

Transcorporeality, Gendered Narratives, and Ecological Concerns in Sarah Moss's *The Fell*

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ABSTRACT

Drawing from Stacy Alaimo's Transcorporeality, this research paper studies how Sarah Moss's pandemic novel *The Fell* demonstrates the interconnectedness of human physical bodies with their environments throughout the pandemic. Through its narrative, the novel contests human-centered thinking while showing how the pandemic shifts nature-human connection points by highlighting the environmental aspects of bodily existence. It also observes the role of nature in conditioning the incidents of the novel. It demonstrates how the novel presents human bodies as accessible to environmental substances and forces, thus reshaping identity boundaries to respect fluid identity definitions. A posthumanist analysis of the book demonstrates how distinctive gender roles in the story collapse due to environmental factors, which also determine the path of character adversities.

KEYWORDS

Pandemic Fiction, Posthumanism, Gendered Narratives, Transcorporeality, Fluidity of Identity, Ecological Concerns

"Men can imagine their own deaths, they can even imagine the deaths of others, but they can't imagine their own extinction."

Margaret Atwood, *Oryx, and Crake*

1 | INTRODUCTION

Sarah Moss's *The Fell* (2021) is a moving and multi-layered pandemic novel that explores the profound connections between environment, human beings and socio-political restrictions during critical times of global upheaval. The novel is set on a single evening during the second wave of the pandemic, when confinement was mandatory. The intersection of the

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four characters in the novel provides us with a scope to navigate their psychological, physical, and ethical dilemmas as they suffer from isolation, risk, and sickness. This paper will analyse the novel using the theory of Transcorporeality by Stacy Alaimo. It vests answers to the questions like how the human bodies coexist and interact with the environment, and it also sheds some light on how the environment shapes the decisions of the characters in the novel. Drawing from posthumanism and transcorporeality, this paper opposes the binary concepts of human/nature and self/other. Kate's solitary walk in the wild moors serves as a transcorporeal experience where the weather, setting, and her own frail body defy the Anthropocene practices of mankind. The setting of the novel becomes an active force driving the novel further, unfolding varied narrative trajectories and risky conditions. Moss also illustrates that the responsibility for maintaining the household, caring for children, and ensuring emotional stability often falls disproportionately on women. This gendered narrative is apparent even in times of crisis.

The COVID-19 outbreak has revealed the interconnectedness of mankind, the environment, and society. During times of crisis, the boundaries between humans and nature become blurred. Man is not separable from Nature; they coincide with each other. This interconnection serves as a focal point of Transcorporeality. Scholars such as Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, and Francesca Ferrando have urged the people to de-centre humans in the narratives. Much of the research done so far has been focused on the ecological aspects of the pandemic narratives, opposing humans to gain the central stage, thereby neglecting how gendered experiences are entangled with the ecological aspects of the novel. One possible reason for this gap could be the space of acknowledging the role of the Environment and its degradation in this Anthropocene world. Consequently, this paper aims at extending transcorporeal concerns towards the contemplation of pandemic narratives since it posits gendered emphases. This paper asserts that *The Fell* reimagines that human subjectivity is not independent but has emerged from the complex web of ecological, social and material interrelationships. Moss focuses her plot on human vulnerability and the porous boundaries between human and environment. Thus, she crafts a story that captures the fear of crisis along with pointing towards the newer paradigms of ecological consciousness that becomes attuned to the boundaries and possibilities of mankind in a constantly changing posthumanist world.

Posthumanism challenges anthropocentrism and the repositioning of non-humans. Ahn in his thesis argues that human dominance over the non-humans is not real but an illusion, Posthumanism does not support the delusion of human superiority over the other species. It avoids adhering to the power dynamics and socioeconomic conditions that bestows humans to assume a superior place over other beings (Ahn 4). Posthumanism thus dismantles human exceptionalism, and as a result, offers an understanding of the entanglement of all living and non-living beings— which is useful when dealing with the pandemic fictions in which figures of the human and non-human are often fluid.

This entanglement of the non-living matter can be studied by using New Materialism. It represents the active participation of matter in the formation of the world. "Matter is not viewed in any way as something static, fixed, or passive, waiting to be molded by some external force; rather, it is emphasized as 'a process of materialization'" (Ferrando 31). This theory eliminates the possibility of a clear distinction between nature and culture on the basis that the two are very much intertwined. Whereas the Anthropocene focuses much on human influence on the planet, New Materialism emphasizes the ability of the environment and other entities to alter the world. Karen Barad, one of the main theorists of New

Materialisms, implicitly referring to Butler's book *Bodies That Matter* (1993), has stated: "Language matters. Discourse matters. Culture matters. There is an important sense in which the only thing that does not seem to matter anymore is matter".

This paper aims to evaluate *The Fell* by Sarah Moss to study posthumanism as an Anti-Anthropocene and the dominance of matter in the novel. The novel has the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, in which the characters locked in their homes realize their dependence on the environment. The relationship with nature is not only semiotic, they are vital for the characters' existence and mental health, showing Alaimo's transcorporeality. Transcorporeality studies the interrelation between nature and culture, consequently blurring the nature/culture binary. In the novel, nature does not serve as a passive element but a powerful entity that reconstructs the protagonists' emotional as well as physical existence. This study will also look at how these narratives situate gender, ecology, and transcorporeality, showing how gendered experiences of beings that are considered less than others are portrayed concerning ecology. Thus, this paper demonstrates how the novel depicts the protagonists' escape to the wilderness as necessary for survival and how the novel represents a posthumanist recreation of the individual, who can no longer disregard the environment they are a part of. In doing so, this study fits into debates of how contemporary fiction represents human-nonhuman ties in the period of crisis.

2 | TRANSCORPOREALITY BY STACY ALAIMO

Stacy Alaimo points out that trans-corporeality captures the interconnection of the different bodies explaining that human beings are intrinsically connected to their surroundings. This disproves distinct divisions and clear-cut separation of material and non-material items. Trans-corporeality recognizes the relations, interconnections, interactions, and mobilities between human and non-human bodies. It denies the anthropocentric view and posits that human beings cannot be isolated from their environment as they are formed by it or rely on it in some way or another. Trans-corporeality explains the interlinkage of a human and non-human entity, thus breaking a binary between the two and seeing their interactions. It attempts at reverting humans to Nature but this does not take it back to the Anthropocene philosophy. Jhan Hochman offers a metaphor: it is like a wife who is being beaten and needs to be 'arranged' and separated from the husband so that she can get shelter for herself and in the same manner, culture has to be separated from nature. Due to people's irresponsible behavior and actions, the environment is destroyed and cannot be built again (Alaimo 15).

As trans-corporeality emphasizes the encounter between bodies and their surroundings at the local level, it is often possible to follow the genealogy of a toxic chemical and identify global relations of oppression, fiscal policy, and pollution. According to Ursula Heise, ecological awareness and environmental ethics address an understanding of how people of the world weave their lives in global networks. Heise demands something that she calls eco-cosmopolitanism, that is, considering persons and groups as members of global human and animal populations (Alaimo 15-16). Thus, using the aspects of scientific literacy, one will be in a position to comprehend the material exchanges between the bodies under consideration and the surroundings.

Creating an environmentalist ethos requires the construction of a connection to the material world, in a strong sense, especially given the hegemony of alienation that makes environmental problems appear trivial. Efforts such as environmental health, environmental justice, popular epidemiology, and green consumerism are peripheralized, though their

memberships are growing. The environment and material elements and forces are separate from human beings. This is obvious from the careless sprinkling of harmful pesticides and herbicides in our own homes, but also from the horror movies that set our pulses racing with visions of human-animal hybrids before human triumph. This mismatch is also evident in the right-wing denial of global warming, which treats it as a question of personal “belief.” Huge McMansions, gigantic vehicles, and gas-guzzling SUVs—each of these items increases carbon emissions as it sequesters its occupants from the outside world. It is much harder to fall into illusions of transcendence or imperviousness when one is tuned to the material passage between bodies and environments (16).

A strong environmentalist ethos, in light of the widespread alienation that makes “environmental issues” appear insignificant, demands a tangible connection to the material world. Environmental health, environmental justice, popular epidemiology, and green consumerism are some of these movements and are still marginalized even with an increased number of members. Although transcorporeality denies human subjects a 'central, sovereign position, traditional environmental ethics extends the moral circle of concern to include plants, animals, species, and ecosystems. Rather, ethical issues must emerge from a perspective in which the “human” is an element of a dynamic, often unpredictably changing material environment. An analogical point is made by Lorraine Code regarding the “ecological subject.” Subjects in *Bodily Natures* carry responsibility for their political, moral, and intellectual actions. Code advocates “ecological thinking,” which moves the objects of inquiry to locations and processes of knowledge construction and negotiation to interact with locations, patterns, and linkages of life in human and nonhuman realms. She argues that such a mode of thinking gives up aspirations to anthropocentric mastery and instead relocates knowers as part of nature (146). This shift reveals how changes in our perception can trigger ethical dilemmas; trans-corporeal subjects are, becoming part of the ever-changing flux and flow of the world, under threat to renounce mastery.

As Richard Lewontin and Richard Levins so aptly noted, “Your body is likely aware of your class/status no matter how thoroughly you've been taught to deny it” (27). This raises one interesting question: how does the body “know” (27) something as abstract as its position in the class hierarchy? The use of the term “consciousness” may not be very apt because it suggests similarity with a human rational mind. This perspective needs to be more profound, especially because the best-known methods of understanding the human body are based on science and medicine. Both perspectives, Lewontin and Levins encourage us to consider what workers of the body can manifest and who can speak of those manifestations. They focus on the collective determination of biological and social causes and argue that “human sociality is a consequence of our acquired knowledge of biology, and of human biology learning is social ecology” (27).

3 | LITERATURE REVIEW

The pandemic narrative is not the latest trend in literature. Throughout history, numerous pandemics and epidemics have caused humanity suffering and pain. Virus and Bacteria would spread rapidly across the countries, causing the loss of thousands of lives often due to medical negligence or ineptitude. Pandemic fiction in English literature has a long and rich history, spanning several centuries. Bożena Kucała examines the value of walking as a means of survival and connects it to literary and philosophical traditions using Sarah Moss’s *The Fell*. Drawing on Thoreau's Walking and Frédéric Gros's A Philosophy of Walking, the review

emphasizes the protagonist Kate's voyage as a reaction to the oppressive seclusion of lockdown, arguing that Kate represents the "walker errant." Kucała highlights *The Fell*'s distinctive use of nature writing while skillfully placing it into the larger context of pandemic literature. The article's strengths are found in its thorough intertextual links and examination of nature as a haven and an uncaring force. Its breadth is constrained, though, as it mostly addresses personal experiences rather than the broader sociopolitical ramifications of pandemic-era constraints.

Furthermore, the article does not adequately address transcorporeality and ecological interconnectedness beyond the protagonist's immediate survival, despite the detailed description of walking as an existential and therapeutic act. Building on these gaps, my research will analyze *The Fell* through a transcorporeal and posthumanist lens, placing Kate's experience within larger ecological networks and going beyond the human-nature dichotomy. I will examine how the novel deals with concepts of entanglement, where human and non-human agencies come together in unexpected ways, in contrast to Kucała's emphasis on walking as a means of fostering personal resilience. I will also expand the conversation to cover biopolitical control and pandemic governance, examining how Kate's transgression expresses opposition to state-imposed imprisonment and surveillance. By connecting these viewpoints, my study will offer a more thorough comprehension of *The Fell* as a book that explores broader power dynamics and ecological interdependencies in pandemic fiction in addition to chronicling personal crises.

On Edge: Liminality and the COVID Pandemic in Sarah Moss's *The Fell* by Bożena Kucała examines how the book deals with the idea of liminality and makes the case that it depicts the COVID-19 pandemic's transitional experience. Kucała emphasizes how the book functions as a "time capsule," capturing the fear, social isolation, and disruption brought on by the lockdown. The study focuses on Kate, Moss's protagonist, and how she crosses existential, psychological, and physical boundaries, especially when she disobeys quarantine regulations by walking. Kucała's study is strong since it explores liminality and shows how it relates to sociological and anthropological theories.

The article's scope is constrained, nevertheless, as it mainly discusses the novel's dilemma rather than its wider biopolitical ramifications. Furthermore, although Kucała recognizes the novel's emphasis on nature as a place of solace, she does not thoroughly examine how *The Fell* deals with ecological entanglement outside of the symbolic and emotional aspects of liminality. By adding a posthumanist and transcorporeal framework to the topic of *The Fell*, my research will fill in these gaps and examine how Kate's experience relates to more general ecological and material interdependencies. I will examine how the novel challenges human exceptionalism by highlighting the agency of non-human actors, like the environment, weather, and viral forces, in contrast to Kucała's emphasis on liminality as a transitory experience. I'll also look at how the book deals with pandemic governance, emphasizing how Kate's stroll that breaks the quarantine acts as a kind of protest against the government's mandated bio-surveillance. By including these viewpoints, my study will offer a more thorough interpretation of *The Fell* as a book that not only explores the psychological effects of the pandemic on individuals but also challenges structural power dynamics and ecological crises.

4 | KATE AND HER FALL

Kate, the protagonist, was also a single mother working at a restaurant. Her divorce made her lonely, and to add to her misery, she was infected with the virus by a customer. Being confined to her house, she was deprived of wages or even work for her livelihood, consequently being 'driven to ruminate on the misfortunes and mistakes of her past' (Kucala 9). Being an 'outdoor person' (Moss 94), it became suffocating for her to remain restricted to her house the entire time. Her anxiety, after reading about the symptoms of the disease, felt oppressed by the custody of her house. With an irresistible urge to move out into the wild moors, she took off amidst the quarantine, with the virus spreading and the fine imposed on all the perpetual criminals almost whimsical. She had a craving to be outside, which is a part of her being. She met with an accident; this shows impermanence, solitude, and intimacy with nature's strength.

Nature, specifically trees, the moors, and the raven, can accurately be called an active participant in the process of creating a new narrative for her. At the same time, the isolation and vulnerability of the protagonist are reflected in the author's portrayal of the sparse and wild surroundings where Kate is left alone with herself and her weakness. The interactions with the raven and the wild environment present her and explain how they are not very far from each other – they are all intertwined. The raven, with whom Kate constantly converses, is not just a spectator but transforms into a creature that Kate comes across that portrays her part of helplessness and loneliness in life. This erases the distinction between human and non-human and that Kate's health is not distinguishable from the natural environment. Thus, Moss disrupts the binaries of nature/culture and illuminates in practice the notion of the transcorporeal entanglement of human and nonhuman beings, and the environment.

"Trans-corporeality portrays the material interconnections of humans and non-humans in the more-than-human world to unite human corporeality and nonhuman nature." (Tasnia and Haque 7). This concept studies the material exchanges between humans, animals, and the physical world. (Alaimo 476). Trans-corporeality acknowledges "the human as substantially and perpetually interconnected with the flows of substances and the agencies of environments" (476). The value of trans-corporeality lies in its ability to promote a "material ethics [...] that is centered neither in individual humans nor in an external nature, but instead in the flows and interchanges between them" (136).

In her case, this bond with the outdoors plays an essential part of her emotional sustenance. Yet, one would notice that her desire to get into the moors overrides the danger and subsequent accident; this is because she needs the environment's healing touch. Nature is not an invisible passive setting in the novel that surrounds Kate; this reflects the vibrancy of matter as portrayed by Jane Bennet – it acts back and thus participates in transforming both the emotional and the physical aspects of her existence. She faces her weakness in the moors but also negotiates her strength with the vastness of the space – the moors and thus establishes how much her existence and endurance are invested in this landscape.

Furthermore, she involves herself physically in the natural environment, which further describes transcorporeality, in which distinctions between the body and nature are unclear. During her walk, Kate's contact with the natural environment symbolizes the continuity of human and nonhuman bodies, as seen by her integration with the surrounding moor. It appears that she is not an individual with a mechanical body apart from the environment, but her being insists on its interaction with the earth, the air, and even with

the raven. This interaction negates the Nature/culture divide, how, in conjunction with the earlier mating scenes, sympathies for Kate's womanhood and her roles as a human are melded and altered by affinity to the natural world.

5 | GENDERED NARRATIVE

Gendered Kate's desire for freedom depicts the need to be free from the captivity of the lockdown. It also symbolizes her desire to get away from her assigned position as the caretaker of the family. Thus, the fluidity of her gender, as she escapes from her domineering husband to the forest, can be observed. Her walk also embodies a transcorporeal element where her body is very close to the environment. The scene in which Kate walks into the middle of the moors is one of freedom and reclamation of her position in the world: freedom from the oppressive control of her husband. She found freedom in the wild forest, where she could avoid all the pressures and expectations. She could try to find herself outside the framework of a stereotypically feminine woman.

Confined to the four walls of her house during the lockdown, the mentally and physically tormented body and soul of Kate found deliverance in a symbolic attempt to embrace the wilderness. She was divorced, and her entire life revolved around her son. She works hard at the restaurant to make both ends meet. It was due to her restaurant that she caught the fever, infected by a customer. Even though she worked hard, she did not have enough money. She did not have money to pay a fine for breaking her quarantine, yet she chose to step out into nature. "Kate is out and moving, going somewhere, the hill rising under her feet and the sky ahead of her. Wind in the trees and her body working at last, climbing, muscle and bone doing what they're made for." (Moss 55). The action she takes in leaving her home and moving into the moors is a rejection of such gendered pronouncements. She became fed up with the monotonous life of staying at home and bored with a limited number of activities, she perceives herself as being a prisoner of her domestic sphere as well as of traditional gender expectations. Kate finds solace and spiritual equilibrium by connecting with nature, "deploying the motif of self-isolation, gestures towards a certain type of nature writing – rooted in the culture vs nature dichotomy, the protagonist's escape from societal pressures into the solace that the natural world offers constitutes yet another response to the disaster" which she sees as a realm of unfamiliarity and a constant cycle of birth and demise (Kucala 37).

The moors symbolize both freedom and danger as it is very vast and not as controlled as the city. While choosing to walk home without informing anyone or taking appropriate measures Kate is thus symbolically trying to go 'wild', to return to a state in which her body and the world are one, viewing it as a liberating refuge from society. Matt observes her "basically losing it, hours spent pacing from the front garden through the house to the bottom of the garden and back, followed by the cat who is interested in people coming in and going out and gratified to have the process on repeat" (Moss 6). She was not only getting a shot of running free from the confinement of her home but also a shot at a meeting with the moors that symbolically represents an encounter with the more primal, and therefore healing, side of the human character. It is more than a flight journey; it also embodies her escape from society/regime/culture norms imposed on her, and she transforms herself into a free, unrestricted woman. Sleight continues to contend that through this act of walking, it becomes radical in a way that resists the social order that was imposed through the lockdown and the traditional role of women as the caretakers of

society. Nature becomes a lifeline, offering an escape from the oppressive effects of the lockdown. Kate thinks that “walking a few more minutes, another mile or so, over the darkening hill makes it easier to stay alive” (64).

6 | THE FLUIDITY OF IDENTITY IN *THE FELL*

Transcorporeality, as defined by Stacy Alaimo becomes part of *The Fell* by Sarah Moss, in which the connections between human and non-human entities are brought to the foreground. Alaimo’s proposal to theorize encapsulates the body’s relationship with its surroundings was that binaries such as material/more-than-material, human/non-human, and nature/culture are artificial constructs. The interaction with nature, however, as suggested above, is not without its problems. On one side, nature offers consolation and refuge to Kate, while on the other side, it gives her a reflection of what is happening out there in the world. Moss succeeds in portraying nature as a place of solace and as a territory to overcome and, at the same time, the place where Kate is to confront not only external dangers of the environment but also internal psychological, and emotional ones that were caused by the pandemic. Kate reached a point where the weight of her thoughts and problems became overwhelming, leading her to consider risking her safety rather than remaining at home. The problems that Kate faced are not solely because of the pandemic, but there are other facets involved, too.

Kate started talking to the raven. It becomes a crucial point when Kate is injured, and immobilized, the raven reminds her of the neutrality of nature and that humans are mortal beings. She started facing her psychological fears, her failed marriage, her struggles of being a single parent, and her desire to go into the wilderness. The raven constantly becomes a trigger point for varying personalities of Kate during the tough times. There is a constant fluidity from being hopeful to hopeless. Moreover, Kate’s experiences show that human personality is always in a state of transformation depending on the interactions within the environment. Kate does not show any traces of being influenced by the gender role, but her experiences and where and how she performs her role have been constructed repeatedly through her encounter with nature, thereby establishing a link between gender roles & Nature. Transcorporeality is further developed to explore this specific perspective on how the boundary between humans and their surroundings is negotiated.

In the second half of the novel, Kate directly puts herself in harm’s way as she goes to the woods for walking while being quarantined. Her impoverished status doesn’t stop her from plunging. Fredrick Gros, in his *The Philosophy of Walking* explains that walking can help a person temporarily escape their problems by focusing on other aspects such as distance, weather, and the weight of their backpack (Kucala 39). He discusses three different styles of walking: suspensive, aggressive, and the one where a person achieves a sense of sublimity. The previous ones are more like responses to the mundane and repetitive lifestyle, while the latter signifies a deep connection with nature and a sense of longing, subtly highlighting the post-humanist aspect of the character's psyche. The third form of walking becomes a form of spirituality. Thus, this connection reveals the post-humanist aspect of her psyche, when the division between human and nonhuman is erased and individuality is constructed concerning the environment. To this end, it is critical to stress that through the appropriation of nature, Kate has subverted the concept of gender as a natural category. Instead, Moss explores gender as a malleable category, which moves and shifts depending on the characters’ circumstances and the environment they face.

It is also possible to notice that Moss's narrative denies anthropocentric perspective as nature itself becomes a focus and an agent in the characters' lives. The protagonist's being very caring about the environment shows a move to androcentrism in a way that considers the life of other species as valuable and important, thus negating anthropocentrism. "The relief of it, being out, being alone, starting to warm up from her effort, wind and sky in her lungs, raindrops on her face, weather" (Moss 56). Through her deep concern and profound respect for the environment, the protagonist of Moss's novel embodies a contemporary shift in our perception of the natural world. This shift moves away from a human-centered perspective, where humans are seen as the center or standard, towards a biocentric view that recognizes humans as an integral part of the larger living ecosystem and acknowledges the intrinsic value of all forms of life (Kucala 39). This is well illustrated by Kate and Rob as both are compulsively attracted to the natural environment even at the risk of their lives, "Rob, if he'd been stuck in a house for ten days and couldn't take another minute of it" (Moss 103). It translates into becoming one with nature, and this idea of their sense of belonging in the great wide is that when the watershed defining lines of identity are blurred, the end product is a more coherent and holistic reality of existence.

Kate's injury makes her stuck in the middle between the living and the dead; she is in a different dimension of life, where she hallucinates talking to a raven, which suggests the dualities of life and death concerning transcorporeality. It suggests that human bodies are porous, they would absorb everything around them. The "environmental genetic body is porous; it absorbs what it touches in the air, soil, and water and is changed at the molecular and morphological level by these absorptions. The body itself becomes a molecular archaeological site revealing the past history of exposures and potential future harms" (Alaimo 107). People are always vulnerable to the environment all the time. The fact that after the fall, Kate has not been able to get up and starts talking to the creatures around her, especially the raven. Her physical and mental limitations reflect the materiality of the world and strengthen the interrelation between nature and humans. Her conversation with Raven, real or merely in her head, becomes a manifestation of her internal conflict, "externalization of her dilemma" (Kucala 111), as well as how she is linked to the raven or any other non-living object in the surroundings. "The minimalist definition of a body-machine is an embodied affective and intelligent entity that captures processes and transforms energies and forces. Being environmentally bound and territorially based, an embodied entity feeds upon, incorporates and transforms its (natural, social, human or technological) environment constantly" (Rosi 139).

From Braidotti's posthuman perspective, the subject is not only dynamic but also performs changes due to an external context, like the environment. Kate's symbiosis with the raven and her physical surroundings is also illustrative of this, for Kate and herself boundaries are no longer singular and demarcated but are rather fused with said environment. "The posthuman predicament is such as to force a displacement of the lines of demarcation between structural differences, or ontological categories, for instance, between the organic and the inorganic, the born and the manufactured, flesh and metal, electronic circuits and organic nervous systems" (Rosi 89).

The raven resembles Thomas Ravenscroft's hymn, "Remember O Thou Man," a reminder of death that lingers within Kate's mind when she is left to fend for herself with a serious wound. At one point in time, Kate thought that the raven was "circling him just as they circle dying sheep" (Moss 136). The lines from the song reflect the state of existentialism: humanity's end, like hers, is prosaic yet undefined. Her journey through the

Moors to attain peace shows the urge to find commonality with Mother Nature. However, in her reverie, Kate does not fit people's moral judgment of the natural world. She admits that the raven is not guilty and suffers because of her decisions — not paying attention to the weather and going out alone without a phone. In this way, Kate's physical closeness to the environment becomes a form of transcorporeal realization: her body, battered and bruised, is one with the earth, the turf, the heather, and the rock.

The process of character development is different in this case because nature is not 'against' Kate in any way but is simply immovable and uninterested in her plight. The raven's apparition is silent and, therefore, accentuates the rationale of the plot, which states that there is no difference between life and death from the perspective of nature. For Kate, communion with this landscape is not a matter of striving to be one with it in a civilizing or transcending way but of dying, of being aware of her corporeality, mortality, and the eternal return of death. Her walk, therefore, is less about escape and more about submission to the material world into which she has been born, where her body and the external environment share seminal ways in which they are physically linked.

The relationship of the novel to environmental justice, as well as the issue of environmental ethics, are quite inextricable from the concept of transcorporeality. In this respect, the idea of eco-cosmopolitanism developed by Ursula Heise is of paramount importance as it theorizes the concept of people's global interconnectedness based on ecological webs (Alaimo 16). The author depicts how the pandemic has made people rethink the realities of these complex interlocking systems, which have brought suffering and vulnerability to both human and environmental health. Thus, the difficulties, which have been illustrated by the example of Moors' exploration and loss through the impulsive decisions taken by Kate, can be regarded as symbolizing the challenges that minorities experience when it comes to both access to and management of natural resources. "Night-walking is one of her favorite pastimes – it is the best opportunity to see badgers in the woods, watch the stars from the hills, and hear the sounds of the natural world" (Moss 11). The Anthropocene narrative that is presented in the novel is a negative one since the novel presents an opposition to the main idea concerned with the notion that nature and the environment are an external entity independent of human beings, and hence, saw the use of dangerous chemicals and denial of climate change-related issues as harmless and rightful.

In addition, the main character, Rob, willingly embarks on a quest to locate the individuals who have gone missing. The desire to venture into perilous situations and save others, even at the risk of personal harm, suggests a profound bond between Rob and the natural world. He is someone who would easily relate to Kate's impulsive desire for a walk, as he felt the same irresistible urge. He and his wife were no longer together, but he still managed to spend some days with his daughter, as her custody was with her mother. His wife knew the fact that he was someone who could not be controlled or locked at home, she says, "It's like trying to keep a wolf in the house, living with you, ..., you're not house-trained, you're barely even tame" (Moss 86). He willingly dedicated his time to venturing into the great outdoors. He possesses a personality similar to Kate's. Through the experience of Rob's character, the author conveys the concept of the human subject as not fixed and unchangeable, but rather as something that is constructed very much in the middle of the environment. What we see in him are attributes of responsiveness, being responsible to Mother Nature and fellow beings to the extent of risking his life.

7 | CONCLUSION

Sarah Moss's pandemic fictional novel – *The Fell*, serves as an important text to depict how ecological concerns, gendered narratives, and transcorporeality converge in crisis narratives. By highlighting the interdependence of human and non-human factors, Kate's voyage challenges anthropocentric viewpoints. The study has shown how Moss problematizes human exceptionalism by portraying nature as an active force influencing human existence rather than a passive background. Individual crises are enmeshed in larger environmental and socio-political contexts, as demonstrated by the novel's portrayal of the protagonist's walk as both an ecological entanglement and a psychological necessity. By building on earlier research, this study draws attention to the novel's interaction with posthumanism and ecological materialism, illuminating previously unnoticed facets such as gendered subjectivity, transcorporeality, and biopolitical control. Moss's story challenges oversimplified interpretations of nature as solely healing, portraying it as a force that coexists alongside and has unforeseen effects on human life. In the end, *The Fell* emphasizes how critical it is to reconsider the relationship between humans and nature during emergencies, questioning conventional dichotomies and promoting a more holistic view of life.

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