

Student's Name
Professor's Name
Subject
Submission Date




Survival

In order to have a stereoscopic view of survival, there are five guiding perspectives: the importance of survival, the dangers that threaten survival, the strategies that enable survival, any issue that trump survival, and the effort to survive that shapes the “self” of the characters in *The Life and Most Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner* (truncated in the paper as *Robinson Crusoe*) and *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SURVIVAL IN BOTH WORKS


There are various reasons why survival is significant in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*. One of the reasons is that survival is a human contingent; it is a characteristic of the human race. The use of the uninhabited island, shipwreck and inventions in *Robinson Crusoe* is metaphorical. An adage soberly pipes it: life is an adventure that ends in a shipwreck. Away from the context of the work, life is a ship and humans are the wrecked cargo. It implies that being born is an accident that leads to the shipwreck of the ship; thus, life and humans have to try to survive from the debris of the



shipwreck. It is the reason they make inventories to enable them survive efficiently and sufficiently. Survival is a preordained instinct. There is, however, a providence, which is a divine force believed by some people to control their lives and what happens to them, usually in a way that protects them. There is its presence, when after seeing the wreck of a ship and hearing the gunshot, Crusoe starts a fire to show the seamen of his presence and thanks providence.

The second reason is that the urge to survive is a preordained urge that inspires the inventiveness. Despite the solitude of life on the uninhabited island, to some extent, Crusoe is comfortable with the life he leads there. His comfortable life on the island ends, when he sees the impression in the sand. "Upon the state of my case since I came on the shore on the island, I was comparing the happy posture of my affairs in the first years of my habitation here compared to the life of anxiety, fear, and care which I had lived ever since I had seen the print of a foot in the sand...my satisfaction was perfect though my danger was the same; and I was as happy in not knowing my danger, as if I had never really been exposed to it" (Defoe 151).

Thirdly, the factor "reason"—it makes survival crucial in the work. The author extensively describes what Crusoe thinks and his temperament by summarizing accounts of his reasoning, apprehension, resulting from his thinking, and the logicity of his reasonable conclusions, despite the fact that some of them are based on emotions. Faced with danger, "reason" assures Crusoe; he uses "reason" to determine good and evil, whose description is as a "testimony" (Defoe 44-51).



The following are the reasons why survival is pivotal in Samuel Richardson's epistolary work, *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*. One of the reasons why it's crucial is that Pamela can realize her chastity dream. After Pamela's master passes away, her service is relinquished to another master, Mr. B, her former master's son. Her new master flirts with her; being chagrined, she reports it to her parents and promises herself that she would better undergo any suffering or be chastised rather than go against her chastity vow. It is the idea that puts her at crossroads with her master, and she is torn between two decisions. At last, she survives both decisions by marrying her master and lives up to her chastity vows, rather than "suffer" through his sexual advances.

Another reason why in each work survival is essential is that it is the only way, through which the protagonists can blend into the higher or lower stratum that circumstance, in the case of Pamela, or fate, in the case of Crusoe, throws them into. By fate, Crusoe, who is from a middle class of society, finds himself in a place, which is fraught with dangers and where he belongs to a lower social class. On a forsaken island, Crusoe lacks the luxuries he had been using before; thus, he had to use his wit and fists to eke out a living in the island and get the basic necessities of life. It is the desire to survive and triumph of life that he was not weaned from what gives him the need for survival. On the other hand, Pamela is from a social stratum, which is lower than that of her master. She has no option, but to blow her chastity vows to smithereens if at all she has remained employed. This is because the job she does is the fulcrum of not only her family as she provides for them, but also of her own. Thus, she has to cling to the source of her livelihood.

THE DANGERS THAT THREATEN SURVIVAL

There are various dangers that threaten survival. One of them is the natural order, which is the orderliness of a system that is the physical universe, which entails the natural relation between and among beings. In *Robinson Crusoe*, there are cannibals, who thrive on human flesh. The Crusoe's security on the uninhabited island is not spur-of-the-moment, but preordained by the natural order, because these cannibals need human beings, like Crusoe, to furnish their cannibalistic lifestyle. However, in *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, the natural order, even though it threatens the survival of Pamela, who sees that it is the only source of her livelihood, is significant to a considerable degree. In either way, for Pamela to survive, she has to bring about a short-term and long-term gain in the natural order. One of them is the propensity of the human race to be attracted to the opposite gender, and her sexual appeal that compels her master to make sexual advances. The other concerns its ability to bring about the continuation of the human race. When she marries him, they have the chance of getting children.

The second danger that threatens survival is weakness. Weakness, which is the lack of the necessary things to have an advantage over another person, can be a matter of life or death. For instance, during the time, when Crusoe comes across thirty cannibals on the island, getting ready to feast on two natives. One is unlucky and gets killed, while the other flees, later named Friday. Friday lacks the ability to fight the cannibals, flees and seeks protection from Crusoe, therefore, he is weak. Crusoe has the necessary measures to fight the two cannibals and, thus, not only rescue Friday, but also save his own life. Consequently, they both survive what could have been an



onslaught.

Yet, the weakness of the being that is of Friday and the other native, who was eaten, holds the ultimate answer to the survival of the cannibals. In addition, the inferiority of the blacks in Africa compels Crusoe to embark on a slave-gathering expedition to Africa. In *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, however, the weakness of Pamela is a feminine trait, and females are exploited sexually through the virtue of that weakness. Just as like the cannibal's satisfaction and survival lie in the weakness of their prey, Mr. B takes an advantage of it, and his gratification lies in the Pamela's weakness. Survival also lies in weakness, something that may otherwise be seen as ironical.


Another danger that threatens survival is vested interests. To some extent, one's dreams and aspirations threaten his or her survival. Sometimes, people have unnecessary hopes and aspirations, achievement of which is not worth the effort. For instance, the Crusoes are a well-heeled family, thus, it is not a profitable if Crusoe undertakes the adventure. Crusoe's father also notices the lack of feasibility in the adventure, and Crusoe goes against it. Later, in his adventure, Crusoe scarcely cheats death many times, namely in situations that unnecessarily threaten his survival. Yet, he seems to enjoy it. It is, however, a human trait to seek for the excitement and exhilaration. In the same perspective, Pamela seems ready to sacrifice her source of livelihood and that of her parents on the altar of chastity. She is even aware that her dreams and chastity vows might make her lose her job as a maid in Mr. B's house. Yet, she looks forward to it, until, in an intriguing turn of events, she realizes her chastity dream and keeps the job.

STRATEGIES THAT ENABLE SURVIVAL

The following are the strategies that enable survival. Based on arguments made by biologists, there are two survival strategies. The first strategy of survival is survival of the fittest. The second one is an isolation of oneself and one's environment away from any stronger enemy, who is the predator.

These two strategies are evident in the two works. In *Robinson Crusoe*, the main character is fit to survive, when compared to the natives that the cannibals feast on, for two reasons. First, he is equipped to survive the cannibals' attack as he has arms, ammunition, a bagful of small shots, powder and musket bullets, while the natives are not. Thus, Crusoe is fit to survive. In his conclusion of the survival of inferior species, Charles Darwin observed that if the inferior species isolated themselves, they could survive. Second, Crusoe uses this strategy. In order to prevent being seen by the cannibals, Crusoe even goes to the extent of moving into a new cave, eliminates all of his activities' traces, when moving from a place, and improvises a way of cooking underground. Thus, he lives in complete isolation, and his dwelling is fenced and fortified.

In *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, it was not Pamela's virtue that got rewarded. Instead, it was because she refused to sacrifice her virginity on the altar of anything less than cash. If she felt intimidated to yield to her master's sexual advances and was pessimistic in terms of her chastity vows, she could have been merely a sex object to her master. However, she survived, because of her optimism and as the saying emphasizes, "nature operates on the principle of the survival of the fittest, and a pessimist is not ideally equipped




to survive.” Similarly, as Pamela tries to survive independently, she is isolated. In the work, Mr. B is the enemy, a stronger predator, who belongs to the man’s environment, where money and the social position are the basis of power. Pamela loses herself in letter-writing.

ISSUES THAT TRUMP SURVIVAL

There are various issues that have an essential impact survival. In the two works, these issues are evident. One of them is lack of food. As Defoe recounts in *Robinson Crusoe’s* “Agricultural Experience”, for nearly two weeks, there was the incessant rain that hampered his efforts to have food. Yet, he “began to be straitened for food”. He had to do with the few that he got and barely cooked. This is echoed in *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*. Despite Pamela’s discomfort with her employer, she has to suppress her pride, because she has no other means of getting food.

Sickness also affects survival to a considerable degree. Crusoe becomes very sick with a fever and a severe headache. With no one coming to his rescue, he becomes weak to stand and take water, despite the fact that he is thirsting for it. He is in a near-death situation. In *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, this is also present. In a reply to their daughter’s letter, Pamela’s parents cite their talk with Widow Mumford, who tells them that it is normal, when a Lady dies and gives what she has to the waiting-maid “and to such as sit up with her in her illness” (Richardson 6).


Another triumph of survival is the population size of people, particularly the



increase in population against diminishing resources. For instance, in *Robinson Crusoe*, there are many cannibals, than there is their prey. The cannibals have to come from the mainland to the island to find food from the occasional survivors of a shipwreck and suchlike. In fact, when they get their two prey, with Friday among them, they share it among themselves, although there are thirty of them. However, in *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, the size of population is vital for the disparity between the rich and poor, which brings about the mutual relationship between them. The poor serve the rich and, in so doing, solve the issue of poverty in their families. For instance, the poor Pamela's parents depend on their waiting-maid daughter and the rich Widow Mumford, "and she puts [them] in some Comfort." (Richardson).

THE WAY THE EFFORT TO SURVIVE SHAPES THE "SELF" OF THE CHARACTERS

Various efforts made by the characters in a bid to survive shape their "self". One of the aspects is perseverance. Crusoe's efforts to survive numerous dangers and calamities, such as enslavement, shipwrecks, earthquake, instill a sense of perseverance in him. The second aspect is belief. Crusoe's feeling of guilt after rebelling against his father's expectations of him, the dream with the angel and after the first prayer and reading the Bible, though vague and episodic, portray Crusoe's increase in his religious belief. The third aspect is religiosity. After having saved Friday from other cannibals, he converts to Protestantism. Another essential aspect concerns the diet. Friday is a cannibal, who is anatomically and physiologically adapted to human. However, he is convinced by Crusoe, his savior, to denounce his cannibalistic



habits and start eating goat meat; thus, he changes from a cannibal to an eater that prefers the meat of an animal. The last aspect deals with the economic activity. Crusoe and Xury run away from their Moorish captors and go down the African coast. When the Portuguese captain finds them, he takes Crusoe to Brazil, where he introduces him to a new way of life as a plantation owner.

In *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded*, efforts to survive made by the characters also shape their “self”. One of the abovementioned efforts implies generosity. At first, the squire B. successfully uses money and material wealth to gain advantage over others such as the Reverend Williams. However, when he tries to exert an impact on Pamela, he fails, even after offering her lots of money, clothes, jewels and estate. Pamela delivers a rebuff to his sexual advances and generosity; she gives her impoverished parents most of her money, instilling a sense of generosity in him, and he starts giving freely his wealth to Mrs. Jewkes, Colbrand and the coachmen.

The other issue is the preservation of virtue. Despite her master’s endless attempts to seduce her, Pamela never yields to him. She refuses his money and similar offerings in order to preserve her virtue. Another crucial aspect is forgiveness and repentance. The squire tries to win Pamela’s heart, and after they have a true romantic love, he sets the Reverend William free and denounces the wrongs he had committed in the past.