HOW DOES IT END?: JOYCE'S "ITHACA" AND THE INTERROGATIVE MOOD IN CONTEMPORARY MEXICAN LITERARY NON-FICTION

A Research Master's Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Centre for the Arts in Society

Leiden University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Research Master

Literary Studies

By

Mark Stephen Mullee

July 2019

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ABSTRACT

Valeria Luiselli, in her book-length essay, *Los niños perdidos*, uses an immigration questionnaire to structure her story of the refugee crisis taking place across the US-Mexico border. In *Examen de mi padre*, Jorge Volpi uses the schema of his father's body to structure his "autopsy"—not only of his father but also of the Mexican nation in the depth of an existential crisis. This thesis studies these two pieces of literary non-fiction through the lens of teaching and the interrogative mood in the "Ithaca" episode of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. In "Ithaca," a question and answer structure subverts the Roman Catholic catechism and its drive toward a single truth, as well as the scientific objectivism which the questions and answers themselves mimic stylistically. To what extent does the question and answer structure subvert the scientific and political discourse in Volpi's essay in 10 lessons and Luiselli's essay in 40 questions? I borrow from the methodology of secondary language teaching to explore and order the different types of questions and their linguistic relevance to literary style. How do Joyce's experiences as a language teacher, using the interrogative mood as a teaching method, influence his literary use of interrogatives? The grammatical progression of the interrogative mood serves as an organizing principle for my own research questions. I argue that Luiselli's use of the interrogative mood, like Joyce's in "Ithaca" and Volpi's in *Examen de mi padre* evades the determinacy and conclusion of an ending as well as any purely objectivist approach to its subject.

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INTRODUCTION: TEACHING AND WRITING IN THE INTERROGATIVE MOOD

In the "Ithaca" episode of *Ulysses*, a question and answer structure subverts the Roman Catholic catechism and its pedagogical drive toward a single truth, as well as the scientific objectivism which the episode mimics stylistically. The catechistic technique in "Ithaca" instead functions to undermine the authoritarian search for "correct" answers and finished endings. In this thesis, I ask how this Joycean use of the interrogative mood operates in Jorge Volpi's book-length essay, *Examen de mi padre* (2016), which tells the story of a father's life through an interrogation of his body, and Valeria Luiselli's *Los niños perdidos* (2016), which tells the story of unaccompanied children seeking asylum in the U.S. through a series of questions and answers that fail to tell the whole story.

My first chapter will provide a framework for using Joyce's "Ithaca" as a model of the interrogative mood as a subversive stylistic technique. As the subverted structure of the catechism is in origin a teaching tool, I will borrow from the methodology of secondary language teaching to explore and order the different types of questions and their linguistic relevance to literary style. I will employ recent research by Elizabeth Switaj into the teaching life and methods of James Joyce. Among the scholars to consider Joyce's teaching and its influence on his writing, Switaj especially has studied his teaching at length in terms of its effect on his writing style and linguistic experimentation. Switaj shows how *Ulysses* destabilizes the division between native and non-native speakers and destabilizes the position of all readers: "when everyone is a learner, no one is an authority" (Switaj 2013, 155). Despite Joyce's problematic position as a native English speaker (one of the requirements to teach at the Berlitz School of Languages), Joyce does not share the common notion of language learning as learning its *rules*, or a standardized version of the language, but rather as understanding its *possibilities*. This is the pedagogical impulse of *Ulysses*. Following the work

of, among others, Hugh Kenner, Switaj explores the possible overlaps between Joyce the writer, the (native-speaker) teacher, and the language learner.

The origin story of the Berlitz Method, the method used by Joyce in his early teaching in Pola and Trieste, bears an uncanny resemblance to the story told by Rancière of Joseph Jacotot, the teacher of the French language who stumbles upon a revolutionary and egalitarian teaching method in the post-Napoleonic United Kingdom of the Netherlands. Rancière recounts this story in his book, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, a philosophical exploration of egalitarian, emancipatory teaching in opposition to the pedagogical myth of explication. Rancière's notion of the ignorant but emancipated teacher fits with an understanding of *Ulysses* as a non-explicative text, which contains everything in it to be understood by a reader—and a text which, according to Switaj, uses non-standard English to make all of its readers non-native speakers, and therefore equal as students.

Onto the three chapters that make up the body of my thesis, I will impose a schema of my own based on one aspect of the teaching methodology prescribed by the Berlitz Method. This teaching method is based on a progression of fluency practice through four stages of questions: from yes/no questions to either/or questions to open, or wh- word questions, and finally to mixed, uncontrolled practice of all of the preceding question types. This grammatical progression of the interrogative mood will serve as an organizing principle for my own research questions. I will consider these structures in the context of Joyce's teaching according to the Berlitz Method and Jacotot's teaching method (according to Rancière). In the first chapter of my thesis, I will analyze "Ithaca" through the lens of the interrogative mood by first reviewing some of the criticism on the episode in *Ulysses*. I will focus my own research question on the function of closed, yes/no questions in language acquisition, and the paradox of constraint and freedom in the catechistic technique employed by Joyce.

I will then attempt to turn to Volpi and Luiselli as “ignorant” writers who in their nonfiction essays subvert the explicative order by structuring their books on questions that they themselves cannot answer. As both works are themselves structured as a form of instruction or examination, I will bring Jacques Rancière’s notion of the ignorant schoolmaster, and the eight “lessons” of his radical method of egalitarian and emancipatory teaching, to bear on the books themselves.

In *Examen de mi padre*, Jorge Volpi uses the schema of his father’s body to structure an “autopsy”—not only of his father but also of the Mexican nation in the depth of an existential crisis. The second chapter of this thesis will focus on either/or questions and *Examen de mi padre*. The figurative medical exam, or autopsy, that he performs in this book on his father and on the Mexico of his father’s lifetime relies on a series of correlatives between physical body parts and intangible attributes. The extended metaphor includes pairings such as the hand and power, the skin and “others,” and the liver and melancholy. The rhetorical questioning of Volpi here, the interrogation of the body, is couched in a didactic methodology, and his book of non-fiction is indeed divided not into chapters, or headings, but into anatomical “lessons” under each of these paired titles and subtitles. The text itself is interspersed with historical photographs, historical drawings, and personal drawings and photographs, resembling both a pedagogical textbook as well as a biography/memoir. Just as Volpi dissects his text, Joyce also organizes the entire novel of *Ulysses* around the body, following an implicit schema attached to each of its 17 chapters, or episodes. “Ithaca” is associated with the skeleton in the so-called Linati schema for *Ulysses*. In this second chapter of my thesis I will show the either/or dualities at play in Volpi’s lessons on the body/mind problem and Joyce’s cultivation of paradox in “Ithaca” as a function of their subversive use of the interrogative mood.

In the third and final chapter of this thesis, I will study the formal narrative techniques employed by Valeria Luiselli in *Los niños perdidos*, especially the use of open questions to

address the questions of the border. Because of the unique translation history of this book, I will take as an authority in my close reading neither the Spanish-language "original" nor the English language "translation," *Tell Me How It Ends* (2017), but rather use both side by side—as another form of language lesson that assumes the equality of language and experience across the borders of Central and North America. Luiselli describes both books as an essay in 40 questions. By anchoring her narrative around the intake questionnaire that she used as a volunteer interpreter in the federal immigration court in New York City, she first foregrounds, and I argue subverts, the logic of the question & answer structure and the clear, linear narrative it is designed to extract from its respondents. This use of the interrogative mood to structure her book has a formal affinity with the "Ithaca" episode of *Ulysses*. I will show the Joycean structures at work in the structural interrogative Luiselli uses to write about the international refugee crisis across the borders of Central America, Mexico, and the United States, and the relation in both works between the interrogative mood and narrative plot. The title of the English translation, or version, of Luiselli's book, *Tell Me How It Ends*, refers to the constant request of her young daughter to know the end of the child refugees' stories told through the formal structure of the immigration questionnaire.

Volpi's essay in 10 lessons and Luiselli's essay in 40 questions are examples of a narrative structured on a rigid external system. They both use formalized procedure and instruction, embodied in the question-form, as a skeleton for critical narratives of Mexican and U.S. responses to immigration from Central America across their national borders. But to what extent does the question and answer structure subvert the scientific and political discourse in Volpi and the discourse on transnational migration in Luiselli? Of interest to me is how Volpi and Luiselli, writing about migration, have used the interrogative mood—especially formalized procedure or other catechetical forms representing authority—to subvert narrative structures of the current refugee crisis.

JOYCEAN SCHOOLMASTERS: PEDAGOGY AND STYLE IN “ITHACA”

In this first chapter I will examine a catalogue of theoretical schoolmasters, as a tool for understanding the use of the interrogative mood in the “Ithaca” episode of *Ulysses.* My eventual aim is to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the use of the interrogative mood in the literary non-fiction by Mexican writers Jorge Volpi and Valeria Luiselli, but first I will show how *Ulysses* exemplifies the idea of a text that teaches a reader fluency in its unique language without resorting to explication or authoritative modes of instruction. To this end I will employ the research of Joycean scholars in combination with thinking on pedagogy, language, and power by Jacques Rancière.

The ways in which Joyce’s fiction models the process of language acquisition and modes of instruction has been studied by Joyce scholars such as Hugh Kenner, Declan Kiberd, Roy Gottfried, and others. More recently Elizabeth Switaj has studied Joyce’s teaching life and methods with a greater attention to the influence of his teaching on both the form and content of his three novels. I would like to use these insights in combination with Rancière’s ideas in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* in order to emphasize Joyce’s egalitarianism as teacher and writer. My contribution will be to show the role the interrogative mood plays in this feat. Through the use of the interrogative (and occasionally imperative) mood in alternation with the indicative mood and, more broadly, by subverting institutionalized power behind the forms of interrogation and examination, “Ithaca” confronts the interrogating authority with its own inefficacy.

I will apply the lessons of Jacques Rancière’s *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* to Joyce’s pedagogical approach to writing in “Ithaca” and his subversion (through exaggerated use) of authoritarian modes of instruction. Additionally, to understand how Joyce uses the authoritarian technique of the catechism to nonetheless open up possibilities in language, I

apply Antonia Fritz's identification of two opposing tendencies in "Ithaca:" towards the *catechetical*—objectifying knowledge and fixed, singular meaning—and towards the *catechal*—the multiplicity of potential meanings and echoes. The indeterminate yet highly precise answers to the questions in "Ithaca" force the rigid catechistical system (Rancière would say stultifying) into a catechal interrogative (Rancière would say emancipating) that allows for multiple answers to the litany of questions.

Later this principle will be key to understanding how Volpi and Luiselli force upon a predetermined set of questions a range of possible answers, and therefore a catechal response of poetic possibility in the discourse. First, though, we need to understand how the interrogative mood functions in "Ithaca," both as an indirect narrative strategy and as antiauthoritarian pedagogy that works to subvert the scientific discourse it mimics.

The Catechizing Schoolmaster

Most readers will have experienced at some point in their education—if not throughout—the figure of the catechizing schoolmaster: a teacher who is looking for the one single answer, which we never seem to have. Rancière talks about the possession of this knowledge in terms of hierarchy, and I will return to this shortly in my discussion of the *stultifying* schoolmaster, who Rancière says divides the world into two: in this case the teacher who knows the answer and the student who does not. But first of all, let us look at how this so-called Old Master uses the interrogative mood, and in particular catechism.

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines catechism as "a book that explains the beliefs of the Christian religion by using a list of questions and answers." Also: 1) oral instruction 2) a manual for catechizing, specifically: a summary of religious doctrine often in the form of questions and answers, 3) a. A set of formal questions put as a test b. Something resembling a catechism especially in being a rote response or formulaic statement.

In these definitions we see that the use of catechesis extends to secular instruction, although often changing crucially from a list of questions and prescribed answers to a list of prodding questions with the answers left blank for the student to fill in. When Joyce uses the catechistic technique, he is indulging in the precision of the answers and their simultaneous meaninglessness, frustrating expectations of definite answers or clear explanations of events.

Whereas the catechism has traditionally been used as a pedagogical tool to extract the "correct" answer from students, Wolfgang Iser has argued in *The Implied Reader* that, in fact the indeterminacy of the narrative increases with each new question, and with it the impossibility of arriving at a "correct" answer: "It is scarcely surprising then that new questions are constantly thrown up which are meant to limit the amount of indeterminacy, but instead—thanks to their very precision—in fact increase it" (221). The questioner's insistence on precision backfires.

The Ghostly Schoolmaster

When Wyndham Lewis said of *Ulysses*: "[t]he schoolmaster in Joyce is in great evidence throughout its pages" (qtd. in Switaj 2016, 103)—which sort of schoolmaster did he means was in such great evidence? I will go into detail briefly about the influence of Joyce's pedagogy on the structure and style of his writing, but a reader also brings to the pages of *Ulysses* a sort of schoolmaster, which may differ depending on the reader. The reflex to correct Joyce's idiosyncratic English, for example, may be stronger or weaker depending on the schoolmaster of lessons past. As Hugh Kenner says, "words to battle with the ghosts of absent words" ("Approaches" 349-50). He uses the term *ghostly schoolmaster* to describe the reflexive reactions of a reader of *Ulysses* schooled in the traditional pedagogy to catch out errors and immediately shoot them down: "there rises within each of us a ghostly schoolmaster to protest..." (350).

Rather than correcting mistakes, Jacotot places the act of questioning very high in his pedagogy: it is the first of only two fundamental acts of the master: to interrogate and to verify. His innovation was to prove that a teacher could perform both these acts without knowing the correct answers himself. Jacotot, and Rancière in turn, develop from this accidental success the idea that a student can be taught what the teacher does not know. In the Introduction to her English translation of *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, Kristin Ross writes:

> All people are equally intelligent. This is Jacotot's startling (or naïve?) presupposition, his lesson in intellectual emancipation. And from this starting point (the result of an accidental discovery occasioned by the peculiar circumstances of exile), Jacotot came to realize that knowledge is not necessary to teaching, nor explication necessary to learning. (xix)

But Rancière is careful to distinguish the new master from the old, even if this method of questioning, or verifying, resembles to the reader the Socratic Method. The two are not to be confused:

> There is a Socrates sleeping in every explicator. And it must be very clear how the Jacotot method—that is to say, the student's method—differs radically from the method of the Socratic master. Through his interrogations, Socrates leads Meno's slave to recognize the mathematical truths that lie within himself. This may be the path to learning, but it is in no way a path to emancipation. On the contrary, Socrates must take the slave by his hand so that the latter can find what is inside himself. The demonstration of his knowledge is as much the demonstration of his powerlessness: he will never walk by himself, unless it is to illustrate the master's lesson. In this case, Socrates interrogates a slave who is destined to remain one. (Rancière 29)

Whether it is a sleeping Socrates or a ghostly schoolmaster, there is in each of us this sort of schoolmaster. We will see that two narratives about revolutionary pedagogical methods involve chance circumstances that came about, at least according to the myths that perpetuate

these methods, in a chance moment when the ghostly schoolmaster was negligent and allowed a different sort of schoolmaster into the classroom quite by accident.

The Accidental Schoolmaster

Essential to a good origin story is the element of chance. This is evident in the most memorable tales of invention: when Alexander Fleming leaves a petri dish out overnight and returns the next morning to find penicillin, for example, or when Louis Armstrong improvises nonsense syllables on the spot because he has dropped his lyrics the moment before recording "Heebie Jeebies," thus inventing "scat" singing in jazz. Whether these stories are true, half-true, or wholly invented, accident makes an origin story memorable and amenable to our sense of casual genius. In the mythology of the Berlitz Method, chance dictates that linguist and language teacher Maximillian Delphinius Berlitz, founder of the Berlitz School of Languages in Rhode Island in 1878, comes down with an illness before one of his French classes. He hires Nicholas Joly to teach his English-speaking students in Providence, without realizing that Joly himself does not speak any English whatsoever, and therefore would be unable to teach according to the grammar-translation method of language teaching. Returning to work from his illness, he finds that Joly has improvised by speaking only French, the target language, and making himself understood by pointing, by gestures, and by building slowly upon the students' existing vocabulary. This origin story is essential to the story of Berlitz, and the Berlitz Method, which Joyce would be trained in a few decades later teaching in Trieste.

Jacques Rancière, in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, grafts his theories of an egalitarian, emancipatory method of teaching onto a very similar origin story, set almost a century earlier. Rancière tells the story of Joseph Jacotot, a popular French professor at the University of Louvain, or Leuven, who in 1818 accidentally "invents" a new method of teaching when he is asked to give lessons to Flemish students, whose native language he does not speak.

Somewhere between "accident" and a conscious experiment, he decides, essentially, to leave them alone with a bilingual edition of the book *Télèmaque*, a French classic of the 18th Century that retells not the story of Odysseus, or Ulysses, but of his son, Telemachus.

> The thing in common had been found, and Telemachus made his way into the life of Joseph Jacotot. He had the book delivered to the students and asked them, through an interpreter, to learn the French text with the help of the translation. When they had made it through the first half of the book, he had them repeat what they had learned over and over, and then told them to read through the rest of the book until they could recite it. This was a fortunate solution, but it was also, on a small scale, a philosophical experiment in the style of the ones performed during the Age of Enlightenment. And Joseph Jacotot, in 1818, remained a man of the preceding century.

Despite what we would now consider the dubious methodology of translation and rote memorization, the metaphor of breaking with the Explicative Order is what interests us here, and also what links this story to the story of Nicholas Joly, although the former emphasizes the written word and the latter the spoken word—as language teaching still does today.

The Stultifying Schoolmaster

Considering Jacotot's accidental success, Rancière asks the question: "Were the schoolmaster's explications therefore superfluous? Or, if they weren't, to whom and for what were they useful?" (4). To answer these questions, Rancière first of all familiarizes his reader with the order that is to be overturned: the Explicative Order. The first section of *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* is dedicated to setting the context for Joseph Jacotot's intellectual adventure in a classroom where he no longer had the ability, due to the language barrier, to explain the French language to his students.

> To explain something to someone is first of all to show him he cannot understand it by himself. Before being the act of the pedagogue, explication is the myth of pedagogy,

> the parable of a world divided into knowing minds and ignorant ones, ripe minds and immature ones, the capable and the incapable, the intelligent and the stupid. (6)

From his surprising experiences in Louvain, Jacotot would develop the principles of stultification and emancipation, the former premised on the need for explication by a teacher for the benefit of a student, and the latter premised on an equality of intelligence between student and teacher.

What the stories of Jacotot and Joly really reveal is that explication had been taken for granted in the language classroom. In both cases of the "accidentally" successful French teachers Nicholas Joly and Joseph Jacotot, the teacher is ignorant of the native language of the students, Flemish and English, respectively, but that ignorance leads to a new methodology. The role of chance in the origin story lends the invention an aura of inevitability, or discovery, that perhaps a calculated experiment would not have given to the new revolutionary methods.

Indeed, followers of Jacotot would go on to develop his method under the name of the *natural* method of language learning. But much to his dismay, and to Rancière's, followers of Jacotot's radical method dropped the slogan expressing the equality of intelligence, as well as the proper name of Jacotot, and instead tethered it to progressive ideas of education that nonetheless maintained the Explicative Order. Rancière points out the fundamental stultifying traits of what he calls the Old Master: the belief in an ignorant student who must be raised to the level of the teacher. Rancière documents the coopting of his method under the names of the natural method, or *natural universal teaching*, but divested of his principal insistence upon the equality of intelligence. In other words, the reformers took the letter of the method but not the spirit—and put a new face to the same old systems and institutions of examinations and gatekeepers (123-34). Rancière's emphasis on the failure of Jacotot's method to take hold in the universities suggests that a revolutionary pedagogy was once again needed by the time of

the students protests of 1968. Although Rancière makes no explicit mention of these events in his 1987 book, the lessons would be clear to his readers.

In *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, Rancière argues not that no schoolmaster is needed in the classroom, but that a schoolmaster *is* needed who does not explain. According to Rancière, a book contains everything within it: "Everything is everything" (27). In his first pedagogical experiment, Jacotot uses the bilingual edition of Télèmaque to teach his Flemish students French, and believes that it contains everything his students need, with their equal intelligence, to understand the book. Jacotot had a similar view of *Télèmaque*, or any book for that matter, that Joyce had of his own increasingly encyclopedic fiction: that it contained within it everything. The Homeric connections of both *Ulysses* and *Télèmaque* will not be lost on the reader, but in fact Jacotot held that any book contained within it its own key to understanding, and did not require outside explication. *Ulysses* is rife with portrayals of teaching and language acquisition, but we also have scholarship that helps to answer the question: what kind of a teacher was Joyce?

The Seriously Nonserious Schoolmaster

The first and most obvious observation to make about Joyce's period as a teacher is that, through teaching English, he earned his living working with language. Early critics made little substantive connection between his teaching work and written work. I have already mentioned how Joyce's teaching experiences guide depictions of language learning; to find the turn toward an antiauthoritarian pedagogy along the lines of Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster, then we can look to the process of Joyce's development as a teacher and writer as documented by Elizabeth Kate Switaj. In her 2013 essay, "The ambiguous Status of Native Speakers and Language Learners in *Ulysses*," she argues that *Ulysses* destabilizes the category of Native Speaker by placing all readers on the level of language learner:

> *[Ulysses]* treats all readers, whatever their experience with English, as language learners. Along with the depiction of characters with an ambiguous or difficult relationship to English, this positioning of the reader is part of an overall project of destabilizing the division between native and non-native speakers. It also suggests a way in which the difficulties of modernism, or at least of Joyce's modernism, can be read as anti-elitist: when everyone is a learner, no one is an authority. (Switaj 155)

In her later book, *James Joyce's Teaching Life and Methods* (2016), she expands her analysis to include Joyce's trajectory through *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Ulysses*, and *Finnegans Wake*. She faults earlier critics and biographers for failing to make connections between Joyce's writing and his "other work in language," i.e. teaching. These critics at most viewed Joyce's experience with his students as inspiration for his writing, but not his teaching experience in and of itself as formative of his style (Switaj 2016, xii). With critics such as Hugh Kenner, Roy Gottfried, and Thomas Jackson Rice, we may begin to speak of a conversation about Joyce's pedagogy, and the effects of this teaching life and methods on his writing. But even here, Switaj laments that those who did write of his teaching the Berlitz School of Languages or with private students did so mostly in context of Joyce's reputation as a poor teacher.

The stylistic representation of language acquisition is not new in *Ulysses* among Joyce's works. The progression of linguistic complexity in his earlier novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, already demonstrates through fiction the learning experience of its character. In *Ulysses*, however, "the gradation of language no longer serves to represent language acquisition but, rather, positions the reader a as learner of the language" (Switaj 2016, xii). The novelty in *Ulysses* is that fiction becomes a language learning experience for the reader. As Hugh Kenner remarks: "when it was published in 1922, *Ulysses* was a new kind of book altogether, a Berlitz classroom between covers: a book from which we are systematically taught the skills we require to read it. The first response, shock, was like the shock you'd feel if you

were suddenly put down where you hardly knew the language" ("Berlitz Days" 72). And looking beyond *Ulysses*, we can see that the experimentation in *Finnegans Wake* makes it possible to speak of a book written in its own language, *Wakese*.

In *James Joyce's Teaching Life and Methods*, Switaj goes further in linking Joyce's linguistic experiments and his depictions of education to his experience as a teacher. In Chapter One, "'With No Delays for Elegance': Joyce's Teaching Life and Methods," she sketches a biography of Joyce as an educator based on the above sources, among many others. She follows Gottfried's lead in comparing the actual teaching material that Joyce used, and may have used, to actual effects in his writing style. Here, however, she goes even further and explores the origins of the Berlitz Method and its history in the development of language teaching in the 19th Century and earlier. Finally, she takes on the judgements and evaluations on Joyce's teaching methods, largely based on his brother Stanislaus's interpretation and on a general unfamiliarity with the direct method that so influenced Joyce.

In Chapter Two, "Language Learning and Pedagogy in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Yong Man*," Switaj traces the techniques of gradation and "chaining" in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the novel most directly influenced by the Berlitz Method. As fascinating as this is, I am interested in the next stage of his writing, in which he uses the insights of teaching in a slightly different way in *Ulysses*. The main difference between *Portrait* and *Ulysses* in terms of their portrayal of language acquisition is the timescale of an entire youth in the Bildungsroman, compared to the novel *Ulysses*, in which the events of the novel take place over a single day. Language acquisition in the condensed timescale of *Ulysses* is therefore shown instead by the various stages of language learning in its characters, by the constant interrogation of words, definitions, and usage; and, most importantly by the positioning the reader as a learner of an idiosyncratic, nonstandard English of the novel itself.

In “Native Speakers as Language Learners: The Pedagogical *Ulysses*,” the third chapter of her book, Switaj shows how Joyce’s teaching influenced his writing of *Ulysses*. Rather than represent language acquisition through gradation of language in his prose style, as he did in *Portrait*, in *Ulysses* Joyce places the reader directly in the role of a learner of the language. More importantly, Switaj shows how the non-standard English of *Ulysses* positions the reader as a learner of the language of *Ulysses*, and thus approaches an antiauthoritarian pedagogy: “If Joyce did not teach seriously, his unseriousness served a purpose” (Switaj 2016, xiv). Joyce’s pedagogy in *Ulysses*, though, rather than transmit knowledge from a singular position of authority (teacher/author), functions as a way to open up possibilities. Joyce does this in part through his use of nonstandard English: “Joyce’s pedagogy in *Ulysses* values what more authoritarian approaches would seek to eliminate: variance from Standard English” (xiii). This process will lead to the more radical experimentation of *Finnegans Wake*. I will stop short of that stage in Joyce’s progression here, but Switaj’s fourth chapter studies the tenth chapter in *Finnegans Wake*, which “seemingly does away with the idea of teachers as separate from learners and in which the writing is in a language variety that has no native speakers” (113). Joyce’s final novel resists all forms of master and authority and teaches its own language of “Wakese.”

The Progressive Schoolmaster

One more link between the pedagogy of the seriously nonserious Joyce and that of Rancière’s ignorant schoolmaster is their treatment of time and their collapsing of the notion of intellectual “progress” over time. According to Rancière, the pedagogical myth of Explication is replaced by the pedagogical myth of Progress in the age of education reform,. He speaks of the stultification of the student by the teacher in terms of “delay” and adjectives of distance and time—and their quotient, speed:

> Progress is the pedagogical fiction built into the fiction of the society as a whole. At the heart of the pedagogical fiction is the representation of inequality as a *retard* in one's development: inferiority, in its innocence, lets itself be taken in; neither a lie nor violence, inferiority is only a lateness, a delay, that is posited so one can put oneself in the position of curing it. (119)

Rancière will develop this into "the instituted social fiction of inequality as lateness" (132) that will allow the triumph of the Old Master in the Public Institution.

The "delay" in the title of Switaj's chapter on Joyce's Teaching Life and Methods refers to a quote from a letter of Joyce's in which he describes himself as teaching "the English language as quickly as possible with no delays for elegance" (*Letters II*, 131). Switaj's choice to focus on Joyce's self-descriptions of teaching methodology and by the recommendations of students rather than administrators of the schools he worked for, or his brother Stanislaus, lead Switaj to a different understanding of his competence as a teacher using a conversational and nonauthoritarian method in direct opposition to the grammar-translation method dominant at the time. Switaj places special importance on the opinions of his students, their evaluation of their own progress in language acquisition as well their view of him as a successful teacher: "The success as an educator that allowed Joyce to be so viewed stemmed from an energetic and ultimately nonauthoritarian approach that he developed through years of experience and that has, in the years since, led to some misunderstanding of the seriousness (or lack thereof) of his teaching" (Switaj 2016, 1).

What interests me in Switaj's history of Joyce's pedagogy is her evaluation of the power dynamic in his lessons, the serious purpose of his unseriousness. Switaj's point that Joyce "would eventually hold exchanges of power as a kind of ideal" (14) is borne out by studies of his teaching as much as his writing. It's clear in any case that by the end of his teaching career, when he left Trieste and after his last private students in Paris, Joyce was still interested in language teaching pedagogy, and made several requests for books from Sylvia Beach (on

English Speech) during the drafting stage of Finnegans wake, which to Switaj "hints at the importance that language and pedagogy held for Joyce the writer, as well as for Joyce the teacher" (15).

The Resourceful Schoolmaster

Switaj situates the Berlitz Manual in a long history of language teaching reforms and debates in the 19th Century that led to the Direct Method of teaching languages, including Lambert Sauveur's first language schools to be run on such principles, C. Marcel's recommendation to use children's language acquisition as a model for adult education, Francois Gouin's "Series Method," pamphlets by Wilhelm Viëtor, and Felix Franke's and Otto Jesperson's *European Reform Movement* championing "inventional grammar"—right down through the centuries to the seeds of the Direct Method in John Locke, John Amos Comenius, and Michel de Montaigne. (Switaj 2016, 21-3). Important to our discussion here is that Berlitz popularized the Direct Method, rather than inventing it ab ovo, as the commercial myth would have us believe. There is even evidence that Joly may have been familiar with the work of Lambert Sauveur (23). Switaj concludes her telling of the story of Nicholas Joly with the caveat: "and the rest is either language-teaching history or a brilliant commercial myth" (23). We could easily extend such skepticism to Jacotot's story, which also emphasizes the supposed naturalness of the approach in order to show the naturalness of the touted new Method. In fact, it fits with Joyce's own aggregatory creative process to think of this "chance invention" as the product of preparation—an arbitrary tipping point in an ongoing paradigm shift, rather than a lightning strike.

The other significant conclusion for my purposes is that Joyce was not operating in a vacuum when he began teaching at the Berlitz School of Languages, but was part of a paradigm shift in teaching methods. Switaj argues for his conscientious use of these methods: "he was

not simply aping a commercial apparatus but, rather, playing with the popularization of principles developed and debated over centuries" (23). To those unware of the different priorities of the method Joyce employed—and only used to the grammar-translation method of teaching languages—his lessons, however, could seem like poor or negligent teaching.

Joyce was a resourceful teacher and used some of the same sources in his fiction as in his classroom. Three factors influence Joyce's teaching: 1) his own experience as a student in various institutions in Ireland and under tutelage of various teachers, 2) the Berlitz Method, and 3) requirements of others schools where he taught. Switaj outlines in her chapter on Joyce's teaching life and methods how Joyce "adopted those methods he found effective and congenial and rejected techniques rooted in authoritarianism" (15).

In addition to the well-researched catalogue of books and influences, there is a lot of discussion of sliding down bannisters in the studies of Joyce's teaching in Trieste, and this attests to the role of fun and play in Joyce's methodology. Switaj points out that "Joyce's teaching style might, in fact, have been "more effective due to its immediacy" (20), rather than a sign of unseriousness. And Joyce's conversations with private students, including his habit of conducting lessons on strolls around Trieste, show a close relationship to the Berlitz Method, by privileging fluency over accuracy—or as Switaj puts it: "communicative ability mattered more than formal grammatical correctness or style" (20).

The outward ease with which Joyce is reported to have walked and talked his way through lessons belies the incredible preparation and empathy needed to employ the direct method of language teaching. Switaj quotes the *First Book* for Berlitz English instructors: "Indeed, for instruction entirely within a target language to work, the language taught must be carefully selected and ordered" and "...the language has been methodically and systematically arranged for him" (24). Examples include the adherence to the verb "to be" in the first three lessons of the textbook, and vocabulary that is carefully introduced "in order to fulfill new

communicative requirements as the students' abilities increase" (24). Switaj in this chapter goes on to detail the mirrored structures of increasing complexity in both the Berlitz materials that Joyce is proven and suspected to have consulted as resources, cataloguing the ways verbs are introduced in both, the use of realia—a pedagogical term for real objects at hand—and further into the correspondences between *Ulysses* and the "Preparatory Readings" section of the Berlitz textbooks, which other scholars such as Gottfried had not included in their comparisons. I will skip for my purposes to the place the *questions* Joyce used in teaching found in his writing.

The Writerly Schoolmaster

John McCourt, in his book-length study of the years Joyce spent teaching and writing in Trieste, *The Years of Bloom: James Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920*, provides a succinct description in the first chapter of the effect of the Berlitz Method on Joyce's writing:

> In order to teach English grammar, syntax, phonetics, and pronunciation, Joyce was forced to analyze patterns that he had always taken for granted, so as to render them understandable to students. In thus distancing himself from his own language, Joyce was in fact deepening his appreciation of it, and this process cannot but have helped him as a writer. The Berlitz method might well be traced in *Ulysses,* in particular in the impersonal catechetic technique of "Ithaca" (although Joyce's religious education at Belvedere was a more obvious and important source here). The novel contains linguistic echoes of the types of drills Joyce used in the Berlitz, repetitions of verb forms, tenses, and vocabulary. (21)

McCourt offers some of the questions asked in "Ithaca" as the first examples of those "echoes" of Joyce's Berlitz lessons in his writing: "What did Bloom see on the range?" and "What did Bloom do at the Range?" (782). Through repetition with slight variation, such questions would have isolated the changing verb in these examples, so that Joyce could *verify* his students understanding without explaining or translating.

On the same subject of interrogatives in "Ithaca," comparing the text with the text of the Berlitz *First Book*, Switaj notes that: "Although questions are asked through the text, students are not required to generate them until lesson nine" (24). Here is where Switaj hits on the key pedagogical function of catechistic drills in the Berlitz Manual and in "Ithaca." Know in many methods of teaching, leading questions are used to elicit answers from students: "such questions as oblige the student to employ the new word in the answer" (*First Book*, qtd. in Switaj 2016, 26) so that teachers must "work backwards from the words to be practiced" (26).

In the Berlitz Method, there is a prescribed progression of questions from yes/no, to either/or, to open questions, and finally a free mix of all of the different types of questions. Answering questions is the first step in independent meaning making for a student, and asking a question that elicits a negative answer is a way for the teacher to introduce new vocabulary without translation or explanation.

The Catechal Schoolmaster

This has interesting implications for the narrative impulse of "Ithaca"—and, as I will show later, for *Examen de mi padre* and *Los niños perdidos*. In "Ithaca," the interrogating authority can be thought of as, in a way, responding to the answers that follow. I began to show in the previous chapter how the (inappropriate) use of the catechistic structure in "Ithaca" confronts the interrogating authority with its own inefficacy, increasing the indeterminacy, as Iser says, of the episode. I will continue the discussion by examining how the structure of alternation between questions (occasionally commands) and answers drives the narrative of the episode. The nature of this failure of authority is captured by Antonia Fritz, who makes a useful distinction that will guide me through "Ithaca." In her essay, "Oviditties in 'Ithaca,'" Antonia Fritz attempts to read "Ithaca" in the light of the Ovidian Echo & Narcissus tale and the process of poetic creation. Fritz begins with an etymological exploration of the words *catechism* and

catechize, focusing on the meaning of instruction by word of mouth or by questions. She identifies two opposing tendencies in "Ithaca:" towards the *catechetical*—objectifying knowledge and fixed, singular meaning—and towards the *catechal*—the multiplicity of potential meanings and echoes. Fritz discusses antithesis as the predominant rhetorical device of the episode and concludes that, although Bloom and Stephen are irreconcilable on level of story; they merge on the level of language.

In "Ithaca" there are abundant examples of antithesis, in which the negative is explored with equal scientific inquiry as the positive answer. On the level of language, Joyce introduces neologisms based on the opposites of existing words, such as "diambulist" in opposition to noctambulist (648), and "posticipated" in opposition to anticipated (793). On the level of character, the whole episode serves as a comparison between Stephen and Bloom. Some of the first questions in the catechism include: "Were their views on some points divergent" (777) and "Was there one point on which their views were equal and negative?" (778). Somewhat later in the catechism, the question "Did he find four separating forces between his temporary guest and him?" is answered by: "Name, age, race, creed" (792).

Yes/No questions mark the beginning of active language acquisition. In the Berlitz Method, a lesson with an absolute beginner often begins with an object and an affirmative statement: "This a pen." The student then repeats the statement in the target language without recourse to a translation in her own native language. The student must deduce meaning from the context of the statement, and from the gestural language of the teacher—in other words, from the direct physical experience of the object, or the sign, rather than from the signifying word. When the student has mastered this statement with various different objects physically present in the classroom, the teacher introduces a question and its affirmative answer: yes. Without ever being told the difference between the indicative mood and the interrogative mood (in English differentiated by word order), the student can already make this distinction. The

first question from the teacher—"Is this a pen?"—is the first foray into independent meaning-making: "Yes, this is a pen." From there, the teacher and student can continue to distinguish meaning from incremental linguistic changes. Pointing to an object farther away, or near the student, the teacher asks, "Is *that* a pen?" Again, without resort to grammatical terminology, or an authoritative explanation of demonstrative pronouns, the teacher teaches the student how to use *this* and *that*. The method is based on a repetition and echoing of previous constructions with the new meaning introduced through isolated changes.

Once the student is competent in this type of exchange (yes/no question and affirmative answer) the teacher can then point to an object and use the incorrect name for it: pointing to the student's book and asking, for example, "Is that a pen?" The teacher can lead the student to the concept of negation: "No, this is not a pen." The question becomes a tool for teaching negation. The natural instinct for the student to answer is: "No, this is a pencil." But the teacher must insist in the proper order of negation: "No, this is *not* a pen. This is a pencil." Both the false and the correct identity of the object are included in the answer.

The Successful Schoolmaster?

This is the method of teaching that Joyce would have used in his classroom in Trieste and in Pola, while employed as a teacher in the Berlitz School of Languages. Richard Ellmann has shown that Joyce purchased the Berlitz textbook, or *The Berlitz Method for Teaching Modern Languages: English Part, First Book*, after leaving Berlitz in 1914, and Renzo Crivelli and John McCourt have interpreted this to mean that he used the manual in his private teaching practice (Switaj 2016, 12). The method demands that teachers not explain grammar, but demonstrate grammar and present new vocabulary through a progression of questions.

It is a commonly noted phenomenon that teaching one's own native language as a foreign language has the effect of defamiliarizing the structures that one has taken for granted.

Before Switaj, Hugh Kenner had already argued that teaching gave Joyce a stronger bottom-up understanding of the structures of the English language and that *Ulysses* in particular resembled “a Berlitz classroom between covers” (“Berlitz Days” 155). The method of teaching directly influenced his working style in his fiction, where it has been shown that Joyce used a building, cumulative technique of accretion, in which “new words cannot be introduced before the vocabulary necessary to explain them” (Switaj 2016, 27). Joyce would return to words like a teacher reviewing vocabulary, using accretion in his writing in a way that he would have found fundamental in his teaching practice.

Along with questions, errors and mistakes are an important part of any teaching methodology. In the presentation of new material—grammar, vocabulary, etcetera—and in the early, controlled practice stage of a lesson, the Berlitz Method allows for thorough correction of the student’s errors. The second, uncontrolled practice stage, however, limits correction to the targeted area of practice, favoring higher fluency over perfect accuracy. And in the final stage of performance, fluency is given priority, and all corrections is reserved for a feedback session at the end of the performance activity. Although the Berlitz Method was not formulated in these terms during the career of Joyce, the structure of moving from textual accuracy to spoken fluency was a part of the direct method of language teaching. Nonetheless, Switaj writes that Joyce’s practice of leaving students feeling “as if they have not been corrected ... is one of the primary reasons Joyce’s teaching has been viewed as subpar” (28), whereas *balanced* corrections are a fundamental aspect of the method that Joyce was employed to use in his classroom. Yet the idiosyncratic language of a learner who privileges fluency over accuracy could still serve a communicative function, just as the idiosyncratic language of *Ulysses* serves a communicative function that may have nothing to do with accuracy.

Switaj uses all the above evidence to conclude that Joyce, despite the assumptions of most critics, was after all a conscientious and successful teacher—and that his experiences

working with the building blocks of language were immediate influences on his writing, in Trieste and afterward. In *Ulysses* this is clear in the way that the novel makes its readers, like a teacher or student of a foreign language, hyperaware of the arbitrariness of all language: "If, as [Marilyn] French argues, a combination of accurate and understandable units of language that has no overall meaning indicates the arbitrariness of language, then it is an arbitrariness that Berlitz made blatant to Joyce" (Switaj 2013, 152). Witnessing the process of foreign language acquisition by means of the Berlitz Method, and later other forms of direct method, made Joyce aware of the arbitrariness of language and also the impossibility of fully mastering any language.

The (Non-)Native Schoolmaster

In the third chapter of her book on Joyce's teaching life and methods, "Native Speakers as Language Learners: The Pedagogical *Ulysses*," Switaj shows how the influence of the Berlitz Method in *Portrait* evolves into a stylistic structure that attempts to teach readers of *Ulysses* how to read the book as a language learner, dissolving the hierarchy of native and nonnative reader (75), much as Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster dissolves the distance between teacher and student. Switaj's central thesis in this chapter is that *Ulysses* demonstrates that "no one ever finishes learning" and thereby destabilizes the category of Native Speaker. Berlitz valorizes native speakers and yet there is an irony to Joyce's position there: "... having been exposed to the idea that the language one has spoken from birth could be considered foreign prepared Joyce to reconsider what it means to be a native speaker of a language. Cultural nationalists told Joyce he spoke a foreign language and then Berlitz gave him a job based in part on his being considered a native speaker." (86)

Switaj demonstrates how the novel functions as a textbook for the teaching of a language according to the Berlitz Method: "Joyce creates a text that requires anyone, of any

linguistic background, to study its language *as language* in order to understand it" (87). Rather than pointing out errors, Joyce obliterates any objective standard of "correct" English, privileging performance in his revolutionary literary work: "If the characters of *Ulysses* struggle with English because they did not naturally learn an arbitrary standard, the readers of *Ulysses* must relearn the language because that standard has been overthrown." (87) Switaj sketches the pedagogical program of *Ulysses* as one that "rejects the notion of correctness as such in favor of the study of effects and possibilities" (103). This important distinction helps us understand the antiauthoritarian possibilities of the seemingly authoritarian, objective questions in the catechistic technique of "Ithaca."

The Ithacan Schoolmaster

In this first chapter of my thesis, I have analyzed Joyce's writing through the lens of the interrogative mood in order to understand how principles of style and pedagogy converge in a structure of questions and answers. I reviewed some of the criticism on *Ulysses*, and especially scholarship investigating the connection between Joyce's work teaching the English language to adults and the stylistic innovations in his writing that linguistically reimagined the English language. I have tied Rancière's ideal of the ignorant schoolmaster to the argument of Switaj that *Ulysses* places all readers on the level of language learner. This line of thought shows specifically how the interrogative mood in "Ithaca" is an expression of Joyce's antiauthoritarian teaching methodology. The function of closed, yes/no questions in language acquisition, how teaching by the Berlitz Method may have influenced Joyce's use of antithesis in "Ithaca" and the paradox of constraint and freedom in his catechistic technique.

Joyce uses the (supposedly) extremely objective language of scientific discourse and the Roman Catholic mode of instruction known as the catechism to tell a subjective story and to teach the lesson of *Ulysses* without resorting to explanation, or nonegalitarian modes of

instruction that "Ithaca" itself averts. The (impersonal) catechistic structure of "Ithaca" challenges narrative expectations and undermines the authority of catechetical instruction and scientific discourse by balancing catechetical questions with catechal answers, according to Fritz's distinction, and by providing answers that belatedly determine the questions, confusing the notion of delay that presupposes an inequality of intelligence.

THE BODY AS AN EITHER/OR QUESTION IN *EXAMEN DE MI PADRE*

This second chapter of my thesis will focus on either/or questions and Jorge Volpi's *Examen de mi padre* (2016), or "Examination of My Father",[1] and the pedagogical metaphor of the autopsy. The figurative post-mortem that Volpi performs in this book on his father and on the Mexico of his father's lifetime relies on a series of correlatives between physical body parts and intangible attributes. The extended metaphor includes pairings such as the hand and power, the skin and "others," and the liver and melancholy. The rhetorical questioning of Volpi here, his interrogation of the body, is couched in a didactic methodology, and his book of non-fiction is indeed divided not into chapters, or headings, but into anatomical "lessons" under each of these paired titles and subtitles. The text itself is interspersed with historical photographs, historical drawings, and personal drawings and photographs, resembling both a pedagogical textbook as well as a biography/memoir. I am interested in how Volpi's non-fiction replicates the stylistic strategies of Joyce's fiction writing in "Ithaca." I will show how Volpi in his non-fiction uses Joyce's (impersonal) catechistic technique, especially either/or questions, to interrogate the body of his own father, and by extension the Mexican nation. Is his book a catechetical anatomy lesson *or* is it a catechal post-mortem open to a multitude of possible answers?

In the Berlitz Method, the closed question is followed by the either/or question. To respond to such a question, a simple yes or no is no longer adequate, but one option must be repeated and affirmed. I will show in particular the either/or dualities at play in Volpi's lessons on the body/mind problem and Joyce's cultivation of paradox in "Ithaca" as a function of their subversive use of the interrogative mood, specifically the either/or question as it is used to ascertain understanding, or verify the knowledge of the student.

[1] All translations are my own.

One of the lasting impacts of *Ulysses* was Joyce's choice to center the novel on the body. In his 1992 introduction to the novel, Declan Kiberd describes *Ulysses* as "an epic of the body" (xxviii) and affirms that "Joyce wanted to afford the body a recognition equal to that given the mind, but to a post-Victorian generation which had lost this just balance, [Joyce] *appeared* to elevate the body above all else" (xvi).[2] Just as Joyce organizes the entire novel of *Ulysses* around the body, following an implicit schema attached to each of its 17 chapters, or episodes, Volpi also dissects his text, organizing his chapters, or "lessons," around the parts of his father's body. "Ithaca" is associated with the skeleton in the both of the so-called Gilbert and Linati schemas for *Ulysses*.

Joyce's conception for the novel as a "Work-as-Cosmos" (Eco 33) included many systems, including the cycle of the human body, which he broke up into its constituent parts in order to reassemble them again.

> It is an epic of two races (Israelite-Irish) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life).... It is also a sort of encyclopaedia. My intention is to transpose the myth *sub specie temporis nostri*. Each adventure (that is, every hour, every organ, every art being interconnected and interrelated in the structural scheme of the whole) should not only condition but even create its own technique. (*Letters I* 146-47)

Joyce described the episode himself as revealing truth in "Ithaca" in the " baldest coldest way." (*Letters I*, 159). The bare-bones style of the prose and the scientific jargon unleashed in "Ithaca" leave the impression of an x-ray, if we were to think of story in the terms of a body. *Examen de mi padre* likewise tells the story of a life in terms of the body, but averts the scientific objectivism of categorizing the mind and the body by framing his essays, or ten lessons, not as an explanation but as an interrogation. Volpi does not answer the question of

[2] Kiberd discusses both Joyce and D.H. Lawrence in this passage, but I will focus only on Joyce.

whether a life is either in the body or in the mind, but uses the interrogative mood to challenge the dominance of either one in the public discourse of Mexican society.

We could say that it is in the duality of his chapter titles that Volpi most explicitly splits his attention equally between the body and the mind in *Examen de mi padre*. Both Joyce and Volpi have interesting answers to the question of where the individual resides and ground their work in the anatomy and the physical experience of the body as firmly as in the mind. Both Volpi, whose father was a surgeon, and Joyce, who abandoned his medical studies in Paris to pursue his writing career, in some way see their work as dissection, and the body as metaphor for the text, having traded pen for scalpel as the instrument of their profession.

The Scalpel and the Pen

In *Examen de mi padre*, Jorge Volpi remembers the life of his father, a surgeon by profession, by means of his body, in a series of ten essays—or "lessons in comparative anatomy"—that each take a part of his body for a subject. In choosing his father's body as theme and object of investigation, Volpi is in fact uniting his profession with that of his father, privileging the body as individual expression, and the individual as national expression. This remarkable use of biographical details in terms of the body will serve me as an example of "reading the body" in *Examen de mi padre*. In this effort, I will reconstruct with the help of these ten anatomical lessons a national body as seen from Volpi's perspective, as a member of the *Crack* literary movement and as the son of a surgeon.

The form of *Examen de mi padre* is an idiosyncratic anatomy of the human body that has multiple associative levels, much like Joyce's own implicit schema for his novel *Ulysses*. In ten sections Volpi literally dissects the body of his father, attributing to each body part a metonymic function in the human experience and in Mexican society. Each chapter carries a title with an organ and a human faculty, and a subtitle with one corresponding social

manifestation. To what extent and to what point is *Examen de mi padre* an autopsy of the country and a public exam, as Volpi himself describes it on the back cover of his book, and to what extent is it elegy, or an elegy in prose, of his father? It is more or less clear what each of the discrete titular parts of his father's body represent: *the body, the brain, the hand, the heart, the eye, hearing, the genitals, the skin, the legs, and the liver*. But I will try to clarify in this chapter what exactly the communal body is that Volpi constructs from the following components from the subtitles: *funeral rites, interior life, power, passions, the watchmen, harmony, secrets, the others, the travelers, and melancholy*.

Another formal question is precisely this game with the body within a genre, the elegy, that tends to take as its subject the life of the deceased. Volpi is in essence asking an either/or question about the life his father has lived. Is his father contained in the material of the body or in the immaterial traces he has left behind? The range of topics, verging toward a catalogue of Joycean proportions, also leaves the reader wondering whether the book is about Volpi's father at all, or about Mexico, or about Volpi himself. The ten lessons often begin with the material aspect of the body part before ballooning outward to include a list of topics that, like the redundant and/or runaway answers in "Ithaca," are exhaustive but ultimately unsatisfactory.

We can look toward the theories of biopolitics and in particular to the work of Giorgio Agamben to help us with the first question: How does Volpi complicate the norms of the elegy by centering his book on the *body* of his father? The frank and foregrounded discussion of the body seems so out of place because of the non-fiction genres of biography, autobiography, and memoir that *Examen de mi padre* mimics, but with the vocabulary of the autopsy. Volpi is mixing the discourses that we use to speak of bodies—such as those in the newspapers, found all too commonly in mass graves in Mexico—and lives, which are discussed in more abstract, biographical terms. In essence, Volpi is crossing the border between Agamben's "qualified life" of the biography, the elegy, and other literary forms (bios) and the "bare life" of biopolitics

(zoe). This fluidity and mixing of discourses—brining the physical body into places where it does not belong—in effect subverts the either/or questions that divide the dead in the dark picture of contemporary Mexico that Volpi paints in *Examen de mi padre*.

These are very personal essays that form this book, about the body of a unique individual, but at the same time the attempt to speak—through the history of science, Mexican history, and the current events of that country—about the collective body, and its political life. How does Volpi then represent the biopolitics of Mexico in *Examen de mi padre*, treating the body as a site of experience for the individual and the Mexican nation?

Volpi dissects with care the body of his father, making a biography out of each part, something that dismantles even further the dichotomy between *bios*/zoe. In the first chapter of *Examen de mi padre*, Volpi reproduces a list of the five precepts of the surgeon Ambroise Paré for the practice of the art of surgery:

1. *To place the organs in their correct position.*
2. *To join that which is separated.*
3. *To separate that which is joined.*
4. *To remove that which is superfluous.*
5. *To try to modify that which nature has deformed.*

By means of a detailed reading of selected chapters in *Examen de mi padre*, I propose in the following five sections to determine whether Volpi the stylist adheres to the precepts of his father the surgeon in his autopsy of the Mexican nation—whether the son's pen follows the same lines as the father's scalpel.

To place the organs in their correct position.

The first chapter of the book is titled: "Lesson 1: The Body, or Of Funeral Rites." Here the pattern is set of associating the material of the human body with the human faculty or phenomenon. The chapters that follow take as their title an organ in the system of organs that

make up the human body, but the order is not by any means obvious. In an experiment in a course on about the body in Latin American literature, I asked participants to match each title with a subtitle and to arrange the pairs that seemed correct to them. The result was a variety of matches, with very interesting justifications, and various competing schemas to arrange the chapters: from the outside to the inside, from top to bottom, and from the center to the periphery. Neither did we come to an agreement about the correspondence of the organs.

The first chapter dwells on surgery and its history, travelling to its early practitioners, but also its representation in the plastic arts. *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* by Rembrandt is key for Volpi, and offers the reader a model for his own exam. The doctor begins with the left hand, not with the intestines, where a surgeon would in reality start an autopsy. And so Volpi also follows an idiosyncratic order that reveals his autopsy by pen to be more of an artistic representation than an anatomically-correct autopsy. The organs are arranged, one could say, in the order of what they symbolize, or what they are associated with:

the body	*funeral rites*
the brain	*interior life*
the hand	*power*
the heart	*passions*
the eye	*the watchmen*
hearing	*harmony*
the genitals	*secrets*
the skin	*the others*
the legs	*the travelers*
the liver	*melancholy*

In whichever order, the act of attaching these writings onto the skeleton of the body serves to center the body in form as well as content, in a very material way. The body is the material of this book, even though it treats the intellectual life of a father, a son, and a country in crisis. To enter into the mind of his father, Volpi examines his body, because Volpi himself

reminds us: “we don’t read the minds of others, because we are incapable of observing them directly; we read their bodies and their skins, their breaths and their gestures” (226-7). Maintaining this metaphor throughout the book, we will see how Volpi applies his preferred instrument, the pen, to the material.

To join that which is separated

Graphically, the most notable stylistic decision that Volpi makes is to not separate the text itself into paragraphs. The text has standard syntax and punctuation but otherwise runs on in an undifferentiated block of test that matches Molly Bloom’s soliloquy in terms of associative digressions. In the entire book there is not a single paragraph break, as if Volpi, while he dissected his father, wanted to at least maintain his own text in one piece, without any indentation. The effect is that all the themes mix in a block of text 289 pages long, chopped into the ten chapters, or body parts. Within a single “lesson” all manner of topic related to the life of Volpi, the life of his father, and the life of the nation flow together—with the only link the body part and its corresponding associations. In this way the disappearance of the 43 students of Ayotzinapa mixes with the slow slide of his father into senility and chronic pain in the first chapter on the body, or funeral rites. Another chapter contains everything about the skin of his father mixed with the discrimination on the basis of skin color in Mexico, the notion of the “other” in Mexican society, and the intellectual history of *mestizaje*. In joining that which is separated, Volpi makes possible the interpenetration of the history of his father with that of Mexico, and the history of Mexico in the life of his father. At the end of this first lesson, Volpi proclaims very clearly the goal of his autopsy:

> Las páginas que siguen pretenden convertirse en un examen de mi padre: una disección de sus logros y caídas, sus enseñanzas y debilidades, sus creencias y odios. También en una anatomía de mí mismo y, sobre todo, en un examen de mi patria, este México

> doliente de las postrimerías del siglo XX e inicios del XXI. Una autopsia de esta nación de fantasmas y cadáveres. (Volpi 44)
>
> The pages that follow are intended to be an examination of my father: a dissection of his accomplishments and his failures, his teachings and his weaknesses, his beliefs and his aversions. Also an autopsy of myself and, above all, a post-mortem of my fatherland, this painful Mexico of the end of the 20th Century and beginning of the 21st Century. An autopsy of a nation of phantoms and cadavers.

Volpi follows immediately in the second chapter with the brain, or the interior life. One of the mysteries of the body is where the "I" of a person resides, and here Volpi is conscious of what is lost in the material when what he is searching for has vanished with the death of his father: "If I write these lines it is to keep my father with me" (73). In his biography, or autopsy, of a father, or son, or nation, Volpi above all attempts to join the two sides of the profound dichotomy that we maintain between the body and the mind.

To separate that which is joined

Although Volpi identifies the characteristics of his father with himself, he is also very careful to distinguish between the father and the son, the surgeon and the writer. In the chapter about hearing, or harmony, Volpi describes how their tastes were for the majority of his life in disharmony, and how he forced himself to distinguish himself from his father in his tastes and in his dogmas. He also distinguishes his politics from that of his father, and even the politics of his father from those of the dominant politics of the PRI. At the same time, he praises his father for fighting his whole life to maintain his independence, for keeping himself separated from the hegemony of the PRI, and for joining neither the left nor the right. "To preserve the rebelliousness that my father nurtured in me from my youth is the only way that I can find to reach out and shake his hand" (108), he says in the chapter on the hand, or Power, in which he also describes his own approaches to the centers of political power in the Mexico of his youth.

Volpi compares his father to Albert Camus or Octavio Paz, with whom he shared a similar attitude: "their solitary fight, which earned them an endless number of critics and enemies, did not have the left as its principal enemy, but the principal intellectual order of their time" (108).

This precision work by Volpi is achieved by an associative, far-ranging non-fiction style. In "Ithaca," when Stephen Dedalus, searching for a father figure since the opening episodes of "Telemachus" and "Nestor," finally meets with Leopold Bloom, a potential father figure, after unwittingly crossing paths all day, the first questions relate to their differences and similarities. The first five questions attempt a surgical separation by asking in what Joyce called "the baldest coldest way" (*Letters I*, 159) that would characterize "Ithaca": "What parallel courses did Bloom and Stephen follow returning?" ... "Of what did the duumvirate deliberate during their itinerary?" ... "Did bloom discover common factors of similarity between their respective like and unlike reactions to experience?" ... "Were their views on some points divergent?" ... "Was there one point on which their views were equal and negative?" (Ulysses 776-8). Like Joyce's unidentified narrator, or interrogator, in "Ithaca," Volpi in *Examen de mi padre* is concerned with the delicate operation of separating the views and experiences of the son from those of the father (figure).

To remove the superfluous

In his professional life as a surgeon, Volpi's father practiced one operation over and over again: the cholecystectomy, or removal the gallbladder. He performed this habitual action in the service of the precepts of Paré: "My father, melancholic by nature, had to remove hundreds of gallbladders over the course of his life" (278-9). In the last chapter of *Examen de mi padre*, Volpi explores the antiquated theories of the temperaments (which attributed cholera to the bile produced in the gallbladder), the nostalgia of his father, and his own melancholy, making a link between the superfluous body and the superfluous body of work of the melancholy artist.

The superfluous gallbladder finds its literary corollary when Volpi finds himself in the Book Fair of Guadalajara among the multitude of books and superfluous artistic production: "And the thing is, dedicating oneself to art or literature makes it impossible to not ask once in a while the crucial question: and what is all of this *for*?" (277). I will show later how Luiselli echoes such rhetorical questions in her constant repetition, like a refrain, of the unanswerable question: "Why did you come to the United States?" For Volpi, the question of motive is also a fundamental point of return, and it's significant that he ends on such meditations. In this last chapter about the liver, or melancholy, Volpi sketches for the reader his own sentimental education in the works of melancholic artists, and his own nihilism in life and in his craft as a writer.

The process of writing, reading, and editing is in itself a process of removing the superfluous. Volpi is conscious of the limits of art as well as the limits of the body, in this game he plays with the body of his father and his own literary body of work. In writing about the body, he has most likely excised much of the superfluous in places where we don't even notice. But at the same time, when he writes about the 43 students from Ayotzinapa and the 49 victims of the conflagration in the ABC child daycare center in the city of Hermosillo, Volpi intentionally includes the entire—some would say superfluous—list of the dead, giving each one their name in print. Names, in the case of the students of Ayotzinapa, for which we don't have bodies to bury nor even knowledge of their real cause of death. This superfluous information is perhaps more earnest than Joyce's pointless catalogues in "Ithaca," but the same stylistic game of pushing boundaries is being played by both authors as they challenge our expectations as to what should be removed and what should be listed out in full.

To try to modify that which nature has deformed

In the overwhelming task of imparting justice to the victims of the recent violence in Mexico, this remembrance is a small contribution, together with his attempt to diagnose the illness that has infected the Mexican nation. Volpi operates here between surgery and autopsy, using his pen to make incisions that at times follow the precepts of Ambroise Paré and at times are more of an pedagogical display—a lesson in the style of the anatomist Andreas Vesalius which reveals the anatomy before the reader in the dissection room.

Volpi argues, for example, in the chapter about the genitals, or the secret, that the abuses of Marcial Maciel, priest and founder of the Legionarios de Cristo (or Legionaries of Christ) were not an aberration, as the Catholic Church maintains, but inherent to the organization. In this and in many other examples, Volpi tries to distinguish between human nature and the social and political conditions that have set off the recent carnage in Mexico. In struggling with the Mexican identity and the recent outbreak of violence since the declaration by Felipe Calderón of the War on Drugs, he resists the idea that one people could be more susceptible to violence than another: "nothing in our precarious identity drives us to torture or forced disappearances, but the social and political conditions that we have created are indeed responsible for the murders and the disappearances perpetrated in recent years" (284). The tragedy of this examination that Volpi carries out on his father comes in part from the way in which he shows the deformation of his character with the old age and depression he suffered in the waning years of his life alongside the deformation of the civil institutions that Mexico has suffered in these last years.

Cause of death: Father and Country

One of the aims of a post-mortem is to arrive at a cause of death. In this case, this was known before beginning the autopsy of Volpi's father. But another aim of the autopsy is to demonstrate

to the living the structures and the organization of the human body. The division of his book into "lessons" is proof that Volpi is dissecting the body of his father in order to arrive at a better understanding of the man, of himself, and of the country where they were both born.

Nonetheless, he is in a certain way also searching for the cause of death for the Mexican nation. In each chapter there is a corollary to the life of his father and events in his country. Volpi dissects according to the precepts of Paré the surgeon, but also according to the schema of Vesalio the anatomist. He describes Mexico as "a country that requires not one but thousands of autopsies" (285), in which nobody, despite the daily violence, wants to dissect the body of the nation in 2016 in order to understand its anatomy:

> ¿Quién querría a uno de sus seres queridos sometido a una carnicería semejante? Mejor ignorar las causas de la muerte que investigarlas mediante un procedimiento tan cruel, al menos para quien lo contempla. Gracias otra vez a Paré y Vesalio, reunidos por única ocasión, las autopsias se transformaron en instrumentos imprescindibles para buscar la verdad" (285).
>
> Who would want one of their loved ones to be submitted to such a massacre? It is better to ignore the causes of death than investigate them through such a cruel procedure, at least for those who contemplate it. Thanks again to Paré and Vesalius, reunited for a single occasion, the autopsies become indispensable instruments in the search for truth.

The reunion to which Volpi alludes was the result of a famous death and "the most relevant autopsy in history" (287). Volpi describes the death of King Henry II of France due to blows received in a jousting tournament that he himself had organized, and the resulting autopsy performed by Paré the surgeon and Vesalio the anatomist in 1559. This historic moment links Volpi to the present, to the "días de pólvora," or "days of ash," that Mexico is suffering at the moment: "Like the body of the king, Mexico requires a similar autopsy. An anatomy that will reveal to us the mode by which we are destroying this country in these times. But we prefer to forget and entrench ourselves in our indifference before we would pursue the truth" (287). What

Volpi offers is this autopsy in essay form, substituting the impaled king for his own father, and his father for the wounded nation. The son the writer follows in the footsteps of the anatomist and the surgeon, and with his pen approaches knowledge by means of the body in this incisive but caring examination of his father. When he begins his book, Volpi acknowledges the paradox of the body as site of the person: "Today I am convinced that my father was not that conglomeration of inert organs that rested in the crematorium, but I recognize that my father was also that body" (14). Volpi wants to get close to the body, to the material existence of his father, and to the difficult work of "reading the body." He recognizes that writing about the body is an indispensable act in understanding his father, himself, and Mexico in this historic moment.

Either/Or Questions

In this way, Volpi takes a medical procedure and makes it a philosophical inquiry. Volpi uses questions as a means not to give definite, conclusive answers, but too multiply the answers possible. The either/or question creates an alternative where before there was only the ability to affirm or negate in a yes/no question. Whereas in fiction writing the idea of equal choice between two alternative realities or possibilities is a familiar scenario for readers, in non-fiction it could appear imprecise, or be seen to conflate concepts. Is Volpi talking about his father's body or his father's life? Is there a difference? Is the life in Mexico he describes qualified life or bare life, according to Agamben's distinction? Do the victims of the massacres Volpi describes—the victims of cartel violence, of fires due to gross negligence, of a Mexico in ashes—these victims, do they have qualified lives or bare lives?

If we remember the basic example of "Is this a pen?" from the previous chapter, we move to the next level of interrogatives in the Berlitz Method by asking, "Is this a pen or a pencil?" We move through either/or questions from identification to differentiation. In a more

advanced class, the student may be asked, “Do you cut your own hair, or do you have your hair cut by someone else?” in order to demonstrate, for example, the causative passive. We have moved between a true/false dichotomy to a multiplying of possibilities, but this from of controlled practice still limits the possible answers to *two*, and presupposes a specific desired response.

The questions in Volpi, often rhetorical, are not catechetical questions, but catechal in the sense that we spoke of earlier: in a limited way, they open up the possibilities of a poetic response. Interestingly, the “Ithaca” episode of *Ulysses*, written in the (impersonal) catechistic technique, according to the Gilbert and Linati schemas, does not use many either/or questions. There are only three questions in the Joycean catechism giving either/or options—and in each case they are options within a broader, open question: “Had Bloom and Stephen been baptized, and where and by whom, cleric or layman?” (635). In another case, near the end of the episode when Leopold and Molly Bloom are discussing the day, a follow-up question allows for an either/or option: “In what state of rest or motion?” But rather than stopping at the selection of either “rest” or “motion,” the answer to both questions zooms in to precisely describe the position of the two interlocutors, and then zooms out to explore forms of motion not encompassed by the question itself:

> In what directions did listener and narrator lie?
>
> Listener: S.E. by E. : Narrator N.W. by W. : on the 53rd parallel of latitude, N. and 6th meridian of longitude, W. : at an angle of 450 to the terrestrial equator.
>
> In what state of motion?
>
> At rest relatively to themselves and to each other. In motion being each and both carried westward, forward and rereward respectively, by the proper perpetual motion of the earth through everchanging tracks of neverchanging space. (870)

Neither the question nor the answer is intelligible without the other. Narration is not one unified indicative prose flow but a toggle between interrogative and indicative. Neither the question nor the answer is allowed to continue long before it is interrupted by the other.

Another situation in which "both" or "also" is the answer to an either/or question is in quantum mechanics. Volpi uses the uncertainty principle of fiction in the genre of literary non-fiction, by admitting the possibility of both as an answer to his either/or questions. Volpi, influenced alike by the modernism of Joyce as by modern physics, and whose oeuvre contains the history of mid-twentieth century science in *En busca de Klingsor* as well as other novels that blur the lines between art and science, and fact and fiction, is a writer well suited to appreciate the quantum mechanical possibilities of "Ithaca." The non-fictional "lessons" of *Examen de mi padre* apply the impersonal scientific approach to the most personal of subjects in order undermine yet another either/or dichotomy of the body.

Volpi is borrowing from a medical methodology, the precepts of Paré, and the pedagogical methods of the autopsy. Through his anatomical lessons, we learn the language of the body. But Volpi is also looking for an answer to the question: What ails Mexico? Or What has killed Mexico? Looking at the body here is looking at the violence that has permeated contemporary Mexican society. Looking at human anatomy is looking at the current political and humanitarian disaster.

The Ignorant Anatomist

Volpi is asking the same question of his readers that Jacotot asked of his students: *What do you see? What do you make of it? What can you tell me about it?* The idea that a student could be taught what the teacher does not know is also one that Volpi embodies in his examination of his father. The first reversal is already present precisely there, in the fact that he is examining his father, the authority, and not the other way around. And in writing about his father's death,

he is also writing about something that he is necessarily ignorant of, and which he is bound to fail to understand completely.

Failure is another link between Volpi's unconventional examination of his father and Joyce's subversive catechism. Even before "Ithaca," the "Nestor" episode in *Ulysses* shows the failure of the stultifying method of the Old Master in a scene in which Stephen Dedalus teaches a failed lesson to his students. As Switaj notes, Joyce's antiauthoritarian teaching is also present in such depictions of classroom scenes of learning, and often comes in the form of contrasts and failures (Switaj 2016, xiii). Stephen in both episodes of *Ulysses* that employ the catechistic technique is failing at his task. And just as "Ithaca," the second-to-last episode of *Ulysses*, uses the (impersonal) catechistic technique, so the second chapter, "Nestor" employs the (personal) catechistic technique. In this chapter Stephen teaches a History class, then leaves his frustrated students with a riddle before discussing History with the headmaster Mr. Deasey, in a series that is widely seen as Stephen's search for and subsequent rejection of father figures. Bloom, then, at the opposite end of the day, becomes another father figure in the continuation of this series in "Ithaca."

The constant contrasting and comparing executed by the (impersonal) catechism between Stephen and Bloom can also be seen in this way as an examination of the father, or of fathers. *Ulysses* in this regard—as an examination of the body in 17 episodes and of Bloom as one (rejected) father in a series—is a suitable model for Volpi in *Examen de mi padre,* a very personal work of non-fiction that intentionally conflates the body of the father for the fatherland. The "lessons" of *Examen de mi padre* confound any attempt to separate the personal from the impersonal, the body from the biography, or the scientific from the artistic approach. The framing of his writing as medical dissection is akin to Joyce's focus on the life of the body, and paradoxically, the desire to contain within it everything that exists in the mind.

LOS NIÑOS PERDIDOS: OPEN QUESTIONS AND THE BORDER QUESTION

Valeria Luiselli's *Tell Me How It Ends* begins with a question: "*Why did you come to the United States*?" The Spanish-language *Los niños perdidos* begins with the same question: "¿Por qué viniste a los Estados Unidos?" The two books are in a way versions of each other, neither strictly a translation of the other. They both follow the narrative of Luiselli's experiences working as a translator for the federal immigration court in New York City, interviewing child refugees crossing unaccompanied into the US and trying to learn their stories. Written first as a shorter essay in English, then expanded into a book-length essay in Spanish, *Los niños perdidos*, or "The Lost Children" was then translated (freely) into English as *Tell Me How It Ends*, using the original English-language essay by Luiselli and translations of the new Spanish-language sections into English by Lizzie Davis, in consultation with Luiselli. A book about border crossings, *Los niños perdidos* has itself crossed from language to language, changing in content and form with each crossing. The two books are partially translations, or versions of each other, but they are also rearranged for context and effect in crucial ways. The telling and retelling of the story is for Luiselli an ongoing process that now includes the publication of the 2019 novel, *Lost Children Archive*, in English.

This complicated genetics is fitting for a book that deals extensively with politics of translation and the translation of politics. In recognition of this, I will use the two versions interchangeably in my discussion of the Joycean structures in Luiselli's essay in 40 questions, allowing the differences in language to account for what is already lost and gained in translation. Spanish quotes come from *Los niños perdidos* and English from *Tell Me How It Ends*. Longer citations will be reproduced in both languages, often illustrating key reshufflings of the text that took place in the process of translation.

What does *not* change between the Spanish-language *Los niños perdidos* and the English-language *Tell Me How It Ends*, however, is the order of the forty questions that structure these book-length essays told in the first person. Luiselli's experiment with form and content blurs the distinction between original and translation, foreign and familiar, and in doing so mirrors its subject. The narrative of these two books follows both the child asylum-seekers whose stories are being translated into English by Luiselli and her teenage niece by means of the intake questionnaire.

What Joycean structures are at work in Luiselli's use of formalized questions to write about the international refugee crisis across Central America, Mexico, and the United States, and what is the relation in both works between the interrogative mood and narrative plot? In *Ulysses*, Joyce frustrates many of the expectations of narrative and style and yet does provide the reader, in "Ithaca," with an attempt at filling in gaps in information near the closing of the novel. In over a hundred pages of questions (and a few imperatives), "Ithaca" sets out to gather expository data in an objective, styleless style—to flatten the artistic process of selection into a text in which every detail is of equal importance. And yet this exhaustive inquiry becomes a style of its own, undermining the objectivist approach that it mimics.

"*Why did you come to the United States*?" Luiselli uses the interrogative mood to show the irreconcilable differences between the lived experiences of the children caught in the US immigration system and the narratives that the 40 questions of the intake questionnaire are meant to elicit from them. It is the interrogative mood that imposes narrative plot on Luiselli's essay, in tension with her refusal to give definitive answers.

Luiselli does not pretend to know the content of what she is teaching, neither in her essay itself nor in the classroom setting she describes in the same essay. She is in this way an ignorant schoolmaster in the mode of Rancière. Luiselli does not know the answers to the questions, and yet she submits to the rigid structure of the questionnaire, as Joyce submits his

readers to a form of the catechism, which he himself does not believe in. Her evasion of the questions is even more explicit in her non-fiction than in Joyce's fiction, and yet Luiselli insists, like Joyce, on foregrounding the questions and allowing them to tell the story in the order given. Just because the questions are replicated in the official order, however, does not mean that she tells the story by any official chronology.

Luiselli writes from first-person perspective, and although the book starts with an official question from the questionnaire, the first narrative setting is Luiselli's own story, as a so-called legal non-resident alien living in New York City, driving around the country on a road trip while she and her husband await the outcome of their green card applications. Circumstances lead Luiselli to a volunteer position within an organization that provides legal counsel to children seeking asylum in the US. She interviews children in Spanish, using the 40 questions of the intake questionnaire, and translates the answers into English for the benefit of the legal team who will decide whether or not to pursue the asylum case in court.

By borrowing the structure of the intake questionnaire, a practical bureaucratic document, Luiselli exposes it as a tool to funnel the answers, and the lived experiences of the children's stories, into a legally definable category: relevant or not relevant. The questions are a form of (impersonal) catechism in the sense that the stories that they are meant to extract from the children are to be judged by a lawyer as either helpful to a case or not helpful—creating "correct" narratives and "incorrect" narratives. Luiselli rejects this objective goal of the questionnaire immediately by rephrasing the 40 questions in such a way as to produce subjective answers of dubitable legal value, and by weaving in her own narrative of performing the work of taking interviews, translating the answers, and interpreting the results for immigration lawyers. It is first of all in this protrusion of the irrelevant that Luiselli's interrogatory structure resembles Joyce's catechistic technique. The narrative she imposes upon the 40 real questions of the questionnaire frustrate the impersonal interrogator in the same way

that Joyce's fictional questions scramble the normal transmission of information, and in particular our expectations of temporality.

In "Ithaca," for example, the fifth question asks: "Had Bloom discussed similar subjects during nocturnal perambulations in the past?" (620). The answer, a catalogue of similar meetings and discussions, shows through a small sample that there are endless number of previous experiences that contribute to the present moment. We are limited to seeing the very selective, "relevant" narrative of finite fact—in fiction alike as in non-fiction, and most of all in bureaucratic forms. What is not relevant to the narrative or to the end-goal (in Luiselli, the basis for a case), is not included in the report, though it may be the most significant detail.

In *Los niños perdidos*, the task of translating the answers from Spanish into English is complicated not only by the difference in languages but also by the messiness of the narratives and by the different importance attached to details by the child and by the state. Luiselli writes:

> Las palabras que escucho en la corte salen de bocas de niños, bocas chimuelas, labios partidos, palabras hiladas en narrativas confusas y complejas. Los niños que entrevisto pronuncian palabras reticentes, palabras llenas de desconfianza, palabras fruto del miedo soterrado y la humillación constante. Hay que traducir esas palabras a otro idioma, trasladarlas a frases sucintas, transformarlas en un relato coherente, y reescribir todo eso buscando términos legales claros. El problema es que las historias de los niños siempre llegan como revueltas, llenas de interferencias, casi tartamudeadas. Son historias de vidas tan desatadas y rotas, que a veces resulta imposible imponerles un orden narrativo. (15-16)

As if to emphasize her point about the work of translation, the English version of this passage is reordered and made more succinct, lacking for example the wonderful (but irrelevant?) detail of toothless mouths trying to tell their own stories. The English translation is perhaps slightly more coherent, but also in its own way somewhat *chimuela*:

> I hear words, spoken in the mouths of children, threaded in complex narratives. They are delivered with hesitance, sometimes distrust, always with fear. I have to transform

> them into written words, succinct sentences, and barren terms. The children's stories are always shuffled, stuttered, always shattered beyond the repair of a narrative order. The problem with trying to tell their story is that it has no beginning, no middle, and no end. (7)

Imposing the orderly chronology of the questionnaire onto their narratives, and her own, exposes its inefficacy to tell the whole story. Her book is divided into four sections, titled: *Border*, *Court*, *Home*, and *Community*. The questions reproduced one by one in ordinal series are spread out among the first three sections, corresponding to questions about the voyage. Luiselli launches her own narrative on the irony that she is unable to answer for herself the very first question of the questionnaire onto whose structure she has literally pinned her story: Why did you come to the United States? (7):

> We didn't have a clear answer. No one ever does. But the deed was done, we had filed our applications, and while we waited for an answer we were not allowed to leave the country. So, when summer arrived, we bought maps, rented a car, packed a few basics, made playlists, and left New York. (Luiselli 2017, 9-10)

> «¿Por qué viniste a los Estados Unidos?» No teníamos una respuesta clara, pero decidimos que si nos íbamos a quedar a vivir in Estados Unidos, tendríamos al menos que conocer mejor el territorio. Así que en cuanto llegó el verano compramos mapas, rentamos un coche, hicimos *playlists* y salimos de Nueva York. (Luiselli 2016, 17)

Although the reasons for embarking on this domestic road trip are, interestingly, different in the two versions, both are founded on a central uncertainty in the narrative. This is the first inkling, in this opening section, *Border*, that Luiselli follows the pattern of the ignorant schoolmaster. She herself does not know the answers to the questions she asks, but she is able to ask Rancière's three key questions: *What do you see? What do you make of it? What can you tell me about it?*

***Border* (Questions 1-8)**

Luiselli begins on the border—not with the story of the children lost in the immigration system of the US, but with her own story in the US, living with her own family in New York City, navigating the application process for a Green Card. The book begins with a road trip to the border region of her host country with her family, while they await the decision of the Immigration officials. Luiselli is immediately preoccupied with the terminology of this system. Her status is radically different from the children she will later interview, and yet she and her husband, awaiting a response to their application for resident status (and meanwhile prohibited from leaving the country, and/or wanting to get to know the country better), are aware that their own fate rests upon the determination of their status according to this alienating terminology of US Immigration authorities. In the car, she and her husband, both Mexican nationals, amuse themselves by entertaining possible alternate terms for "resident alien:" "Éramos «alienígenas en busca de residencia», «escritores buscando permanencia», «permanentes alienígenas», «mexicanos pendientes»" (17). *In Tell Me How It Ends*, Luiselli poses this Joycean wordplay on a Kafkaesque term as a question: "We joked, somewhat frivolously, about the possible definitions of our new, now pending, migratory status. Were we 'pending aliens'" or 'writers seeking status,' or 'alien writers,' or maybe 'pending Mexicans'?" (9).

Luiselli makes light of her own situation, but very consciously distinguishes it from the dire situation of the children whose fates hang in the balance of the system in a much more threatening way. She does this, in typical fashion, by comparing the two formal questionnaires of their respective application processes. She analyzes the language of the form itself, the bureaucratic style, we could say, of each form as a symbol of their difference predicament:

> El cuestionario [de solicitud para la Green Card] tiene la inocencia de lo retro, la obsolescencia de ideologías pasadas, y recuerda la calidad granulosa que tenían las películas sobre la Guerra Fría que veíamos en formato Beta. El cuestionario de admisión para los niños indocumentados, en cambio, es frío y pragmático. Está escrito como en

alta resolución y es imposible leerlo sin sentir la creciente certidumbre de que el mundo se ha vuelto un lugar mucho más jodido. (18)

> The green card questionnaire has a retro kind of candor, like the grainy Cold War films we watched on VHS. The intake questionnaire for the undocumented children, on the other hand, reveals a colder, more cynical and brutal reality. It reads as if it were written in high definition, and as you make your way down its forty questions it's impossible not to feel that the world has become a much more fucked-up place than anyone could have ever imagined. (10)

The first question on this 21st Century document naturally makes Luiselli ask herself the same question about her own process of immigration. "I suppose, deeper down, we were simply asking ourselves, perhaps for the first time, that same question I now ask children at the beginning of each intake interview: 'Why did you come to the United States?'" (9).

Her ability to tell her story in this first section, *Border*, does not suffer for her failure to answer that question. The ground covered in this first sections includes the first eight questions of the official questionnaire:

1. Why did you come to the United States? (7)
2. When did you enter the United States? (13)
3. With whom did you travel to this country? (18)
4. Did you travel with anyone you knew? (18)
5. What countries did you travel through? (18)
6. How did you travel here? (18)
7. Did anything happen on your trip to the U.S. that scared you or hurt you? (25)
8. Has anyone hurt, threatened, or frightened you since you came to the U.S.? (28)

Question Six leads to a large expository section on *la Bestia*, the name in Spanish of the freight trains that carry refugees and migrants at great peril from Central America and across Mexico, and the answer which almost all children give in response. Rather than explain this journey, Luiselli lets the children tell their broken stories. Luiselli embodies on two levels Rancière's

principal charge against explanation and the explicative method of teaching, what he calls the "myth of pedagogy." I will return to Luiselli's emancipatory teaching methods in the final section, to show the political ramifications of how she gives her class over to the intelligence of her students, without giving an authoritarian explanation of the refugee crisis. First, though, I will show how Luiselli resists using the explicative method on her readers, on the level of the questionnaire.

Rancière makes a statement about political equality through a story about language teaching. All forms of equality, including political, start with the assumption of equality, according to Rancière. He does not explain his position on the events of May 1968 in France with explicit references, just as his subject Jacotot does not explain the French language to his Flemish students. Readers are invited to make those connections.

There is a linguistic as well as a political lesson in the two books by Luiselli. Legality for Luiselli is not a goal of the asylum process, but a starting point in Luiselli. And her own classroom. The terms used to describe the children seeking asylum in the US—Luiselli uses "refugiados," or refugees—are cognates in Spanish and English: "migrantes" for migrants, "ilegales" for illegals, and "menores indocumentados" for undocumented minors. The differences in this case are political, and Luiselli struggles to redefine the terminology of the debate and argues for a reclassification of the conflict. Because of the unique, reciprocal process of translation that created *Los niños perdidos* and *Tell Me How It Ends*, the same argument is split up in the Spanish and the English language versions. Her demand in Spanish is much more unequivocal:

> Sería un avance hablar del tema como una Guerra hemisférica porque obligaría a repensar el lenguaje mismo en torno al problema y, por lo tanto, la posible dirección futura de políticas públicas para enfrentarlo. Los niños que cruzan México y llegan a la frontera de Estados Unidos no son «migrantes», no son «ilegales», y no son meramente «menores indocumentados»: son refugiados de una guerra y, en tanto tales, tienen derecho al asilo político. (77)

Luiselli makes the same argument in English, with sentences translated verbatim, but also transposed in the text:

> To refer to the situation as a hemispheric war would be a step forward because it would oblige us to rethink the very language surrounding the problem and, in doing so, imagine potential directions for combined policies. (86-7)
> [...]
> The Children who cross Mexico and arrive at the U.S. border are not "immigrants," not "illegals," not merely "undocumented minors." Those children are refugees of a war, and, as such, they should all have the right to asylum. But not all of them have it. (90)

***Court* (Questions 9-22)**

Court, the second section of *Tell Me How It Ends* covers the following questions from the intake questionnaire:

9. How do you like where you're living now? (44)
10. Are you happy there? (44)
11. Do you feel safe? (44)
12. Have your parents or siblings been the victim of a crime since they came to the U.S.? (47)
13. Was it reported to the police? (47)
14. Do you still have any family members that live in your home country? (48)
15. Are you in touch with anyone in your home country? (48)
16. Who/how often? (48)
17. Do you have any other close family members who live in the U.S.?
18. Immigration status? (49)
19. Who did you live with in your home country? (50)
20. Did you ever live with anyone else? (50)
21. How did you get along with the people with whom you lived? (50)
22. Did you stay in touch with your parents? (50)

In "Ithaca," blatantly wrong answers and omissions undermine the scientific thoroughness of the (impersonal) catechistic technique. Likewise, Luiselli writes that most children respond in the affirmative to the above questions, despite all evidence to the contrary. If Luiselli shows anywhere explicitly that the format of the questionnaire misleads or leads to false answers, then it is here. The answers, literally, do not tell the story. These "wrong" answers instead show the limits of the questionnaire in subjective matters. In *Los niños perdidos*, Luiselli thinks about these three questions not in terms of the answers, but in terms of the images that the questions must raise to the minds of the children: "Pienso seguido en esta constelación de preguntas. Me pregunto qué imágenes brotan en la mente de los niños el segundo antes de darme una respuesta" (39). In *Tell Me How It Ends*, on the other hand, Luiselli writes:

> In the media and much of the official political discourse, the word "illegal" prevails over "undocumented" and the term "immigrant" over "refugee." How would anyone who is stigmatized as an "illegal immigrant" feel "safe" and "happy?" But the children usually respond yes to those questions" (44-5).

The tension between questions and corresponding answers in "Ithaca," the disobedience of the answering voice, and the abundance of oddities and inconsistencies lead Fritz Senn to label the episode a, quote, "pedantic triumph and protracted failure" (39). I argue that Luiselli exposes these 40 questions to the same judgement by focusing our attention on their failure to capture the story of these (lost) children.

***Home* (Questions 23-40)**

As we saw earlier, in Chapter One, Wolfgang Iser and others have argued that the proliferation of questions in "Ithaca" actually increases the indeterminability of the episode: "The more questions we get in 'Ithaca,' the more the chapter demonstrates the impossibility of obtaining adequate answers or the right answers" (Gibson 16). The third section of Luiselli's book contains the most questions, almost all of them about the respondent's home country, and in

the past tense. They are an attempt, from the Immigration authorities' perspective, to ascertain the exact conditions of the children's home country, and yet the answers often lead the questioner farther from the truth:

23. Did you go to school in your country of origin? (64)
24. How old were you when you started going to school? (64)
25. When did you stop going to school? (64)
26. Why [did you never go to school?] (64)
27. Did you work in your home country? (64)
28. What sort of work did you do? (64)
29. How many hours did you work each day? (64)
30. Did you ever get in trouble at home when you lived in your home country? (65)
31. Were you punished if you did something wrong? (65)
32. How often were you punished? (65)
33. Did you or anyone in your family have an illness that required special attention? (65)
34. Did you ever have trouble with gangs or crime in your home country? (74)
35. Any problems with the government in your home country? (74)
36. If so, what happened? (74)
37. Have you ever been a member of a gang? Any tattoos? (82)
38. What do you think will happen if you go back home? (88)
39. Are you scared to return? (89)
40. Who would take care of you if you were to return to your home country? (89)

The final three questions move from the past tense into the present, future, and conditional tenses, but are still about the respondents' home county, i.e. country of origin, though notably now in the context of a possible return. It is an ominous end to the questionnaire that the questions turn to contingencies of a possible return, i.e. deportation. What would the correct answers be to these final questions? Luiselli's earlier question is more pertinent than ever here.

> Los abogados aceptan casos de los menores cuando éstos responden las preguntas del cuestionario «correcta», de un modo un poco tautológico, si incrementa las posibilidades de que un abogado o una abogada acepte el caso. En el mundo despiadado

> de la ley migratoria, los «mejores» casos son los que están respaldados por las peores historias. (56)

> If the child answers the questionnaire "correctly," he or she is more likely to have a case strong enough to increase its chances of being placed with a pro bono attorney. An answer is "correct" if it strengthens the child's case and provides a potential avenue of relief. (61)

The unsatisfactory answers that do not "do justice," literally, in this case, to the claims and stories of the children—reminiscent of the "story" of "Ithaca." The precision does not get at the truth. The children still do not have the language to tell their stories.

> "If their answers didn't align with what the law considers reason enough for the right to protection, the only possible ending to their story was going to be a deportation order. It was going to be very hard, with the answers I was getting, to even find them a lawyer willing to take their case. The girls were so young, and even if they had a story that secured legal intervention in their favor, they didn't know the words necessary to tell it. For children of that age, telling a story—in a second language, translated to a third—a round and convincing story that successfully inserts them into legal proceedings working up to their defense, is practically impossible. (66)

Even worse, the precision of the question and answer form has the potential to skew the storyline. Where the lost children lack the language to tell their own stories, others possess language in such a hegemonic capacity that they presume to tell the children's stories for them. Within the narrative of *Los niños perdidos*, Luiselli offers the reader an example of the most egregious from of catechism: a *New York Times* article that attempts to *explain* the refugee crisis (the author writes migration crisis) using a series of rapid-fire questions to which the author himself gives the answers. The resulting display of stultifying explanation angers Luiselli to the point that she includes it in her essay, refuting the biased language that portrays refugees as barbarians and the state as benevolent force glad to be rid of them. (*Tell Me* 84)

Luiselli comments on her own aversion to the format that the Immigration authorities, and their paradoxical requirements, impose upon the children: "This is how it starts. A boy and I are seated at one end of the long mahogany table. It is obvious that both of us are new to the scenario, both still uncomfortable with reducing a story to the blank space between questions" (70). By the end of the 40 questions, Luiselli is right back at the beginning, at the first question: "Why did you come to the United States?" She is no more comfortable with the story imposed by the catechism than she was at the beginning.

Community (No Questions Asked)

In the final section of both *Los niños perdidos* and *Tell Me How It Ends*, Luiselli turns to the part of the children's lives that the questionnaire does not pay much attention to at all: their experiences in their new communities—and allows them to tell their stories, no questions asked. The closest the questionnaire comes to inquiring about the possible new community ties of the respondent in its 40 questions are questions #9-13, discussed above, which clearly miss the mark.

The intake questionnaire is never meant to instruct like the catechism, but it is meant to examine, to determine the children's qualifications for legal status. As an examination, it does not ask Jacotot's three fundamental questions: *What do you see? What do you make of it? What can you tell me about it?* The questions are designed to extract exact answers, along set narratives. Luiselli instead creates an open ending by describing the community that some of the children, whose names she has changed, are adapting in their new homes. She breaks down the distinction between home/country of origin and home/adopted country, and differences in immigration status.

In "Ithaca" the reader arrives home with Leopold Bloom, and arrives at answers to direct questions, with objective facts like the (almost) exact amount of money spent that day, and the

complete inventory of the contents of his locked drawers. The (impersonal) catechistic style of the episode, in a novel that employs so many different styles, is also an arrival at a non-style, or the style of a non-style. It is also of course the scene in which Bloom arrives home, corresponding to Odysseus' homecoming, and the scene in which the events of the day's odyssey are recounted.

Inside the US, the odyssey of the "lost" children is also just the beginning. All of the questions from the questionnaire have already been asked, and Luiselli focusses here on her own pedagogical methods, and on the formation of community between children in the US who have been divided by their legal status. I argue that it is in the last section, *Community*, where Luiselli makes her strongest case, as an ignorant but emancipated teacher, for the children in legal limbo at the border, without an ending in sight.

In the last paragraphs of the book, as an indirect answer to the opening question of the questionnaire, Luiselli writes:

> ¿Por qué viniste a los Estados Unidos? Tal vez nadie sepa, realmente, la respuesta. Hay cosas que quizá sólo puedan entenderse en retrospectiva, cuando hayan pasado muchos años y la historia haya terminado. Mientras tanto, mientras la historia no termine, lo único que se puede hacer es contrala y volverla a contar, a medida que se sigue desarrollando, bifurcando y complicando. Per tiene que contarse, porque las historias difíciles necesitan ser narradas muchas veces, por muchas mentes, siempre con palabras diferentes y desde ángulos muy distintos. (88)

In the Spanish version it appears in the last paragraphs of the book, as an indirect answer to the original answer of the questionnaire. The corresponding section is displaced in the English version, *Tell Me How It Ends*, between the conclusion of the classroom experiment and the rehashing of the questions of the questionnaire and the concluding section of the book:

> There are things that can only be understood retrospectively, when many years have passed and the story has ended. In the meantime, while the story continues, the only thing to do is tell it over and over again as it develops, bifurcates, knots around itself.

> And it must be told because before anything can be understood, it has to be narrated many times, in many different words and from many different angles, by many different minds. (96-7)

In *Los niños perdidos*, Luiselli displays pedagogical tendencies similar to Joyce's not only in her above attitude toward narration, but also in her self-described experiment in the classroom, where the refugee crisis becomes the subject of an egalitarian conversation between students and teacher. She flips the classroom in her Advanced Spanish Conversation class at Hofstra University (84), allowing the students to approach the subject from a position of equal intelligence, and describes the student-organized activism that results from her experiment.

The final section, *Community*, returns to the first question on the intake questionnaire, yet again:

> ¿Por qué viniste? –le pregunté a una niña.
> Porque quería llegar. (90)

> "Why did you come here? I asked one little girl once.
> Because I wanted to arrive. (99)

Just as "Ithaca" is a sort of homecoming, Luiselli's road trip is a sort of arrival, in a way, to her new adopted country. The little girl's answer above is a central paradox of the book: the impossibility of arrival and the impossibility of return. Arriving at the end of the book, this final reframing of the opening question and answer is the ultimate subversion of the intake questionnaire.

To conclude, the interrogative mood in "Ithaca" eliminates the distance between the narrated question and the narrated answer, eliminating with it the authority of the catechistic technique in the way that Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster eliminates the stultifying distance between teacher and learner maintained by traditional pedagogy. Joyce would have used interrogatives in the Berlitz Method to elicit vocabulary through examples rather than explain

new words and structures to his students. Joyce's language teaching, according to several critics, had a profound linguistic influence on the mechanics of his fiction, and *Ulysses*, according to Switaj, places all readers on the level of the language learner. I argue that Luiselli's use of the interrogative mood, like Joyce's in "Ithaca," has roots in an egalitarian pedagogy that undermines an objectivist approach to its subject. *Los niños perdidos* is about the reality of the border and the division of children into the categories of legal and illegal. But by focusing on the inefficacy of the question rather than the legal relevance, or "correctness," of the answer, Luiselli destabilizes these categories, much as *Ulysses* destabilizes the categories of native and nonnative speaker. Her text shares with Joyce's a pedagogically antiauthoritarian use of the interrogative mood and a distrust of narrative certainty and conclusion.

MIXED QUESTIONS AND INDICATIONS OF THE INTERROGATIVE MOOD

I have asked in this thesis how the stylistic techniques employed by James Joyce in "Ithaca"—especially his use of the interrogative mood—operate in the technique of Jorge Volpi's and Valeria Luiselli's non-fiction writing on questions of Mexican and US politics of migration, power, and authority. To this end, I have looked at the antiauthoritarian pedagogy at the roots of Joyce's subversion of the catechistic technique in "Ithaca." The metaphor of Rancière's ignorant schoolmaster, rather than Jacotot's pedagogical practice itself, has guided my formulation of the interrogative mood as a technique of an antiauthoritarian narrative style.

I have argued that Volpi turns the language of the medical autopsy topsy-turvy, as both elegy to his father and criticism of his country. Volpi's rhetorical examination and Luiselli's use of the interrogative mood, like Joyce's in "Ithaca," evades the determinacy and conclusion of an ending as well as any purely objectivist approach to its subject. The texts by Volpi and Luiselli, by focusing on the authority of the question rather than the answer, share with Joyce a pedagogically antiauthoritarian use of the interrogative mood. This helps to destabilize various dichotomies of the indicative mood: in Joyce, between the native speaker and the non-native speaker; in Volpi, between the body and the biography; and in Luiselli, between the status of legal or illegal imposed by the immigration authorities upon the unaccompanied children who cross the Mexico-United States border. This distrust of resolution in the interrogative mood is mirrored in the distrust of narrative conclusion.

The work of this thesis is likewise unfinished. Luiselli continues her Joycean retelling in "many different words and from many different angles" of the story of *Los niños perdidos* in her recent novel, *Lost Children Archive* (2019). In this newest iteration, the many elements of her nonfiction are present in fictionalized form, including the immigration questionnaire we have seen so much of, and the *New York Times* article in Q&A format discussed in the previous

chapter of this thesis. But an additional interrogatory voice is also added in this new novel. In *Los niños perdidos*, the 40 questions of the intake questionnaire were in constant tension with Luiselli's young daughter's incessant questions about the refugee children and her imperative for her mother to finish the story: "Tell me how it ends." In *Lost Children Archive*, the infantile interrogatives of the child characters take over narration of the novel completely. Midway through the story of a struggling family on a road trip from New York to the Southwest of the United States, the character of "the boy" begins re-narrating events in the second person to his younger sister, from a position of knowledge in the future.

In this thesis, I have shown how the official procedure, form, or questionnaire—or in the case of Joyce, the Roman Catholic catechism and scientific discourse—can be subverted from a limiting, authoritative device with prescribed answers, to a device of style and structure that undermines the objectivity of the interrogatory process. My aim in writing about Joyce's "Ithaca" and the interrogative mood in Volpi and Luiselli has been to follow in my writing the methodology of language teaching toward the stage of mixed interrogatives—and from "controlled practice" to "uncontrolled practice" and "performance." The final demonstration of this in a language classroom would be a fluency activity with a speaking goal tailored to the material learned in the lesson. In a written thesis there is no satisfying means to perform the knowledge I have acquired as a reader. Attempts to do so verge dangerously on the act of explaining. My work then confronts the same contradiction as Rancière in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, who describes Jacotot's belief that no book is needed to explain a book. I am therefore aware and wary of the pitfall of explaining a non-explanatory text. In writing on Joyce's "Ithaca" and on the interrogative mood in these two works by Volpi and Luiselli in terms of their pedagogical methodology, then I must also consider my own writing on their writing in such terms, and even question the value of such critical work.

More than just describing or explaining, though, I hope I have demonstrated the teaching methods of Jacotot and Joly through their stories, and by showing Joyce's embodiment of these pedagogical principals in his prose. My readings of the Joycean interrogative mood in the stylistic methods of Volpi and Luiselli intend to show that these two authors have learned the lesson of "Ithaca," so to speak, and are able to subvert the catechism of Rancière's Old Master by using its very same structures—but with a strong catechal impulse. These two writers are able to counter the pedagogically antiauthoritarian catechism, not with a forceful argument but by questioning the authority of the question. Part of that questioning involves admitting to not knowing the answer. By showing their own ignorance, Volpi and Luiselli emancipate their readers from the supposed objectivity of the literary essay and give to the genre a catechal impulse, according to Fritz's distinction, to balance out the catechistical impulse of "factual" nonfiction.

As these two writers have themselves commandeered the structure and language—somewhat jarringly—of official discourses in their nonfiction works, I have taken the structure from each of their books in turn, as a means of demonstrating rather than explaining. I have taken the metaphor of writing as a lesson literally, reading and learning from Joyce's lesson in style in "Ithaca," from Rancière's "eight lessons" in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, from Volpi's 10 anatomical lessons (which are really political lessons), and finally from Luiselli's 40 questions, and the story they fail to tell. These authors do not give us any answers—only different questions to ask. By training my readers' attention on the interrogative mood in their work rather than explaining the indications of the questions they raise, I have attempted to teach what I do not know myself. Not as an authority or a native speaker, but as a reader and learner myself, I have attempted to make my own readers conversant in the Joycean language that Volpi and Luiselli speak when they write in the interrogative mood.

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APENDIX A – The Forty Questions in Luiselli's *Tell Me How It Ends*

I BORDER

1. Why did you come to the United States? (7)
2. When did you enter the United States? (13)
3. With whom did you travel to this country? (18)
4. Did you travel with anyone you knew? (18)
5. What countries did you travel through? (18)
6. How did you travel here? (18)
7. Did anything happen on your trip to the U.S. that scared you or hurt you? (25)
8. Has anyone hurt, threatened, or frightened you since you came to the U.S.? (28)

II COURT

9. How do you like where you're living now? (44)
10. Are you happy there? (44)
11. Do you feel safe? (44)
12. Have your parents or siblings been the victim of a crime since they came to the U.S.? (47)
13. Was it reported to the police? (47)
14. Do you still have any family members that live in your home country? (48)
15. Are you in touch with anyone in your home country? (48)
16. Who/how often? (48)
17. Do you have any other close family members who live in the U.S.?
18. Immigration status? (49)
19. Who did you live with in your home country? (50)
20. Did you ever live with anyone else? (50)
21. How did you get along with the people with whom you lived? (50)
22. Did you stay in touch with your parents? (50)

III HOME

23. Did you go to school in your country of origin? (64)
24. How old were you when you started going to school? (64)
25. When did you stop going to school? (64)
26. Why [did you never go to school]? (64)
27. Did you work in your home country? (64)
28. What sort of work did you do? (64)
29. How many hours did you work each day? (64)
30. Did you ever get in trouble at home when you lived in your home country? (65)
31. Were you punished if you did something wrong? (65)
32. How often were you punished? (65)
33. Did you or anyone in your family have an illness that required special attention? (65)
34. Did you ever have trouble with gangs or crime in your home country? (74)
35. Any problems with the government in your home country? (74)
36. If so, what happened? (74)
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38. What do you think will happen if you go back home? (88)
39. Are you scared to return? (89)
40. Who would take care of you if you were to return to your home country? (89)