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«The South was in its Glory»: Southern Ladies Remember Plantation Life

In the title of my essay, and in the text, I use the traditional terminology when I mention women of the Southern elite such as planters' or former planters' wives and daughters, wealthy politicians' and business elite's wives and daughters. Southern women of the wealthy white elite became "belles" (before marriage) and "ladies" (when married) in the Southern mythology and Southern legendary representation of ante-bellum society.

Sociologist John Shelton Reed quotes a definition from Wilbur Fisk Tillett who in 1891 wrote: "American civilization has nowhere produced a purer and loftier type of refined and cultured womanhood than existed in the South before the war...". The Southern Lady stereotypes were constructed on their spotless purity, "refined and cultivated minds," "neatness, grace and beauty of person."

More than anything else Southern Ladies were celebrated for their "laudable pride of family and devotion to home, kindred and loved ones..." (Reed and Reed 1996, 281).

Southern Ladies were white, indeed, by definition. The groundbreaking book of Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady,* has given a new historical meaning to the role, and the reality of that part of Southern society - white women of the elite.

Scott's insightful and well-documented presentation seems to have also institutionalized the "Lady" as a well-defined protagonist of Southern history both in the opulent pre-Civil War era, and in the unexpected changes brought by the defeat and economic crisis following the war. Moreover, Scott discovered in her study that "Southern women in the years before 1860 had been the subjects - perhaps the victims - of an image of woman which was at odds

with the reality of their lives."

"The image", Scott argues, " was weakened but not destroyed by the experiences of the Civil War and Reconstruction. It continued to shape the behaviour of Southern women for many years and has never entirely disappeared" (Scott 1970, x),

Finally, what is more important and seems also paradoxical, the image of fragility, purity, and leisurely attitudes, explains, in Scott's analysis, "the kinds of women who appeared in Southern reform movements: those of impeccable antecedents and secure family position" (Scott 1970, x).

My essay will trace some of the moments in the lives of two Southern Ladies - Rebecca Latimer Felton and Belle Kearney - who became progressive reformers but never forgot their mythical past, as they show in their *Memoirs.*

Rebecca Felton became the first woman Senator in the United States (an important event even if she was appointed for a short term as a tribute to her popularity after Tom Watson's death), and Belle Kearney was elected Senator of her state, Mississippi, becoming the first woman in the South to be elected state Senator, despite the fact that Mississippi had been for so long hostile to women's suffrage.

Both in Felton's book *Country Life in Georgia in The Days of My Youth* (1919), and in Kearney's *Memoirs, A Slaveholder's Daughter* (1900), we find elements of what William Chafe called "the paradox of change" (Chafe 1991). Southern ladies were the protagonists of a controversial period in which Southern society was torn between the memories of a plantation past and the need to accept a transformation into a modern society approaching the 20th century. In Southern elite white women's memories, the Old South was romanticized as a sort of "golden age" because they were raised in a family background of loyalty to the Confederacy and to the "Lost Cause", and therefore, they did not want to infringe upon the beliefs of their fathers who fought a glorious fight for virtue and liberty (Wilson 1980). For that reason neither Rebecca Felton nor Belle Kearney intended to put the basic values of their regional past under scrutiny.

It took a second generation of women to awaken a new

awareness of racial inequality in Southern society, and other Southern ladies, like Katharine Du Pre Lumpkin (Georgia) or Jessie Daniel Ames (East Texas), were able to unravel the iniquities of segregation in the 1940s and to become leaders of anti-lynching campaigns as well as defenders of racial equality (Du Pre Lumpkin 1946; Hall 1979).

On the contrary, in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, Southern women lived among the burning memories of recent tragic events of defeat and poverty, constantly recalled by their family members, because, as Katharine Du Pre Lumpkin's father used to repeat, children should not forget (Du Pre Lumpkin 1946, 1991).

Yet it is amazing to see how Southern women belonging to the privileged upper class of former slaveholders, like Felton and Kearney, moved onward from the so called "proper sphere" in which Victorian codes had kept women, broke the silence and courageously faced the public sphere to speak on behalf of the progress of their region and society.

Their role in the process of transformation of the Old South into the New was twofold because they were at the same time "hostages of the Lost Cause" (to quote Marjorie Spruill Wheeler) and worshippers of a myth, but also New Women engaged in the process of modernization. While commemorating the past with nostalgia they did not remain blind to the needs of women to achieve new goals and obtain new rights, thus acquiring a new status in their social work, from mission work to club activities, a long way, however, toward the final victory of woman's suffrage.

"A land without ruins is a land without memories ... a land without memories is a land without history" (Kearney 1900, 1).

Rebecca Latimer Felton published her second autobiographical book, *Country Life in Georgia,* in 1919, at the age of 84. She had written a previous book in 1911, *My Memoirs of Georgia Politics, Written by Mrs. William H. Felton,* but for the purposes of my essay I will just briefly touch on some issues of the 1919 book, which is a true contribution to the creation of the plantation myth.

Rebecca insightfully gives us back the contours of Old South culture and life such as country life in an era of opulence, self-sufficiency, food and nutrition habits, hospitality, women's role within the plantation, female education, and some crucial attitudes toward the issue of race relations.

Sometimes Rebecca Felton is able to describe scents and voices, colors and sounds of her childhood and adolescence, a world re-thought in her old age but still lively and made more interesting by her comments and opinions as an adult person.

One thing always puzzled Rebecca and was an enigma to her "as well as to many good men and women", and that was the silence to which women were forced into even in church, while on the contrary, women "could shout at revivals". If one ever dared to pray in a meeting, she "became the talk of the town for a good while and she was one by herself" (Felton 1919, 64-65).

This sad feeling of solitude and ostracism for a woman whose only sin was to express her religious feelings in public remained deeply impressed in Rebecca's mind but did not prevent her from becoming an outspoken orator when she became a leader in the Temperance Movement or in the suffrage campaign, and she used to defend herself vigorously against men's criticism of her pleading the cause of prohibition, of prison reforms, and of women's rights.
On her plantation self-sufficiency was the rule. "It was a land of plenty...," she says, where "except salt, iron, sugar and coffee, everything was raised by those early Georgia planters necessary for human comfort and sustenance" (Felton 1919, 34). Moreover, "All men's wear was woven at home, coats and pants, and the wool was grown on the farms ..., spun and woven just as cotton and flax cloth was fashioned ... the homespun clothes were warm and enduring" (Felton 1919, 32).

The duties of women on a plantation were innumerable. "They were constantly busy, often with cloth-making work ... everything that could be grown at home was diligently cultivated and the early fortunes of Georgians were promoted by such thrift, economy and conservation of resources" (Felton 1919, 33). Moreover, there was the quilting which was never interrupted in winter or summer, and in early Georgia "homes woolen 'coverlids'

woven at home, and quilts innumerable, made by hand were the bed coverings in all such well-to-do Georgia homes" (Felton 1919, 29). As we know now, quilting (a true form of elegant art-craft) was one of the rare occasions for women to gather, taking turns in their homes, and to talk about their problems. These gatherings became a sort of ante-litteram and informal women's clubs where women could hear their own voices.

Rebecca does not mention, though, what Elizabeth Fox Genovese discovered about black women's skills: "slave women cultivated their own skills in quilting and thereby testified to their distinct Afro-American aesthetic sense of fashion and elegance"; Rebecca's memories were focused on white society.

At any rate Rebecca's description fits well into the analysis of Fox Genovese who points out how "to a large extent American and Western European societies have assigned textile production to women, and slaveholding women proved no exception". "The preparation of clothing," Fox Genovese argues, "accounted for a significant portion of their time, and in this case they participated in the actual labor" (Fox Genovese 1988, 120).

Rebecca's early recollections cluster especially around one woman in her family: her Georgia grand-mother, Mrs. Lucy Talbot Swift, because she was often at her home where she could observe her "abounding hospitality". Remembering her grand-mother Rebecca depicts the portrait of the typical plantation mistress in the series of duties imposed by tradition on this central protagonist of plantation fortunes: child-bearing and child-rearing (her grand-mother was mother of eleven children "and all reached maturity, except two that lived to eleven and twelve years" - a good record in times when the infant death rate was very high); "industry, management, executive ability in caring and carrying on her household affairs ...". These were wonderful memories for Rebecca and an example that lingered with her in her own extended life.

Rebecca never heard her grand-mother complaining about the extremely heavy burdens of house-keeping, and neither did Rebecca herself, when she got married and had her duties to fulfill at the age of 18, seem to find the burdens of her life too much to bear. She never talked about the sense of inadequacy during the

early years of marriage that Catherine Clinton describes in her analysis of plantation mistresses' diaries (Clinton 1982).

Mrs. Swift's example was an education to Rebecca, and we take pleasure in following Rebecca, who "trotted around grandmother" in her untiring moving from one duty to another, outside and inside the house ... "from dwelling to the garden, to the milk dairy, to the poultry house, to the loom house, to the big meat house, where rations were issued once a day, and to the flour and meal house, where there was always a superabundance of supplies for white and colored". Inasmuch as she had fowl of all domestic kinds to look after, including the fattening of pigs.

Food-raising and preserving was of the utmost importance in the economy of a plantation. For example, pigs that Rebecca's grand-mother had to look after, were the backbone of the Southern farm and played a central role in the region's economy and culture, as S. Jonathan Bass writes in a recent essay published in *Southern Cultures,* "throughout the nineteenth century hog meat was the staple item in the Southern diet" (Bass 1995).

"Peach and honey ..."

Community values, kinship and the close ties of solidarity among wealthy planters made the occasions of meeting together true "sumptuous affairs".

Rebecca quotes, as an example, the excitement of marriage celebrations that went on for days "with a different dress for each day". Abundance was the rule and, as Rebecca remembers, "everything good to eat was bountifully furnished, meats in abundance, all sorts of home collections and concoctions topped off with pound-cake and syllabub". Moreover, there was always "gin and rum and peach brandy", and, much to the pleasure of the youngest guests, "loaf sugar brought from Charleston and Augusta".

Childhood was surely made happier by those goodies that Rebecca "can remember with accurate recollection": ... "those beautiful snowy cones of white sugar encased in bluish-green papers that were always in request when company came, and the

sideboard drinks set forth in generous array". "Peach and honey was in reach of everybody that prided in their home".

The descriptions speak for an "abounding hospitality" when friends and neighbors were brought in "at least for one meal, many to spend a night".

The recurrent visits to grand-mother are one of the highlights of Rebecca's childhood as she often refers to them with intensity and joy, due both to the excitement of the journey ("It required one day and a half by gig or barouche ... one night of lodging to be secured on the trip ..."), and to the expectations of those visits.

Rebecca builds up a crescendo of emotions when she describes not only grand-mather's "big, clean yard", the "milk dairy where not only butter and milk were kept", but also "pies and cakes that could be handed out to little folks when they were hungry"; memories of those intense pleasures come back in Rebecca's words from the "dense and delightful shade" of the "enormous white oak tree" to the Proustian evocative skill of "the odor of those pies and cakes" and "the wonderful beaten biscuits that I ate for breakfast along with rich red ham gravy, or the dinner time experience with a plateful of chicken and dumplings, and also a generous slice of pot peach pie, smothered with cream and sugar" (Felton 1919, 39).

The tale of rural abundance permeates the pages of Rebecca's recollections, including the watermelon "superabundance" and the mutual help with neighbors if their crop failed. In addition festivities like corn-shucking time were accompanied by corn-shucking melodies, or religious meetings which made people gather and socialize.

Of course, there was "plenty of colored help to cook it all and serve it and partake bountifully of what was left over" (Felton 1919, 40). Rebecca was too young to see that in that same plenty of black hands and in the "peculiar institution" of slavery, the tragedy of her country would be rooted because, as she confesses, she took "no thought of the morrow".

The myth of the opulent South would not be complete without other aspects of material culture such as dress fashion. First of all "... there were fine English and French calicoes and muslins

and 'northern homespun' came from New England fine and white, while our southern factory cloth was rough and unbleached after cotton mills were erected in Georgia". Rebecca in this description unconsciously sheds light on the Southern dependence on the North and on the fact that Southern wealth was systematically converted into northern profits (Gaston 1970, 46), but she does not discuss this question at length and chooses only to give further details of the elegance and beauty of southern ladies' garments. In Rebecca's opinion, no other reason except slavery was to be considered the cause of secession, and no economic concern or clash of interests could have caused such a bloody war. She, in fact, repeatedly stressed in her writings that "...it was slavery, nothing but slavery that made Georgia secede ... facts, nothing but facts will furnish reliable history" (Felton 1919, 81).

At any rate, in the ante-bellum days, fashionable ladies "wore voluminous skirts and many of them ... as large as the sidewalk", "the body to the dress was tight as beeswax ... and it was fashionable to faint on occasions ... everybody, women and children, wore bonnets" (Felton 1919, 64). Bonnets, indeed, were not only elegant but necessary to protect Southern belles' skin from sunlight. Rebecca recalls how "a pretty white complexion was the call of that period; the young women were scrupulous in care of the skin" (Felton 1919, 32).

Female education

Rebecca Felton acknowledges her luck in attending school from the elementary level through college, a rare opportunity, because "...there were only a few denominational schools for girls who were fortunate in securing a college education ... and not a free school for the masses throughout the confines of the Empire State of the South" (Felton 1919, 71).

She attended a Methodist college in Madison, Georgia: "Madison was a remarkable educational centre, the Baptists and Methodists had each a girls' college". She received her diploma in July 1852, at "sharp seventeen".

She got married shortly after she was eighteen and became a

plantation mistress alongside with her husband, Mr. William Felton, a planter, physician and later, politician.

Hard times were awaiting young Rebecca both as a mother (the death of two infant children), and as a Southern woman, while the winds of war were blowing closer and closer and a "time of madness and a sort of mad-hysteria" changed the South.

The opulence of the past was gone and "upon nobody did the storm fall more dreadful and unexpected than upon women" (Felton 1919, 101).

When the war was over, it was her diploma that helped Rebecca open a school on her own land. "When the war of the fateful sixties left us impoverished", writes Rebecca, "obliged to earn the bread we ate, until the plantation could be restored and farm labor secured, my husband and myself decided to open a school at Cartersville and do something for the young people who had been almost without school facilities, and also provide the wherewith for a start making some sort of honest living owing to our poverty" (Felton 1919, 73).

The war was seen as the disruption of opulence, and in the "emergence of war strenuosity the remembrance of those affluent households with always something good to cook inside, and no stint anywhere in big house or negro cabin, appeals to me with most suggestive force" (Felton 1919, 33).

Rebecca saw her fortunes wrecked by war and then rebuilt them in its wake, largely due to her own hard work and business acumen.

The South was in its glory": Belle Kearney's memories.

Belle Kearney was born too late to be a slaveholder's daughter, as she writes, not without irony: "The 6th of March, on the plantation at Vernon, my eyes caught their first glimpse of the light of life, - just two months and six days too late for me to be a Constitutional slaveholder" (Kearney 1900; 1969, 9).

She, therefore, was not so lucky as Rebecca Felton was in the enjoyment of the wealth and the glory of the old, opulent State of Mississippi, and when she recalls her own family's past, she uses

the tones of nostalgia for a world that she did not experience: "The South was in its glory. It was very rich and very proud. The wealth consisted of slaves and plantations ...".

It was, also, in Belle's view, an orderly society compared with the disruption following the war: "The social system was simple, homogeneous. Three castes existed: the slaveholders constituted the gentry ... the middle class carried on the concerns of commerce and the trades incident to a vast agricultural area and were men of affairs in its churches and municipalities. The third class constituted a yeomanry ... small farmers who, for the most part, preempted homesteads on the poor lands, sometimes owning a few slaves, and who lived in a world of their own" (Kearney 1969, 2).

While she describes what she was able to learn from her parents' recollections, she defines Southern life in the same terms as Rebecca Felton did, in a scenario of "refinement and luxury", offering images of a usable past for the creation of a myth.

The presence of the Lady is central to the myth in Belle's autobiography as in Felton's recollections: "Ladies of wealth and position were surrounded by refinement and luxury. They had their maids and coachmen and a retinue of servants" (Kearney 1969, 3).

Social life was scheduled and carried on according to rituals and codes: "There was a time honored social routine from which they seldom varied; a decorous exchange of visits, elaborate dinings and other interchanges of dignified courtesies". Moreover, in order to keep up with the standards of colonial traditions which planters maintained originated from their chivalric status, "every entertainment was punctilious, strongly suggestive of colonial gatherings".

Belle gives us a description of prosperity and economic growth when she defines the area of her family properties and of the kinship that was established among relatives and friends: "Mississippi, like her sister states, was at the height of prosperity. The wealthier classes were congregated in the counties bordering the great river, and its tributaries and in the rich prairie belt of the north-east section".

The n1ap of plantation wealth is thus defined, and the stage is set for the protagonists: the vast landed estates, Belle writes, "were

owned by ten or twelve families ... the majority of neighbors were his (Belle's father) relatives, the rest were personal friends. These constituted a congenial and delightful society" (Kearney 1969, 4).

The women of the South, "devoted wives and worshipful mothers", "realized their obligations and met them with reflective efficiency". As marriage was the ultimate goal of their existence and was planned from the cradle by interested relatives, they accepted their roles as the heads of their households.

Both Rebecca Felton and Belle Kearney cherished fond memories of their fathers and depict them as examples of chivalric virtues.

Rebecca's father was, in fact, "a man of advanced ideas, while the mother was the gentlest and most religious of women, imparting to them (the children) their religious ardor in the temperance movement" (Felton 1919, 68). As we know, Rebecca Felton was in her adulthood one of the most prominent leaders in the Temperance Movement in the South.

As for Belle's father, he seems to personify the cliché that the builders of the plantation myth would have used in the New South Era to glorify the Southern past: "Father was a fine type of Southern gentleman of the old regime; in person tall, slender, well-proportioned, blue-eyed, brown-haired, with delicate, clear cut features, and noble expression; cultured, high-bred, courtly; full of intense family pride, brave, generous, chivalrous" (Kearney 1969, 5).

He was a loving father too, and yet unable to understand his daughter when she decided to reach new goals in her life and, as she claimed, to become an independent creature by leaving the protective walls of the home and finding a job.

"The desire of my heart has been to lead the life of a thoroughly independent creature" (Kearney 1969, 66).

The war came, and in its aftermath "The land which has been celebrated for its prosperity was the habitation of wrecks of human being and ruins of fortunes ...". The orderly society was devastated and "... women were afraid to leave their front doors without being armed or accompanied by a male escort ... crime swept like a prairie fire over communities" (Kearney 1969, 11).

In her apocalyptic vision Belle saw her state as "dismantled and dishonored" ... "then came the days of Reconstruction with their attendant terrors" (Kearney 1969, 15).

School age came for Belle and the story of her schooling was thorny and difficult all along.

First of all, she received her first elementary tutoring at home. Then she was sent to a public school (a law was passed by the Legislature of Mississippi in 1846 establishing a system of public schools), only to be kept again at home because the teacher who had been appointed was "a strange lady from Maine", that is to say, "a northerner", a target of Southern prejudice.

When that same teacher was selected by Southern patrons "for her quiet dignity" in the next session, Belle could go back to public school.

She was indeed happy because she was longing to receive an education, thus enjoying what she called "the beginning of a bright era".

Unfortunately, her father was unable to adjust to the changes brought about by emancipation and failed both as a planter and as a lawyer. Yet when Belle reached the age of thirteen and her public school had finished, she was sent to the Young Ladies' Academy in Canton "for as long as father would be able to bear the expense of tuition fee" (Kearney 1969, 36).

Belle's excitement in receiving a higher education is expressed in her enthusiasm for hard work "... midnight found me at my books ... I began to dream the dreams of graduation" (Kearney 1969, 39).

Alas, for her "fine schemes": "after being at the Academy for only two years, father was compelled to take me home because he was unable longer to pay the monthly tuition of five dollars ...".

From that tragic moment onward, the emancipation of Belle Kearney begins as she starts realizing the true condition of women in society, and she wants to rebel against tradition and codes of behaviour.

She knew well that industrial colleges, where poor girls could work their way through, were not in existence, and the doors of state universities, where tuition was free, were then open only to

boys. There was nothing in Mississippi for young women except high-priced boarding schools and female academies.

A "new woman" develops from this adolescent, hungry to learn and prevented from pursuing her education, when she complains: "It is humiliating to women for colleges, academies and boarding schools established for their education to be called 'female'. There is no sex in institutions of learning" (Kearney 1969, 40).

She knew, also, that household drudgery was natural and unavoidable, and public work was "monstruous and impossible" for elite women.

Therefore, she must surrender for three long years during which "she died a thousand deaths", following the tradition of balls, visits with friends and relatives, horse-riding, fishing, attending picnics in summer, attending theaters, and card parties. But in those "fateful months", when the foundations of her ill health were also laid, "she abhorred the way she spent her time".

In the depths of desperation, she eventually found the courage to work for a salary in order to pay for her education, teaching school at the beginning, without her father's consent.

From private tutoring in her own home to public school teaching ("...no more than a hut ... in heat and dust, in rain and mud, a little school house by the roadside ... a lesson in self-command") (Kearney 1969, 70-80), Belle Kearney won her battle for independence, and she became from then a hard worker, a defender of women's rights, a fighter on behalf of moral issues like temperance, until the final and most courageous campaigns for woman's suffrage.

In Belle Kearney's words temperance was "the golden key that unlocked the prison doors of pent-up possibilities. It was the generous liberator, the joyous iconoclast, the discoverer, the developer of southern women ... the natural outcome of their desperate struggle for individual freedom" (Kearney 1969, 118).

Yet while being able to break the rules of silence and the Victorian codes of female behaviour, she remained profoundly rooted in her past, just as the "New South spokesmen who understood instinctively", as Paul Gaston argues, "that no program of reform could do violence to a universally cherished past and hope to succeed" (Gaston 1970, 153).

Rightly, Marjorie Spruill Wheeler believes that "above all, these women understood that their movement, which sought to modify the traditional relationship between the sexes by involving women in politics, must not appear to threaten other cherished ideas concerning Southern womanhood". Wheeler also maintains that "drawn from the social and political elite of the region, the leaders of the woman suffrage movement in the South were proud of the image of the Southern Lady and - at least in the early days - believed it could work at their advantage" (Spruill Wheeler 1993, 75).

As it turned out, Belle Kearney was also proud that, late in life, her parents both became suffragists. At the age of 71, Walter Kearney even accepted the Presidency of an Equal Rights Club which Belle helped organize.

When suffrage became law, Belle Kearney was one of the first Southern ladies to run for office. She lost her first political contest in 1922 (a bid for the United States Senate), but she admitted that "she enjoyed the campaign". Three months later, she ran for the State Senate and succeeded. In her career as a Senator, Belle Kearney was a moralist, supported prohibition, pledged to work for women's rights such as expanding opportunities for women to serve in appointed offices in State Government, and she co-sponsored an anti-lynching law (which failed to come out of the committee).

After her term expired and after a few more years of lecture tours, Belle returned to her beloved plantation where she was born and remained an interested by-stander in Mississippi politics until her death in 1939 (Spruill Wheeler 1993, 194; Tipton 1975).

To conclude, Southern Ladies' *Memoirs* show that "their primary identification was with their states and region" and that "they shared many of the ideas of Southerners on race and class" (Spruill Wheeler 1993, 184).

Surely, both Rebecca Felton and Belle Kearney were unable to disagree about race prejudice and white supremacy principles. Belle Kearney maintained strongly that "it is futile to advance a plea for the unreasonabless and unrighteousness of race prejudice. It is enough to say that it exists in the South and that it will persist there" (Kearney 1969, 91, 92). Rebecca Felton did not hesitate to

proclaim that lynching could be an acceptable substitute for the protection of white women if necessary; in Kearney's opinion, it could indeed be necessary "when there was a prevailing sense of insecurity wherever there are many negroes in the South, even if the people representative of the best element throughout the South are strongly opposed to lynching" (Kearney 1969, 96).

To understand the black mentality, "one must be born to it" Belle used to say, and both Rebecca and Belle seemed to be convinced that their slaves were obedient and faithful to the idyllic picture of the Old South and both accepted one of the most striking distortions of the Southern mind when they admitted that slavery was as much a burden to the master as to the slaves.

Black inferiority and white supremacy, paternalism and *noblesse oblige* reveal the ambiguity of Southern Ladies' belief that they could experience change and still be true to their essential "southernness".

In Anne Firor Scott's interpretation, the war was a watershed that speeded up social change for women (Scott 1970), while George Rable is more inclined to see Southern Ladies unable to question the "dogmas" of Southern society, whether concerning race, class or gender (Rable 1991). Jean Friedman prefers to see women's post-bellum experience as a process of a slow change that would gradually lead them to a new consciousness (Friedman 1985).

We undoubtedly feel that these recollections were inseparable from the social and economic history of the region, and, therefore, we must listen to them both as voices of an individual past and as expressions of a collective cultural identity.

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