

# The idea of survivalism in yann martel's life of pi



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American Historian of Science, Michael Brant Shermer once stated, "Mammals are sentient beings that want to live and are afraid to die. Evolution vouchsafed us all with an instinct to survive, reproduce and flourish." Identical characteristics are shown in humans no matter what period of time they are from. In Yann Martel's Fictional Drama Novel, *Life of Pi*, the protagonist, Piscine Molitor Patel is a boy battling for his life with minuscule resources while globetrotting the Pacific Ocean after he lost his family in a shipwreck on the way to Canada. Pi is stranded in an unfamiliar environment along with a Bengal tiger: Richard Parker, a hyena and a zebra from his father's zoo. A more desirable tomorrow is what Pi hopes for. Pi holds onto the skill of survivalism through his belief in religion, breaking his morals and forming a relation with nature. The idea the author develops regarding the human will to survive and endure the destructive forces surrounding them is that humans will take extreme measures.

All throughout the novel, there is a consistent repeat of the subject of religion. Pi pursues three religions making him see religion uniquely in contrast to every other person. He was conceived in an entirely Hindu family and rehearsed Hinduism for the greater part of his life. At fourteen years old, he meets a Christian priest, Father Martin, amid his family outing to Munnar. Demonstrating negligible intrigue while chatting, Pi tuned in to Father Martin when he clarified how Christ's blood was sacrificed for human sins. Pi was convinced to become a Christian after the engaging conversation. ' I said, " Father, I would like to be a Christian, please." He smiled. " You already are, Piscine - in your heart. Whoever meets Christ in good faith is a Christian. Here in Munnar, you met Christ." Through this conversation, Pi takes in that

the internal significance of religion is really about having a solid faith. After around a year, Pi had a comparable experience with the religion of Islam. We see proof of his enthusiasm for the religion when he says "I challenge anyone to understand Islam, its spirit, and not to love it. It is a beautiful religion of brotherhood and devotion." After this, his genuine interest for God had started. Pi began to have faith in all three religions. To begin with, in view of his belief in Hinduism, he perceived the colour orange as an indication of survival. 'It seems orange-such a Hindu colour, the colour of survival'. Furthermore, as a result of Pi's belief in Christianity, he made a daily practice of praying each morning, midmorning, dusk and during the evening. 'I kept myself busy. That was the key to my survival. Sunrise: wake up, prayers. Mid-morning: prayers, lunch. Sunset: prayers. Night: fitful sleeping, prayers.' Lastly, as a result of Pi's belief in Islam, it is what kept him from killing Richard Parker. 'The words 'Plan Number six, Plan Number six, Plan Number six, Plan Number six' repeated themselves in my mind like a mantra and brought me a small measure of comfort.' Pi used his comprehension of God to keep him inspired to remain alive in such brutal conditions. With no data about where he is, Pi remained full of faith amid his time on the life raft which helped him stay alive in an obscure situation for two-hundred and twenty-seven days.

Pi was on a life raft surrounded by the Pacific Ocean for a long time, so he needed to break his morals to support living. He needed to set his mind to a savage point of view in which he can get skills of survivalism and make it with a tiger while on the Ocean. Pi's character was based on morality because of his association with the concept of religion. Pi was believed to be

a vegetarian alongside the rest of his family. This was not shocking considering the fact that he lived in India where vegetarianism is ordinarily rehearsed because of the high strength of the Hindu religion. So as to make due on the life raft, Pi was compelled to break his vegetarianism and seek after carnivorousism. " Lord, to think that I'm a strict vegetarian. To think that when I was a child I always shuddered when I snapped open a banana because it sounded to me like the breaking of an animal's neck. I descended to a level of savagery I never imagined possible." Pi explains how he viewed vegetarianism as an imperative good to himself and that even stripping a banana peel makes him feel that he has killed the banana, taking into account that it is just an organic fruit. Since he has such a significant number of challenges doing that, it is considerably harder for him to think about eating meat or fish. The main food source Pi had was ocean animals like fish and turtles. " Tears flowing down my cheeks, I egged myself on until I heard a cracking sound and I no longer felt any life-fighting in my hands. I pulled back the folds of the blanket. The flying fish was dead. It was split open and bloody on one side of its head, at the level of the gills." While killing the fish, Pi was feeling horrible for it like it was somebody very dear to him. Through such extreme feelings, Pi demonstrates his regard towards life. Pi butchers a sea turtle by cutting the turtle's neck and depleting the blood into a beaker, " bright red blood shot out. I grabbed the beaker and collected about three hundred milliliters". Pi drinks the turtle's blood and says: " I drank the blood to the last drop." Pi can drink the turtle blood and scrape off the turtle's shell with a knife. This can be seen when Pi states: " As confidently as if I had done it a thousand times, I jammed the knife just to the right of the turtle's head, at an angle. I pushed the blade deep into the folds of skin and twisted

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it." Pi needed to break his morals because he was practically choosing between life and demise. If he wanted to survive, he realized he needed to become accustomed to slaughtering animals so as to keep himself and Richard Parker alive. By breaking his morals, Pi gave himself more motivation to live since he has made survival less demanding for himself, however not ethically. His new feeling of survivalism convinces him to view another day since Pi realizes he has enough abilities to support himself and Richard Parker.

Zoomorphism, as characterized by Pi, is an animal seeing an alternate animal as one of its own for the purpose of companionship. Pi figures out how to interface with animals by contrasting animal identity qualities and his own and makes an association with them. He is applying personification to the animals to create a connection. If he doesn't partake in this then he will go mentally insane so this is healthy for him. "The poor dear looked so humanly sick! It is a particularly funny thing to read human traits in animals, especially in apes and monkeys, where it is so easy." Another instance is when Pi says "She came floating on an island of bananas in a halo of light, as lovely as the Virgin Mary. The rising sun behind her. Her flaming hair looked stunning...Let me say it plainly: I love you, I love you, I love you, I love, I love you...". Pi was talking about the orangutan, Orange Juice. Orange juice was unaggressive and gentle with lovable qualities like a mother. The connections Pi made with his surroundings helped him appreciate them and was part of what gave him the will to survive.

Ultimately, Pi holds onto the skill of survivalism through the influences from his three notable religions, breaking morals and creating a sense of

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relationship with Mother Earth. The idea the author develops regarding the human will to survive and endure the destructive forces surrounding them is that humans will take extreme measures. Without such influences, Pi would not have survived. This is what got him through two-hundred and twenty-seven days on the Pacific Ocean. As American Dancer Twyla Tharp would say, "To survive, you've got to keep wheedling your way. You can't just sit there and fight against odds when it's not going to work. You have to turn a corner, dig a hole, go through a tunnel - and find a way to keep moving."