Chapter 1

Introduction

James Joyce (1882—1941) is one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century in the world. As an Irish writer, Joyce comes to the fore with his first published novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), and establishes his literary prominence by his milestone work *Ulysses* (1922) and his pioneering work *Finnegans Wake* (1939). Prior to these masterpieces, Joyce's *Dubliners* (1914) is his first published collection of short stories revolving around the Dublin people and their city. However, when it ultimately came out in 1914 upon its tortuous publication, it did not receive enough attention nor adequate recognition among the early critics and readers. Power and Schneider explain that "they [the stories] did not seem to fit the established literary patterns of Poe or Maupassant. They were spare and bleak; some readers thought they lacked a plot" (1997: i). More than a half century after its publication, Beck still deplores that "to some minds the 'fame' which came to Joyce twixt Molly Bloom's sleep and Finnegan's wake has relegated *Dubliners* almost to the status of juvenilia" (1969: 1).

However, with more and more attention paid to the collection since the 1970s, Joycean critics have concurred on the stories of being deceptively simple (Norris, 2003; Power & Schneider, 1997; Sexton, 2003). Their efforts devoted to *Dubliners* set in motion a countless number of *Dubliners* studies. Brunsdale points out that "In *Dubliners* Joyce awakened his readers to startling new possibilities of fiction" (1993: 4); Brandabur (1971), Leonard (1993), Ingersoll (1996), etc. approach *Dubliners* from their own psychoanalytic perspectives; Cheng (1995), Williams (1998) and a host of other post-colonial and Marxist critics examine the political agenda Joyce implicates in *Dubliners*. The achievements of *Dubliners* studies have been distilled in monographs, chapters in edited books, scholarly journals, websites, and translations. From the 1970s on, therefore, *Dubliners* studies became in full swing, with their attention to not merely discrete stories but the collection as a whole, contributing to the Joyce studies as well. O'Brien accounts for this growing popularity that "these

stories have a life, had it when they were written and continue to have it after a century" (2007: ix). Just as Power and Schneider succinctly put it, "*Dubliners* is not to be dismissed as juvenilia, but is as distinguished as Joyce's later fiction" (1997: i). This book echoes this equal standing of *Dubliners* with Joyce's later works, and continues to savor its abiding enchantment that *Dubliners* boasts for the readers over the centuries.

  Dubliners, as the title suggests, is concerned with the denizens of Dublin. Just as Vesala-Varttala puts it, "As the collective title of the work suggests, *Dubliners* deals with a community of people, or to be more precise, with a group of people whose common denominator is the city in which they live" (1999: 223). Joyce himself also emphasizes this group perspective in the opening line of his essay "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages" (1907), stating that "Nations have their ego, just like individuals" (Mason & Ellmann, 1989: 154). In this sense, it is significant to explore the Irish citizens as a group in *Dubliners*. In plumbing the fictionality of fictional narratives, both Fludernik and Cohn pinpoint the representation of consciousness as a signpost of fictionality (Cohn, 1999; Fludernik, 1996). Palmer puts it directly that "fictional narrative is, in essence, the presentation of mental functioning" (2010: 9, 2015: 137). Miller notes that "the words of a novel embody a structure of related minds. Interpersonal relations are the fundamental theme of fiction" (1968: 29). Therefore, the Dubliners as a group can be fleshed out by their group mental functioning distilled in the interactions of their minds. However, this group perspective is still lacked in *Dubliners* criticisms, and consequently its interactions of minds are still unexplored. Against this background, this book, under the theoretical framework of the extended version of the social mind theory, an area of cognitive narratology, will examine the interactions of the characters' minds, namely the social minds, in all the *Dubliners* stories, thereby generating the panoramic social minds of the collection. It will show that tracing the social minds in *Dubliners* will be central to our understanding of this fictional narrative.

  Dubliners encompasses fifteen short stories on the central theme of paralysis by portraying turn-of-the-century citizens in a Dublin with real names of streets, shops, bars, bridges, etc.[1] Maddox observes that "These fifteen stories, written by Joyce between the ages of twenty-two and twenty-five, stand beside those of Chekhov and Flaubert, and culminate in what may be the finest short story in the English language" (1990: vii).

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1   For the synopses of all the fifteen stories, see Appendix A.

The stories were completed from 1904 to 1907, and most of them were done around 1905.[1] During its creation, Joyce wrote to the English publisher Grant Richards with regard to the use of the word "Dubliner":

> I do not think that any writer has yet presented Dublin to the world. […] Moreover, on account of many circumstances which I cannot detail here, the expression "Dubliner" seems to me to have some meaning and I doubt whether the same can be said for such words as "Londoner" and "Parisian" both of which have been used by writers as titles. (Ellmann, 1966: 122)

Joyce, by comparing writers who have used "Londoner" and "Parisian" in their works, initiates his plan for writing about his fellow citizens called "Dubliner", highlighting its group nature of the collection. In this sense, *Dubliners* is designed as a collection of stories concerned with a community of people.

However, *Dubliners* underwent its twists and turns in its publication. The trouble was primarily incurred by its offending passages with such lewd stuff as "having a girl", "a woman changing the position of her legs often" (O'Brien, 2007: viii) as well as such words as "bloody" (Gilbert, 1966: 61), and also its ironic reference to the English King Edward VII (Scholes & Litz, 1996: 281). This zigzag publication is recorded in Joyce's letters, particularly to the publisher Grant Richards. In justifying the two stories "Two Gallants" and "Counterparts" questioned by the printer, Joyce spelled out the central theme, four-stage aspects and style in a letter to Richards in 1906, elucidating his intention for *Dubliners*:

> My intention was to write **a chapter of the moral history of my country** and I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to be **the centre of paralysis**. I have tried to present it to the indifferent public under four of its aspects: **childhood, adolescence, maturity and public life**. The stories are arranged in this order. I have written it for the most part in **a style of scrupulous meanness** and with the conviction that he is a very bold man who dares to alter in the presentment, still more to deform, whatever he has seen and heard. I cannot do any more than this.[2] (Ellmann, 1966: 134)

The collection is organized into four-stage aspects: childhood, adolescence, maturity, and public life; the last story "The Dead" is added to the whole

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1   For the composition time of the *Dubliners* stories, see Appendix B.
2   Boldface in all the quotes and excerpts is mine except extra clarification.

collection.[1] The first three stories in the childhood adopt the first-person narration, while the rest adopt the third-person narration. All the stories center on the theme of paralysis concerning the Catholic middle-class life in Dublin with its "didactic" (Norris, 2003: 13; Walzl, 1984: 161) aim or function by evoking an awareness of their spiritual paralysis in "the indifferent public". Joyce made it clear in 1905 to Richards that "From time to time I see in publishers' lists announcements of books on Irish subjects, so that I think people might be willing to pay for the special odour of corruption which, I hope, floats over my stories" (Ellmann, 1966: 122-123). Therefore, the readers can feel that underlying the central theme of paralysis, "Joyce was writing an indictment of his people" (Ostroff, 2012: 28). As for the style, despite controversies among critics, it is "a style of scrupulous meanness", characterized by its linguistic meticulousness which proves Joyce's unrelenting persistence in his choice of words and refusal to make changes demanded by the publisher. This is evidenced in another letter to the publisher: "I fight to retain them because I believe that in composing my chapter of moral history in exactly the way I have composed it I have taken the first step towards the spiritual liberation of my country" (Gilbert, 1966: 62-63).

Indeed, Joyce had revealed his general scheme, as *Dubliners* was in bud, in a letter to his friend Constantine Curran in 1904: "I am writing a series of epicleti—ten—for a paper. I have written one. I call the series *Dubliners* to betray the soul of that hemiplegia or paralysis which many consider a city" (Gilbert, 1966: 55).[2] Joyce also made clear to his brother Stanislaus Joyce the similar role that his *Dubliners* plays as epicleti: "for their [his people's] mental, moral, and spiritual uplift" (Scholes & Litz, 1996: 250), which echoes Joyce's further correspondence with the obstinate Richards: "I seriously believe that you will retard the course of civilization in Ireland by preventing the Irish people from having one good look at themselves in my nicely polished looking-glass" (Gilbert, 1966: 64). This looking-glass effect is mirrored in *Dubliners* by

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1 The stories were composed individually rather than in their published order, though they had such a fixed pattern prescribed by Joyce. As a matter of fact, Joyce had begun three *Dubliners* stories, "The Sisters", "Eveline" and "After the Race" in 1904 for an Irish agricultural journal *The Irish Homestead*. He had earlier intended ten stories, and later twelve stories with three stories distributed among the four stages in the published work. In 1906, he added two stories "Two Gallants", and "A Little Cloud" for publication. During its tortuous publication, Joyce added another story "The Dead" to the whole collection in 1907. Kenner notes that the *Dubliners* stories are "less as a sequence of stories than as a kind of multi-faceted novel". Kenner, H. 1987. *Dublin's Joyce*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 48.

2 "Epicleti" is derived from "epiclesis", meaning "an invocation to the Holy Ghost" in the Eastern Church; "In this epilesis, the Holy Ghost is besought to transform the consecrated wafer of bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ". Scholes, R. & Litz, A. W. (eds.) 1996. *Dubliners: Text, Criticism and Notes*. New York: Penguin, p. 250.

all the characters "on the verge of something, on the verge of death, disgrace, leaving home, relinquishing love, or finding out the truth" (O'Brien, 2007: ix). Expectedly, it serves as a self-reflection for the Irish readers and even us readers today as well as the future readers, for "the stories are lived by us and the moments from them become part of our own experience" (x). Just as Rifelj puts it, "Storytelling is one of the ways humans come together in all societies; it is a way of building human community" (1992: 22).

Joyce's general scheme underpins an understanding of *Dubliners*. Taking account of it, this book is to explore the social minds of the Irish Catholic middle class people at the turn-of-the-century Dublin in all the fifteen stories of the collection. From the group perspective, or rather the social minds perspective, Joyce's chapter of the Irish moral history written in a style of scrupulous meanness is expected to produce its planned looking-glass effect.

This book offers a cognitive narratological approach reified by the social mind theory to examine the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*. By using an extended version of the social mind theory, it aims to probe the Dubliners' group minds through its devotion to the interactions of minds both in the individual stories and across the stories, and their presentations in the collection. Therefore, the book attempts to answer the following questions.

Firstly, as the first story and the last story, what are their respective social minds in "The Sisters" and "The Dead"? What purposes Joyce has in presenting the social minds in both stories? And how are the social minds presented in them, respectively?

Secondly, what are the individual stories (except "The Sisters" and "The Dead") that can best illustrate the social minds in their own storyworlds? What aspects of the social minds these stories present to uncover their motifs? How does Joyce present the interactions of the characters' minds with regard to the relationship between individuals and groups in these stories? In other words, how do the readers follow the social minds presented by Joyce to understand the stories?[1]

Thirdly, given that all the fifteen stories are under the canopy of *Dubliners*,

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1 Alan Palmer, who proposes the social mind theory, makes clear that the reader he refers to is "implied reader: the theoretical construct of the ideal, informed, or model reader that is implied by or can be constructed from the text". Palmer, A. 2004. *Fictional Minds*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, p. 18. Tang Weisheng (2013) helps explain that despite its stress on the social nature of thought, the social mind theory is concerned with the characters' mental functioning in the social context not beyond the storyworld, but within the storyworld. As such, the readers are those within the storyworld rather than flesh-and-blood readers. Shen Dan (2004) makes explicit the notion of the readers in cognitive narratology, and calls them "generic readers" as against the flesh-and-blood readers in the reader response theory. As this book falls into the category of cognitive narratology, it will take the readers as the generic readers proposed by Shen Dan.

what aspects of the social minds will be presented if an investigation is made into the interactions of the minds of characters from different stories? How does Joyce encode the social minds across the stories, or how do the readers attribute the shared minds to the characters that belong to different storyworlds in *Dubliners*?

Finally, what is the relationship between analysis of the social minds in *Dubliners* and the readers' understanding of the collection? Why does tracing its social minds contribute to their understanding?

The book will focus on all the fifteen stories in *Dubliners*. Five individual stories will be examined in excruciating details: "The Sisters", "The Dead", "The Boarding House", "Grace", and "Ivy Day in the Committee Room".[1] The first two stories are singled out because of their prominent positions in the collection, whose social minds are taken as playing a prominent role for the panoramic social minds in the whole collection. The social minds of the other three individual stories will be explored in that group figures prominently in them. In "The Boarding House", the group perspective orients the readers towards the central role played by a mother-daughter group. Two public life stories caricature a number of characters boasting their group identity in unveiling Irish religion in "Grace" and Irish politics in "Ivy Day". In addition to this layer of the social minds in these three individual stories, it is assumed that there is a new layer of the social minds, i.e. the interactions of the characters' minds across the stories. The character in one story will find at least his/her counterpart in the other story on the basis of their shared minds. Therefore, all the fifteen stories will be plumbed in terms of this new layer of the social minds.

Under the theoretical framework of the social mind theory as a cognitive narratological approach, this book will be devoted to exploring the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*. The social minds in the individual stories will be analyzed in light of plot development; the social minds across the stories will be plumbed in view of the shared minds between/among the characters attributed by the readers in the process of their reading. In due course, some tools, notions and theories from other disciplines will be borrowed to bolster up both the social mind theory and the analysis in the book. In this manner, it is of an interdisciplinary nature.

This book is significant in the sense of its contributions to both the *Dubliners* studies and the social mind theory.

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1   The story "Ivy Day in the Committee Room" will be shortened as "Ivy Day" in this book.

First, it offers a new cognitive narratological approach to reading *Dubliners* against the backdrop that the first two decades of the twenty-first century witness a growingly tremendous interest in mind in both science and humanities. The social minds perspective contributes to understanding the characters' group minds rooted in different aspects of the social minds in the individual stories and across the stories clad in various ways of presenting them. This also accounts for the process of reading the *Dubliners* stories neglected by previous criticisms. In this sense, it can be said that this book enriches the *Dubliners* studies as well as Joyce studies.

Second, it extends the scope of the social mind theory designed to address the social minds in a single piece of novel by attending to the social minds across the stories in *Dubliners*. Thus, the inclusion of the social minds across the stories contributes to the social mind theory. In this sense, the social minds explored both in the individual stories and across the stories command a panoramic view of the *Dubliners*' group minds, thereby making the holistic approach of the social mind theory more comprehensive, and contributing a new perspective to cognitive narratology as well.

Third, it has also its pedagogical significance. This new perspective will help rivet students' attention on character's experience of an event other than the event per se. By means of this, the representation of consciousness as a distinguishing feature of fiction advocated by Fludernik (1996) and Cohn (1999) can offer students a maximal reward in reading literature: literary enjoyment and literary competence.

The book is composed of eight chapters. Chapter 1 offers an introduction, providing Joyce's general scheme for *Dubliners* and detailing its objectives, data, and significance.

Chapter 2 is devoted to a comprehensive review on previous studies on *Dubliners* and fictional social minds. It provides general criticisms on *Dubliners* and the relevant studies on minds in the collection, pinpointing the social minds on *Dubliners* unexplored by previous studies. In turn, previous narratological approaches to fictional minds are reviewed, showing their inattention to social minds. Finally is offered previous studies on fictional narratives from the perspective of the social minds theory, showing that much room is left for the application of the social mind theory to the analysis of the social minds in *Dubliners*.

Chapter 3 aims to set out an analytical framework for examining the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*. Based on its introduction to the theoretical foundations of the social mind theory, it attempts to furnish a

theoretical description of the theory as a cognitive narratological approach. When the theory is introduced into *Dubliners*, in addition to analyzing the social minds in the individual stories, the first layer of the social minds in *Dubliners*, a panoramic view of its social minds must also take into account the social minds across the stories as a new layer. As a result, a solution is offered. Finally, it proposes an analytical framework for the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*, revolving around the two layers of the social minds, headed by a focus on the social minds in "The Sisters" and ended by an attention to those in "The Dead".

Chapters 4–7 constitute the bulk of the book, where all the fifteen stories are explored as suggested in the analytical framework. Chapter 4, concerned only with the first story "The Sisters", focuses on its social minds as an exposure for the panoramic social minds in the collection. Specifically, this chapter first examines the boy's publicly engaged mind, and revolves around his relationships with both the secular adults and the religious adult Father Flynn, where the interactive minds of the boy and others are investigated. Finally, it broaches the interpretative uncertainty caused by the ontological and epistemological difficulties in this story. Taken altogether, "The Sisters" adumbrates disharmonious human relationships repeated in other stories by pitting individuals against groups.

Chapter 5 delves into the first layer of the social minds: the overt social minds, i.e. the social minds in the individual stories. It plumbs three stories that palpably pertain to group: "The Boarding House", "Grace" and "Ivy Day". In "The Boarding House", tacit complicity is examined. Based on the characterizations of Mrs. Mooney and her children from the perspective of communal thought, the tacit complicity between Mrs. Mooney and Polly and that among ideological forces flesh out the social minds by intermental thought and communal thought, respectively. Subsequently, this chapter deals with open complicity in "Grace". First, the social minds perspective orients the readers towards the communal perception and communal thought on the main characters: Mr. Kernan and his friends. The central part of this section centers on the open complicity publicly shared among Mr. Kernan's friends as well as his wife in having him join their religious retreat as chiefly reflected in their dialogues. Finally, it raises the complicity between the Church and the Mammon to the level of ideology. In "Ivy Day", this section probes into a group of canvassers' unawareness of their political betrayal, namely political anosognosia, predominantly betrayed through their dialogues. Specifically, it works on the characters' intermental thought that unfolds their political

anosognosia. By examining closely the overt social minds in each of these three stories, this chapter offers one of the views of the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*.

Chapter 6 traces the social minds across the stories and thereby excavates the other layer of the social minds: the covert social minds. They are attributed only by the readers to the characters of different stories in the process of their reading. Among the covert social minds, this chapter identifies three paradigms: group servility, group self-unknowing and group isolation. Group servility is further examined to pin down three aspects: group servility to the Colonialism, group servility to the Church, and females' servility to the patriarchy. In a similar vein, group self-unknowing is further unpacked to present two aspects: group self-deception and group anosognosia. Finally, in some *Dubliners* stories, Joyce repeats scenes of isolated individuals against the crowd, which furnishes the background for group self-division, an extreme case of group isolation. Thus, the devotion to the covert social minds in Chapter 6 contributes to another view of the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*.

In Chapter 7, on a par with "The Sisters", the last story "The Dead" is reserved for one separate chapter to plumb its social minds, serving as a closure for the panoramic social minds in *Dubliners*. This chapter begins to highlight the Dublin bourgeois communal thought, foreboding the unpleasant experiences of the protagonist Gabriel, the representative of the bourgeois patriarchal power, at the party. In turn, it centers on Gabriel's separate encounters with three females, during which, different aspects of the social minds are unfolded. Finally, this chapter attends to Gabriel's epiphany at the end of the story, where his mind is publicly engaged with the external world, echoing the boy narrator's in "The Sisters".

Chapter 8 is to offer the conclusion of the book, providing the major findings and its contributions. It ends up with its limitations and suggestions for future studies.

Chapter 2

Previous Research on *Dubliners* and Fictional Social Minds

Chapter 1 briefly touches upon the lack of studies on *Dubliners* from the perspective of the social mind theory. This chapter will provide a thorough review of general criticisms on *Dubliners*, research on minds in *Dubliners*, narratological approaches to fictional minds, and finally the social minds perspective on other fictional narratives.

2.1 General Criticisms on *Dubliners*

Since its inception, *Dubliners* has not received its impartial criticism from the earlier critics, who unanimously "categorized *Dubliners* narrowly as a set of realistic sketches with little indication of its structured complexity or stylistic subtlety" (Walzl, 1984: 165). From the 1940s, however, *Dubliners* began to attract the critics' attention and came to prominence when American critics rediscovered its worth in 1956.[1] From the 1940s to the 1960s, the symbolic readings dominated the critical scene of *Dubliners*. It is not until the 1970s that *Dubliners* criticisms came to take multiple perspectives, infusing the collection with more vigor and glamour.[2]

Considering the chronology of *Dubliners* criticisms, they can be divided into three periods: the early period (1914s—1930s), the transitional period (1940s—1960s) and the later period (1970s—the present).[3]

2.1.1 The Early Period

When *Dubliners* was ultimately published in 1914, it did not win an

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[1] The American critics are Ghiselin (1956) and Magalaner and Kain (1956), who devote their studies to the stories, stressing their unity.

[2] Rice (1982) offers a bibliography of works by and about Joyce prior to the 1980s, including *Dubliners* criticisms.

[3] Li Lanyu (2014) divides the criticisms on *Dubliners* into four historical periods: the beginning, the development, the booming and the multi-cultivation.