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Elitelore and Folklore: Theory and a Test Case in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

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Concepts of elitelore and folklore are developed here to advance theory about lore as it is reflected in the relationship between oral and written images.[1] Although lore of the folk (or people) has been the subject of theoretical analysis, it has been little examined in relation to its interaction with the lore of the elite.[2] We argue here that written and spoken forms of lore exist among the elite as well as among the folk and that the interaction of these forms shapes beliefs of elites and masses in ways that hitherto have not been explicitly addressed by social science.

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[1] For more on these concepts, see James W. Wilkie, *Elitelore* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications. 1973). See also Maria Herrera-Sobek. *The Bracero Experience: Elitelore versus Folklore* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications. 1979): and James W. Wilkie and Edna Monzón de Wilkie. "Dimensions of Elitelore: An Oral History Questionnaire," *Journal of Latin American Lore* 1:1 (1975).79-101.

[2] For an important statement on the science of folklore and literature, see Munro S. Edmonson. Lon (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 1971). Advancing upon somewhat parallel lines to the work of James Wilkie. Edmonson relates patterns in lore of the the

Analysis in Part I concerns the theory of the relationship between elitelore and folklore. Part II involves the application of theory in a case study that examines meaning in Gabriel García Márquez's novel about village life in "Macondo." The anthropological study of village life in "Aritama" by Gerardo and Alicia, Reichel-Dolmatoff is used here to test Garda Márquez's view. [3] Macondo and Aritama are pseudonyms for two

people (which he finds in preliterature, speech, plays, and style) to lore of-implicitly-the "elite" (which he finds.. great comparative literature). For an innovative approach to lore as seen in superstition, see Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1976). Weber uses lore (among other sources such as data on literacy, schools and schooling, military service, crime, taxation, elections, migration, road building, etc.) to show how the passing of traditional rites and popular culture gave rise to the modem French nation. According to Weber (p. 495): "From the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, high and low cultures agreed on the fundamental interpretation of the world and of life. Literacy or illiteracy made little difference to people's understanding of the condition of man, his purpose and his means. Knowledge varied in degree but not in kind. In the seventeenth century things changed. Natural science and rationalism with its particular logic created a separate culture of the literate, while the illiterate clung to the old days. The relative cultural unity of Western society … as dissolved, and people henceforth lived in two different worlds of the mind. Coherent religious theories of life that had been accepted by most educated members of the community became, survivals-superstitions-no longer compatible with the scientific principles of the time. Correspondences and analogies that made sense in one system seemed childish and futile to the other. What had been common sense... as forsaken by those… ho pursued higher wisdom and became the province of those who regulated their existence by the seasons and the stars. Deprived of the support of elite thought, popular belief broke into a thousand subsystems unintegrated into a comprehensive view of the world. Popular wisdom was bitsy-a collection of recipes, ceremonies, rituals-and popular religion was little more. Yet both were crucial, providing believers with things people badly need: explanations, a sense of control, reassurance, a framework for individual and social activities. From the cultivated point of view, popular culture was a morass of deprivation and ignorance. So was it from the point of view of its own most gifted spirits, those who yearned in vain for truths this culture could not teach them. Much popular magic and religion-and some rejection of both-reflected a persistent quest for just such truths... When, after about 1800, the gap began to narrow, it was thanks in large part to the rural world's increasing intercourse with the urban world. But material circumstances were crucial: increasingly effective control of the environment opened the door to urban views suggested by like experience. The more sophisticated people of the city believed, and in time demonstrated to the satisfaction of more and more peasants, that the world could be explained without evoking magic or supernatural intervention. The rural convert to rationalism could throwaway his ragbag of traditional contrivances, dodges in an unequal battle just to stay alive, with the heady conviction that, far from being a helpless witness of natural processes, he was himself an agent of change."

[3] See García Márquez's *Cien Años de Soledad* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 1967). translated in English as *One Hundred of Solitude*. by Gregory Rabassa (New York: Avon Books. 1971 l: and Alicia Reichel-Dolmatoff and Gerardo Reichel-Doimatoff. *The People of Aritama: The Cultural Personality of a Colombia" Mestizo Village* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1961).

villages in the same area of northeastern Colombia.[4] The case study also shows that the literature and oral history of García Márquez can be tested against each other.[5] The reader should note that because the case study presented in Part II comprises only one aspect of theory offered in Part I. some of the discussion in the latter does not apply specifically to the former.

In treating the interplay of written and oral images as involving the "lore" of the elite as well as the nonelite in society, it should be noted at the outset that the elite may be hostile to the concept of elitelore. The idea of elitelore suggests that leaders do not espouse truth (as they have generally thought); instead, leaders have their own lore (a lore not directly shared by the folk) that can be examined for self-myth, customs, accumulated "wisdom." Legend, and tradition which influence self-perception of past, present, and future-in short, lore that elites previously believed to exist only among popular sectors of society.

I. Theory

Definitions

Lore is defined as noninstitutionalized knowledge (seen in elitelore (found in conceptual and perceptual information and views manipulated by unique individuals to justify leadership wherein they retain or change the life situation of their followers) and folklore (found in its traditional or popular sense, especially to explain one's situation in life).

Elitelore involves the .following elements which mayor may not coexist with each other: first, self-perception and self-deception to justify the role of leadership; second, incomplete information Systems based upon

[4] Although Aritama and Macondo are not precisely the same place nor are they depicted at the same time, and although the Reichel-Dolmaloffs could not have set out to test ideas in García Márquez's book which had not yet been written, the two villages are close enough for comparison. What is important is that anthropological and novelistic views were selected by their authors to show life in an isolated village in the same area in Colombia's northeast region. Both villages lie under the Santa Marta mountain mass: Macondo borders the woods, fields, pastures, and marshlands of the Ciénega de Santa Marta Lagoon on one side of the 19,000-foot peaks and Aritama lies in a narrow, hidden valley fanned by a small affluent of one of the larger rivers whose headwaters are on another side of the mountains. Despite some difference in altitude and occupation between the villages under discussion here, we have been told by Gerardo Reichet-Dolmatoff that the people of Macondo and Aritama are essentially the same, regional similarities tending to overcome local peculiarities.

[5] Until recent years some of the scholarly elite rejected the idea that oral history could be classified as "history" because history could only involve written records. For an early attempt to overcome such a narrow view, see discussion in Caroline F. Ware. Ed., *The Cultural Approach to History* (New York: Columbia University Press. 1940).

self- serving or selective knowledge; third, ego-protection in order that activity is not obstructed by self-doubt or the realization that selfish and altruistic goals may alternate as well as coincide; fourth, construction of public myth that will live beyond the aspirations attainable in the course of man's short life-span; and fifth, the subservience of material power to political and intellectual power, especially at the national level. If politicians may stress more selfish motives, literary elites may stress more altruistic motives.

Psychohistory should not be confused with elitelore. The latter is consciously or half-consciously constructed as part of a life history framework replete with contradictions, incompatible ideas never posited against each other, and a tendency to see "errors" in terms of "learning experiences," Psychohistory, in contrast, concerns unconscious patterns not readily visible to the protagonist. Although elitelore can be used to develop psychohistorical explanations, that is not our purpose. Rather, we are interested in analyzing the way in which leaders think about known components involved in convincing people to follow them (especially if a politician) or to espouse a "just cause" (especially if an intellectual) and we are interested in using such analysis to help explain how and why history takes the course it does.[6] A major tenet of elitelore is the idea that leaders do not so much feel that they do not understand themselves as that they feel misunderstood because they seldom have the chance to be heard out completely. Thus participation in oral history programs does not pose any overt threat to leaders, owing to their general belief that they can convert their interviewers (and later the audiences) to "see the light" by the simple expedient of giving their complete view never before told with all its subtleties and ramifications.

Elitelore can be contrasted with ideology in different ways. Whereas ideology concerns systematic thought about the organization of society, elitelore concerns relatively unsystematic thought about the role of self related to society. Whereas ideology is generally couched in rational

[6] Hegel's comments on psychology and history are quite insightful: "The pragmatic historian fancies himself justified and even obliged to trace the supposed secret motives that lie behind the open facts of the record. . . . To make these pragmatical researches in history easier, it is usual to recommend the study of psychology, which is supposed to make us acquainted with the real motives of human actions.... A pragmatical psychology ought at least to leave the historian, who investigates the motives at the ground of great actions, a choice between the 'substantial' interests of patriotism, justice, religious truth and the like, on the one hand, and the subjective and 'formal' interests of vanity, ambition, avarice and the like, on the other.... If the heroes of history had been actuated by subjective and formal interests alone, they would never have accomplished what they haft." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. *Logic: Being Part One of the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Science [1830],* trans. W. Wallace (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1975). p.140

terms, it is rooted in the elitelore of the authors. If ideology involves conscious choice of myth and symbol to represent the "true path," elitelore, for example, involves the conscious and half-conscious emulation t of traits that show strength of leadership, including appropriate tone of voice, mannerisms, style of dress, and so on. Although ideology has I been equated with world view, such a relationship is misleading because world view generally represents a relatively fixed set of wide-ranging orientations to life developed passively at an early age.[7] Thus world view is a concept complementary to folklore rather than elitelore.

Folklore, contrasted with elitetore, embodies the following elements: self-perception and self-deception about role in events and forces explain the "predicament of life"; tradition and custom justify the lot of the people, especially in relation to the actions of leaders who, for example, tax the masses and send them to war for causes: possibilities for self development in the course of one's life seem to be prescribed by certain boundaries and limits: the "fruits of life" are seen to be preceded by suffering and often must be postponed indefinitely, perhaps even until the "next life"; accumulated rules give "stability" and "meaning" to lives that might otherwise seem pointless: life is preoccupied with earning a living and satisfying physical needs, for example, food and sex (and often. drink) dominate the lives of the poor; questioning of the accepted order and of leaders is limited.

To go beyond the idea that the leader leads and the follower follows at all levels of society, we can say that the leader makes up and changes the rules for the follower who plays the, game of life. The leader says, "it is necessary because that is policy." The populace rarely responds, "then let us change the policy." Leaders who speak in the name of the masses to make a "revolution" (complete change of rules) generally are disappointed to find that the masses are comfortable with "tradition" (the old rules) because relearning is unnecessary and new rules may leave them with less than they had under the old rules.[8]

[7] Note that *Weltanschauung* (philosophy of life) represents a passive mode in English but an active one in German.

[8] One exception to this statement concerns the role of new university-educated groups from the lower and middle classes, who learned at the end of the 1960s that if university degree requirements and grading standards could easily be changed, so then might the rules of the society, be it in Mexico, France, Japan, or the United States. Thus many old rules have been challenged in the United States in the 1970s while at the same time new rules may be difficult to formulate because the number of voices to be heard and reconciled apparently overwhelms existing problem-solving systems. Yet "power to the people" has meant also that an expanded old elite is necessary to manage conflict and consensus in order to arrive at new policies wherein regulation of society becomes ever· more bureaucratic: Consequently, the United States seems well on its way to adopting the kind of Latin American legal codes wherein every meaning and detail of the law is spelled

Levels of Lore

The terms "elitelore" and "folklore" may both be used in several ways, depending upon context:

1. to mean the field of inquiry:
2. to mean the method, especially pertaining to oral history:
3. to suggest a biographical aspect of inquiry:
4. to suggest vertical linkage within each lore:
   a. in terms of generalized and particularized analysis,
   b. in terms of elites at all levels of society on a continuum from national to local levels, and
   c. in terms of genres derived from elitelore and folklore:
5. to suggest interplay between elitelore and folklore.

With regard to the first three items, we may say, for example, that elitelore involves (1) examining the lore of the elite through (2) elitelore research (such as interviewing) about (3) life histories. Furthermore, extended elitelore analysis makes use of written materials and topical (in contrast to biographical) investigation. The same process is true of folklore.

In terms of vertical linkage, *(4a)* generalization from cases of individual elitelore and individual folklore (or popularlore)[9] yields typologies found in collective elitelore and collective folklore, respectively, as shown in Table 1, each involving, in turn, such approaches as aggregate analysis of individual psychological tests or composite biography.[10] Moreover, *(4b)* we see elites among all groups, for example, political elites such as presidents at the national level, economic elites such as labor leaders at the local level, religious elites such as priest-shamans at the Indian tribal level;[11] *(4c)* we see the genres through which elitelore and folklore are originated in Table 2: only the oral and written genres are discussed below in detailed case studies.

With regard to interplay of lores, (5) leaders may incorporate the lore of the people into their own lore in order to develop the folksy qualities needed to win followers. Too, they may unknowingly create

out in greater length than any sensible person would have thought possible. Irony is found in the face that the law which sees out to save the people becomes so complicated that it is meaningless except to those who can afford its necessary interpreters- a lawyer elite.

[9] See Wilkie. *Elitelore*. Appendix A. entitled "The Extended Study of Elitelore."

[10] Because of the various usages of the term "elitelore," if is often necessary to qualify its meaning, for example, as being biographical in nature.

[11] Thus the fields of elitelore and folklore both include the subfield of Indianlore. See the article by Johannes Wilbert on Indian elitelore. "The Metaphoric Snare: The Analysis of a Warao Folktale," *Journal of Latin American Lore* 1:1 (1975). 7-17.

Table 1
Levels of Lore According to Origin

LEVEL OF ANALYSIS	FOLKLORE	ELITELORE
Generalized	Collective folklore	Collective elitelore[b]
Particularized	Individual folklore[a]	Individual elitelore

a In Wilkie and Monzón de Wilkie. "Dimensions of Elitelore." Table 1, the term used is "popularlore."
b In bid.. the term used is "Leaderlore."

Table 2
Genres Originated in Elitelore and Folklore

ELITELORE	FOLKLORE
Literature	Oral history (including tales, sayings, gossip,
Cinema[a]	etc.)
Behavioral mannerisms (including carriage,	Ballads and songs
apparence, dress., Etc.)	Ceremonies, rituals and games
	Behavioral mannerisms.

[a] Although, for example, cinemalore is originated by cultural elites, it also interacts with and influences folklore in general and other types of elitelore: see Daniel I. Geffner and James W. Wilkie. "Cinematore: State of Siege as a Case Study." Journal of Latin American Lore 2:2 (1976), 221-238.

lore to be consumed by the people or reinterpret folklore for explicit or implicit purposes of control. [12] And as leaders selectively assimilate folklore to communicate with each other about mass needs and desires, they may distort the lore, with the new version itself becoming gradually accepted by the people, who have no way at hand at articulate effectively their views.

[12] For analysis of unknowing creation of lore through misunderstanding of language by scholars from one culture .who attempt to study another one, see Américo Paredes. "On Ethnographic Work among Minority Groups:" *New Scholar* 6 (I977), I-32. In this otherwise insightful article, Paredes argues that "truth" is simple: for example, if a son's image of a stern and domineering father is tested to find the reality of a warm and affectionate one, then the latter obviates the "truth" of the former: Paredes apparently does not realize that the image may be just as important as the reality. For examination of reinterpretation of lore to achieve social control, see Christa Kamenetsky. "Folktale and Ideology in the Third Reich:' *Journal of American Folklore* 90 (I 977). 168-178. Kamenetsky.

Several correlative statements are necessary to help the reader avoid some basic misunderstandings:

1. Some "leftists" have criticized the theory of elitelore without having read it because they "oppose elitism"!
2. Some critics of the elitelore theory, who evidently have not read the theoretical postulates clearly, have argued that there is less need to study the elite than to study the forgotten masses, including leaders at the local level (whom we also consider to be elite).
3. Some readers have not fully realized that we need to distinguish between *(a)* aggregate analysis (in collective elitelore and collective folklore) and *(b)* the importance of individual cases (in individual elitelore and individual folklore) previously thought to involve only "idiosyncratic ramble"; and that we need to distinguish between (;) lore of the elite held only by elites and (;;) lore of the folk held by both elites and followers.
4. Some readers have not well understood that folklore is not only found in rural and urban areas (contrary to Robert Redfield's influential notion that the "folk" and thus folklore are found only in rural areas) but that elitelore, too, is an urban, as well as a rural, phenomenon.

Needless to say, the first point is absurd: even if elitelore theory dealt only with elites, one would think that rather than disregarding it at the outset, any serious ideologist would try to understand the nature of his adversary in order to gain an advantage. Perhaps, too, the notion that the forgotten masses are more in need of study than leaders are stems from the Marxist idea that the masses in history are more important than the so-called leaders who, thrust forward and pressured by social movements, only appear to lead. Or some students of the masses would argue that the story of leaders has been overdone, at the expense of the people for whom the leaders act. Nevertheless, even a cursory survey shows that the major part of the contemporary literature deals with the oral accounts of the common man, often recorded by anthropologists.

writes: "Ironically, the new folktale interpretation (by the Third Reich] achieved the very opposite of what it officially set out to do. While transforming the folktale into a stale product of Socialist Realism, it served it from its genuine connection with the living folk tradition, thus stifling its growth and cream, development. Finally, the folktale was no longer a true reflection of the common-peasant folk, but only a medium for the Nazi ideology, and a mouthpiece of racial propaganda." See also W. E. Simeone, "Fascists and Folklorists in Italy." *Journal of America" Folklore* 91 (1978).545-557.

It is necessary, in any case, to examine the interplay of lore between elites and masses at the individual level as well as the level of generalization. The recording of particular elitelore and folklore helps us to appreciate the wealth of detail and variation suppressed at the typological level.[13] With regard to the last point in our list of misunderstandings, Redfield's influential view of the 1930s gradually has declined in academia since the 1950s when anthropologist George Foster, in summarizing Oscar Lewis's work, wrote that "large segments of urban population are more typically folk than anything else."[14] We add that popular culture also blends into the culture of the aspiring and established middle sectors, both heavily influenced by the impact of mass media, as in the case of the battery-operated transistor radio which has extended the boundaries of mass culture to areas not served by electricity.

Oral History and Social Myth

For clarification of levels in lore, it is important to discuss the role of oral history, beginning with two misinterpretations. First, one critic has implied that the oral history aspect of lore is not really oral if its chief means of transmission are transcription and publication.[15] This view mistakes transcribed statements for formal written argument. The transcript, even if edited to achieve appropriate translation of spoken ideas into a written form that captures the essence of the original emphasis, intonation, and empathy, still retains what Jesus Silva Herzog has called the spontaneity and defects in organization of language that are inevitable because of improvisation in the spoken format.[16] It is important to remember that formal written argument tends to progress logically from point A to point Z in contrast to spoken thoughts, which may start at point X and move to A before arriving at Z.

Second, one reviewer of James Wilkie's *Elitelore* has concluded that such lore is found only in oral history interviews.[17] Confusion here could

[13] For example, at the general level all men are men, but at, the particular level it is crucially clear that there are women as well as men.

[14] Quoted in Wilkie. *Elitelore*, p. 77.

[15] Roderic A. Camp. "Review of *Elitelore*," *New Scholar* 5:1 (1975). 198-200.

[16] Jesús Silva Herzog. "Aclaración Necesaria," in James W. Wilkie and Edna Monzón de Wilkie. *México Visto e" el Siglo XX: Entrevistas de Historia Oral: Ramón Beteta. Marte R. Gómez. Manuel Gómez Morín. Vicente Lombardo Toledano. Miguel Palomar y Vizcarra. Emilio Portes Gil. Jesús Silva Herzog* (México. D.F.: Distributed by Cuademos Americanos for the Instituto Mexicano de Investigaciones Económicas. 1969). p. 19.

[17] Richard N. Adams."Review of Elitelore," *American Anthropologist* 77 (975), 366-367.

probably have been avoided had *Elitelore* emphasized that the oral history interview offers only one especially useful way of understanding the role of the leader. Because *Elitelore* does- not posit alternatives to the interview other than an indirect analysis of lore in literature, elitelore indeed may apparently seem limited.

Too, at the time the basic statement was written President Nixon's audaciously conceived tape recordings of daily conversations and decisions in the White House had not yet come to light. President Nixon alerted academicians to the question of the meaning of documents in oral history. Although Nixon has been condemned harshly for his actions as an "oral historian" who conducted his interviews without the knowledge of most of those with whom he conversed, we still can say (if tongue in cheek) that he merits nomination for the title "oral historian of the 1970s." Had Nixon's cache of tapes not been uncovered until the year 2074 instead of 1974, his place in history probably would have been that of a man of great historical vision who recognized the need to provide major documented oral discussion of policy matters (even if he never realized that on tape his performance often was that of a henchman deferring to his fellow plotters, not that of a leader at all); but, owing to circumstances of timing, he emerged in history as a simple "crook" who did not have the foresight to burn his tapes.

The Wilkies developed this view of Nixon's tape recordings during the First Brazilian Oral History Course, conducted in Rio de Janeiro, July 1975.[18] They took the position that oral history does not have to be recorded or written by a professional historian, as their fellow visiting professor, Eugenia Meyer, from Mexico, argued. Thus the Wilkies contended that oral history includes (1) oral accounts about the past told within or outside of the interview format, and (2) oral accounts surviving from the past, however recorded.[19]

Oral history is of major import to the masses, especially in developing areas like Latin America where the mean rate of illiteracy for twenty countries is 30 percent. As Table 3 shows, Latin American illiteracy in

[18] The course, organized by Professor George P. Browne, was conducted at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, under the sponsorship of the Comissâo Brasileira de Doeumentacâo das Ciencias Sociais, with funding provided by the Ford Foundation, the Brazilian National Library, and the Centro de Pesquisa e Documentačao em Historia Contemporânea of the Vargas Foundation.

[19] Students in the Rio de Janeiro course (professors themselves and some directors of oral history programs) were especially interested in the Nixon tapes because Brazil had experienced a contemporary scandal in the "Caso Moreno." wherein a senator, secretly recorded by an industrialist, unknowingly revealed himself to be a solicitor of bribes to facilitate the opening of industrial plants. Political ramifications of the case were complex. On the one hand, some observers viewed the case as an attempt by the military dictator· ship to discredit politicians, who, in order to fight the dictatorship, "had to support" the

Table 3
National Percentages of Latin America Illiterates
(Age 15 and Over 1970)

COUNTRY	PERCENT
TOTAL	30[a]
Haiti	76
Bolivia	60
Guatemala	55
Honduras	43
EI Salvador	42
Nicaragua	40
Dominican Republic	30
Venezuela	30
Brazil	29
Peru	29
Ecuador	27
México	27
Colombia	22
Paraguay	22
Panama	17
Chile	11
Costa Rica	11
Uruguay	7
Argentina	6
Cuba	4

a Arithmetic mean, regardless of size of population in each country.

Source: James W. Wilkie and Peter Reich. Eds., *Statistical Abstract of Latin America,* vol. 19 (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1978. table 1000.

1970 ranged from 76 percent to over 10 percent for all but three countries. Because many persons must rely on spoken rather than' written forms of communication, clearly any oral record must be considered as a historical document, including, for example, speeches (taped or printed) as well as interviews. Such "documents" constitute important sources for those who would analyze how leaders and masses (either of whom may be illiterate) communicate with each other.

The oral history interview is an effective way to examine the reasoning behind speeches (or formal written argument) because the interviewer

Brazilian Senate's judgment finding the senator not guilty as charged. On the other hand, failure of the Senate to find one of its members guilty of a widely publicized crime (in which the tapes proving the case were publicly aired) gave the military an excuse to strip the senator in question of his political standing and rights. See "Wilson Campos e as Conseqüencias Políticas de Sua Cassacâo," *Fatos e Fotos* (Brasilia), July 14, 1975,4-9.

can probe the boundaries of the leader's perception and conception of issues involved. But this is not always possible to do directly, as in the case of journalistically recorded oral history documents in which the interviewer does not know enough to probe deeply. Yet even superficial interviews can be contrasted with one another or with speeches and other documents, as in the individual elitelore case of the two book-length interviews with Fidel Castro and the many volumes of his speeches.[20] And at the folklore level, interviews that cannot focus too overtly on political matters may still be used to infer attitudes about the elite whose views are known through speeches, as in the case of Oscar Lewis's interviews with the common people of the Cuban Revolution.[21]

Interviews conducted for specific purposes. even if (or perhaps because) they involve propaganda, can be especially suitable for analyzing lore and its result in social myth, as, for example, the published "testimony" of Domitila Barrios about her life as a woman of the mines of Bolivia. Although her view could appear to be formulated mainly as feminist propaganda growing out of the U.N. International Women's Forum held in Mexico City in 1975, such is not the case.[22] If her expression shifts from that of a functional illiterate to that of a very articulate ideologist, giving the idea of a fabricated story, close reading of the ideological portions reveals that an innately intelligent Domitila had learned a few Marxist viewpoints which she parrots over and over again without a thorough understanding of political economy of the history of her country. Words have indeed been put into her mouth, not by her interviewer, but by Bolivian miner folklore about development, with social myth advocating a simple "social revolution" for complex problems.

[20] For interviews, see Lee Lockwood, *Castro's Cuba, Cuba's Fidel* (New York: Vintage, 1%9); and Frank Mankiewicz and Kirby Jones, With Fidel (New York: Ba1lantine. 1975). For speeches, see, for example, Martin Kenner and James Petras, eds., *Fidel Castro Speaks* (New York: Grove Press. 1969).

[21] Oscar Lewis, Ruth M. Lewis, and Susan M. Rigdon, *Four Men: Living the Revolution, An only History of Contemporary Cuba* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1977). *Four Women and Neighbors*, by the same authors, extend this oral history research into other aspects of Cuban life.

[22] About the Forum, Domitila says: "My *compañera* and I left because there were hundreds of prostitutes gathered there to discuss their problems. And we went to another place where we heard lesbians announce that 'they were happy and proud to love another woman . . . that they should fight for their rights…" and such. Those were not my interests and it seemed incomprehensible to me that so much money be spent to discuss those things in the Forum... I had left my *compañero*, with seven children and having to work each day in the mines… to let people know Bolivia's suffering... [not] to bear that man is the enemy, man starts wars, man builds nuclear arms, men beat women..." See Moema Viezzer, *'Si Me permiten Hablar... 'Testimonio de Domitila. Una Mujer de las Minas de Bolivia* (México. D.F.: Siglo XXI. 1977). pp. 220-221.

Social myth resulting from U.S. lore about the "dangers of communism" has been investigated by Graham Allison in his *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis.* Utilizing interviews, congressional testimony, and published accounts and records. Allison shows how the interaction of elitelore at various levels both impeded and helped President John F. Kennedy in his showdown with the Soviet Union in October 1962. JFK's own cold war inclinations were buttressed and influenced by the collective struggle among his advisors over connotative and denotative meanings of such military terms as "surgical air strike." The United States was saved from a blundering air strike by civilian realization that although the idea of "surgery" denoted a swift, clean, fully successful military operation to wipe out the missiles in a matter of minutes, the military's idea of the mission involved 500 sorties with only 90 percent certainty of complete success. Ironically, the military view was ill-conceived because it classified the missiles as mobile when they were not, thus helping to save the civilians from a "swift" air strike with long-term repercussions. In the end, too, the blockade approach of the Kennedy administration could have failed because navy "standard operating procedure" (i.e., navy lore) meant that defense of the blockade was more important than drawing it closer to Cuba and giving the Russians more time to reflect about the danger of running the line-the navy simply ignored JFK's orders to move the blockade.[23] Only with news media and with propaganda was JFK relatively successful. The U.S. popular fear of communism rested on a body of elite historical information (and misinformation) sufficiently strong to guarantee that the governmental elite could generate and justify almost any decision chosen to confront the" crisis."

Connotative and Denotative Meanings in Lore

One key to analyzing lore is found in differing denotative and connotative meanings of language or behavior. With regard to language, Munro S. Edmonson has written that denotative differs communicatively from connotative in that denotative meanings, whether idiosyncratic or cultural, share an empirical basis in sensory experience and a characteristically logical association of elements, whereas connotative meanings are conventional rather than empirical and are -freely--associative or analogical rather than logical. Connotative meanings that constitute a lore arise in patterns held in common by populations with intensively shared history, and the resulting lore is translatable only 'when we possess

[23] See Graham T. Allison. *Essence of Decision: Explaining tile Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown. 1971). pp. 124 and 202 on air strike; and pp. 129-130 and 309, n.123, on blockade.

the experiential key. Edmonson notes that often connotative meanings are intentionally obscure or even secret: the young knights of the high Middle Ages elaborated an almost codelike slang for describing the ritual hunting that was the prerogative of their class; and a similar elite language was found in heraldry.[24]

At the level of the Indian tribe, Johannes Wilbert has described the use of metaphor in the elite language separating leaders and followers among the Warao of western Venezuela:

> The use of metaphoric language among the Warao is largely restricted to the social and religious elite of the tribe. They either choose archaic words, no longer in common use, or modify the current lexicon "by adding, suppressing or substituting letters, syllables, or even words with or without semantic meaning." On special occasions priest-shamans, in trance or not, chant texts that are totally unintelligible. A master craftsman of canoes punctuates the different phases of the manufacturing process with chants addressed to supernatural beings-chants very rich in metaphors. And chiefs are prone to resort to use connotative language when each morning before sunrise they chant their work orders.[25]

Wilbert also discusses the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico where the Maya Indian leaders spoke the "language of Zuyua." Like the Warao language of chiefs, the language of Zuyua was not only a general status indicator, setting the rulers apart from the commoners, but it functioned also as a device to detect an intruder and proof of legitimacy was considered to be certain knowledge supposed to have been handed down from father to son in families eligible to chieftainship, If the head chief demanded to eat the branch of a ceiba tree, a cord of three strands, and a living liana, he expected to be brought a lizard, the tail of an iguana, and the entrails of a pig. A great number of other foods and objects were requested during the interrogation of the subordinates by the head chief and each time the head chief used metaphors to express his desire. Potential chiefs found incapable of uncoding the language of Zuyua gave themselves away as usurpers and intruders into the class of nobles. They were "seized because they are lacking understanding" and put to death.[26] Would-be chiefs of today who do not speak the language of their superiors are more frequently exiled to Siberia (if they are officials living in the Soviet Union) or to Moscow (if they are rival politicians who must be banished from Latin America with the carrot of an important ambassadorship).

To exemplify denotative and connotative meaning of behavioral mannerism in a political situation, let us take the experience of James Wilkie

[24] Edmonson, *Lore*, pp. 3, 4, and 17.
[25] Wilbert. "The Metaphoric Snare," p. 8.
[26] Ibid., pp. 16-17..

in travels during 1962 with ex-President of Mexico, Lázaro Cardenas. In visiting schools, public works, and communal farms in an area development project headed by Cardenas, the posture of Wilkie at the head of the entourage (and to whom the results of the projects were shown) denoted that he was the most important personage of the group-and Cardenas's place, suggesting that he had apparently been shunted out of the limelight by a visiting dignitary, denoted that his position was on the fringes of the proceedings rather than at the center. In connotative terms, however, all knew that Cardenas was on an inspection tour and was freer to examine affairs from the periphery. And although the speeches by those who received the entourage were directed to Wilkie, they actually were intended to impart information to Cardenas, reassuring him that his orders were being carried out. In short, the cry "!Viva Wilkie!" at each stop on the trip really meant "!Viva Cardenas!

For the genre of cinema, the difference between denotative and connotative meaning has engendered serious debate. Interpretations of the Bolivian film *Blood of the Condor* (1969), in which U.S. Peace Corps volunteers are depicted sterilizing the Indian population, suggest that the image is employed metaphorically to show that U.S. aid is rendering barren Bolivia's ability to be an independent nation able to care for its own people in its own way. Yet for the film's author, Jorge Sanjinés, it appears that the denotative meaning takes precedence, for he helped in the successful campaign for the expulsion of the Peace Corps from Bolivia.[27]

Denotative and connotative meanings engendered a three-pronged debate in the *Journal of Latin American Lore* concerning the French film *State of Siege* (1973), wherein (because "CIA intervention in Uruguay involved the import of torture to that country") the U.S. "agent" in charge is "captured, tried, and executed" by Tupamaro guerrillas. One essay argues that although the denotative facts were obviously distorted, the film captures the inner truth of nefarious U.S. activities in Latin America.[28] A second article contends that since the film's documentary format encourages the viewer to see the film as history, it should be judged as history-poorly depicted history.[29] The third piece argues that the film should be analyzed as a reflection of the elitelore of its authors, who seek to sway the masses by presenting an uncomplicated picture which will stimulate opposition against dictators. Seen in this framework of elitelore and popularlore, the third article concludes:

[27] For more on Bolivian film, see Erich Keel. "From Militant Cinema to Nee-Realism: The Example of *Pueblo Chico*." *Film Quarterly* 29:4 (1976). 17-24.

[28] E. Bradford Bums. "A *State of Siege* That Never Was," *Journal of Latin American Lore* 2:2 (1976), 257-263.

[29] Mark Falcoff. "The Uruguay That Never Was: A Historian Looks at Costa-Gavras's *State of Siege." Journal of Latin American Lore* 2:2 (1976), 239-256.

Power of films to mobilize opinion, then, must be studied as lore in the making, lore that will live on independently of the "truth" or "justice" they claim to represent. As an expose, *State of Siege* is most valuable to the sophisticated audiences who understand it as a symbol and not as reality. But if political, films with a simple message do help to mobilize the masses to fight for the "right" and the "good." they do so, perhaps, at a high cost.

What political films might better teach is that life is complex: otherwise the masses are subjected to false hopes. Perhaps the ultimate degradation of the masses is to leave them, in the name of momentary mobilization, with the unsophisticated outlook that has permitted them to be manipulated throughout time immemorial. Only when "the people" begin to see how lore is used will they begin to gain control of their own political destiny.[30]

II. A Case Study in Literaturelore

Lore in the Making

Who are "the people"? Are their conditions, hopes, and desires correctly interpreted by the elites in society? Here, in an examination of lore in a case study of images portrayed in influential literature, the concepts of elitelore and folklore are helpful in answering such questions. A written story told by a Colombian novelist is tested against, first, his oral views, and. Second, against research by two Colombian social scientists, who also have investigated life among people of the same area.

Literary critics who see the novel as a totality unto itself, with its own declared ends bearing only an analogous relationship to society's activity, may well object to this kind of test. Such critics may seek to judge novelists, not according to how well they depict real life, but in terms of how they create a new reality in an independent literary world.[31] But since the novelist has an impact upon society, we argue that his work must also be judged on its view of "reality" and its interaction with human events.[32]

Since its publication in Spanish in 1967, *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* by Gabriel García Márquez, has been acclaimed as a contribution to the great literature of the world.[33] In writing about this novel, Jean

[30] Geffner and Wilkie. "Cinemalore." pp. 236-237.

[31] For theory of criticism, see Michael Gonzalez. "*Cambio de Piel" or the Myth of Literature*, Occasional Paper No. 10 (Glasgow: Institute of Latin American Studies. University of Glasgow. 1974).

[32] We do not mean to say, however, that the novel does not have value in itself as a work of art or as a political weapon, regardless of its relation to reality.

[33] In 1969, for example, the French translation was selected by the Académie Francaise as the best foreign book of the year, the Italian version won the Chianchiano Prize, and in 1970 the English translation was chosen as one of the twelve best books 'by U.S. literary critics. Critic: William Kennedy writes: "*One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the first piece of literature dace the Book of Genesis that should be required reading for the entire

Franco has said that the author's approach to literature involves setting the story in a remote village to show, in mythic version, the isolation of Latin America as a whole. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*

the town of Macondo is insulated from the rest of the world because [it is] surrounded by marshes and impassable jungle. Macondo has been founded by the family of Buendía as far as possible from the sea from which they come, and its inaccessibility means that everything there follows a different rhythm from that of the rest of the world. European inventions-false teeth, ice, the magnet-are capriciously introduced by wandering gypsies, but the place is so cut off from knowledge of the outside world that Aureliano Buendía can discover that the world is round without realizing that this is a commonplace. In the beginning there is an innocence about Macondo. Things have not been named, there is no death and the innocence extends to moral questions, for the Buendías marry their aunts, girls of twelve; Remedios Buendía walks about naked, unaware of the effect her beauty has on men. Yet this mythic, fantasy world is not unlike Latin America, or at least the remoter parts of the continent. For there, too, during many centuries, people's contacts with the rest of the world were sporadic and whimsical. In Macondo, evil comes from outside. A hundred-year civil war brings death and destruction, a banana company introduces exploitation and oppression. To these are added natural hazards-a four-year rainstorm, a plague of insomnia, a scourge of dead birds, which afflict the town like biblical disasters. Again analogies can be seen with Latin America. In *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* García Márquez has created the mythic representation of a third-world culture.[34]

García Márquez summarizes the tone of the book accepted by most readers in his conversation with Miguel Fernández-Braso:

FERNÁNDEZ-BRASO: The characters of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* speak as if at a long and phenomenal party. Readers have' had a ball reading those pages...
GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ: I don't know how others may has felt when they read it, but I can certainly say that I had an incredibly good time writing it. At times my wife would catch me writing and bursting out in laughter. She asked me what

human race. It takes up not long after Genesis left off and carries through to the air age, reporting on everything that happened in between with more lucidity, wit. Wisdom, and poetry than is expected from 100 years of novelists, let alone one man" (quoted in C.D. Kinsman and M.A. Tennenhouse. eds., *Contemporary Authors*. vols. 33-36 [Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1973]. p. 348). Critic John Leonard is almost as enthusiastic: "Macondo is Latin America in microcosm: local autonomy yielding to state authority; anticlericalism; party politics; the coming of the United Fruit Company; aborted revolutions; the rape of innocence by history. And the Buendías (inventors. artisans, soldiers, lovers, mystics) seem doomed to ride a biological tragi-cycle in circles from solitude to magic to poetry to science to politics to violence back again to solitude" (ibid.).

[34] Jean Franco, *The Modern Culture of Latin America*: Society and the Artist, 2d ed. (Middlesex, Eng.: Penguin, 1970), pp. 252-253. In contrast to Franco, Albert L. Michaels sees the four-year rainstorm as a symbol of a non-natural hazard, a fall in world market prices, for example, causing the banana company to at last abandon Macondo.

was happening. And the answer was that I was laughing about the things that happened to the *cabrones* of Macondo. What characters![35]

In spite of García Márquez's limited interpretation of his own intent, he has been honored by the critics for having achieved broad goals. One has said that García Márquez produced the first Pan American novel written in Latin America: "Many readers irritated by [Julio Cortazar's] *Hopscotch* and incensed by [Carlos Fuentes's] *Change of Skin,* have not had to sigh but could totally unwind in their easy chairs while they followed, fascinated, the narrative thread [of *One Hundred Years of Solitude],* which never loses momentum nor seems ever to become entangled."

Thus readers have proclaimed that the García Márquez novel about solitude is "the great Latin American novel of the land, the novel of protest, the novel of anecdotes, the narrative novel which is readable without effort and does not force the reader to accept any suspicious algebra.[36] Another critic has written that although García Márquez saw the world of Macondo first, it now belongs to everyone who has read about it because it is not in Colombia, in Macondo, but within all Latin Americans because it also belongs to Peru, and Argentina, and to other unknown countries.[37]

Readers of *One Hundred Years of Solitude* have acknowledged, by and large, that its folkloric myth has existed among rural peoples. For many readers life in Macondo seems real not only because its inhabitants reflect the simple lore of a "better time" but because it seems that had outside national and international forces not meddled in their existence, life might have continued to be "good." In the unfolding plot of García Márquez's novel the symbol of central government authority. Alpo1inar Moseote, arrives in Macondo to bring trouble:

> He set up a table and a chair... nailed up on the wall the shield of the republic that he had brought with him, and on the door he painted the sign: *Magistrate.* His first order was for all the houses to be painted blue in celebration of the anniversary of national independence. Jose Arcadio Buendía, with the copy of the order in his hand, found... Moscote to speak to him in no uncertain terms....

[35] Miguel Fernández-Braso, Gabriel García Marque: (*Una Conversación Infinita*) (Madrid: Azur, 1969), pp. 82-83. For discussion of and bibliography on humor in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, see Carmelo Gariano, "EI Humor Numérico en Cien Años de Soledad,' Hispania 6:1 (1978) 443-450. It should be understood, however, that much of the humor involves tragicomedy.

[36] Emir Rodríguez Monegal, "Novedad y Anacronismo de Cien Años de Soledad." in Helmy F. Giacoman. ed *Homenaje a Gabriel García Márquez* (New York: Las Américas Publishing Company. 1972). p. 16.

[37] Pablo Rojas Guardia, *La Realidad Mágica* (Caracas: Monte Avila, 1969), p. 21.

"In this town we do not give orders with pieces of paper," he said without losing his calm. "And so that you know it once and for all, we don't need any judges here because there's nothing that needs judging."

Facing Don Apolinar Moscote, still without raising his voice, he gave a detailed account of how they had (migrated to the area and) founded the village, of how they had distributed the land, opened the roads. and introduced the improvements that necessity required without bothering the government and without anyone having bothered them. . . .

"So that if you want to stay here like any other ordinary citizen, you're quite welcome," Jose Arcadio Buendía concluded. "But if you've come here to cause disorder by making the people paint their houses blue, you can pick up your junk and go back where you came from. Because my house is going to be white, like a dove."[38]

What are the resultant implications as literary ideas trickle down to influence public opinion? The people seem to have spoken: "Government, please leave us alone! Keep out all foreigners, national and international!" Any government officials who make policy within general contexts of such opinion later may justify implicitly the fact that roads have not been built to link the isolated villages with the nation. If schoolteachers, doctors, dentists, and agricultural extension agents have not been sent to those towns, so what? Life will go on, and perhaps go on better at that.

But what if the lore we have seen above is not the lore of Macondo but only of Gabriel García Márquez? Then García Márquez's elitelore has come to be accepted in the urban world as the lore of the rur.al people, who, having no way of articulating what they stand for, in the future may e!~n come to incorporate this elitelore into their own folklore?

We-can begin to answer this question by examining the man and his novel.[39] García Márquez (b. 1928) graduated from the University of Bogota, started law school, but departed to become a journalist. From 1948 to 1955 he wrote for several Colombian newspapers. *El Espectador* sent him to Rome and Paris in 1955, but dictator. Gustavo Rojas Pinilla shut down the newspaper at the end of the year. García Márquez remained in Europe. His abode for the next several years was Caracas,

[38] García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* pp.61-62.

[39] The brief life history chronology that follows is reconstructed from oral interviews with García Márquez appearing in three books: Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann. *Into the Mainstream: Conversations with Latin-American Writers* (New York: Harper. 1967), chapter 9; Fernández-Braso. *Gabriel García Márquez*; and Rita Guibert, *Seven Voices: Seven Latin American Writers ...* (New York: Vintage. 19n). pp. 303-337. Compare Mario Vargas L1osa. García Márquez: Historia de un Deicidio (Barcelona and Caracas: Barral and Monte Avila. 1971); and George R. McMurray, *Gabriel García Márquez* (New York: Ungar. 1977).

Venezuela; where as a reporter for the magazines *Elite* and *Momenta* he wrote about the last days of the dictatorship of Marcos Perez Jimenez. In January 1959 he moved to Cuba where he remained for several months as a correspondent for Prensa latina, revolutionary Cuba's news agency, which sent him to New York to cover the United Nations (and Khrushchev's shoe-pounding visit). Later, at the same time that his relations with Prensa Latina cooled, he was (ironically) denied a visa to return to the United States from Mexico where he had gone on a trip in 1961. Having resigned from Prensa Latina, he settled in Mexico City where for a time he became involved in writing screenplays. In late 1967 he moved to Barcelona. From there he was permitted to return to New York in 1971 to receive an honorary doctorate of letters from Columbia University - his fame and contribution to literature now "officially" recognized: By the mid-1970s García Márquez was again living in Mexico City and had revisited Cuba from which he had been temporarily estranged.[40]

García Márquez's publication history and his view of it have spirited much literary interest. His major novels are La Hojarasca (1952), EI Coronel No Tiene Quien Le Escriba (1958), La Mala Hora (1960, Cien Años de Soledad (1967), and EI Otoño del Patriarca (1975). About his novels, he is quoted by Miguel Fernández-Brase: "The function of the novelist in any social scene is to write good novels. I realize, however, that every good novel is destined to be nonconformist, and it has, therefore, a subversive function."[41] In the same book García Márquez is quoted as follows:

> I believe that sooner or later the world will be socialist: I want it that way and the sooner the better. But I am also convinced that one of the things that can delay the process is bad literature. My personal reservations about what is known as the social novel . . . are rooted in its fragmentary character that gives the reader only a partial vision of the world and of life. . . . The great paradox is that our writers [of Latin America] who with such good faith try to express the terrible political and social drama of our majority populations have become the smallest minority of writers in the world: nobody reads them.[42]

Speaking specifically about *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* García Márquez told one interviewer in 1970 that

[40] García Márquez bad signed a letter of protest condemning Fidel Castro's treatment of Heberto Padilla who, despite having, won the 1968 prize for poetry awarded by writers of the revolution, in 1971 was forced to sign a "confession" that his art had been subversive. Nevertheless, Garda Márquez told Guibert in 1971. "I'm not prepared to throw a revolution on the rubbish heap every ten years" (Guibert. Sevent Voices. p. 333).

[41] Fernández - Braso. Gabriel García Márquez. 57.

[42] Ibid., p. 58.

no reviewer has touched the point that most interested me as I wrote the book and that is the idea that solitude is the opposite of solidarity-that idea is the essence of the book. That explains the frustration of each Buendía, the frustration of their situation, the frustration of Macondo. And I believe that here we have a political concept: solitude considered as the negation of solidarity is a political concept… [The frustration] comes from the lack of love. Aureliano Buendía's incapacity for love is written with all its letters throughout the book. At the end, when little Aureliano is born with the tail of a pig, it says: "he was the only one in a century who had been engendered with love."[43]

And seven years later García Márquez is quoted in a Havana interview with Prensa Latina:

Now I am famous enough that I can be completely natural, and I've had to ask myself seriously-Good, what do I do with this fame? How can I use it? What should I do to be useful with this thing that makes me instantly recognizable in the street, that makes what I say seem important, that makes people I meet want to talk to me?-And I think I've found the answer, that is, to put this fame at the service of the revolution in Latin America. If what I have to say takes on importance, then I'm going to say political things ... put this fame to use for the liberation of Latin American countries. And that's what I'm doing. I'm doing political work ... in all honesty. I don't have the vocation or the training for it, but I've tried hard to do it well because I believe that is the duty of any Latin American, and especially so for a well-known Latin American ... and right now, defending the Cuban Revolution is one of the prime duties of all revolutionary Latin Americans.[44]

Moreover, García Márquez stated in the same interview: "I consider that my first novels are journalism, a different way of treating true material." With this respect for journalism and his desire, to defend the Cuban Revolution, it is no wonder-that he took up his journalistic pen of old to write "Operation Carlota: Cuba's Role in Angolan Victory,"[45] where he presents a history of Cuban involvement in Angola during 1975 and 1976.

Yet in his 1971 interview with Rita Guibert, García Márquez seems to contradict the trajectory of the above thought about the' novel, as shown in the following interchange:

GUIBERT: . . . Is Macondo meant to be taken as a sort of surrealistic history of Latin America? Or does ... it [serve] as a metaphor for all modern men and their ailing communities?

GARCÍA MÁRQUEZ: Nothing of the sort. I merely wanted to tell the story of a family who for a hundred years did everything they could to prevent having a

[43] "Entrevistas González Bermejo: García Márquez..." *Bohemia*. Feb. 19. 1971. p. 9.

[44] *Cuba Update*, a publication of the Center for Cuban Studies (New York), 1 (April 1977), p. 3.

[45] Ibid ., pp. 1-8.

> son with a pig's tail, and just because of their very efforts to avoid having one they ended by doing so. Synthetically speaking, that's the plot of the book, but all that about symbolism ... not at all. Someone who isn't a critic said that the interest the novel had aroused was probably due to the fact that it was the first real description of· the private life of a Latin American family (because) we go i.nto the bedroom, the bathroom, the kitchen, into every comer of the house. Of course I never said to myself, "I shall write a book that will be interesting for that reason," but now that it's written, and this has been said about it. I think it may be true. Anyway it's an interesting concept and not all that shit about a man's destiny, etc...[46]

García Márquez's interest in Macondo and its lore stems from the fact that he was born there, or really in Aracataca; for the novel he reo named Aracataca "Macondo," after a nearby banana plantation he knew as a child. Raised by his grandparents, Colonel Nicolas Márquez Iguarán and Dona Tranquilina, García Márquez's childhood memories are of that household which was anything but tranquil.

In mid·l960s interviews with Luis Harss and Barbara Dohmann, García Márquez spoke of his youth in an enormous house full of ghosts. His relatives were very superstitious, and in every comer there were so many skeletons and memories that after six in the evening it was a world of fantastic terrors and coded conversations. Harss and Dohmann report that García Márquez remembers himself as a frightened child barricaded behind the furniture to peer from the foot of his bed where loomed "the ominous shape of a huge gilded altar decorated with plaster saints whose eyes shone in the dark." On the one side, his grandmother was an eerie presence always hovering nearby, and she used to tiptoe in at night to tell him bedtime stories. She was a nervous individual'"-jumpy, unpredictable, constantly in a frazzle, and given to seizures and visions.

[46] Guibert, *Seven Voices*. p. 314. But Mario Vargas Llosa, then a close confidant of García Márquez and whose book about him was made possible by that special relationship, summed up symbolism in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* like this (p. 498): "Just as the Buendia family synthesizes and reflects Macondo. Macondo synthesizes and reflects (at the same time that it denies) true reality: its history condenses human history... especially that of Latin America ... from its social origins to its extinction: those one hundred yean of life reproduce the vicissitudes of all civilization (birth. development. apogee. decline. death), and. more precisely, the stages that have passed (or are passing) in the majority of third-world satieties, the neocolonial countries." According to Vargas Llosa (pp. 513-514). "The decline of the Buendía family sets in with banana fever: they lose power, economic ruin begins, the lineage is spread out throughout the world. The fifth generation is educated outside of Macondo. Jose Arcadio y Amaranta in Europe, and Meme in a convent.... Meme's illegitimate son grows up as a primitive savage, as a 'cannibal: He is the agony of the lineage: this bastard is the sixth generation of the Buendia family; the next is going to be, literally, an animal: that child with the tail of a pig. . . . Like Macondo, the Buendáa lineage was already dead when the final wind blows it away."

On the other side,· García Márquez's grandfather, who occupied a minor political post in the village bureaucracy, was the friend and companion, the most important figure in his life, who told him of Colombia's civil wars. According to Harss and Dohrnann, García Márquez remembers that because his grandfather once had to kill a man, he would say:
"You don't know how much a dead man can weigh." The grandfather himself died when the child was eight years old. It was the end of an era for García Márquez. After that, García Márquez has said that neither growing up, studying. nor traveling particularly impressed him. In his own words: "Nothing interesting has happened to me since."[47]

Aracataca had been a thriving town under the impetus of the United Fruit Company which, during the presidency of Rafael Reyes (1904-1909), had established the lucrative, business of banana cultivation and export. The banana industry brought to Aracataca a short period of prosperity that had ended by the time García Márquez was born (March 0. 1928). Although the world depression of the 1930s affected Aracataca during García Márquez's childhood, the boom had not quite faded. And it was not until after García Márquez had left for school, at age nine, and had returned in his early twenties that he realized that Aracataca had fallen into abject poverty. [48] This extreme change for the worse became a focal point in his mind and was to serve him in the development of his literary universe.

García Márquez's Fantastic World

To depict life in Macondo, García Márquez has presented in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* fantastic folkloric subject matter in a radically different way from previous writers of the fantastic who use a few folkloric themes as a source of inspiration. His technique consists of completely integrating hundreds of folkloric elements in his novel, meshing them so well that one hardly recognizes them as folklore. Events do not appear so "fantastic" at all but a fundamental aspect of the reality of village life that he has fashioned.

Separating the different folkloric elements belonging to this field of the fantastic, we find five major categories in *One Hundred Years of Solitude;*

I. Supernatural beings
   - A. Revenants *(aparecidos)*
   - B. Death ("La Muerte")
   - C. The Devil

[47] Hans and Dohmann, *Into the Mainstream*, p. 319.
[48] Vargas Llosa, *García Márquez*. pp. 96 and 104.

D. Ghost Ship
E. The Wandering Jew
F. Angels
G. Kobolds (duendes)
H. Poltergeists

II. Folk medicine
III. Magic
IV. Supernatural Events
A. Miracles
B. Levitations
C. Weather

V. Folkloric motifs (from fairy tales or folktales):[49]

A1010. Deluge
A1331. Paradise lost because of forbidden fruit
B107.1 Fish with ingot of gold inside
C114.2 Sex tabu: man-niece
C943 Loss of sight from breaking tabu
D303.9.4 Transformation of devil to snake (Transformation of man to snake)
D1162.1 Magic lamp
D2120 Magic transportation
D2121.3 Magic journey through power of imagination
E414 Murdered person cannot rest in grave
E421.1.1. Ghost visible to one person alone
E610.1.1. Reincarnation
E670 Repeated reincarnation
F610 Remarkably strong man
F911.4. Jonah (fish swallows man)
L111.21.1. Future hero found in boat (basket. bushes)
M370. Vain attempts to escape fulfillment of prophecy
N532 Light indicating hidden treasure
Q386 Dancing punished
Q451.1. Hands cut off as punishment (Head cut off as punishment)
Q502.1. Wandering Jew
Q559.5.2 Girl's hand withers as punishment for broken oath to God
T415 Brother-sister incest
Z17 Rounds (endless tales)

[49] See Stith Thompson, *Motif Index of Folk Literature*, 6 vols. (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1932-1936).

This "fantastic material" is presented as part of the reality of the universe of this particular work; the function of folklore in García Márquez is to erase the boundaries between the fantastic or imaginary and the real in order to present a situation in which both coexist in harmony.[50] For example, the revenants or aparecidos do not appear different from their original status on earth or from other humans. The aparecidos continue to perform human functions even though they are now "officially" dead. The dead continue to eat and drink, or indulge in their previous occupations and preoccupations. An example is the murdered Prudencio Aguilar, who would not leave his murderer, Jose Arcadio Buendia, alone. Jose "was tormented by the immense desolation with which the dead man had looked at him through the rain, his deep nostalgia as he yearned for living people, the anxiety with which he searched through the house looking for some water."[51]

Time in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* can also be categorized. We find (1) chronological time. (2) static time, (J) eternal time, (4) subjective or psychological time, (5) simultaneous time, and (6) circular time. With regard to the latter, for example, aparecidos are an extremely important vehicle for the introduction of the concept of circular time. They come to the "real" world of the characters from the afterlife in the works of Garda Márquez. The universe fashioned by this author is populated with both the living and the dead. They often share an equal status, an equal citizenship in this mythical state García Márquez has founded. Their claim to residence is the common psychological virus that has infected all of *them-solitude*. Furthermore, these aparecidos serve to erase the barriers of space and time between the living and the dead. The ubiquitous presence of these phantoms obliterates the lines of demarcation between these two realities. García Márquez's characters, then, do not experience man's anguish and fear toward death and the dead. This acceptance of death acknowledges the eternal nature of time. Death does not mean an end to existence but merely the other side of the coin of life:

> At the final moment, however, Amaranta did not feel frustrated, but, on the contrary, free of all bitterness because death had awarded her the privilege of announcing itself several years ahead of time. . . . Death did not tell her when she was going to die . . . but ordered her to begin sewing her own shroud on the next sixth of April. She was authorized to make it as complicated and as

[50] For a more complete account, see Maria Herrera-Sobek, "The Function of Folklore in Gabriel Garda Márquez," Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1975.

[51] García Márquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, p.30.

fine as she wanted... and she was told that she would die without pain, fear, or bitterness at dusk on the day that she finished it.[52]

In this manner, for Macondo death need not appear in a threatening manner; and it need be no lonelier than life itself.

Finally, for example, it is within the terms of folk medicine (treated, sympathetically)[53] that the major theme of the book is resolved. The scene takes place in the book's final chapter, which describes the passing of the last of the female Buendias after childbirth:

One Sunday, at six in the afternoon, Amaranta Ursula felt the pangs of childbirth. . . . [Soon] her cries were drowned out by the bellows of a formidable male child. Through her tears Amaranta Ursula could see that he was one of those great Buendias, strong and willful like the Jose Arcadios, with the open and clairvoyant eyes of the Aurelianos, and predisposed to begin the race again from the beginning and cleanse it of its pernicious vices and solitary calling, for he was the only one in a century who had been engendered with love. . . .

After cutting the umbilical cord, the midwife began to use a cloth to take off the blue grease that covered his body as Aureliano held up a lamp. Only when they turned him on his stomach did they see that he had something more than other men, and they leaned over to examine him. It was the tail of a pig.

They were not alarmed. Aureliano and Amaranta Ursula were not aware of the family precedent, nor did they remember Ursula's frightening admonitions, and the midwife pacified them with the idea that the tail could be cut off when the child got his second teeth. Then they had no time to think about it again, because Amaranta Ursula was bleeding in an uncontainable torrent. They tried to help her with applications of spiderwebs and balls of ash, but it was like trying to hold back a spring with one's hands.[54]

In the end, the overall political message of García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* does indeed *seem* to be that a people reveling in their isolation are destroyed by outside influences resulting from the establishment of the U.S. banana plantation. In one scene alone García Márquez puts into dubious light both modem medicine (as opposed to the commonsense folk remedies used throughout) and technological advance (symbolized by the train as it carries away the corpses

[52] Ibid., pp. 259-260.

[53] The concoctions "prescribed" in Macondo for preventing conception as well as guilt about the sexual act offer a humorous example of folk medicine to the reader versed in modern but incomplete birth control prescriptions that as yet do not salve the conscience. The reader knows that the folk remedy will not prevent conception, however, and that the birth control method advised by Pilar Ternera will not work. The remedy involved the application of mustard plasters that in cases of trouble could expel "even the remorse of conscience" (ibid., pp. 269-270).

[54] Ibid., pp. 378-379.

of the workers). The scene, in the heart of the book; depicts a strike against the banana company:[55]

The protests of the workers this, time were based on the lack of sanitary facilities in their living quarters, the nonexistence of medical services, and terrible working conditions. They stated, furthermore, that they were not being paid in real money but in scrip, which was good only to buy Virginia ham in the company commissaries. Jose Arcadio Segundo was put in jail because he revealed that the scrip system was a way for the company to finance its fruit ships, which without the commissary merchandise would have to return empty from New Orleans to the banana ports. The other complaints were common knowledge. The company physicians did not examine the sick.... The engineers, instead of putting in toilets, had a portable latrine for every fifty people brought to the camps at Christmas time and they held public demonstrations of how to use them so that they would last longer....

So the workers could not be stopped:

The great strike broke out. Cultivation stopped halfway, the fruit rotted on the trees and the hundred-twenty car trains remained on the sidings. The idle workers overflowed the towns. The Street of the Turks echoed with a Saturday that lasted for several days and in the poolroom at the Hotel Jacob they had to arrange twenty-four-hour shifts. That was where Jose Arcadio Segundo was on the day it was announced that the army had been assigned to reestablish public order....

"Public order" meant that

the captain gave the order to fire and fourteen machine guns answered at once. (The people) . . . were penned in, swirling about in a gigantic whirlwind that little by little was being reduced to its epicenter as the edges were systematically being cut off all around like an onion being peeled by the insatiable and methodical shears of the machine guns. . . .

The strike was broken and the dead hauled away:

When Jose Arcadio Segundo came to he was lying face up in the darkness. He realized that he was riding on an endless and silent train. . . . Trying to flee from the nightmare, Jose Arcadio Segundo dragged himself from one car to another in the direction in which the train was heading, and in the flashes of light that broke through the wooden slats as they went through sleeping towns he saw the man corpses, woman corpses, child corpses who would be thrown into the sea like rejected bananas .... When he got to the first car he jumped into the darkness and lay beside the tracks until the train had passed. It was the longest one he had ever seen, with almost two hundred freight cars and a

[55] Ibid… extracted from pp. 278-285.

locomotive at either end and a third one in the middle. It had no lights, not even the red and green running lights, and it slipped off with a nocturnal and stealthy velocity. On top of the cars there could be seen the dark shapes of the soldiers with their emplaced machine guns.[56]

No wonder, then, that Colonel Aureliano Buendia had prophesized:
"Look at the mess we've got ourselves into just because we invited a gringo to eat some bananas.[57]

This description of foreign impact, however, covers only three percent of the text; and given the rustic humor and paradiselike qualities of Macondo, the virtues of the folk isolated there predominate with thriftiness, kindness, intelligence, and industriousness symbolized in Ursula Iguaran de Buendia. Even Colonel Aureliano Buendia emerges as a hero because he realizes the futility of having fought thirty-two civil wars, just as liberals and conservatives spent the century fighting pointlessly-the same kind of useless internal strife which García Márquez saw continuing in Colombia after 1948 in what is known as La Violencia. But the old Colonel does not realize that it is easier to start a war than to end one:

It took him almost a year of fierce and bloody effort to force the government to propose conditions of peace favorable to the rebels and another year to convince his own partisans of the convenience of accepting them. He went to inconceivable extremes of cruelty to put down the rebellion of his own officers, who resisted and called for victory, and he finally relied on enemy forces to make them submit.

He was never a greater soldier than at that time. The certainty that he was finally fighting for his own liberation and not for abstract ideals, for slogans that politicians could twist left and right according to the circumstances, filled him with an ardent enthusiasm.[58]

And the Colonel (who had fought thirty-two wars and lost them all; who had seventeen male children by as many different women, only to have them all killed one after the other on a single night before the oldest reached the age of thirty-five; who had survived fourteen attempts on his life, seventy-three ambushes, a firing squad, and a poisoning attempt) retired, refusing to accept the Order of Merit awarded by the President of Colombia. Although he had risen to Commander-in-Chief of the revolutionary forces of the whole republic, he had never let himself be photographed, and he declined the lifetime pension offered him after the war, preferring to make his living from the little gold fishes that he manufactured in his workshop in Macondo.

[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., p. 215.
[58] Ibid., p. 164..

Here, then, is a warm book from Colombia written with empathy for the people. Which, in reaching the level of expression found in Brazilian Jorge Amado's *Gabriela, Clove and Cinnamon,* explains somewhat differently "the labyrinth of solitude" described by Mexican writer Octavio Paz. In addition to its romantic charm, the book has a significance beyond that seemingly intended by García Márquez. Or does it?

Given what we know of the man and his immediate goals, on the one hand, we can suggest that *One Hundred Years of Solitude* may have been misunderstood in that it is not meant to represent reality in the third world, in Latin America, in Colombia, or even in Macondo. Indeed. García Márquez seems to tell us that destiny (including thirty-two civil wars and superstition) would lead Macondo to destroy itself, as the gypsy Melquiades had foreseen in parchments depicting the simultaneous existence of all time as coexisting at the same instant. In this manner he saw with historical consciousness Macondo's future one hundred years ahead of time:

> [Melquiades] had not put events in the order of man's conventional time, but had concentrated a century of daily episodes in such a way that they coexisted in one instant ... [and) it was foreseen that the city of mirrors (or mirages) would be wiped out by the wind and exiled from the memory of men at the precise moment when Aureliano Babilonia would finish deciphering the parchments. and that everything written on them was unrepeatable since time immemorial and forever more, because races condemned to one hundred years of solitude did not have a second opportunity on earth.[59]

The banana company only dealt "the fatal blow" (p. 272), one among many. On the other hand, given García Márquez's long-term goals, he would seem to have written a "subversive piece" planned to show the advantage of a people remaining in isolation to enjoy a simpler life.

That such contradiction does not harm the book but helps it (for its complexity offers different meanings for different readers) is perhaps best shown in García Márquez's explanation to Guibert:

[59] Ibid ., pp. 382-383. According to Linda L. Williams. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* sets up a play of mirrors that allows the suggestion of the infinite through the make, believe reflection of an imitated world. The book only seems to represent a tragically failed attempt to return to a unity and harmony whose mythical existence is posited at the beginning of time and the beginning of the novel. Melquiades' parchments "come to represent the key to these origins, but this way back turns out to be a prophecy of doom that is fulfilled at the very moment the key is decoded." But at a second level of interpretation, a "comic" reading of the novel includes the tragic reading within it, and it is through this continuous artifice that "even if the lost Eden is not retrievable, there are new unities that can be created, if not in the world itself, then in an art whose play of mirrors suggests an infinity of the possible." See Williams. "Edenic Nostalgia and the Play of Mirrors in *Hopscotch* and *One Hundred Year of Solitude*." *Latin American Literary Review* 6:11 (1977).53-67, quotes are from pp. 56 and 66.

I've said that anyone who doesn't contradict himself is a dogmatist, and every dogmatist is a reactionary. I contradict myself all the time and particularly on the subject of literature. My method of work is such that I would never reach the point of literary creation without constantly contradicting myself, correcting myself, and making mistakes. If I didn't I should be always writing the same book. I have no recipe....[60]

Aritama versus Macondo

The issue of García Márquez's motives and methods aside, we can test his novelistic view of life in Macondo by turning to Gerardo and Alicia Reichel-Dolmatoff's book entitled *The People of Aritama: The Cultural Personality of a Colombian Mestizo Village.*[61] The Reichel-Dolmatoffs, who in the 1950s spent fourteen months in this village in the same region as "Macondo," have described Aritama (a pseudonym) as a small peasant community in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. The village lies in the intermediate region between the rural and urban Creoles of the lowlands and the Indian tribes of the mountains. Originally an Indian village, during the second half of the last century Aritama was penetrated by a peasant migration into the valley. With occupation, the village became divided into "Indian" and "Spanish" sections; subsistence agriculture was largely replaced by a market economy; long-term, religiously sanctioned monogamy' shifted to short-term unions and consensual concubinage. As color, class, and cultural differences became powerful status-defining factors, "the struggle of prestige behavior increased individual and collective insecurity, and as higher formal control systems were lacking or unable to cope with the new situation, interpersonal hostilities spread and were openly expressed in malicious gossip and aggressive sorcery.[62] This process continued into the 1960s and, at present, this struggle dominates village life; the main ambition of its inhabitants involves their desire to be accepted and respected by the general Creole population of the lowlands, which considers Aritama a backward Indian village. (Conversely, the Indian communities. have considered Aritama a Creole village.) According to the Reichel-Dolmatoffs, "the tensions created by this quest for self-assertion are felt on all levels and in all dimensions of individual and community

[60] Guibert, *Seven Voices*, p. 332. Too, García Márquez lamented to Fernández-Braso (p. 91) that critics had found all kinds of allusions that do not exist in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* but had not noticed anyone of the forty-two contradictions that he himself had found after publication nor had they discovered any of the seven "grave errors" pointed out to him by the Italian translator-errors and contradictions that García Márquez could not change without dishonoring the book which had become famous.

[61] London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1961. Reprinted by the University of Chicago Press in 1910.

[62] Reichel-Dolmatoff and Reichel-Dolmatoff. *People of Aritama*, pp. xii-xiii.

life. Paired with population increase and the mismanagement of resources, they have led to conflicts which begin to endanger survival and for which workable solutions have to be found by all."[63]

Whereas García Márquez had only lived in the area as a child, leaving behind his "fantastic village" at age nine, and had mainly his memories with which to work, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs went to the area with the questioning eye of the adult, developing their view through informal conversations with the villagers themselves-eighty individuals of both sexes. From their interviews and observances, they found that

> People in Aritama are not much given to friendly chatting and visiting. They are controlled and taciturn, evasive and- monosyllabic. They are always afraid of giving themselves away somehow, of being ridiculed because of the things they say or do, or of being taken advantage of by persons of authority. This reserve, however, is not only displayed toward strangers but characterizes their own interpersonal contacts as well. There is a front of ready answers and expression, of standard affirmations and opinions, and there is always, in the last resort, the blank stare, the deaf ear, or the sullen *no sé*. Such behavior is, of course, to be expected among people who feel very insecure, but in the case of Aritama it leads frequently to a highly patterned type of confabulation. Individual and community life is explained by them in ideal. prestige-carrying terms meant to impress the outsider, but at the same time is so insistently stereotyped and so anxiously phrased that its reality becomes all the more evidence behind his facade of complacency and conformity. In Aritama the make-believe of overt behavior and the flight from the misery of reality into an utterly imaginary world acquire striking proportions.[64]

The Reichel-Dolmatoffs, like García Márquez. set out to explain the disintegration of traditional village life as isolation was coming to an end. A road had not yet reached Aritama by the end of the 1950s. but it had come close, having arrived at the edge of the valley at least for travel in the dry season. The Reichel-Dolmatoffs wanted to examine what contact meant to the village in relation to changing institutions, motivations, values, and community attitudes. They had hypothesized a breakdown of existing institutions and their replacement by new ones guided by new goals, but they did not find "disintegration." "break-down" of institutions and their underlying values, or the "disorganization" of society. What they found in Aritama was "change, sometimes accelerated and sometimes retarded, but more often simply change, such as will occur necessarily in any community of human beings." Sometimes this change, when demanding an unaccustomed choice of action, affected deeply an individual, a group, or the entire community, but it was never fully beyond human experience and means to cope with

[63] Ibid., p. xiii.
[64] Ibid., pp. xvii-xviii.

it. "Nothing 'disintegrated,' nothing 'broke down,' a continuous shaping and reshaping of the relations between man and environment, man and society, man and the supernatural took place, but simply as a part of life, of anybody's life, anywhere."[65]

In one important aspect the research of the Reichel-Dolmatoffs does partly support the authenticity of the folkloric elements in the works of García Márquez. Allowing for a certain amount of poetic license, the folkloric elements of García Márquez do indeed represent legitimate folkloric entities found in so many small Latin American villages. With respect to ghosts, for example, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs write:

> The belief in ghosts, revenants and other similar apparitions is very common throughout rural and urban Colombia, but the intensity of these beliefs and the interpretation of details vary considerably from place to place. Furthermore, such beliefs are limited mainly to a lower rural level and tend to disappear with increasing urban influence. In Aritama, however, the entire village lives under the permanent fear of apparitions, and even the most sophisticated inhabitants are firmly convinced of their existence. Everyone is terrified by the thought of seeing or hearing a ghost. After nightfall only a very courageous person will dare to leave the house, even if only to cross the backyard or street in order to visit a neighbor, or to go to the cooking houses, which are usually a little distance from the living quarters. This fear is not so much concerned with the actual perception of a ghost as with the consequences such an experience is said to have. It is believed that a person who claims to have seen a ghost will fall seriously ill and perhaps die after a few days. That this is a very real problem is demonstrated by the fact, observed by us, that people actually did fall ill after claiming to have had such an experience, an eventuality which seems to indicate that their emotional imbalance leads occasionally to grave psychosomatic disturbances. [66]

Note, however, the difference in the *interpretation* given to the psychological and social ramifications of folkloric elements, as shown in the example of the role of ghosts. Whereas García Márquez uses superstition in positive terms to support his individual elitelore (i.e., his conception of pretechnological man as being carefree and living in an idyllic state in his folk culture), the Reichel-Dolmatoffs give quite a negative evaluation of the impact of superstition on popular culture.

Whereas in the image portrayed Garda Márquez almost ignores problems of hygiene and nutrition, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs present, in an uncompromising manner, the devastating effects of living in a culture which usually entails ignorance of modem hygienic practices and lack of nutritional knowledge necessary for an adequate diet. They not only observed a tragic situation in relation to disease (including smallpox,

[65] Ibid., pp. xiv-xv.

[66] Ibid., p. 413..

chicken pox, whooping cough, measles, mumps, diarrhea, typhoid fever, amoebic dysentery, hookworm, ascariasis, diphtheria, pneumonia, cold, bronchitis, malaria, syphilis, gonorrhea. lymphogranuloma venereum, erysipelas, puerperal infection, food infections and poisoning), but they found that the principal health problems of the community were gastrointestinal diseases caused by parasites and deficiency diseases owing to inadequate food intake. (Intestinal parasites. the main single cause of infant mortality, coincide with early weaning. when the infant is suddenly exposed to infection through contaminated food.) Too, they discovered that practically all adults suffered to some extent from the poor disposal of excreta. a lack of cleanliness in housing, clothing, and personal habits, and the continuous contamination of food and water by flies and other vectors. [67]

Also, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs noted that the following characteristics of the population as a whole could be attributed to nutritional deficiencies: chronic fatigue, general lack or loss of strength, lack of appetite, diarrhea, night blindness and burning of the eyes, occasional photophobia, pallor, rough and scaly skin with occasional cutaneous lesions, pellagrous dermatitis, and edema. Symptoms of infants and children included: retarded sitting, standing, and walking: retarded growth; marked pallor; abdominal swelling; and frequent respiratory infections. Too, they found the nutritional status of infants, children, and adults to be characterized by an excess of carbohydrates (which tends to interfere with the absorption of the vitamin B complex) and by a low protein level.

While many, of the characters in García Márquez are projected as optimistic, industrious, intelligent individuals, anthropological research presents a very different picture-that of a pessimistic, fatalistic people. From the Reichel-Dolmatoffs' determination of the "normal." most commonly found Aritama personality type, an extremely negative individual emerges:

> The *normal* type of personality ... is extremely controlled and rigid in his reactions to others, and the maintenance of satisfactory relations is *very* difficult. Authority figures are thought of realistically as irresponsible, unpredictable in their actions, and likely to be unjust and hostile. There is mistrust of all motivations in others, little submission, and never rebellion, but rather avoidance of all close relationships. Uncooperativeness and hostility are evident, but open

[67] Ibid., pp. 45-46. Compare the discussion of illness described by García Márquez (*One Hundred Year of Solitude*. p. 37): “Those kids are out of their heads,' Ursula said. ’They must have worms.' She prepared a repugnant potion for them made out of mashed wormseed, which they both drank with unforeseen stoicism, and they sat down at the same time on their pots eleven times in a single day, expelling some rose-colored parasites that they showed to everybody with great jubilation.... "

outbursts of the latter are very rare and if they occur they are directed against inoffensive persons (women, children, old people. Indians), against animals, or against inanimate objects.[68]

The people of Aritama. moreover. are a worried people:

> Gloominess and cynical self· accusations are frequent. On the other hand, hostility and aggression are readily verbalized in malicious and envious gossip, but fearfully hidden as far as Black Magic is concerned. Interpersonal relations are made dependent to a high degree upon food-sharing patterns. There is exaggerated concern with phenotype, dress, correct language, accompanied by fantasized achievements and pretentiousness. There is no spontaneity - and all overt behavior is dominated by profound anxieties. Lack of public recognition, ill health through envious magic and poverty through economic failure are constantly worried about.[69]

According to the Reichel-Dolmatoffs, supernatural beings govern all interpersonal relationships and serve as a social control with every individual living in constant fear of the magical aggression of others; the general social atmosphere in the village is one of mutual suspicion, latent danger, and hidden hostility, which pervade every aspect of life. The most immediate reason for magical aggression is envy, for-example, over good health, economic assets, good physical appearance, popularity, a harmonious family life, or a new dress. These aspects of life offer prestige, power, and authority over others. Aggressive magic, therefore, is seen to prevent or to destroy this power and to act as a leveling force.[70]

In Aritama the concept of universe involves a complex magical system' into which man is born and in which he exists without ever being able to achieve security and peace. Individuals are unwelcome guests in a world controlled by unknown and unknowable powers that are essentially hostile to mankind. The universe is thought to be beyond human understanding, and all speculation about its meaning is deemed idle. In short, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs report that

> It is taken for granted that man can never know the laws that govern life and the universe, because these laws themselves are thought to be inconsistent, to change in an arbitrary and unforeseeable fashion. There are eclipses and earthquakes, droughts and tempests, landslides and epidemics; healthy people die suddenly while an ill person might live for many years; virtue is seldom rewarded and crime is seldom punished. These facts are thought to be ample proof that there is no order, no justice, no hope at all. People believe that there is no way to forestall disaster or to invite success.[71]

[68] Reichel-Dolmatoff and Reichel-Dolmatoff, *People of Aritama*, p.449.

[69] Ibid., pp. 449-450.

[70] Ibid., p. 396.

[71] Ibid., pp. 439-440. Regarding views toward life, the Reichel-DoImatoffs note (p. 441) that every individual is believed to be born under a particular sign or star that determines

Owing to this view of the laws of the universe, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs conclude. Aritamans make little effort to teach their children to tell the truth. Lying is thought to be a natural tendency that cannot be avoided. Children sometimes boast in the presence of parents or other adults that they are better liars than other children, and adults will not interfere. Stealing, however, is severely punished, particularly if a child steals something belonging to a member of another household. It is not the act of stealing itself which is considered improper, but the possible consequences, for example, enmity between two families. All acts of physical aggression a child might commit against his mother are also severely punished. but little attention is paid to verbal aggression and insults. Obscene language is never considered improper for children.[72]

With a "realistic view" reminiscent of Oscar Lewis *(Life in a Mexican Village: Tepoztlán Restudied.* 1961), the Reichel-Dolmatoffs report:

> The prestige of being respected is gained mainly through authority and dominance over others. The desire to dominate is never openly expressed; as a matter of fact, any overt sign of it would be strongly condemned, but nevertheless it is a basic motivation which, can be inferred from many ramifications of individual behavior. Al1 human motivations are believed to be essential1y suspicious, and co-operation is never based upon mutual confidence, trust, or affection. On the contrary, every individual expects the worst from his fellow men, be they his brothers, parents, or children. Social unity is then based upon a relationship of dominion and submission. Every individual is subordinated to others, but dominates stil1 others.[73]

In contrast to views of social relations portrayed by García Márquez, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs explain that ceremonial patterns of conduct (demonstrated in politeness. greeting, and visiting) are much emphasized, and facial control is highly valued: smiles, laughter, tears, rage, sadness, pain, or fear should never be shown, and to maintain a "wooden face" is a prerequisite for being considered a "serious person." that is, a dependable character. On the street, most people look straight ahead or downward and cast only furtive glances sideward: people walk purposefully but with worried faces. Self-control is asked for in all dealings with others, be it the immediate family, the kin, or society in general, and the correct phrasing of greetings and condolences and fluency of expression are the most desirable characteristics for "serious" persons,'[74]

his existence in every detail. Because there is no escape from fate and predestination, it is thought useless to try to live according to certain norms or to make efforts to change one's lot. Individual responsibility, then, is not a recognized quality. The individual never believes that he himself could be responsible for his having failed in a certain endeavor.

[72] Ibid., p. 96.

[73] Ibid., p, 442.

[74] Ibid., p. 443.

Thus, the Reichel-Dolmatoffs depict Aritama as a mentally and physically "sick community." For example, its people suffer from the problem of tooth decay to such an extent (few persons over twenty years of age retain all of their teeth and sets of false teeth are unknown in this town without a dentist) that some persons even have healthy teeth removed by "traveling dentists" to avoid tooth pain and suffering in the future. Impliedly, then, the population of the area is too sick or worried about being sick to enjoy life very much at all.[75] If any single description serves to wipe out the idea of cultural paradise, it is the following:

> Rarely does a mother clean an infant after he has defecated. Maybe she will rub the baby's buttocks strongly with a towel or with her own skirt, or will wipe the soiled parts of his body with her bare hands. A very common practice is to call a dog and to hold the infant in a position so the animal can lick his but-tocks and anus. Dogs are frequently trained to devour all excrements inside the house and are called in should a child soil the floor or a bed. Many infants, when crawling on the floor, eat earth and dust, which, often has been moistened by someone's urine. The eating of feces is also quite common and is hardly ever discouraged.[76]

It is clear, then, that García Márquez's novelistic view built upon emotional childhood memories is challenged by the Reichel-Dolmatoffs' anthropological research, observation, and analysis. If on the one hand anthropolical research may have missed some of the spiritual qualities ascertainable only by an "insider" who had spent his early years in the community, on the other hand, the novel may reflect an exaggerated view of idealized people.[77]

In confronting the Colombian "realities" evoked in García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* and the Reichel-Dolmatoffs' *The People of Aritama,* we face the inevitable problem of comparing art and social science. Do the books deal with separate realities or do they deal with related realities? The Reichel-Dolmatoffs suggest a causal relationship between the realities: hallucinatory and superstitious images perceived by the people of Aritama are in large part caused by traumatic experiences that begin when very young children commonly witness parental

[75] Ibid., pp. 46 and 332.

[76] Ibid., p. 86.

[77] From one point of view, idealization of life in Macondo is as necessary for Latin Americans as dreams are for people everywhere. According to Leopoldo Maller, Freud's theoretical analysis of the uses of dreams is put into practice in García Márquez's *One Hundred of Solitude*. In this view, dreams are not pathologic but allow, as Plato wrote, certain pleasures and desires not disciplined by reason to be resolved. Dreams also allow man's escape from savagery, vengeance, and so on. (See Muller, "De Viena a Macondo," in *Psicoanalisis y literatura en 100 Años de Soledad* [Montevideo: Fundación de Cultura Universitaria, 1969], pp. 4-7.)

coitus,[79] become confused from watching childbirth:' and succumb along with persons of all ages to disoriented mental states because of nutritional deficiencies and illness.[80]

Despite different vantage points in art and social science, however, it is important to note that García Márquez and the Reichel-Dolrnatoffs would agree implicitly with us that for the world of Macondo/ Aritama what people believe happened is more important than what really happened. The people there are so accustomed to living with magic and the irrational that everything that happens is acceptable as part of a reality-in the end reality is myth mixed with reality.

III. Elitelore and Folklore

We have attempted here to advance theory of lore integrating literature, oral history, folklore, and anthropology. We suggest that "lore"

[78] According to the Reichel-Dolmatoffs (*People of Aritama*, p. 419), "All children sleep in the same room with their parents or other adults, and generally share their beds or hammocks during the first years of life. As many houses consist of only one single room, this situation is unavoidable, but even in cases where two or more rooms are available, it is usual for all those who live under the same roof to share the same sleeping quarters. Furthermore, as we have already pointed out, the people show great fear of sleeping in complete darkness and always keep a light, however feeble, burning all night in a comer of the room. Under these circumstances it is natural that children would sooner or later have occasion to witness parental intercourse, as this usually takes place in the sleeping quarters. Even if the couple should retire to the next room, the frequent lack of doors and the presence of light would make observation possible."

[79] All children are allowed to be present when their mother or any other woman gives birth, and. as noted by the Reichel-Dolmatoffs (ibid .. pp. 423-424), they watch every phase of the process. The midwife, an' old woman, takes over the household, puts a large cauldron on the fire to heat water, closes all doors and windows to keep out "evil winds or airs." lights candles, ties a kerchief around her head, and begins smoking a cigar. "The parallelism between witch and midwife is thus quite evident. In infantile imagination the midwife commits an act of violence in an atmosphere of general anguish, screams, and excitement. There is blood and the steaming cauldron, the rustle of white linen, the candles and the prayers. Picking up the crying newborn she cuts the umbilical cord with her scissors, cauterizes the end with a burning candle or her cigar, and then, by putting her mouth to his nose, she sucks out the phlegm to make the child breathe more freely. Shortly afterward she can be seen burying the placenta in the backyard, her hands and dress still bloodstained. Or else she can be observed crouching near the fire and concocting an herbal infusion. Exactly the same images that are associated with witches can thus be seen associated with midwifery: cauldron, candles, cigars, bedsheets, scissors, prayers, the cutting of a mysterious 'tube', and the burying of something in the backyard. All this, seen by the uncertain light of swaying candles and under pressure of the excitement present, is bound to make a deep impression upon the child who watches the events from some dark comer. It is a scene of aggression during which a newborn child is 'stolen', 'eaten', 'castrated', 'killed', 'buried', or 'cooked'. Sometimes the mother dies in childbirth, and the scene of violence ends with a wake, with a coffin topped with candles standing in the middle of the room."

[80] Comatose or hypnogenetic hallucinations often occur when people vividly imagine that

does not have much to do with "truth." and we divide lore into categories for analysis in order to show how the interplay of oral and written sources reveals lore in the making.

Lore is defined as noninstitutionalized knowledge based on point of view and life history experiences. Folklore is seen to involve a "collective" aspect (in its traditional sense defined by motif indexes and other generalized patterns) as well as an "individual" aspect (within a particular context heretofore rejected as being idiosyncratic rather than folkloric). In the same manner, collective elitelore concerns typological patterns in contrast to individual elitelore reflected in the lives of unique individuals. Whereas elitelore and folklore are held by elites, only elitelore is found among leaders, in varying degrees of sophistication and at all levels of society.

We have applied the theory of lore to the Colombian novel. *One Hundred* Years *of Solitude,* in two ways. First, García Márquez's written elite lore is tested against his oral views, the result revealing dramatically different perspectives about his motives in writing about life in a small village in northeastern Colombia and the meaning of his novel. Second. we have tested the novelist's romanticized version of a historical past and idealized mode of living in Macondo against the anthropologist's view of Aritama wherein painful reality is dissected and analyzed with scientific detachment.

It could be argued that both versions are correct in that they are complementary. In the case of Aritama the role of the social scientist is to look at life with skepticism, to point out the scabs and sores of society. In the case of Macondo the role of the artist and literary critic is to give us an optimistic view of life that partially shows the ultimate goodness of human existence. That a romanticized view of "the people" may be necessary at times to offset patent U.S. technological superiority by advancing the idea of Latin American cultural superiority cannot be ignored. Since publication of *Ariel* by Jose Enrique Rodó in 1900, many Latin Americans have used the concept of cultural superiority to mobilize national self-conscience and to overcome self-destructive inferiority complexes which make Latin America vulnerable to excessive influence by the United States. In rejecting "vulgar materialism" fostered by the United States, however, the tradition encompassed by Rod6 and García Márquez, among others, has fostered-at least implicitly-a rationale for leaving the masses alone.

Is García Márquez's myth more beneficial to society than the "reality" revealed by the Reichel-Dolmatoffs' research which has unintended

they see or smell food, that they find trees bearing ripe fruit, or that they are offered food and eat abundantly (ibid., p. 429).

results? Such "science" may lead some elites to have contempt and disregard for the rural poor, the mestizo, the Indian, the black, thus serving to confirm these elites in their long-held lore: if people are fatalistic, unclean, passive, resistant to change, and refusing of science and technology, nothing can be done about their status in life. Because of such attitudes, lower classes, who live marginal lives, are relegated to a state of limbo, a state of nationless peoples.

Conversely, however, the same criticism can be leveled against works eulogizing "the spirit of the people" because they help other elites cling to the romanticized version of reality, to the idealized folk culture, and to likewise practice the art of self-deception in refusing to see the utter poverty and misery of the people. These elites find comfort and delusion in their desire to present a happy satisfied "pueblo" (virtuous, hardworking, resilient people who lack incapacitating alcoholism. ill health. prostitution. broken families. or other visible side effects of a poverty-striken nation); and they may rely on folklore to justify leaving the people to their own devices.

Given the above alternative views, the potential exists for misinterpretation by cultural elites of what collective and individual folklore is all about, misinterpretation that confuses political elites who translate ideas into society's policies. If policy results always generated a better standard of living for isolated peoples, misinterpretations of ideas would not make much difference. But what if the people of an isolated area are left uninterrupted by communication and outside influences because it is thought that it is better to leave them in peaceful paradise? Often such a policy result is ironically supported by the elitelore of both the left and the tight of the political spectrum. The case for "leaving the rural peoples in their bliss" has been advocated by some leftists in Latin America. but· it is also supported by those rightists who have a stake in the economics of perpetuating the status quo and who argue that rural dwellers should be left alone in their misery because "they are incapable of bettering themselves anyway."

Problems of meaning in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* are compounded in other ways, one involving time and one content. First, the story of Macondo ends in 1928-the year García Márquez was born. If the region is like so many others that have undergone serious decline, innovative persons who are upwardly mobile in "business" and "society"[81] departed in search of new opportunity. Anthropologists arriving to study the region some thirty years later could, then, find a much different situation than written about by the novelist. With regard to con-

[81] The terms "business" and "society," of course, are relative concepts with different meanings at national and local levels.

tent, the book yields historical insight into the "Spanish mind." As García Márquez told Fernández-Brase, readers must be aware of the fact that *One Hundred Yean of Solitude* is, like *Don Quijote de la Mancha,* intended to confront reality rather than to reveal it.[82] For García Márquez "the Spanish people have been the most absurd people in the world;"[83] this explanation apparently accounts for the historical disorganization of Latin American society wherein crazy things are capable of happening on a daily basis that could seemingly happen only in someone's imagination.

Thus, we can see the essence of Latin American life in *One Hundred Yean of Solitude* in the same way that we may see it in a mural of a surrealist painter. But these essences are based upon the authors' lore and can be interpreted by the reader in many different ways. Many readers of *One Hundred Yean of Solitude* see the book as revealing the essence of life for each of Latin America's thousands of rural villages. But the novel contains more than a rural clement because García Márquez has injected into it not only the folklore that was passed on to him during childhood but also his own elitelore based upon his cosmopolitan life experiences in Cuba, Mexico, and Europe. No one village could encompass García Márquez's hundreds of rural and urban lore elements synthesized for most of Latin America. Perhaps for this reason the novel can be so well understood within Latin America and so misunderstood outside of Latin America.. Macondo exists precisely because it does not exist.

Elitelore mixes with folklore, then, when the elite create their own "reality" from what they understand to be the lore of the people. The resulting fictionalized folklore may have results unintended by the author, as in the case of García Márquez who sought in his own way to tell us that men are born daily in Latin America condemned to live in solitude and in fear of engendering children with pig tails-that is, to

[82] Quoted in Fernández-Braso, *Gabriel García Márquez*, p. 54. Although it can be argued that art is exempt from confrontation with reality. García Márquez himself would not agree. Thus he told Fernández-Braso (p. 61): "I believe that sooner or later reality ends by emulating fantasy. In my short story 'Los Funerales de la Mama Grande.' I relate an unthinkable, ostentatious trip by the Pope to a Colombian village, and eleven years after I wrote it, the Pope goes to Colombia. It is even more amusing to note that when I wrote the story, the President of Colombia was tall and bony, but I described him plump and bald so that it would not seem to be a personal allusion; but it happens that the President who will now receive the Pope is, as fate would have it, plump and bald. Another case: Fernando Vidal Buzzi, director of Editorial Sudamericana, found and photographed a ship abandoned in the middle of the jungle (like the abandoned ship that I describe in *One Hundred Yean of Solitude*). And a final case: I have here, and you may quote it, news from Barranquilla about a young man who at twenty-seven years old has (finally) dared to reveal that he has something more than other men: a pig's tail."

[83] Quoted in Fernández-Braso, *Gabriel García Márquez*. p. 83.

live in inhuman, ridiculous conditions subject to a fate not chosen by themselves. But when the story becomes so wonderful that ridiculous is seen as positive, the unintended consequences of lore become more important than the intended ones. Thus, in the case of García Márquez, an attack on solitude becomes its very defense. And as García Márquez's powerful individual elitelore is diffused in *One Hundred Yean of Solitude,* as the cultural elite misinterpret for the political elite the lore of the folk, it is the folk themselves who may gradually come to collectively accept that misinterpretation.

By demonstrating the interplay of elitelore and folklore we hope to have demonstrated the need for an expanded appreciation and understanding of lore. In examining elite lore and folklore we can begin to understand the processes of lore in the making, lore that influences and interacts in a major way with all levels of societies.