

Review Article

Uncovering the Semblance of Geography and Narrativity in Jaladas 'Jalaputra and Synge's *Riders to the Sea*

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to study the semblances between the novel Jalaputra (2008) and the drama Riders to the Sea (1904), two of the most impactful books from two different geographic backgrounds. Jalaputra by Harishankar Jaladas (b. 1955) is undisputedly one of the first Bengali novels to have been written solely based on the lives of the Bangladeshi coastal fishing communities. Likewise, exploring the lives of the Irish coastal fishermen, the celebrated playwright John Millington Synge (1871-1909) wrote Riders to the Sea, a play in one act. The play is considered to be part of the Irish Literary Renaissance. This paper investigates the points of similarity between the two works, emphasising how the characters encounter analogous experiences in their daily lives.

Keywords: Jalaputra, Riders to the Sea, Mortality, Folk Beliefs, Poverty

Introduction

In Bangla literature, there have been a good few novels authored on riverine life and people. Manik Bandyopadhyay's *Padma Nadir Majhi* (1936), and Adwaita Mallabharman's *Titas Ekti Nadir Naam* (1956) are some of the most noteworthy ones. However, *Jalaputra*, set in the Chittagonian village of North Patenga, on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, is a painful sea story of Bhuvaneshwari who is victim of both the natural and human world. In the preface to the book *Sons of the Sea* (2017), a translation of the book *Jalaputra*, it is noted that *Jalaputra* truly has "epic qualities" [1] in it. "In weaving the tale of the fishing community, Jaladas has captured from A to Z of the life of its members" [1].

In his tragic play *Riders to the Sea*, Irish Literary Revival playwright J. M. Synge portrays the coastal life of Inishmaan in the Aran Islands, where characters struggle against the relentless cruelty of the sea. The protagonist of the book, Maurya, metaphorically stands on the same ground with Bhuvaneshwari as both of them certainly have their fair share of tragedies in life. *Riders to the Sea* came to be evaluated as "the most perfect one-act play in the English language" [2].

Research Gap

The comparison between a Bangladeshi sea novel and an Irish coastal drama to see the universality of the message of the stories is new. Hence, the present study addresses this research gap.

The Jarring Jalaputra

A mere child of nine, Bhuvaneshwari had to begin her conjugal life before the natural onset of puberty. She was married off to a 19-year-old Chandramani at North Patenga. As the narrative begins, Bhuvan, now nineteen, has a three-year-old son, Gangapada. Bhuvan loses Chandramani, the only earning member in the family, to the sea and falls into extreme poverty with her only child Ganga and old father-in-law, Haribandhu. Bhuvan does not want Ganga to share the same fate as his father. So, she decides that Ganga must go to school and educate himself. But the cost-of-living crisis hits her hard. She gradually sells her husband's belongings to finance the family of the three. Eventually she takes up fish-selling to save the family from reaching rock bottom of hardship. However, she fails to stop Ganga from quitting his studies. Ganga's facing in-class discrimination and racism at school by Hindu and Muslim peers is one of the two main reasons for him to be excluded from school. The second reason is his

inability to witness his mother's relentless efforts for the family's well-being. He wants to help her financially. Later, mother and son earn enough to achieve their financial stability.

Ganga turns 22 and accepts the marriage match his mother arranges for him. Bhuvan becomes genuinely happy to see her sensible daughter-in-law, Sumitra, who conceives just in time. Ganga for his whole life has been a voice and never an echo. He raises his voice against the unjust actions everywhere. Ganga, together with his friends Jayanta, Jagdish, and Anil, organises the fishermen to resist their exploitative creditors, Abdus Shukkur and Shashibhushan Roy, who impose financial hardships on the poor fishing families. The fishermen become aware of their rights and feel that by their side they have Ganga who can lead them with integrity and bravery. Regrettably, Gopal, a fifth-columnist, secretly provides the creditors with information aimed at bringing his own people down. The creditors plot to eliminate Ganga because he intends to close down their bloodsucking business. Shukkur gets Ganga mercilessly killed when Ganga goes for fishing at night in the canal.

Ganga does not get to see the face of his yet-to-be-born child. And, Bhuvan has been losing ever since she can remember. Losing is her forte. Hailing from a disadvantaged fishermen community and encountering with similar situations like the male characters in the book, Jaladas tells lifelike tales of his community in *Jalaputra*.

The Rueful Riders to the Sea

"The play [*Riders to the Sea*] illustrates that this tragedy lies in the death of men by drowning, and women are left behind to suffer and survive alone" [3]. Cathleen and Nora, two little sisters, quietly open a cloth bundle that contains a shirt and a plain stocking which were recovered off a drowned man in Donegal. They suppose that these are their brother Michael's clothes. Michael has been missing at sea for a week. The two sisters do not want their mother Maurya to know of this because she has already lost her husband, father-in-law, and four of her sons to the sea. Cathleen and Nora worry because a big storm is blowing in the west and their last surviving brother, Bartley wishes to go on the sea that day. Maurya tries to stop Bartley from going to the sea but he does not listen to her and rides down on a red mare to earn profit by selling horses. Later news arrives that Bartley has been knocked down in the sea by the grey pony that was running behind him. Maurya becomes completely devastated. Her tears dry up and now she has no more reason to cry as the sea can no longer bring any ill-lucks for her.

Provenance of the Titles

The title *Riders to the Sea* carries a symbolic meaning, suggesting humanity's inevitable journey towards mortal death. It also contains a Biblical allusion. In the book of Exodus, Pharaoh's horsemen pursued the Israelites to the sea, but God struck them down, leading to their brutal death in the waters. Miriam, the prophetess, sang the glory of God for "He has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider He has thrown into the sea" [4].

So, the title *Riders to the Sea* draws on two layers of meaning. Firstly, the "riders" represent people, and the "sea" represents death. It shows that everyone's life ends in death, just like the men in the play who go to the sea and never return. Secondly, just as the waters in Exodus punish Pharaoh's horsemen, the sea in Synge's play acts as a powerful force that takes the lives of Maurya's sons.

On the other hand, the title *Jalaputra* is simply the combination of two separate words "jal," meaning water and "putra," meaning son. Jaladas used the words together to make Jalaputra which literally means fishermen.

Materials and Methods

Research Approach

This article undertakes a simple, qualitative comparison to explore the common themes, culture, and symbols in *Jalaputra* and *Riders to the Sea*. It focuses on the texts and critical writings to find shared ideas such as death, folk beliefs, and poverty in both works. The primary sources for this study are *Jalaputra* (original Bangla edition), its English translation *Sons of the Sea* by Quazi Mostain Billah, and *Riders to the Sea*. The secondary data were drawn from a wide range of scholarly materials, including peer-reviewed journal articles, essays in printed form, concerned websites, and religious texts.

Analytical Framework

The paper uses a comparative literary approach with ideas from postcolonial, social, and eco-critical views. It looks at three main themes such as death, folk beliefs and superstition, and poverty. These themes are chosen because they greatly affect how the characters live and make decisions.

Method of Analysis

The research followed some simple steps. First, both texts were read carefully to find the main ideas and themes. Then, the settings of coastal Bangladesh and the Aran Islands of Ireland were compared to see how they affect the characters' lives. Next, the study looked at how the themes show similar human struggles. Finally, books and articles were used to help understand the texts better.

Result and Discussions

Mortality in *Jalaputra*

Fishermen dying untimely has always been a common phenomenon in coastal fishing communities and the village of Uttar Patenga is no exception. Bhuvan lived her whole life in perpetual fear of loss because the open sea is the toughest place to be a fisherman. Once the fishermen go far into the sea, there is barely any guarantee of their return journey. Jaladas says, “হয়তো এই ঝড়ো হাওয়ায় চন্দ্রমণিরা ভেসে গেছে দূরে কোথাও, হয়তো তাদের নৌকাটি ডুবেছে। নৌকা ডোবার কথা ভাবতেই শিউরে উঠে ভুবনেশ্বরী” (Could be, that Chandramani and his fishing mates were swept far away by the stormy wind or their boat could have sunk. Bhuvaneshwari shuddered at the thought of sinking of the boat) [5]. Bhuvan's feeling of loss brings with it sadness and sadness brings with it a feeling of loneliness. However, the truth is that the sons of the fishermen are left with no other option than to follow in the footsteps of their fathers. “ছেলেরা একটু মাথা-উঁচু হলেই বাপের সঙ্গে মাছ ধরতে যায়। যদি সংসারে দুটো টাকা বেশি আসে” (As soon as the boys are a little grown up, they accompany their fathers to fish. If they can add to the family kitty!) [5]. “জেলেপরিবারে ছেলে বড় সম্পদ, ভবিষ্যৎ-আয়ের উৎস” (In a fisherman's family the male child is seen as a great boon, a source for future income) [5].

The fishermen and the sea are inextricably interconnected. The men clearly risk their lives at sea knowing that there's probably no coming back from this. “তাদের বাঁচা-মরা সাগরের মর্জির উপর নির্ভরশীল” (Their survival depends on the whims of the sea) [5]. “এই জেলেপল্লির অনেক নারী বিধবা। তাদের স্বামীরা সমুদ্রে মরেছে” (Many of the women of this fishermen's quarter are widows. Their husbands died in the sea) [5]. They know very well that life is unpredictable and difficult for a fisherman. Bhuvan, unwilling but bound to send her son to the sea, says, “কিছুদিন পর বাপের মতো দইজ্যাত যাইবো। আর ... আর ডুবি মরিবো” (Like his father, he will also go to the sea. And then ... he will also drown) [5].

Besides the vulnerability in the face of nature's fury, exploitative creditors like Abdus Shukkur and Shashibhushan Roy are the forces of evil in the lives of the fishermen. The fishermen are, and always have been too human in front of them. Raising a voice against them is of equal value to put many lives in danger. It is evident in what Shukkur says, addressing Ganga, “খানকির পোয়া গঙ্গাইয়ার লিডারগিরি থামাই দেওন পরিবো” (Will have to stop the son of a bitch Ganga's leadership) [5]. Ganga's only fault was he was trying to make the villagers aware about life. In revenge, Shukkur attacks and kills Ganga. “গঙ্গা মরি গেইয়ে গই। গঙ্গারে মরি ফেলাইয়ে” (Ganga is dead. They have killed Ganga) [5].

Mortality in *Riders to the Sea*

Mortality is a common facet of the book *Riders to the Sea* like *Jalaputra*. Maurya goes through the same financial hardship and psychological distress as Bhuvan. Fishermen of Inishmaan are completely reliant on the sea like the fishermen of Uttar Patenga. To make a living from the sea they risk their lives and sometimes they fail to make it back to the land. “Although they depend on the sea for survival, their attempts in the sea end with death, and male figures appear to sacrifice their lives in this way” [3]. Having suffered the loss of many loved ones to the sea, Maurya is now bereft of any male members in her family. She says, “It's a hard thing they'll be saying below if the body is washed up and there's no man in it to make the coffin” [6]. Men are, in fact, left with no other option than to go deep-sea fishing. “It's the life of a young man to be going on the sea” [6]. Hence, the fisherwomen live in fear of loss all their lives. Maurya's fear is evident in the lines she says to Bartley, “It's hard set we'll be surely the day you're drown'd with the rest. What way will I live and the girls with me, and I an old woman looking for the grave?” [6].

Against Maurya's will, Bartley left for the sea and she did not give him a proper send off. She says, “He's gone now. God spare us, and we'll not see him again. ... when the black night is falling I'll have no son left me in the

world” [6]. It is the old people that leave things for the wellbeing of their children. “But in this place it is the young men do be leaving things behind for them that do be old” [6]. And the old people treasure those special memories. Similarly, Bhuvan in *Jalaputra* treasures a halish (a long rowing pedal) left at home by Chandramani before being lost at sea. When a nephew of hers wanted to take it away from her, she burst, “খবদার, এই হালিশ তুই নো ছুঁবি। লই যাওন তো দূরের কথা” (Mind you, never talk of taking the halish. You should not even touch it) [5]. In the throes of grief, Maurya started to accept her fate with calm resignation. She says, “They’re all gone now, and there isn’t anything more the sea can do to me” [6]. In Bhuvan’s case, she felt the same after the death of Ganga. “গঙ্গার শিয়রের কাছে জল-কাদায় বসে আছে ভুবনেশ্বরী - স্তব্ধ, নিথর, পাথরের মতো” (Close to Ganga’s head, Bhuvaneshwari sat in the mud and water – silent, immobile, like stone” [5]. Though Maurya was in pain, she showed stoic attitude towards the ending of the story. She says, “What more can we want than that? No man at all can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied” [6].

Folk Beliefs in Jalaputra

The native people in *Jalaputra* have a lot of superstitious beliefs. “সর্পের দেবী মনসাকে তাদের বড় ভয়। ... তারা বিশ্বাস করে - মনসাকে সন্তুষ্ট রাখতে পারলে সর্পের কোপানল থেকে রেহাই পাবে” (They have great dread for Manasa, the snake goddess. ... They believe that if they can keep goddess Manasa appeased, they can have respite from the fury of snakes” [5]. The presence of folk beliefs can be traced in a socio-religious event in the village. “যাকের ধোঁয়া সন্তানদের গায়ে লাগলে তাদের সমস্ত বিপদ আপদ দূরীভূত হয়ে যায় - এটা জেলেনারীদের চিরন্তন বিশ্বাস” (The fisherwomen nourish eternal belief that if the jak smoke, a socio-religious event to expose children to a smoke of medicinal herbs, touches the children they will remain free from all troubles) [5].

“Storms are a universal concern to fishermen” and “fishermen are known to try to avoid fishing in stormy weather, as storms pose a physical threat to fishers, their vessels, and their gear” [7]. At Uttar Patenga, however, it is neither a weather warning nor a weather forecaster that resolves if a fisher will go to the sea. The date and time of the first journeys at sea in the fishing season are always decided by the village Brahmin instead, because he is well-versed in astronomy. “সমুদ্রে জাল বসানোর সমস্ত প্রস্তুতি শেষ। ... চিত্তরঞ্জন শর্মা জেলেদের ব্রাহ্মণ। ... পঞ্জিকা দেখে তিনি জলযাত্রার দিনক্ষণ ঠিক করে দিয়েছেন। জ্যৈষ্ঠমাসের ২৯ তারিখ যাত্রা শুভ” (The preparation to set net in the sea is complete. ... Chittaranjan Sharma is the Brahmin of the fishermen. ... Consulting the panjika he had fixed the auspicious day and time for inaugurating fishing for the year. 29th Jyeshtha (the second month of the Bengali calendar) was found to be the auspicious day to start) [5]. These local cultural and religious beliefs and practices make the book look so distinctive.

Folk Beliefs in Riders to the Sea

The way in which folk beliefs are shown in *Riders to the Sea* is no different than how folk beliefs are shown in *Jalaputra*. Cathleen asks Nora if she asked the young priest whether he stopped Bartley from going to the Galway fair in Connemara. Nora replies, “I won’t stop him,” says [the young priest], “but let you not be afraid. Herself does be saying prayers half through the night, and the Almighty God won’t leave her destitute,” says [the young priest], “with no son living” [6]. The young priest wants the others to believe that it’s only prayers that can save lives as he is least likely to prioritise actions. He could in fact stop Bartley from going to the sea and perhaps he could save him that day giving him a fair warning about the inclement weather. Robert Green Ingersoll (1833-1899), the American writer in his posthumous 1900 book *The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll*, writes, “The hands that help are better far than lips that pray” [8].

According to Cathleen, a blessing is powerful enough for a seagoer to do perfectly well on an ocean voyage. The seafarers would, however, go for a pair of gloves, non-slip shoes, and a water-resistant windbreaker along with the blessing. Cathleen says to Maurya, “Why wouldn’t you give him your blessing and he looking round in the door? Isn’t it sorrow enough is on every one in this house without your sending him out with an unlucky word behind him, and a hard word in his ear?” [6]. This is simply a superstitious belief that people have, particularly the likes of Cathleen. Cathleen urges Maurya to go after Bartley to give him his share of bread as Cathleen forgot to give him at the time of his departure. She thinks Maurya can utilise this chance to bless him. She says, “You’ll see him then and the dark word will be broken, and you can say ‘God speed you,’ the way he’ll be easy in his mind” [6]. They treat beliefs and superstitions like some demonstrated facts. “Superstition is, always has been, and

forever will be, the foe of progress, the enemy of education and the assassin of freedom. It sacrifices the known to the unknown, the present to the future, this actual world to the shadowy next. It has given us a selfish heaven, and a hell of infinite revenge; it has filled the world with hatred, war and crime, with the malice of meekness and the arrogance of humility. Superstition is the only enemy of science in all the world” [8].

Poverty in *Jalaputra*

Fishermen’s fight against poverty in the village of Uttar Patenga is an everyday affair, as if it will never end. “আষাঢ়-শ্রাবন-ভাদ্র-আশ্বিন-এই চারমাসে তাদের হাঁড়িতে ভাত থাকে, পরনে নতুন কাপড় থাকে, মুখে হাসি থাকে। বাকি আটমাস খেয়ে না-খেয়ে তাদের দিন কাটে” (During the months of Asharh, Shravan, Bhadra, and Aashwin, the families enjoy relative prosperity, with food on their plates, new clothes to wear, and smiles on their faces. However, during the remaining eight months, their circumstances are precarious—some days they have enough to eat, while on others they face hunger) [5]. Most of the families in the fishermen community suffer immense financial hardships.

“জেলের জনবলের অভাব নেই। অভাব শুধু টাকার। ... মাছ বিক্রির টাকায় দৈনন্দিন প্রয়োজন মিটে না। চাল-ডাল কিনলে নুনের পয়সা থাকে না, নুন কিনলে তেলের পয়সায় টান পড়ে। এভাবেই জীবন চলে তাদের)” (There is no dearth of manpower among the fishermen. But there is acute shortage of money. ... What they make by selling the fish is not enough to defray their everyday expenses. If they buy rice and pulses with that money, they have nothing left to buy salt, and when they can stretch the money to buy salt they have little left to buy cooking oil. That’s how their life runs) [5]. The weather-beaten widow Bhuvaneshwari struggles to survive amidst the harshness of the sea. “গত পাঁচ বছর খেয়ে না-খেয়ে জীবনকে টেনে এনেছে সে এত দূর পর্যন্ত। ... প্রতিদিন মাছ জোগাড় করতে পারেনি, ডাল আর পুকুরপাড় থেকে সংগ্রহ করা শাক দিয়ে দুবেলা খাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করেছে” (For the last five years she somehow scraped by. She could not procure fish everyday but served her family two full meals with lentils and vegetables plucked from the banks of the pond) [5]. Bhuvan’s hardships beggar belief by the day. She speaks to her neighbour, “খুঁউব কষ্ট। সংসার আর চালাইত নো পারির। দুইবেলা ঠিকমতো রাঁধিত নো পারির। পোয়ার পরীক্ষার ফিস দিত নো পারির। পোয়ার পড়ালেয়া বুঝি আর চালাইত নো পাইয়াম” (Miserable. Can’t run the family anymore. Can’t even arrange two meals. Couldn’t pay my son’s examination fees. Looks like I will not be able to keep him at school) [5].

In spite of the fact that Bhuvan suffers greatly throughout her life, she never accepts loss to poverty. Instead, she stoically accepts her fate and becomes both the matriarch and patriarch of her family. She takes up fish-selling as her profession, something that was unheard of for a woman in her family. She is the embodiment of self-sacrifice.

Poverty in *Riders to the Sea*

Towards the end of the drama, Maurya’s extreme poverty was evidently felt when she says, they are left with “a bit of wet flour ... and maybe a fish that would be stinking” [6]. Bartley was the last hope of the family, being the last living son. With him gone, the family reached rock bottom financially. Son preference is a common phenomenon in the fishing communities. It is because the sons can only be the next earning members in the family. Maurya believes, “If it was a hundred horses, or a thousand horses you had itself, what is the price of a thousand horses against a son where there is one son only?” [6].

Fishermen risk their lives every day. Bartley could avoid going to the fair for horses, given that the weather was rough but he had to go anyway. The family was in dire need of money and Bartley was the only earning member in the family. He says, “The fair will be a good fair for horses, I heard them saying below” [6]. Bartley lost more to poverty than he lost to fate or nature.

Maurya’s life became empty as she lost many loved ones to the sea slash to poverty. She mourns, “I’ve had a husband, and a husband’s father, and six sons in this house – six fine men, ... some of them were found and some of them were not found, but they are gone now the lot of them” [6]. Even though her whole life is full of suffering and pain, she bears no grudge against life. She seems so content at the last of the play for the fact that her sons received decent burials. She says, “What more can we want than that? No man at all can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied” [6].

Bhuvan-Maurya and Ganga-Bartley: Parallels of Suffering

In several instances, the interests of Bhuvan and Maurya are quite identical. Both women lost their husbands to the sea and became widow. Becoming widow, Bhuvan had an indescribable experience that forever changed her life, and similar is the case with Maurya. Bhuvan lost her last hope, her only son Ganga to the sea. Maurya, too, lost her last hope, her last surviving son, Bartley to the sea. Many things caused both protagonists grief but nothing seemed

too big for them to fight. They overcame grief without expressing it too much and showed a stoic resignation towards their fate.

The Swiss-born American psychiatrist and author Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1926 - 2004), in her groundbreaking book *On Death and Dying* (1969) introduced five stages of grief. “Those stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance” [9]. The stages “reflect common emotional responses to change, loss, or shock” [10]. Kübler-Ross’ model was initially presented to describe people with illness facing death. However, it is now “generally accepted among public and has been treated as an all-purpose theory to cope with bereavement” [11]. Both in the context of the play and from a physiological point of view, Bhuvan and Maurya’s grief can be well explained through the theory of grief proposed by Kübler-Ross.

Again, the roles that Ganga played are somewhat similar to those of Bartley. Both of them made a lot of sacrifices to provide for their family. Ganga did not hesitate to quit school to contribute to his family. “মায়ের এই কষ্ট, এই দীন দশা তার সহ্য হয় না। সে ভাবে – যদি দু’চার টাকা সে রোজগার করতে পারতো, তাহলে মায়ের কষ্ট কিছুটা কমতো। কী হবে পড়ালেখা করে? পড়াটা এবার থামিয়েই দিতে হবে” (He could not bear his mother’s pain and suffering any longer. He thought that if he could earn a little, his mother’s suffering would lighten slightly. What was the point of studying? He should give it up) [5]. Ganga’s submission to his fate is also evident when he says, “মা, তোঁয়ার কষ্ট আই আর সহ্য গরিত্ নো পারির। পড়া ছাড়ি দি আই তোঁয়ারে সাহায্য গইয়াম” (Ma, I can no longer bear your suffering. Dropping out of school, I want to help you) [5]. Bhuvan was devastated when Ganga decided this. She went on saying, “আঁর সব আশা আকাঙ্ক্ষা শেষ। গঙ্গা পড়ালেখা ছাড়ি দিএ” (All my hopes are dashed. Ganga has dropped out of school) [5].

Then, Maurya’s efforts to stop Bartley from going to the turbulent sea were in vain because Bartley knew how significant it was for him to go to the fair for horses. Given that they were living in conditions of great financial difficulty, Bartley thought he could not afford losing the chance to go to the fair. He thought he could earn a decent sum of money this time. Prior to departure, he says to his mother, “You’ll see me coming again in two days, or in three days, or maybe in four days” [6]. But he never comes back. He falls off his horse into the sea and drowns. Had he not been paying attention to his family finance, he might have escaped death that day.

Similarly, Ganga disregarded his mother’s warning and went fishing on the night he was killed. Bhuvan warned him saying, “আজিয়া কেএন জানি আঁর মনত্ ভালা নো লাগের। মন নো চাআর তুই জাল লই যা” (I have a foreboding. I would like you not to fish tonight) [5]. Ganga, too, lost his life for the well-being of others. All he did was he wanted to rouse the fishermen and wanted to make them aware of their rights.

Bhuvan and Ganga living at Uttar Patenga are no different than Maurya and Bartley living on the island of Inishmaan.

Conclusions

Jalaputra is a remarkable book in Bangla literature in the sense that it is one of the first Bangla fictions to have been written on the sea fish dependent livelihoods. In this masterpiece, Jaladas quite artistically portrayed the life of the downtrodden, the deep-sea fisherfolk. Given that he himself came from a fishing community and felt the agony of the fisherfolk only too well, he exhibited the lifestyles of his community in a vivid manner. The book must have many resonances for the author.

Synge also established meaningful connections with the local community, living each summer from 1898 to 1902 in Teach Synge, a country cottage on the Aran Island of Inishmaan, following the suggestion of the great William Butler Yeats. Yeats advised Synge, “Give up Paris. ... Go to the Aran Islands. Live there as if you were one of the people themselves; express a life that has never found expression.” [12]. Upon observing the natives at Inishmaan, Synge became inspired to draw material from life. In *Riders to the Sea*, Synge so impeccably recounted his experiences like an islander living on the island. Reflecting life and portraying the sea as both destroyer and preserver, both books have identical characters and storylines, almost down to the last detail. This paper tried to find out the aspects that seemed to be so identical in both books.

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Both authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study and approved the final manuscript.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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