

Cognitive Survival and the World of Belief: *Life of Pi* Through *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind*

T. R. Navya Menon

Independent Researcher

Alumna – EFLU, Hyderabad

## ABSTRACT

This paper studies *Life of Pi* through the conceptual lens of *The Power of Your Subconscious Mind*, reframed as a theory of subconscious belief formation rather than a self-help ideology. Pi's survival after the shipwreck illustrates how deeply internalised belief systems, faith, imagination, and symbolic meaning operate at the subconscious level to sustain psychological endurance under extreme trauma and isolation. The novel foregrounds the mind's capacity to reshape reality through narrative, enabling survival when empirical truth becomes emotionally uninhabitable. Drawing on Cognitive Literary Studies and Theory of Mind, the paper argues that *Life of Pi* transfers interpretive responsibility to the reader, who must infer Pi's psychological motivations and ethical needs rather than verify factual accuracy. This act of inference mirrors subconscious cognition, where meaning precedes logic. By blending Martel's fiction with Murphy's ideas on subconscious beliefs and thoughts, the study focuses on storytelling as a cognitive survival strategy that transforms trauma into coherence, agency, and emotional resilience. The study highlights that narrative trauma and belief are not forms of escapism but a cognitive necessity, revealing how the subconscious mind transforms suffering into survivable meaning through storytelling.

Keywords: Subconscious mind, Belief and survival, Cognitive literary studies, Theory of mind, Narrative trauma.

\*\*\*\*\*