migrant sense of dislocation with laconic brevity: “years of exile and banishment” (Aslam, 2004: 6) largely spent in retrospect. As a mixture of loss and longing, nostalgia is commonly perceived as an essential feature of migrant experience, and so permeates Aslam’s text from the very first chapter, which opens with Shamas longing for a lost season:

Among the innumerable other losses, to come to England was to lose a season, because, in the part of Pakistan that he is from, there are five seasons in a year, not four, the schoolchildren learning their names and sequence through classroom chants: *Mausam-e-Sarma, Bahar, Mausam-e-Garma, Barsat, Kizan*, Winter, Spring, Summer, Monsoon, Autumn. (Aslam, 2004: 5)

That his loss is shared is soon suggested by the following description of Pakistani migrants: “Roaming the planet looking for solace, they’ve settled in small towns that make them feel smaller still, and in cities that have tall buildings and even taller loneliness.” (Aslam, 2004: 9) Their migrations are propelled by political and economic precarity, so millions flee poor countries like Pakistan searching for “a semblance of dignity” (Aslam, 2004: 9) to be gained from economic stability. Even if life in England ensures relative financial stability, the novel makes it clear that immigrants are made to feel small by the host society, which heightens their nostalgia.

In a brief but penetrating passage, Aslam outlines the changing but invariably hostile attitudes to immigrants in England:

*I don't want to see them or work next to them [...] I don't mind working next to them if I'm forced to, as long as I don't have to speak to them [...] I don't mind speaking to them when I have to in the workplace, as long as I don't have to talk to them outside the working hours [...] I don't mind them socializing in the same place as me if they must, as long as I don't have to live next to them.”* (Aslam, 2004: 11)

If our cosmopolitanised times seem better, one needs only remember that the 2015 migrant crisis flushed out anti-immigration sentiments across Europe, or that calls for bans on immigration and the repatriation of immigrants continue. At this very moment (April 2023) people in France, including undocumented migrants, are protesting against planned changes to the immigration law that are racist and discriminatory. The environment’s inhospitable attitudes, voiced in the street and institutionalised by law, particularly affect the migrant body as proof of the existence of “a social structure built around embodied inequalities” (Waskul–Vannini, 2006:

11) because “the deepest prejudices and discriminations, for and against, accrue to the body” (Synnott, 1993: 3). In the context of the community in Aslam’s novel this represents a continuation of colonial thinking that is perpetuated by “the contemporary resurgence of bald-faced racism within mainstream politics across the globe” (Duncan–Cumpsty, 2022). We find evidence in the text – references to violent physical attacks and racial slur – that the world’s many Others continue to be perceived in terms of their corporeality. In turn, the novel’s immigrants largely perceive England as a “nest of devilry from where God has been exiled. No, not exiled – denied and slain” (Aslam, 2004: 30). All of this deepens nostalgia, which provides a sense of continuity to the geographically and culturally translocated immigrants, eventually translating into the physical suffering of the body (pain and illness) and the shared social suffering of the community that is disrupted from the outside (by marginalisation, discrimination and abuse) and from the inside (by self-isolation, inner conflicts and violence, and nostalgia).

Nostalgia is therefore a principal cause of pain in the ailing physical/maternal and social body and an instrument of self-isolation of the migrant community in the host society. It further serves to isolate individuals within the community and the family, and becomes an obstacle to cosmopolitan society. The physical manifestations of nostalgia confirm that the body is indeed, as Anthony Synnott claims, “sponge-like” (Synnott, 1993: 1) in that it absorbs meaning, from the outside as well as the inside. It absorbs socially constructed meanings and values and inner states, emotions and thoughts, and is then doubly pressured: from without, by an unwelcoming society, and from within, by personal and communal feelings of nostalgia. Thus both the individual and the social body painfully *embody* the experience of migration, loss, severed ties (with the country of origin, family and especially children), and self-isolation caused by nostalgic clinging to the culture of origin. The novel develops the idea of a corporeal experience of nostalgia primarily through focus on two female characters, Suraya and Kaukab, whose narratives reveal the link between the female body and unfulfilled social roles: “[u]nfulfilled wifehood” or failed motherhood as “expressed in physical ailment” (Katrak, 2006: 159) and emotional suffering.

Suraya is an exiled mother whose outstanding beauty attracts universal attention and confirms that the body affects both “social responses to the self” and “our life chances” (Synnott, 1993: 2). Suraya’s dismal circumstances and despair for a lost family prompt her to use her irresistible appeal to get her family back. Her nostalgia for her son, and to a degree her husband, is nostalgia for the loss of stability in a cultural setting that treats a divorced woman as an undesirable non-entity.

Nostalgia thus builds upon Suraya's lack of options and forces her to surrender her body to men whom she hopes to marry in order to divorce them and marry her husband again. Namely, under Islamic law Suraya's husband is punished for recklessly divorcing her in a drunken state by a prohibition that allows him to have any woman except her, and he can only *possess* her again if she marries and divorces another man. The heavy burden of the punishment is thus placed solely on the woman's shoulders as she has no choice but to become the conquered and commodified female body that men treat as they please. As her only recourse, Suraya is thus forced to engage in a form of prostitution that involves extremely high stakes but no financial transaction.

As a divorced woman, even if not by choice, Suraya faces prejudice and ostracism, and has no right over her child. Because her world is reduced to wifedom and motherhood, she is controlled through these roles, especially through motherhood, "an institution that is socially, even economically constructed" and located "within a dialectic relationship between patriarchy and capitalism, between reproduction and production" (Katrak, 2006: 210). When her husband beats her, threatens her life and divorces her through no fault of her own – a woman simply cannot be trusted – Suraya is lost, and the pain of loss and nostalgia lead her through an entangled web of stringent rules to sexual acts that perpetuate the exploitation of the female body. Her exceptionally beautiful suffering body is treated as expendable, and raises the question of "ownership of the body" (Synnott, 1993: 3) in the depicted culture. Demonstrating how a "single chromosome divides the corporeal world like a scalpel" (Synnott, 1993: 6), the female body is owned and controlled by the (male) society (family, especially male figures, and the wider community). Control is legitimised by oppressive, not all, cultural traditions which exercise their indisputable authority over a woman throughout her life. Even if she uses her body in ways deemed unacceptable by her culture – she breaks the taboo of extramarital intercourse to seduce a potential husband – in order to reunite with her family, Suraya does not resist the system but plays by its rules. Her act is not one of defiance but desperation as she is left with no choice. Suraya's story of emotional suffering and forced prostitution thus exhibits "a variety of controls of the female body through 'traditions' of the obedient wife, self-sacrificing mother" (Katrak, 2006: xi), controls that she as a mother is not free to escape.

Another character who feels that "[n]ot everyone has the freedom to walk away from a way of life" (Aslam, 2004: 115) is Shamas's wife Kaukab. Not only does she fail to escape social constraints, but she wholeheartedly supports the system of control that subjugates her. Walled in her unassailable faith for protection against

Western corruption, she consciously participates in society's attempts to control women's bodies when she condones and arranges forced marriages, including that of her own daughter who is married off to an abusive cousin, or, to more devastating consequences, when she reports on Shamas's brother Jugnu and his beloved Chanda, the missing lovers, who try to live their love free from social constraints. By reporting them to Chanda's family, which perpetuates a series of events that lead to the lovers' brutal deaths, Kaukab proves that "[i]deologies that buttress women's subordination are supported by family and perpetuated both in the private and public realms" (Katrak, 2006: 157). Lost in a culture that is alien to her and that she is alien to, and afraid that she has lost her children to the "decadent and corrupt West" (Aslam, 1994: 63), Kaukab internalises the patriarchal role of woman and mother as a guardian of tradition.

While all the characters in the novel are affected by cultural dislocation and nostalgia, in different ways and to different degrees, Kaukab seems the most isolated and she embodies the home society's confinement of female sexuality within discourses which glorify motherhood and fertility. She is the socially revered figure of the traditional mother who has come to perceive sexuality purely through the lens of reproduction, she has several children and, as a woman who "barely knew what lay beyond the neighbourhood" (Aslam, 2004: 32), feels safe only within the small compass of her kitchen. This is partly so because Kaukab has internalised the society's mechanisms of control, so she illustrates "complicity and consent as internalized oppressions" (Katrak, 2006: xxii): she never questions the system of control and even actively supports it. She is further isolated by her inability, and unwillingness, to adapt, her strict adherence to the beliefs and values of the old world, and her near-infinite rigidity. Kaukab's nostalgia for the old world, for tradition as "ahistoricized and regarded as fixed, timeless, and unchanging" (Katrak, 2006: 157) – its climate, food, flora and fauna, its values and, above all, its certainties – is made worse when she loses (contact with) her children, second-generation migrants who have adapted to the ways of the host country. The ties are severed and love is lost when their differences cannot be overcome after the terrible crime that Kaukab unthinkingly provokes. She also loses contact with her husband, both sexual and emotional, and imprisons herself inside the house and the kitchen, the one space where she feels entirely comfortable and in touch with the old world, while she endures worsening pelvic pain. The maternal body and, more specifically, the womb that nourished Kaukab's children suffers for the loss of children and homeland, at the same time reflecting the entire community's disillusionment with life in the host country.

Both Kaukab's and Suraya's narratives demonstrate the difficulty and, at times, impossibility of negotiating between strict home culture's rules on male-female contact, female roles, behaviour, dress, and body, on one hand, and the socially acceptable, and therefore threatening, freedom of contact, behaviour and dress in the host culture, on the other. The ailing female body is thus shaped by these opposing forces, and possibly serves as an expression of longing for an imaginary world in which the male and female cease to exist as opposites which "structure their/our lives in dualistic terms" (Synnott, 1993: 6). In this imaginary world boys are not taught that women are "faeces-filled sacs" (Aslam, 2004: 126) whose lives should be threatened every time their virtue is in doubt, nor are women forced to walk the thin line between respectability and whoredom, with nothing in between. To conceive of a future in which the female body is fully autonomous is perhaps farfetched, for when was any body entirely autonomous or private? To imagine, and make true, a future of mutual respect and solidarity is not. This is the kind of future that Aslam's painful and lavish prose reaches out to.

The realisation of this cosmopolitan future is deferred in the novel as the community's disappointment and nostalgia, recalled in the novel's opening through Shamas's ruminations about a lost fifth season of the year, play into the hands of antic cosmopolitan sentiments in the host culture. Isolation and ghettoization are therefore partly ensured from the outside, while also corroding any cosmopolitan sentiments from the inside due to nostalgic and obsessive adherence to the laws and codes disguised as traditions and brought to the new world. "Traditions change according to new political frameworks in societies", rarely to the benefit of women, and they "exile the body especially when [...] tradition itself is made more important than women" (Katrak, 2006: 161, 156), but in *Maps for Lost Lovers* traditions exile the entire community from the host culture and, through inner divisions and a failure to adapt, from itself. The community is "struggling to survive in the present—a time not only of the end of empires but of increased globalisation, ethnic tension, and national self-questioning" (Walder, 2011: 4), and ends up exiled and trapped in nostalgia for a seemingly easier world of clear coordinates. Few among those of Kaukab's generation exhibit "a degree of estrangement from one's own culture and history", which is "essential to a cosmopolitan commitment" (Gilroy, 2004: 75). Migration makes this kind of estrangement inevitable, and while it is pronounced in members of the second-generation immigrants in the novel, who are fighting to negotiate between their cultural heritage and the norms of the host culture that has become their home, the first-generation immigrants continually cling to the old traditions in search of stability. Their nostalgia is fuelled by the experience of cultural

transplantation, their children's attempts to fit in the disorienting British society, as well as by their own exposure to undisguised racism.

Namely, Aslam's characters live in a society that has been thoroughly cosmopolitanised, but its members are not true cosmopolitans (Beck, 2006: 44) since their behaviour testifies to a failure of hospitality and true cosmopolitanism requires feelings and acts of mutual empathy and solidarity. The Pakistani immigrants in the novel are treated as "unwanted alien intruders" (Gilroy, 2004: 98), and it is for this reason that multiculturalism and ethnic and racial diversity at times appear to be "mere exotic wallpaper to the self-fashioning of middle-class identities" (Schoene, 2010: 5), which then *feel* cosmopolitan. *Maps for Lost Lovers* shows that the proximity of cultural, ethnic, racial, or any other Others does not mean that we *are* cosmopolitan. As if to confirm Gilroy's book-length discussion of racism as "a corrosive feature of contemporary democracy" (Gilroy, 2004: xii) rather than a historical problem, the novel is peppered with ethnic and racial slur and violence that go in two directions: immigrants are called names and subjected to physical violence by the white English who are in turn labelled as a "disease, vice-ridden and lecherous race" that is going to be "skinned alive in Hell" (Aslam, 2004: 44, 161). Put differently, Aslam's novel suggests that impediments to cosmopolitan solidarity work both ways, and if the wider society should be held accountable for bigotry – "the white police are interested in us Pakistanis only when there is a chance to prove that we are savages who slaughter our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters" (Aslam, 2004: 41) – the novel's immigrants should be held accountable for their involvement in domestic abuse and honour killings, which solidify stereotyping and pave the way for further discrimination. Gilroy, Beck, Tzvetan Todorov, and a number of other thinkers have already pointed out that in the aftermath of 9/11, an event to which Aslam responds by focusing on similar events on a much smaller scale, diversity and multiculturalism are experienced both as a gateway of opportunity and as a proven threat. To expect that the threat will disappear would be naïve, especially in a time that witnesses a rise in right-wing politics and anti-immigration sentiments as major obstacles to genuine solidarity. For this reason, different visions of the cosmopolitan community in contemporary theory, all of which presuppose conviviality, openness, co-existence, cohabitation, interaction, and interconnectedness, do not foresee the end of racism, nationalism, xenophobia, and other oppressive beliefs and practices, but call for mechanisms for controlling and balancing them.

In its portrayal of lives torn apart by conflicting social forces Aslam's text offers compassion in place of judgement, so neither individual characters nor the

society are viewed from the moral high ground. The immigrants' microcosm in England is exposed in all its cruelty but treated with understanding. It would be easy to judge Kaukab for her ruthless rigidity that destroys her family and costs Jugnu and Chanda their lives. It would also be easy to judge a society that uses tradition as an excuse for severe abuse of women: the text tells of a woman who is forced to undergo hysterectomy after five complicated miscarriages, and finally goes mad; a woman who as a widow is left penniless and exposed to "the brutal charity of her sister's husband" (Aslam, 2004: 50); a girl who is tortured in a fatal exorcism as punishment for her love of a Hindu; and another girl whose husband is advised by her own mother to rape her after a week of no postnuptial intercourse. While Aslam is openly critical of such practices, he refrains from judgement, focusing instead on exposing the mechanisms behind them, for without understanding these mechanisms society cannot defeat them. Suraya's and Kaukab's stories allow Aslam to examine different aspects of a woman's life "as social roles (daughter, wife, mother), but in fact as bodily-sexual roles controlled by husbands, fathers, and sons" (Katrak, 2006: xvii), and women's enslavement by those roles.<sup>1</sup> "Whatever a girl or woman's particular negotiation—speaking against, being complicit within, or resisting tradition—female protagonists experience self-exile, a sense of not belonging to themselves, and particularly not to their female bodies" (Katrak, 2006: 158), which results in emotional and physical pain. The novel therefore demonstrates what happens when women remain deprived of agency as nostalgic prisoners of the home culture and its limited horizons of possibility.

*Maps for Lost Lovers* reveals that both individuals and the community are affected by such limited horizons. The disappearance of Jugnu and Chanda, the lost lovers who are sacrificed to what Ketu H. Katrak aptly sees as fatally absolute social exiling whose result is silencing in violent deaths (Katrak, 2006: 160),<sup>2</sup> signals an impediment to individual and communal processes of integration and, more importantly, to a cosmopolitanisation of the mind. Like so much migrant fiction, Aslam's novel shows that migration does not always deliver you to a better and more secure life in terms of education, work, freedom of movement or behaviour, nor does it ensure intellectual or even physical survival. Even memory of what has been lost fails to fulfil its "restorative, nurturing potential" (Walder, 2011: 2) in the text and

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<sup>1</sup> The novel also discusses, in less detail, the rigidity of male roles as husbands, fathers and brothers. Men are enslaved by the one acceptable image of man as authoritarian, manly, fanatically pious, and in control of his women and children.

<sup>2</sup> Admittedly, her claim refers to women alone, but Aslam's novel highlights that defiant, non-conforming and wayward men are also occasional victims of the culture's strictly defined codes and expectations.

instead further displaces the immigrants from their original cultural context, from themselves and from the possibility of building and participating in a cosmopolitan community. If we read the lost lovers as symbolical of a new, open, tolerant, and truly cosmopolitan world, their disappearance demonstrates that cosmopolitanism is not yet a lived reality. In a world of persistent inequalities, possessed of “a desire to curb mobility from the (postcolonial) peripheries of the world-system” (Duncan–Cumpsty, 2022), peaceful cohabitation is difficult to reach. Both Suraya and Kaukab, for whom nostalgia turns to physical discomfort, pain, and, in Kaukab’s case, illness, show how the body of the Other continues to suffer and bear the burden of accumulated violence. Their suffering reflects the “lived precarity” (Duncan–Cumpsty, 2022) of migrant experience in general, and female migrant experience in particular. The dead lovers’ bodies, on the other hand, serve as reminders of the many scarred, mutilated, battered, and tortured bodies of the colonial era, bodies whose experiences are brought to light by postcolonial fiction in the hope of not only rewriting history to spotlight silenced stories, but also to point out that a more tolerant world is necessary. Therefore, nostalgia as a backward-yearning impulse gives way in Aslam’s text to a forward-looking longing for a more accepting reality. While the text offers no solutions, it does call for a radical rethinking of the current state of affairs and intimates the society’s potential for change, which relies on “cosmopolitan empathy” (McCulloch, 2021: 10) as the necessary first step for the creation of a cosmopolitan world.

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NOSTALGIJA I BOLNO TELO U ROMANU *MAPE ZA IZGUBLJENE LJUBAVNIKE*  
NADIMA ASLAMA

*Rezime*

Roman *Mape za izgubljene ljubavnike* (2004) Nadima Aslama usredsređen je na malu imigrantsku zajednicu u savremenoj Engleskoj i pripoveda o bolu i usamljenosti usled kulturne izolacije i (samo)getoizacije uprkos kosmopolitizaciji stvarnosti. Suprotstavljene tendencije kulturnog izopštavanja i kosmopolitizma predstavljaju kontekst u kom Aslam razmatra nostalgiju kao čestu odliku iskustva migracije, pokazujući kako se osećaji gubitka i čežnje pretaču u fizički bol, te kako zarobljavaju zajednicu u sistem vrednosti i očekivanja sveta koji su imigranti napustili. Ovaj članak analizira posledice nostalgije po telo pojedinca i socijalno telo u teorijskom okviru studija o savremenom kosmopolitizmu i telu. U kontekstu migracije, rad se bavi fizičkim, posebno majčinskim, i socijalnim telom, nastojeći da pokaže kako nostalgija može da bude jedna od prepreka adaptaciji i jačanju kosmopolitike empatije i solidarnosti. Analizom nostalgije koja prerasta u emotivnu i fizičku patnju, a potom ometa

pojedince i zajednicu u procesima integracije i građenja kosmopolitske zajednice, rad pokazuje kako nostalgija može da posluži kao instrument otuđenja pojedinca od sopstvenog tela ili zajednice, te otuđenja zajednice od šireg društva. Ako je ona sila koja nezavidan položaj imigranta iz Trećeg sveta čini dodatno ranjivim, njoj je, međutim, suprotstavljena ideja kosmopolitske empatije kao neophodnog osnova za građenje budućnosti koja počiva na odgovornosti, toleranciji i solidarnosti.

*Cljučne reči:* kosmopolitizam, *Mape za izgubljene ljubavnike*, migracija, Nadim Aslam, nostalgija, telo

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