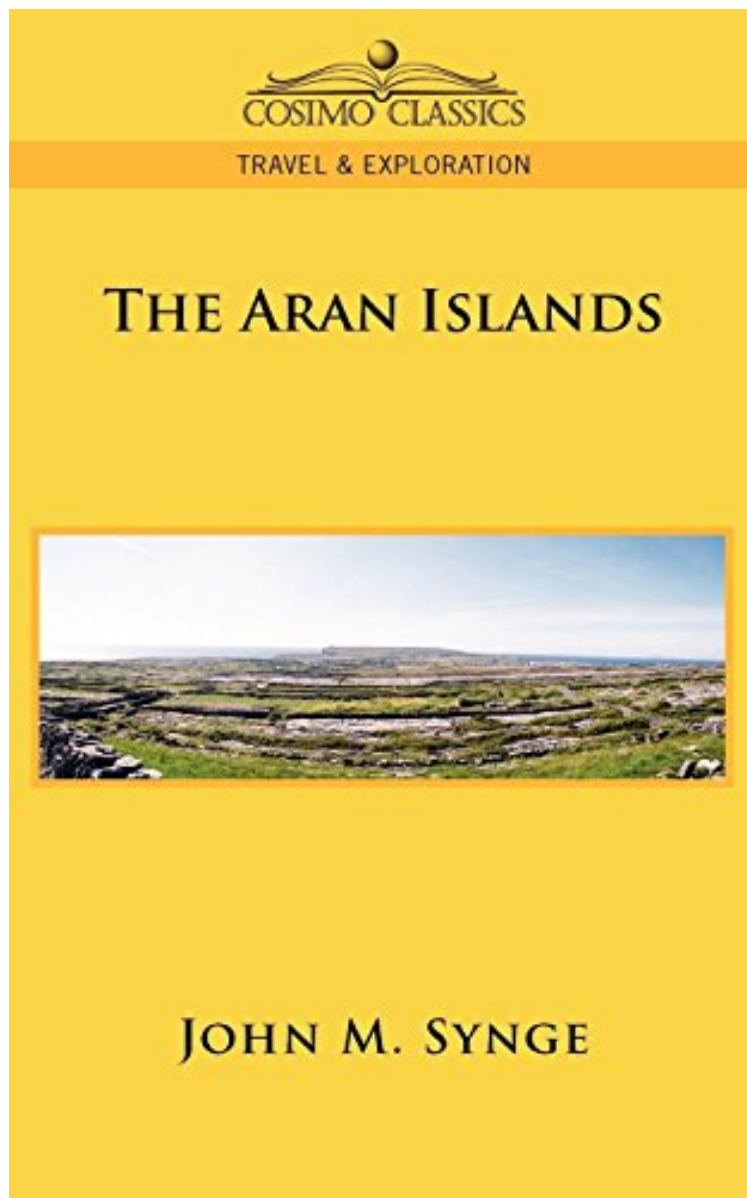


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## The Aran Islands

*Von John M. Synge*

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**Von John M. Synge : The Aran Islands** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Aran Islands:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Highly interesting, but a bit boring Von Ein Kunde J.M. Synge might have been one of the best Irish writers in history, but

despite that fact and the fact that his subject, the life on the desolate Aran Islands, is a very interesting one, I cannot help but be bored by this book. The Aran Islands is a group of islands outside the west coast of Ireland, and the life there is very harsh. The sea, the wind, the lack of good soil... all this worked to make life here very hard and shaped the culture and the attitude of the individuals. Furthermore, the islands were almost totally cut off from the mainland at the time this book was written (now it's a popular tourist spot where you can visit "Synge's cottage"). Synge went to the Aran Islands five or six times during as many years, and wrote this book to "express a life that never found expression before" (Yeats's words). The life on these islands, far from the modern civilization that takes place only a few hours away on the Irish mainland, is indeed of interest. But nothing happens. In the whole book. It starts with Synge being on the Island, his first day there. It ends with Synge leaving the Islands for the last time. In between, all there is is the interesting description of the islanders' life, which could have been described better in another way, and Synge's mixed emotions of them. As a reader you get the visitor's view of the island, a visitor that wants so badly to be accepted at one time, the next minute, he thinks of them as primitive. It is worth reading because of the informative contents, however. And if you plan on visiting the islands, it's a must-read. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. An interesting turn of the century look at the culture Von James G. Mundie People have often said to me that they find Synge's account of his time spent honing his Irish and collecting folklore on the Aran Islands to be one of the slowest and most boring reads they've ever encountered. I must heartily disagree. While the work doesn't exactly "swing like the pendulum do", the rhythms of his narration are very much like that of the changing tide and the rolling of the waves to which the islanders have grown accustomed. Synge's narration-- like time on Inishmaan-- moves slowly and steadily, washing over the reader if one will let it. Remember above all that this work is essentially a series of journal entries, meant to document the people Synge met, the conversations he had, the stories he heard, etc. Perhaps the book's greatest contribution to the world is as a document of a way of life no longer in existence. This book is also a document of the the Irish Literary Renaissance, and-- for its occasional pretensions-- should be ! considered as such. This text might also help to give greater understanding to any reading of Synge's plays, as he alleged that the story for such works as "Playboy of the Western World" were derived from tales he heard in the Arans. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Very interesting peek into the past Von Samuel W. Harnish, Jr. J.M. Synge's book about life on the desolate Aran Islands is a very well written look into a society that could only exist until that time, and in that place. The Aran Islands, a group of islands off the west coast of Ireland, were at the time almost completely cut off from the mainland, except via the 'hooker' and the skin covered 'curagh' that plays such a critical part both in life on the islands, and in the book. Life there was very hard and made the character of the people very unique. The islands were, and are, one of the strongest 'Irish' speaking cultures, and the ability to find life in the midst of it all is profoundly apparent throughout the book, as is Synge's obvious appreciation of the simple life and simple beliefs found there (note the comparison he makes to the 'busy' and 'lost' world in Galway, merely across the bay). It is a book of it's time, and should be read in the context of the beginning of the 'Irish Revival' then beginning.

Kurzbeschreibung When the wind is from the north the old woman manages my meals with fair regularity; but on the other days she often makes my tea at three o'clock instead of six. If I refuse it she puts it down to simmer for three hours in the turf, and then brings it in at six o'clock full of anxiety to know if it is warm enough.... The general ignorance of any precise hours in the day makes it impossible for the people to have regular meals.-from The Aran Islands At the behest of William Butler Yeats, whom he met in Paris during his bohemian sojourn there, JOHN MILLINGTON SYNGE (1871-1909) traveled to the remote Irish Aran Islands for part of every summer from 1898 to 1902. The native Dubliner was seeking the hidden treasures of his native land, and he found the inspiration for the plays that would see his name live in posterity, including 1907's *The Playboy of the Western World*. This beautifully revealing 1906 work is Synge's journal of his time in the primitive Arans and among its hale, stalwart inhabitants. From the folktales of the Aran people to the quirks of their Gaelic-tinged English, from the pagan remnants that inflect their rough Christianity to the coarse monotony of their diet, Synge celebrates the simplicity of life in the Arans but never romanticizes it. These are the people who sparked Synge's imagination so strongly that all his plays reflect their hopes, their dreams, and their tragedies..de Nothing much happens on the Aran Islands--at least, not much went on there in the late 19th century, when John Synge sailed out to these mist-shrouded, salt-sprayed, and wave-battered chunks of rocks south of Ireland. Therein lies the charm of the setting and of this lovely book, which captures the saltiness of both the marine air and the time-lost characters, who deeply believe in the magical "wee people." In cottages where nets and fishing tackle hang from beams, the women (who always wear red dresses and petticoats, as do some of the boys) sit at their spinning wheels or sew cow-skin sandals, while the fishermen spin yarns about fairies, sunken vessels, and bags of gold gained from adulterous wives. The big happening of the year is when roofs are rethatched--an event that blossoms into a festival with twisted rope stretching from kitchen table through lane to nearby field. Synge seems an ambassador from a different world: addressed as "noble person," he brings tokens of

modernity--be they clocks or simple magic tricks that beguile the locals. First published in 1907, this re-released travelogue gives a poignant peek into another time and begs a visit to the Aran Islands to see how, or if, they have changed. --Melissa Rossi.com Nothing much happens on the Aran Islands--at least, not much went on there in the late 19th century, when John Synge sailed out to these mist-shrouded, salt-sprayed, and wave-battered chunks of rocks south of Ireland. Therein lies the charm of the setting and of this lovely book, which captures the saltiness of both the marine air and the time-lost characters, who deeply believe in the magical "wee people." In cottages where nets and fishing tackle hang from beams, the women (who always wear red dresses and petticoats, as do some of the boys) sit at their spinning wheels or sew cow-skin sandals, while the fishermen spin yarns about fairies, sunken vessels, and bags of gold gained from adulterous wives. The big happening of the year is when roofs are rethatched--an event that blossoms into a festival with twisted rope stretching from kitchen table through lane to nearby field. Synge seems an ambassador from a different world: addressed as "noble person," he brings tokens of modernity--be they clocks or simple magic tricks that beguile the locals. First published in 1907, this re-released travelogue gives a poignant peek into another time and begs a visit to the Aran Islands to see how, or if, they have changed. --Melissa Rossi