

## Dimensions of Elitelore: An Oral History Questionnaire

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This paper develops an open-ended questionnaire that is intended to illustrate dimensions in the study of elitelore. Compared with the term folklore, the term "elitelore" offers a relatively new concept. In conducting research into the lore of elite Latin American leaders, this new concept has, provided a framework for our tape-recording of biographical data that has hitherto been neglected or only partly tapped by the interview method.<sup>1</sup> As defined in *Elitelore*: "The idea of lore has been chosen because it gives connotations of accumulated wisdom, legend, and tradition. [In this view] self-perceptions of past, present, and future are integrated into a frame of life reference which is crucial to the understanding of how and why particular leaders have participated in unique historical events."<sup>2</sup>

### **THEORY**

The theory of elitelore can best be understood by relating it to similar concepts such as those dealing with the lore of the folk. Table 1 shows levels of

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<sup>1</sup> James W. Wilkie, "Oral History of 'Biographical Elitelore' in Latin America." Paper presented to the Social Science Research Council Conference on Folklore - Social Science, New York City, November 10, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> James W. Wilkie, *Elitelore* (Los Angeles: Latin American Center, University of California, 1973), p. 61.

**TABLE 1. The Dimensions of Oral Life History Lore**

Level of Analysis	Study of Nonelites and Elites 1	Study of Elites <sup>2</sup>
Generalized or Typological	Folklore <sup>3</sup>	Leaderlore <sup>3</sup>
Particularized or Individual	Popularlore (the biographical aspect of the lore of the folk) <sup>4</sup>	Elitelore (the biographical aspect of the lore of the leader) <sup>4</sup>

1 For extended treatment of the popularlore aspect of folklore, see James W. Wilkie. *Elitelore* (Los Angeles: Latin American Center, University of California, 1973). Appendix B, especially discussion of oral history's place in folklore, p. 76.

2 In coining the term leaderlore, we may note that although this word involves analyses of written materials, it also encompasses the extended study of elitelore, including aggregate analysis, open-ended interviews, and formulation of psychohistorical studies as well as construction of composite biography. For further discussion of such extended study, see Wilkie, *Elitelore*, Appendix A.

3 Folklore and leaderlore deal with the synthesizing of individual cases.

4 Popularlore and elitelore deal with the study of intrinsically valuable individual case histories.

analysis for examining oral life history lore involving the study of (a) nonelites and elites and (b) only elites. Although all people are imbued with folklore, only elitelore can be attributed to leaders. In Table 1 we see the following relationship: popularlore is to folklore as elitelore is to leaderlore, a term coined here to suggest parallelism. Thus popularlore is the unique biographical aspect of the lore of the common man as it has been tape recorded by a few scholars such as Oscar Lewis; folklore is seen as the generalized or typological analysis that emerges from the synthesizing of individual cases. Elitelore is analogous to popularlore and leaderlore is seen as the counterpart of folklore.<sup>3</sup> Elitelore involves the particularized study of elites (and subelites) as they perceive, organize, and justify their own actions

<sup>3</sup> Topical studies are not precluded in our analysis: investigators should be aware, however, of how life history frameworks influence the topical views or accounts of persons interviewed. See Lyle C. Brown, "Methods and Approaches in Oral History: Interviewing Elites in Latin America." *Oral History Review* 1 (1973), pp. 77-86. An example of a topical interview that is extracted and reorganized from an oral life history interview is found in James W. Wilkie. "El Complejo Militar - Industrial en México durante la Decada de 1930: Dialogo con el General Juan Andreu Almazán," *Revista Mexicana de Ciencia Política* 20:77 (1974). For general discussion of the multiple uses of life history cilia, see Jorge Balán, ed., *El Uso de Historias de Vida en Ciencias Sociales: Teoría y Técnica* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Visión, 1974).

at various hierarchical levels of leadership on national-local continua; and the recording of such data may provide the basis for developing the generalizations and typologies of leaderlore. The analogy between leaderlore and folklore is supported in a three-focus view selected from among many definitions in Maria Leach's *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*:

The term folklore was coined in 1846 by the English antiquarian William John Thoms to take the place of the awkward term popular antiquities. The word has since been adopted by virtually all continental European languages. As currently used, it has two acceptations, viz. 1) the mass of the unrecorded traditions of the people as they appear in popular (i.e. non-literary) fiction, custom and belief, magic, and ritual, and 2) the science which proposes to study these materials.

The scope of folklore is to reconstruct the spiritual history of man, not as represented by the outstanding works of poets, artists, and thinkers, but as exemplified by the more or less inarticulate voices of the "folk." In this task it draws on documents which are partly historical, i.e. culled from chroniclers, poets, law codes, etc, whenever they reflect folkways as opposed to literary, artistic, and learned modes of thought, and partly oral, i.e. collected, roughly, within the last century and a half by professional or semi-professional folklorists. In the evaluation and interpretation of these documents our science largely avails itself of the comparative method.

Like every science, folklore had to begin with the collection of the material, and to do this effectively, it had to gain consciousness of itself.<sup>4</sup>

Leaderlore, no less than folklore, must begin with the collection of data, that is, with elitelore. The problem is how to go about it; and it is this problem to which we address ourselves. As Allan Nevins has noted with relation to leaders: Oral history was born of modern invention and technology. "Miss Secretary," says the President, "take a letter to the Prime Minister of \_\_\_\_\_. No, I'll just telephone him; quicker, easier, and above all, safer. We know he has no recording device." What might have been a priceless document for the historian goes into the irrecoverable ether.<sup>5</sup>

Because we now have a classic case of presidential tape-recording devices being used (1970-1973) to capture White House conversations of all types

<sup>4</sup> Alexander H. Krappe, "Folklore and Mythology," in Maria Leach, ed., *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*, 2 vols. (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1949), I:403-407. According to Melville J. Herskovits, Thoms urged the accounts of "the manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs, etc., of the olden times" be recorded so that later students could turn for information to these dying remnants of the unrecorded past were termed popular antiquities of literature. See Herskovits, *Cultural Anthropology* (New York: Knopf, 1963), p. 272.

<sup>5</sup> Allan Nevins. "Oral History: How and Why It Was Born," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 60 (1966), 600.

(including recordings of telephone conversations) and because ex-President Nixon has released the transcripts of some of those recordings, elites may well think twice about consenting to oral history interviews let alone engaging in massive recording activity. Although the motive for releasing the transcripts of the tapes was apparently to show that Richard M. Nixon was not a guilty party in the Watergate scandal, the fact is that the tapes publicly reveal him to have been involved in "shabby, disgusting and immoral conversations."<sup>6</sup>

If the Nixon imbroglio has harmed oral history (and severely limited the possibility that future leaders will record all of their private conversations for history),<sup>7</sup> the release of the tape transcripts helps us to understand an essential tenet of elitelore: Most leaders think that if they can explain themselves (warts and all), in the end they will be believed.<sup>8</sup> Let us note that strategic elites (be they in the United States, Latin America, or anywhere) have sets of beliefs, sayings, myths, superstitions, and legends about themselves and about their country's history which are not written down but which they take for granted, even if they should perchance write letters or their memoirs. For example, Nixon saw the Watergate issue as "us" against "them." Elites tend to develop beliefs or attitudes about themselves or about historical events which they do not investigate or examine but on the basis of which they make decisions that affect the lives of the folk. Leaders rarely have time to delve into the past to find out how things "really happened." or to check the limitations of their knowledge; thus, with the passing of time, they accumulate a set of beliefs that often do not necessarily have any foundation in "truth."

As pointed out in an earlier study, truth is probably impossible to ascertain fully,<sup>9</sup> but by talking with representatives of different political ideologies, we can find out the knowledge and attitudes on which leaders have based their historical action or inaction (the decision not to act is of great historical interest). Leaders tend to construct a mystique about themselves, and in justifying their role to the masses, they come to believe some of the mythology about themselves. Because-like Nixon-many Latin American leaders see

<sup>6</sup> As noted by Senate Republican leader Hugh Scott, quoted in the Santa Monica Evening Outlook, May 7, 1974. According to a Nixon press conference, tape recording began in June, 1970, and was ended at the latest by August 22, 1973 (Los Angeles Times, August 23, 1973); Watergate testimony, however, fixed the secret taping dates as February 1971-July 1973 (Los Angeles Times, November 7, 1974).

<sup>7</sup> An emergent aspect of oral history involves the use of wiretap recordings for interpretation; some governmental wiretapping has been curtailed, however, as in France (see the New York Times, May 30, 1974).

<sup>8</sup> While Nixon is to be congratulated for his historical foresight in attempting to record day-to-day life in which decisions are made, one can only marvel at his massive ego: He recorded for posterity even his burps and "expletives." (The ethical problem of recording conversations without permission of those taking part, of course, suggests the difficulty of replicating the Nixon approach to history.)

<sup>9</sup> These topics are more fully explored in James W. Wilkie, "Postulates of the Oral History Center for Latin America," *Journal of Library History* 2 (1967), 45-55.

their survival in the presidency as identified with national security and development, we must identify elite lore so that we may understand the process of history related to this mystique, a mystique that often may be seen as folklore in the making.<sup>10</sup> It is not enough to know what happened, we must also know what people think happened.

Today's social scientist interested in history has a unique opportunity to help formulate the primary sources that he and scholars of the future need in order to understand more fully the way in which historical decisions are made. The scholar who has studied the past and talked with many historical persons is well prepared to stimulate historical consciousness in the persons he interviews, and by selecting the right questions he can record explanations of events that would otherwise be lost to history.

A model questionnaire was not included in *Elitelore* for various reasons. First, in our conception interviews may best be developed in an open-ended framework, and the presentation of a model tends to constrain the types of questions to which oral historians seek answers. If interviews are open-ended, questions will be generated through dialogue which cannot always be foreseen as the scholar prepares his questions. Rather than present a typical questionnaire in *Elitelore* (thus misleading persons who have not seen how differently an oral history interview may develop in comparison with the ideal listing of consecutive questions), readers were urged to consult *Mexico Visto en el Siglo XX*,<sup>11</sup> a work that shows the various forms the interview may take when discussing the lives and views of seven different leaders on a political spectrum from left to right.

Second, the extended study of the lore of the elite is not necessarily dependent upon asking exactly the same questions of every leader (as is discussed in Appendix A of *Elitelore*). Comparisons may be developed through inferences utilizing the Q-Sort method; in this manner, analysis can be undertaken through implicit meaning of the interview as a whole rather than explicit statements of leaders.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Richard M. Dorson, "History of the Elite and History of the Folk." *Historical Society of Michigan Chronick* 7:4 (1971), 1-19; and Chutes T. Morrissey, "Oral History and the Mythmakers." *Historic Preservation* 16 (1964), 232-237. Dorson's historiographical essay calls for a revisionist approach to U.S. history through studies of folk traditions instead of elitist history. Morrissey's article, which offers the view that the oral historian should seek to combat myth in history, may be contrasted with our view that what people think happens in history is as important as what actually happens, especially, since the former interacts with the latter to influence the course of history. See also Saul Benison, "Oral History and Manuscript Collecting." *Isis* 53 (1963), 113-117, who notes that the recording of prejudices and untruths is often as important as recording what passes for pristine truth. An ideal goal, of course, would be to understand how myth interacts with reality, with a distinction clearly made between these elements.

<sup>11</sup> James W. Wilkie and Edna Monzón de Wilkie, *México Visto en el Siglo XX; Entrevista de Historia Oral: Ramon Beteta, Marte R. Gomez, Manuel Gomez Morin, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Miguel Palomar y Vizcarra, Emilio Pones Gil. Jesus Silva Herzog* (Mexico. D.F.: Instituto Mexicano de Investigaciones Economicas, 1969).

Third experience taught us not to publish a list of questions because an earlier unpublished questionnaire<sup>12</sup> tended to lead those following it into an inflexible pattern of not developing their own questions. In spite of warnings, apparently some scholars found it easier to follow an outline rather than to 'encourage an open-ended discussion tailored to the personal life of the leader interviewed. Because these pitfalls have now been delineated, we think the time has come to develop a questionnaire. By presenting a list of questions of the type with which we' are experimenting in the Latin American Oral History Project,<sup>13</sup> we hope to show a range of queries that can help lead interested scholars to develop explicit as well as implicit analysis in the study of elitelore. Also, the questionnaire presented here is intended to meet the needs of scholars who cannot read our oral history interviews in Spanish.

Although some of our colleagues have suggested that with publication of this first oral history questionnaire we may be laying ourselves open to criticism if the reason for each question is not fully understood by each leader, we believe that this potential problem is outweighed by the need to obtain criticism that may help us to expand the dimensions of elitelore portrayed here. With wider discussion, too, development of theory may also be hastened.

In developing the following questionnaire, note that our basic premise is that leaders are usually comfortable with the interchange and debate concerning their ideas. Not only are they accustomed to giving interviews but also they generally expect to discuss hypotheses and counterhypotheses concerning their actions. Thus, in dealing with elites we need not be as concerned that our questions will lead the person interviewed to a certain answer as we must be with capturing the personage's interest in explaining views and events. This approach is in direct contrast with that of survey researchers who, in interviewing the man in the street, must be greatly concerned with phrasing questions that influence short-answer responses.

Our central problem may be viewed not so much as a matter of phrasing but as one of expanding the range of questions in order to, elicit from the leader as many facets of his life as possible. Pan C below presents particular questions of this type that were incorporated with some success in our 1967 interviews with Francisco Juliao, the Brazilian peasant leader who has been living in exile in Mexico since a military dictatorship took over his country in 1964. The range of questions in parts A and B below (involving life history and societal views, respectively) overlap with pan C (involving kinds of queries useful in obtaining Juliao 's specific life history).

<sup>12</sup> Wilkie, "Oral History of 'Biographical Elitelore' in Latin America."

<sup>13</sup> The Latin America Oral History Project has been supported by the Bancroft Library of the University of California, Berkeley, the Ohio State University, the State University of New York at Buffalo, and the Historical Research Foundation; present operations are based at the UCLA Latin American Center.

**METHODOLOGY**

The following questions offer a rough guide to the range of materials important in oral history. All scholars would not ask the same questions, and interviewers attempting to follow question by question would soon find themselves constricted. Certain queries need to be altered and/or rephrased for every person by the interviewer. Models in the social sciences are helpful, if limiting; therefore, the questions should not be considered model questions but suggestions to stimulate discussion with historical personages.

For every good biographical oral history a scholar completes, he may complete another that is substandard. This statement does not mean that the latter may not yield valuable data. It emphasizes that to obtain better results scholars must approach persons flexibly and adapt the interview to the personage. Not only does the mood of discussion change from interview to interview with the same person, but some historical figures, for example, do not want to talk about childhood and youth: they launch directly into political memoirs. Others do not want to talk about their own political life but tell anecdotes or discuss their attitudes toward history in very unbiographical terms.

The value of the interview may be enhanced if personages read documents, such as letters or speeches, into the recordings in order to save materials that otherwise may be lost to history. Once the document is recorded, questions can be asked about points that need to be clarified, such as the weight to be attached to these materials.

Many questions are interrelated in the following sections. Responses to part A, for example, may obviate the need for particular questions in part C as the interviewee anticipates personal queries with case studies from his own life. Also, if it is not possible to obtain a personal answer, a general approach may be more suitable to elicit a response from which personal experience may be inferred, as in the case of question B24.<sup>14</sup> Some questions may be included to test the inferential nature of responses; thus question AS3 is related to 84. It is often helpful to repeat questions in separate interviews in order to probe subtle meanings or variations in interpretation.

One major element that does not show clearly in the following questionnaire is the intellectual context in which all questions are asked. Often it is necessary to cross the lines between categories of questions in order to ask about logically related personal activities as well as views of national politics. Historical concepts would thus be interrelated in discussion following response to question BI5, especially as related to questions A37 and CI07.

The ability of the scholar to conduct the interview by moving back and forth among life history, views, and specific questions (parts A, B, C, respec-

<sup>14</sup> Our assumption is that the leader draws upon his own experiences as the basic for his generalizations about the nature of man.

tively) is crucial to the success of recording elitelore. Because all questions are founded in specific relations to a leader's life, the need to have conducted extensive research on particular historical personages (and their place in national history) means that the oral life history interview involves much preparation. Thus, although it may appear from glancing at parts A and B that any interviewer may ask such questions, in reality all discussion hinges upon utilizing specific questions (as developed in the part C example) in order to move to more general life history questions (A) and views (B) at the appropriate moment in the discussion. Clearly, the rephrasing and revising of questions will vary not only according to the individual being interviewed but also according to the context in which queries are made. Since some questions may strike the interviewee as incomplete or incomprehensible (or because the questions--let alone the responses--may not have occurred previously to the historical personage), often it is necessary to expand upon a question by placing it into context or by giving examples. Such a question as A86 on dreams and fantasies is delicate; and in our own interviews it is sometimes prefaced by a statement. For example, we may say that the importance of dreams and fantasies became apparent to us in our Costa Rican oral history interviews with Father Benjamin Nunez, leading us to wonder how such aspects of life have influenced the person presently being interviewed. In short, if the meaning or importance of any question presented here is not manifest to the reader, it must not be used until its ramifications have been studied for appropriate introduction and/or modification.

The oral history interview also offers tests for the leader as well as for the investigator. On the one hand, by raising complex questions the researcher may test the mental agility of leaders (as well as their depth of thought about matters of interest to biographers and political sociologists). On the other hand, the interview embodies two serious problems that test scholars. The first arises because scholars may be interested in protecting their own image, which is recorded in the interview along with that of the personage; therefore, it is necessary that they explain that their role often is to play the devil's advocate in order to stimulate discussion by developing various views for the sake of argument. The second problem involves the personage's estimate of the interviewer's knowledge of the history and customs under discussion as well as the latter's capacity for understanding and appreciating details and nuances; therefore, scholars must show their expertise in order to gain full cooperation.

Although anthropologists have recorded interviews from which their words have been omitted in the published version (and in general although they have attempted to observe persons unobtrusively), the recording of biographical elitelore is postulated on the fact that scholars cannot unobtrusively follow elites about and examine their lives. The elite interview has a different form: questions and debate form an integral part of the record and the entire dialogue is important. The elite interview also serves a major function because scholars often act as brokers of information as they move back and

forth between groups which no longer speak with each other because of personal or ideological differences. Here the scholar can bring about indirect confrontation of leaders by noting in conversation with one man that his opponent has told an entirely different account of the same events under discussion.

In the oral history interview with elites there is a fine line between asking too many questions (we have never asked all the questions listed here) and encouraging the personage to reveal himself in his own way, thus permitting scholar and personage to overcome what each may take for granted. Moreover, as Thomas S. Kuhn has suggested,<sup>15</sup> if breakthroughs in knowledge have come through intuition and accident as the scholar systematically works with hypotheses, we must be ever aware of counterhypotheses that can be introduced into oral history interviews. In this manner the oral history document at once provides raw source material and offers a method of analysis wherein through dialogue a synthesis of ideas may take place, ideas which neither the scholar nor the personage may have previously developed. In sum, the following questionnaire<sup>16</sup> is intended not only (a) to encourage the investigator to find out what happened in history and to understand the national historical personage involved, but also (b) to create an open-ended document from which scholars may draw and to which they may add dimensions here not foreseen or developed.<sup>17</sup>

With regard to individual questions, let us note that the inclusion of psychologically based inquiries does not mean that we are psychological determinists. Nor should the inclusion of questions on the world depression of the 1930s, for example, suggest that we are economic determinists. Rather, questions are designed to probe the dimensions of a particular leader's view by jogging his memory or encouraging him to think about the variety of influences on his life.

<sup>15</sup> *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970). That this work shows historians to be "scientific" in spite of a general rejection of close ended hypotheses has not been appreciated by some historians; see David A. Hollinger, "T. S. Kuhn's Theory of Science and its Implications for History," *American Historical Review* 78:2 (1973), 370-393.

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of the practical aspects of recording questions and answers, see James W. Wilkie, "Alternative Views in History: Historical Statistics and Oral History," in Richard E. Greenleaf and Michael C. Meyer, eds., *Research in Mexican History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973), pp. 49-62, especially the notes.

<sup>17</sup> Although psychohistorical aspects of elitelore are included in the questionnaire (some explicitly as in questions A 74 and A91 or implicitly as in questions B 12 and 863), our view here is the same as that expressed in *Elitelore*, p. 10: "While the use of psychohistory, for example, may be viewed as a significant method of research, it does not play a central role in the immediate task of recording the life histories and views of leaders." Regardless of their own unconscious motives, leaders tend to see only their conscious perceptions of self and environment. Thus, we have not added explicitly a host of questions which could be asked of any leader (for example, questions concerning energy levels in relation to periods of indolence, feelings of alienation in relation to persecution, and discussion of lapse of memory in relation to disagreeable events).

A RANGE OF POSSIBLE ELITELORE QUESTIONS<sup>18</sup>

**A. Hypothetical Questions on the General Life History of Latin American Leader**<sup>19</sup>

- A1 Where were you born and when?
- A2 Who were your parents and grandparents and what did they do for a living?
- A3 What is the origin of your name?
- A4 To what social class did your parents belong?
- A5 How much land did they own? How much wealth?
- A6 How many members were there in your family?
- A7 With whom did you play as a child?
- A8 In playing with lower class children, did you feel superior? How did you feel when you played with upper class children?
- A9 Did your parents approve of your playmates?
- A10 What influence did your parents have on your early life?
- A11 What was your religious education?
- A12 What are your first memories?
- A13 Did you live in the country or the city?
- A14 Did you come to know the countryside if you lived in the city, or vice versa?
- A15 Did you have a happy childhood? What were your daily experiences?
- A16 What did you want to become when you grew up?
- A17 Did you ever put your life in danger?
- A18 Do you recall your father talking about politics?
- A19 When and where did you begin school?
- A20 What courses did you study? What incidents stand out?
- A21 Did you travel much in your youth?

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>19</sup> In contrast with the present questionnaire, our concept of the ideal interview involves conducting a creative dialogue which generates unforeseeable lines of inquiry. Discussion may take various turns, yet remain directed toward scholarly goals in an unstructured way: the interviewee may follow a valuable tangent and then be brought back to the thread of original thought by the scholar. In general, broad-spectrum questions in part B are posed after specific biohistorical questions have been developed from parts C and A.

Although this questionnaire might have been divided into topics of inquiry to distinguish between psychological, spiritual, intellectual, political, as well as socioeconomic categories, the organization offered here is intended to distinguish between general and specific questions. In any case, questions presented need to be rephrased or modified according to the personage being interviewed. Deletion and/or addition of questions is advised, and questions should not necessarily be liked in the order given.

- A22 When was the first time you saw the capital of your province or country?
- A23 Do you recall noticing poverty and suffering of the lower classes at an early age, or if you were poor, do you recall noticing differences of wealth?
- A24 When and where did you study during secondary school?
- A25 Do you recall influential teachers?
- A26 What schools did you attend?
- A27 Were you a leader or a follower?
- A28 What did you do during vacations?
- A29 Describe life as you recall it in those days.
- A30 Did you receive much national and world news? How?
- A31 Did you get involved in student politics?
- A32 Did you have much money to spend during your school years?
- A33 What texts did you read? '
- A34 What political books? Marx? Hitler?
- A35 When did you become a politically aware person?
- A36 Who were your friends? Did they also attend the university with you?
- A37 Did you attend the university and did you graduate? What university?
- A38 What courses did you study?
- A39 How did your parents influence you?
- A40 When did your love life begin?
- A41 Did you belong to any clubs or groups?
- A42 When did you become interested in serious politics?
- A43 How were you drawn into political activity? When did you first hold political posts and what were they? Whom did you represent?
- A44 Did your parents and friends object or did they encourage you?
- A45 What was your first job? Trace your career.
- A46 When did your parents die?
- A47 When did you marry? Have you been divorced?
- A48 Whom did you marry and from what background? Have you been happily married?
- A49 How many children have you had and under what circumstances?
- A50 How have you tried to influence your children?
- A51 Do you want your children to follow in your steps?
- A52 What role has your spouse/family played in your life?
- A53 How do you account for your success? Fate? Will? Luck? Accident? Education?
- A54 What has been your social class and income? Have you become wealthy and how?

## Wilkie and Monzon, Ch. 11, Dimensions of Elitelore, Elitelore Varieties

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- A55 Have you ever been pressured by moneyed interests and, if so, how?  
A56 Have you ever received funds from any or all of the following?  
Moscow? Peking? Havana? Washington? (For example, travel funds.)  
A57 What lessons have you learned in life?  
A58 What would you do differently?  
A59 What were your big mistakes? Your big successes?  
A60 Are you a good judge of character?  
A61 Have you been religious?  
A62 Where have you traveled? How have your travels been financed?  
A63 Who are your favorite poets and artists? Do you write poetry? Do you  
paint?  
A64 Do you have other creative talents or abilities? Discuss your writings.  
A65 What books have influenced you? What political philosophers?  
A66 Who have been your favorite authors?  
A67 Do you consider yourself to be an intellectual?  
A68 Who have been your friends and enemies?  
A69 Have you ever been arrested for your political activity?  
A70 How did you organize your political base? What classes supported  
you? What groups have backed you? To what groups have you  
belonged?  
A71 How has your ideology changed over time and why?  
A72 Periodize your life history into significant epochs.  
A73 What have been the turning points in your life?  
A74 Have you been, psychologically happy? (For example, in love and  
work.)  
A75 What illnesses have you suffered? What bad luck has bothered you?  
A76 Have you considered yourself to be a *macho* ("he man")? How do you  
define machismo?  
A77 Have you consciously felt what David C. McClelland has called "the  
need to achieve"?  
A78 What have you considered to be your virtues and vices?  
A79 To what extent have you participated in the following: Smoking?  
Drinking? Dancing? Gambling?  
A80 Has your moment in history passed?  
A81 What events or circumstances have altered or influenced the course of  
your life?  
A82 Have you kept a diary? Kept records/letters?

- A83 With whom have you consulted about preparing your speeches or writings? (This question is aimed at understanding the role of "ghost writers.")
- A84 Has your self-image changed over time?
- A85 Describe yourself at various stages in your life history?
- A86 What have been your worries? Dreams? Fantasies?
- A87 What have been your fears in life?
- A88 How have you defined the "good life"?
- A89 How have you reacted to stress? What have been your relaxations?
- A90 Define your ideal self. Have you lived up to that image? Has it changed?
- A91 Have you ever undergone psychoanalysis?

**B. Hypothetical Questions on Societal Views**

- B1 Should leaders undergo psychoanalysis?
- B2 How have great men differed from ordinary men? What role has the power of will played in politics?
- B3 Who have been your heroes or the persons you would have liked to emulate?
- B4 Which leaders have changed the course of world history? For good or bad? How do you account for their impact?
- B5 Discuss the mannerisms and techniques used by charismatic leaders.
- B6 What have been the historical factors inhibiting your country's development? A lack of good leaders? Or impersonal factors?
- B7 What role does prostitution play in society? Alcohol? Drugs?
- B8 Can society exist in a classless form? Do the workers want to rise in class? Do you believe that a "New Class" is inevitable? Have you read *The New Class* (New York, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires: 1957) by Milovan Djilas?
- B9 Do you have a theory of history? How does your country fit into it? And yourself?
- B10 What is revolution? What is evolution? Has your opinion been consistent?
- B11 Can your country develop with peaceful means or is conflict inevitable? Is history inevitable?
- B12 What groups or persons have controlled your country's development?
- B13 Are the people of your country generally lazy and dishonest? If they had worked harder, would your country have progressed faster? What is the best incentive for work? A82 Have you kept a diary? Kept records/letters?

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- B14 Is there opportunity in your country? Can one get ahead if one works?  
Has the situation changed in your lifetime?
- B15 In your readings of history, what did you decide about the colonial period? About independence? About nineteenth-century politics? How do you periodize your country's history?
- B16 Where is your country coming from economically and politically? (In other words, what progress has your country made and. what changes have taken place?) What is the future of your country?
- B17 Have you changed your mind about the answers to the previous two questions?
- B18 What did you decide that you wanted for your country? When did you decide?
- B19 Is equality of income possible? How have you viewed "work incentives"?
- B20 What has been your opinion of Scandinavian-type socialism?
- B21 Who are your heroes and villains in national history? Have you changed your mind?
- B22 To what political and private groups must one belong in order to succeed in life? In politics?
- B23 Do you feel that man is shaped by events or that he shapes them? Have you ever changed your mind in this respect?
- B24 What happens to men in power? Does their personality change?
- B25 Can corruption be avoided in politics? Should a politician accept favors in order to advance his careers?
- B26 Has one had to accept favors to survive politically in your milieu?
- B21 Given your experience, do you think ideology is important?
- B28 What has been the role of personalism?
- B29 Has the military played a constructive role in politics?
- B30 How did the depression of 1929 affect your country and your particular area? Was it a turning point in history?
- B31 What role has Fascism played in the politics of your country?
- B32 How have you defined Fascism?
- B33 What role has capitalism played in your country? In the world? Has your view changed?
- B34 Define capitalism and mixed capitalism.
- B35 What role has Marxism played in your country and how do you define Marxism?
- B36 What role has socialism played and how have you defined it?
- B37 Did the philosophy of Victor Raul Haya de la Torre or any other political philosopher influence your generation?
- B38 What did you think of Hider and Mussolini? Have you changed your view?
- B39 Did Franklin D. Roosevelt cause the Western Hemisphere to go to war in 1941? If so, why?

- B40 Can the United Nations work? Why did the League of Nations fail?  
What is the role of the less developed nations in the United Nations?
- B41 What has been the role of the Organization of American States?
- B42 What has been the role of the United States in Latin America?
- B43 Have the CIA, KGB, and other foreign intelligence agencies intervened  
in your country's affairs? In other countries?
- B44 Have you ever decided that democracy will not work?
- B45 How have you defined democracy? Is liberalism related to democracy?
- B46 Who caused the cold war?
- B47 Has the Moscow-Peking debate influenced your thinking?
- B48 Do you think a policy of revolution could or should be carried out in  
your country?
- B49 How should society be organized, in your opinion? Is there a "model"  
type of government that you have favored?
- B50 Have you favored private investment in your country?
- B51 Has business earned a fair return on investment in your country?
- B52 Do you believe that the masses have an effective voice in politics? Has  
the situation changed? If the leader acts in the name of the "people,"  
how does he know what they want? Who are the "people" and do they  
have a common interest? What leader(s) in your country represent or  
represented the interests of the people?
- B53 Do you believe that personal political' views are important at the mass  
level? How is this importance manifested? If the masses cannot read and  
write, should they be allowed to vote? Can they vote responsibly if they  
are illiterate?
- B54 What has been the role of the intellectual in your country's history?
- B55 Has the intellectual influenced politics in any concrete cases?
- B56 What has been the influence of positivism in your country's history?
- B57 What should be the goal of education? What has it been?
- B58 What are the most serious problems faced by your country in this  
century and how have they been resolved?
- B59 What would be the best way to solve these problems?
- B60 What groups or individuals have tried to resolve these problems in a  
manner that you have supported?
- B61 What is a reasonable length of time necessary to resolve these  
problems?
- B62 What groups or individuals have opposed your solution to these  
problems?
- B63 How should the opposition be dealt with? How has it been dealt with?

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- B64 Why has the opposition resisted resolution of these problems?
- B65 Will industrialization resolve national problems?
- B66 Can the nations of Latin America compete in the world industrial market?
- B67 Is there land enough for all peasants in your country?
- B68 What role do you see for agriculture when it is faced with unstable production and prices as well as the competition of synthetic products? What has been the role of agricultural production in the USSR?
- B69 What role have the following groups played in your country's recent history: Judges? School teachers? Businessmen? Military men? Policemen? Government functionaries? Radio, T.V., and press commentators? Lawyers? Peasants? Priests? University students? Politicians? Union leaders? Rural and/or urban guerrillas?
- B70 Where has your country stood in relation to political, economic, social, and cultural development in regard to Latin America and the world?
- B71 Do you think that the English language should be taught widely in your schools? To what extent has it influenced your society? Other languages?
- B72 What has been the role of foreign investment in Latin America? .
- B73 Do you believe that foreign investment has involved "decapitalization"?
- B74 Can research in Latin America keep up with research in the more developed world? What are the implications of research or the lack of it?
- B75 What is imperialism? What is "dependency"? Have your views been consistent?
- B76 What examples of imperialism or dependency have you found in Latin American life?
- B77 What has been your view of the Alliance for Progress?
- B78 What has been your view of U.S. aid prior to the Alliance?
- B79 What has been your view of the Peace Corps?
- B80 If you are a Marxist-Leninist, how have you explained the apparent contradiction in the facts that the United States (a) rebuilt capitalism in Western Europe after World War II with Marshall Plan funds, and (b) supported the Bolivian "Marxist-oriented Revolution"? (See J. W. Wilkie, *The Bolivian Revolution and U.S. Aid Since 1952*, UCLA Latin American Studies. Vol. 13, Los Angeles, 1969.) .
- B81 Why has Castro succeeded where Allende failed to stay• in power?

**C. Hypothetical Specific Questions<sup>20</sup> Developed in 1967 for Interview with Francisco Julião<sup>21</sup>**

- C1 Was your life on the plantation in northeastern Brazil as Gilberto Freyre described it in *The Masters and the Slaves*? (Julião suggested this question concerning Freyre's work published in Rio in 1933 and in New York in 1946.)
- C2 What have been your relations with blacks since childhood? Have the relations changed?
- C3 What did you think of the Vargas coup of 1930? Was this your first political interest on the national level?
- C4 How were you affected by the coup?
- C5 Did you take up arms?
- C6 Did you watch closely the acts of the new government?
- C7 What were the crucial policies of the new government?
- C8 Did you approve of the reaction in Sao Paulo or did you know about it?
- C9 What did you think of the "New State"?
- C10 When did you begin to help the peasants with their legal problems?
- C11 As a lawyer for the peasant organizations, did you work for idealism or for money?
- C12 What important cases did you handle? Why did you defend the Prostitutes Union?
- C13 When were the Peasant Leagues actually founded?
- C14 Why did you help them?
- C15 What political aims did they have?
- C16 What was the Vargas policy toward the peasant?
- C17 Did Vargas favor certain groups, in your view?
- C18 How were you affected by World War II in your activities?
- C19 Why did Vargas fall from power after the war?
- C20 Whom did you and your group favor in the presidential election of 1945?
- C21 What was your view of the Dutra government? Was Dutra favorable to your interests or were local politics more important at that time?
- C22 How and why, in your view, could Vargas return to power?

<sup>20</sup> Not necessarily followed in actual course of subsequent interview with Julião.

<sup>21</sup> James W. Wilkie and Edna Monzón de Wilkie (with the assistance of Gabriel Bolaffi, Lyle C. Brown, Warren Dean, and Albert L. Michaels). Oral History Interview with Francisco Julião, Mexico City and Cuernavaca, August-September. 1967.

- C23 How were the interests of the peasants affected between 1951• and 1954 compared with earlier periods?
- C24 Why did Vargas "commit suicide"? What were the powerful forces that might have caused it? Did the United States have a role?
- C25 When did the military begin to act as a major force in Brazilian politics?
- C26 Did you favor the Vargas economic policy? Define it.
- C27 What role did the United States play in the economy of Brazil during the late 1940s and early 1950s?
- C28 What were your relations with the Brazilian Left?
- C29 Did you ever join the Communist Party? Can a nationalist be a Communist?
- C30 When did you become a Marxist? How and why?
- C31 Why did you not join the Socialist Party or the "Democratic Left" if you were a Marxist?
- C32 Whom did you favor for the presidency of Brazil in 1954?
- C33 Did you favor President Kubitschek's policy of "developmentalist nationalism"? Define it.
- C34 What was the effect of inflation in helping to cause the growth of the Peasant Leagues?
- C35 Why did the Peasant Leagues not gain ascendancy until the late 1950s?
- C36 Do you think that Kubitschek favored any certain groups or classes?
- C37 What was your view of the Superintendency of Development of the Northeast? And of its directors (such as Celso Furtado)?
- C38 What was the role of the International Monetary Fund?
- C39 Why did you favor General Lon instead of Janio Quadros in the presidential election of 1960?
- C40 Was not your support of Lon and the military a contradiction in your thought since you favored a government by the masses?
- C41 Why did Quadros resign?
- C42 What was your position in regard to his resignation?
- C43 How many members did your Leagues have by 1960?
- C44 Were you in charge of all of them, or only some of them? Were there struggles for control?
- C45 What organizational structure did you use? How did you finance the Leagues?
- C46 What did you do with the membership fees? For what did you disburse funds? Did you have regular audits?
- C47 How did you communicate with the Leagues outside of your home state of Pernambuco? Describe the Peasant Congresses and their accomplishments.
- C48 What was your program and that of the Leagues?

- C49 As deputy in state and federal legislatures, why did you not introduce any legislation at all? How could the masses make themselves felt if you did not try to help them with laws?
- C50 Did you feel that land should be "invaded" by the landless? How should land reform be carried out? Is land reform feasible in an industrializing society?
- C51 Did you favor expropriation of land with compensation?
- C52 When did you first visit Cuba and why?
- C53 When did you visit China and the Soviet Union? Describe your experiences there.
- C54 Did you not meet with Joao Goulart in Moscow and make a pact to support Quadros in the presidency?
- C55 Do you favor any particular road to socialism such as the Moscow, Peking, or Havana path? What do you think of the Tito model?
- C56 According to Professor Anthony Leeds writing about you in "Brazil and the Myth of Francisco Julião," (Joseph Maier and Richard W. Weatherhead, eds., *Politics and Change in Latin America* [New York: Praeger, 1964], pp. 190-204) you are a false revolutionist who simply is stimulating the masses in order to gain political power. He calls attention to your speech at Ouro Preto which asked Brazilians to die for freedom and then contrasts your letter to the Defense Ministry of April 11, 1962, in which you state, as reprinted in the *New York Times*: If the army does not disarm the landowners of Pernambuco, "the desperate masses will be thrown into an insurrection without a fixed course." Leeds feels that you are using the masses in order to further your career. Would you respond?
- C57 You say that you are not calling for a revolutionary movement, but then why do you call for the people to die for freedom?
- C58 You say that you wish to work within the established system for a revolution, but is this stance not contradictory?
- C59 Did you think that the national congress could make a peaceful revolution in the name of the masses? How did you know what the masses really wanted? Does the leader intuitively know what the masses want?
- C60 According to the *New York Times*, January 23, 1961, you believe that violence is not necessary to win justice for the peasants. Would you expound, defining justice? Did you have to restrain the peasants or are they so traditionally oriented that they do not think of rebellion to gain justice?
- C61 According to the *New York Times* of the same issue, you were a small landowner, but Leeds claims that you were a latifundist. How much property and wealth did you own?
- C62 What must be done to resolve the problems of the Northeast?

- C63 What is the future of agrarianism?
- C64 What problems have you had in your own movement between the goals of the syndicates (which seek higher wages) and the Leagues (which seek land reform)?
- C65 Have you personally gained from this division?
- C66 Is Brazil not as ready for revolution as Cuba was?
- C67 If you are a Marxist, must you not believe in revolution?
- C68 Did not Leonel Brizola use the land reform issue to gain latifundia for himself by scaring the land owners? Does this not represent false leadership of the masses?
- C69 What were your relations with Brizola?
- C70 According to the *New York Times*, you feel that the division of the Galileia Estate was a great example for your movement. What is the example?
- C71 Why did the governor of Pernambuco divide your lands among the people and what was your reaction?
- C72 What role do the masses really play in history? Can they make decisions?
- C73 Are not leaders more important than masses in shaping historical events?
- C74 Did you spell out any particular platform when you ran for local office?
- C75 What was your platform for national office?
- C76 Or did the masses trust your judgment without your having to spell out a complicated ideology or platform?
- C77 According to the *New York Times*, your brother was arrested in the summer of 1962 for guerrilla activities. Were you involved?
- C78 Have you ever been involved in organizing guerrilla activities? Speaking of organizations, what kind of organization did you use in administering the Peasant Leagues?
- C79 How and when did you try to unite the Peasant Leagues with fishermen cooperatives and urban reform? Was this really possible, given the different nature and aims of the groups?
- C80 What are your writings? A novel? Speeches? Have you written with the assistance of advisors?
- C81 To what extent did you support Goulart's presidency?
- C82 What pressures led to his fall?
- C83 Why were you in Brasilia when the military coup took place April I, 1964?
- C84 What role did the United States play? Why?
- C85 Could the coup have taken place without United States support?
- C86 Does not the United States have a right to protect its foreign aid investment and supervise its use?

- C87 What did you do when the coup took place?
- C88 Why did you not call on the Leagues to rebel?
- C89 Describe your flight.
- C90 Please read your letter to your daughter Isabel regarding your flight and term in jail.
- C91 Were you beaten or tortured in jail?
- C92 Why did the government release you?
- C93 How did you flee from Brazil to Mexico?
- C94 What has happened to the Peasant Leagues?
- C95 In light of what has happened in Brazil, do you think that the masses should make a revolution?
- C96 How would you do things differently to avoid your present exile if you had a second chance? .
- C97 What is your impression of life in Mexico and of the Mexican Institutional Revolution?
- C98 What has been your opinion of Carlos Lacerda and Castello Branco?
- C99 How do you live in exile? How much money do you have? What is your income?
- C100 Do you think that inflation can be stopped in Brazil? Or should it be stopped if economic growth will be slowed?
- C101 Do you favor Castro's plan to "overthrow" governments in Latin America?
- C102 Do you have current news of Brazil? If so, how and what?
- C103 What are Brazil's prospects?
- C104 When will you return? When will your twenty-seven-year jail sentence be lifted?
- C105 Why did the Left "collapse so completely" in 1964?
- C106 To what extent was Castello Branco able to change the ethic of Brazilian life?
- C107 In retrospect, how did the different movements of the *tenentes* of Salgado, of Prestes, and of others affect Brazilian history? Do you agree with Celso Furtado's view of Brazil's economic history?
- C108 Is Brazil still struggling with the legacy of Vargas as Argentina has struggled with the legacy of Peron?
- C109 What is the legacy of Vargas? Of Peron?
- C110 Is April 1, 1964, a watershed in Brazilian history, or simply another phase in the complicated politics of the post-Vargas era?
- C111 Given Brazil's problems since independence. is democracy possible? Is political violence likely?
- C112 In our view, the question in Latin America is not "When will revolution come?" but "Why has it not come?" What do you think?
- C113 What are your personal prospects and plans?

## APPENDIX

Sources for the development of oral life-history interviews include (a) those which involve the problem of preparing the questions themselves and (b) those which involve the problem of deciding which questions to ask. Since we are not concerned with the former, suffice it to say that the reader may consult such works as Stephen A. Richardson et al., *interviewing: Its Forms and Functions* (New York: Basic Books, 1965); Robert K. Merton et al., *The Focused Interview* (Glencoe, III.: Free Press, 1965); and other works cited in Elitelore. In any case wording of elite-oriented questions-ignored by most works on interviewing presumably because most questionnaires have been "administered" to the masses who ;ft sensitive to "yes or no" questions<sup>22</sup> -must be rephrased and revised depending upon the leader being interviewed, yeasaying or naysaying not being a factor.

The bulk of the questions listed have been generated by the Latin American Oral History Project in Mexico, Bolivia, and Costa Rica. Because discussion cannot be "administered" and because Latin American leaders themselves have contributed to the development of questions, the queries presented here represent ( 1) a summary of cross-cultural common sense about what kinds of questions help us to understand leaders and (2) a distillation of the kinds of questions with which we have experimented over time.

Ideas have been also adopted from a number of studies, works ranging from the macrolevel (such as David C. McClelland's *The Achieving Society* [New York: Free Press, 1967]) to the microlevel (such as Jorge Balán, Harley L. Browning, and Elizabeth Jelin, (with Lee Littler), "EI Uso de Historias Vitales en Encuestas y su Analisis Mediante Computadoras," in Jorge Balán, ed., *Las Historias de Vida en Ciencias Sociales: Teoría y Técnica* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Vision, 1974),67-85, with Appendix by Balán, 87-91-a work evolving into their volume. entitled *Men in a Developing Society: Geography and Social Mobility in Monterrey, Mexico* [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973]).

Some specific questions (for example, items B58-B69) are adapted from Frank Bonilla et al., "Guia del Entrvistador; Estudio del Liderazgo," mimeographed, (Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1963)-a work which formed the basis for Bonilla, *The Failure of Elites* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1970) and Bonilla and Jose A. Silva Michelena, eds., *A Strategy of Research on Social Policy* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press. 1967).

Other questions listed throughout have been derived from consultation with Professor Kenneth H. Craik of the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research of the University of California, Berkeley. Of special interest for the generation of questions is Harrison G. Gough's *Inventario Psicologico*, a

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., Arthur Couch and Kenneth Keniston, "Yeasayers and Naysayen: Agreeing Response as a Personality Variable," *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 60:2 (1960), 151-174.

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translation of his California Psychological Inventory; this work has been tested in Dr. Gough's "Cross-Cultural Validation of a Measure of Asocial Behavior," *Psychological Reports* 17 (1965), 379-387. See also Donald W. MacKinnon. "Creativity and Images of the Self," in Robert W. White, *The Study of Lives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 251-278. In acknowledging gratitude to Dr. Craik, it should be noted that the questions here remain our responsibility.

With regard to questions to be developed from a psychological viewpoint the reader may wish to consult the works of Henry A. Murray: *Explorations in Personality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938) and *Myth and Mythmaking* (New York: Braziller, 1960), for example. See also Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry A. Murray, *Personality in Nature, Society, and Culture*, 2d ed. (New York: Knopf, 1967), especially Raymond Bauer's article "The Psychology of the Soviet Middle Elite: Two Case Histories," 633-650.

On the idea of self concept, see such works as the following: Kenneth J. Gergen, *The Concept of Self* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971); John E. Horrock and D. W. Jackson, *Self and Role* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972); and Ruth C. Wylie, *The Self-Concept*, 2 vols. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974-). "The problem of consistency also is taken up in two suggestive studies: Prescott Lecky, *Self-Consistency: A Theory of Personality* (New York: Island Press Co-operative, 1951); and Charles C. Anderson, "The Many Voices: A Preliminary Investigation in the Consistency of Self Concept," *Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 5: 1 (1959), 7-15. Such studies suggest that individuals are likely not only to seek and select experiences that are in keeping with their self image but also to resist and reject experiences that go counter to that image.

With regard to images created by varying societal vantage points, the reader should see the suggestive work of Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971). Another valuable work is Kenneth E. Boulding, *The Image* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956).

For political questions, one may consult such works as Myron Weiner, "Political Interviewing," in Frank Ward et al., *Studying Politics Abroad: Field Research in the Developing Areas* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964), 103-133; Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965); and Seymour Martin Lipset and Aida Solari, eds., *Elites in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). On the language of politics and definitions of meaning in specific historical and spatial contexts, see John E. Agard, *Essays on Political Thought and History* (New York: Atheneum, 1971).

In sum, the source material for expanding any oral history questionnaire is endless. Sources presented here are intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive.