

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE SURVEY

Historical fiction is never really about *who* any given historical figure actually *was*, but with who we are now and what it's possible for us to become — or what we might want to avoid at all costs.

— Dr Jeanne Reames.¹

1.1 – INTRODUCTION

C Louis Leipoldt is well known as an Afrikaans poet canonized in the Afrikaans literary system, as one of the early Driemanskap of Afrikaans poetry, for his poem *Oom Gert Vertel* (1911). The Leipoldt discourse in English is virtually non-existent, academically speaking, although a sizable popular discourse has developed around Leipoldt as a culinary figure.² Whilst this thesis concentrates on the value of Leipoldt's so-called 'English' novels one should not lose sight of the fact that in the first place he was a laureate author who twice received the highest award for Afrikaans literature — the Hertzog Prize for his volume of poetry *Skoonheidstroos* (1934) and for two of his dramas *Die Laaste Aand* and *Die Heks* (1944).³ In this respect, the following words by literary historian Peter Merrington about Leipoldt's 'variations' regarding his allegiances, is important:

While he began his literary career as a young man with moving and significant accounts of atrocities committed against the Dutch 'Cape rebels' in the South African War of 1899 – 1902, and while much of his lyrical poetry is quintessential to the Afrikaner national canon, his allegiances were far more complex and varied.⁴

Little was known about Leipoldt's English novels until the abridged versions of *Stormwrack*⁵ and *Gallows Gecko* of which the name was changed to *Chameleon on the Gallows* by Stephen Gray⁶, appeared, and since then the unedited, complete and final manuscripts of

¹Dr Jeanne Reames, Martin Professor of European History in the Department of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha, email to me dated 16 July 2011 (mreames@mail.unomaha.edu).

²Riaan Oppelt, 'C. Louis Leipoldt and the Role of the "Cape Malay" in South African Cookery', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 28(1), March 2012, pp. 51 – 68, wrote: 'Leipoldt regularly wrote about food and culinary traditions in South Africa and used his knowledge of local cuisine to argue against notions of "authentic Afrikaner dishes", instead insisting that the earliest authorities behind original South African dishes came from the "Cape Malay" population of the Western Cape.

³Dr. Zach Blomerus recently translated Leipoldt's *Die Heks* into English for his production at St Cyprians Grammar School in Kimberley. The play was performed over the weekend of 17/18 May 2012 at the school.

⁴Peter Merrington, 'C. Louis Leipoldt's "Valley trilogy" and Contested South African Nationalisms in the Early Twentieth century', *Current Writing*, 15(2), 2003, p. 33.

⁵C Louis Leipoldt, *Stormwrack* (ed. Stephen Gray), David Philip, Cape Town, 1980. The TS for this is in BC94 A7.13.1 (Jagger).

⁶C Louis Leipoldt, *Chameleon on the Gallows* (ed. Stephen Gray), Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 2000.

The Valley were published in a single volume in 2001. In addition, *Gallows Gecko* (2007), *Stormwrack* (2007) and *The Mask* (2006) have been separately published.

1.2 – AIM

C Louis Leipoldt wrote *The Valley* against the unfolding dialectic of liberal and conservative forces that were shaping South African history at the time of the 1920s. The three novels, albeit fiction, take a particular line — anti-Great Trek, anti-nationalist, pro-reconciliation, finding common ground rather than focussing on exclusivity. It is argued that firstly, *The Valley* is an alternative history to the narrative of the journalist Gustav S Preller through the way he constructed a *volksgeskiedenis*, that became the dominating public Afrikaner historiography from *circa* 1905 to 1938. It is argued that this fundamental historiography is the summative, contrary evidence at the end of the full sweep of Leipoldt's *The Valley*. Secondly, it is argued that *The Valley* can serve as an alternative *form* of history to *standard* works of history such as those by Ross, Keegan, Dubow and Legassick and can extend the scope and ambit of the historical field. Furthermore, whilst *The Valley* is read against works of theory of pioneer thinkers Ricoeur and White, leading scholar Ankersmit, and less known authors in the field, Runia and Grethlein, one should nevertheless not lose sight of the voices of serious criticism against postmodernism, such as those of Chris Lorenz, Eric Hobsbawm, G G Iggers and Richard Evans. It stands to reason that knowledge of a certain literary history or historical fiction does not imply actual knowledge of a certain historical topic or historical period. In addition the works of, *inter alia*, Aleida Assmann, Ann Rigney, Astrid Erll *et al* should be noted for newer trends which engage in recent developments in historical representation and the social and cultural relevance of historical consciousness.

Leipoldt's *The Valley* is a collection of three independent yet closely related novels of historical fiction. The fictitious characters are drawn from real people that Leipoldt either knew himself, or knew about at second hand or third hand.⁷ As characters in the fiction, they constantly take an anti-Trek stance, comment on the value of local, deep tradition and discuss the need for tolerance and respect. They argue that an absence of good values and the end to tradition can lead to partisan feelings and cause a community to degenerate over generations. *The Valley* chronicles approximately one hundred years of history in the District, the Valley and the Village although, as one can imagine with historical fiction, this does not necessarily

⁷C Louis Leipoldt, 'Clanwilliam: Herinneringe aan 'n Ou Dorpie', *Die Huisgenoot*, 5 November 1926.

occur on a rigorously historical basis in the novels. Gustav S Preller's public *volksgeskiedenis*, which celebrates the Afrikaner's Voortrekker history, covers more or less the same period (*circa* 1830s to the 1930s). To Preller, the trekkers' actions are seen as heroic, as they moved away from the Cape into wide-open spaces in the face of what he saw as impending danger from the black people, using his carefully researched historical material from which to build a Voortrekker historiography.

However, it is argued that not only is *The Valley* an alternative to the Preller historiography, it can also serve as an alternative form of history, different in nature to the fully researched, 'first referenced' retrospective kind. Acclaimed South African author Stephen Gray has discussed one of Leipoldt's poems with a historical setting⁸ to illustrate historical fiction as a form of relating what happened in the past, with further, related references to, and descriptions of, 'the project which occupied him [Leipoldt] through the late 1920s and into the 30s, the writing of the 'Valley' trilogy.'⁹ In this light, the following from Gray is noted:

The historical novelist may create the illusion that he or she writes history *per se* for the sake of history (this type of false claim is maintained in endless blurbs), but for the novelist his or her contemporaneous audience is always more of a priority than any empirical research.¹⁰

A further point from Gray is noted viz. that the novel can be seen 'as a vehicle for conveying broad social scenes acted on by the impact of historical change.'¹¹ Thus, *The Valley* explains the changes in the historical and social development as experienced by the community of Clanwilliam¹², the place of Leipoldt's youth. On 30 July 1901, whilst still working in Cape Town, Leipoldt penned the following poem under the pseudonym 'F.W.B' entitled 'The Executions in Cape Colony – A Fragment':

The gibbet and the grave gave life, and will
Give life again to those that strive and strain
For freedom and its cause; nor strive in vain
Those whose desires need force and cords to kill.
The thing is done; or right or wrong 'tis done,
And only the remembrance shall endure.
But not the memory of a wrong shall stand
More firm or rooted faster or more sure.

⁸C Louis Leipoldt, Poem XXVIII in *Dinsdagaand* (1920) in *Versamelde Gedigte* (ed. J C Kannemeyer), Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1980, pp. 92 – 95.

⁹Stephen Gray, 'Leipoldt's Valley Community: The Novelist as Archivist', *Social Dynamics*, 10(1), 1984, p. 50.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 51.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹²The place in Leipoldt's fiction is recognizable as Clanwilliam.

And it shall serve to keep this dismal land
More dismal till the final aim is won.¹³

This poem illustrates a sense of dynamic change, also a theme of *The Valley* in the way the tradition once found in the old-world families, now gives way to sectionalism in the community. In this sense, it might be possible to call *The Valley* South Africa's own *I Ching*.¹⁴ This idea of change is nowhere better borne out than on the final page of *The Mask*. The Valley is changed from its former idyllic, bucolic setting. It is somewhere in the late 1920s or early 1930s and Mr Mabuis, an expatriate living in Argentina, whose ancestors were among the foremost farmers of the Valley, is now visiting the Valley on a return visit and re-living his memories. He and Santa, the vociferous young nationalist resident in the Village, are engaged in a range of polemical discussions about issues in South African history such as the language and franchise questions, and the way the Dutch Reformed Church's role has been inimical to culture. Mabuis is fairly well versed in Serbian history, from his travels there (reminiscent of Leipoldt travelling through the Balkans in 1912) and consequently was able to make some comparisons between the two countries. But before Mabuis returns to his country Argentina, he leaves a wedding gift for the newly married couple, Santa and Eric van Deren, with the idea that it should, for them, serve as a memento of the past:

Santa opened the parcel on her return from the Strand, and found an antiquated silver frame, tarnished with age.

'I send you,' wrote the expatriated one, 'what I have reason to believe is something that belonged to my family in the dim past. It may remind you of our drive among the sorrels; it will, at any rate, remind you of what the past was for some of us, and of the obligations which we owe it.'

'Oh, I don't want to be reminded of the past, Eric dear,' Santa said to her husband, as she placed the frame on the table. 'The future is before me. Mr Mabuis did say such disturbing things.'

'I don't think he wants to disturb us,' Eric replied thoughtfully, 'but he means the same sort of thing Aunt Gertrude has in mind, and your mother, my dear. Shall we run out

¹³C Louis Leipoldt under the pseudonym, 'F.W.B.' entitled 'The Executions in Cape Colony – A Fragment' in *Songs of the Veld and Other Poems* with the Introduction by Marthinus van Bart, Cederberg Publishers, 2008, p. 44; based on *Songs of the Veld and Other Poems* first published by New Age Press in London in 1902. The poem has a very similar thrust to the poem 'Vergewe en vergeet' by Totius (J D du Toit), with Leipoldt, a member of the 'Driemanskap.'

¹⁴*I Ching* ('Book of Changes') translated by Richard Wilhelm and rendered into English by Cary F Baynes, with the forward by C G Jung, Penguin Books, 2003. The book is based on the ideas that there is a dynamic balance of opposites, whereby the evolution of events is seen as a process; and that there is the acceptance of the inevitability of change. This can be likened to the concept of Impermanence in Buddhism which Leipoldt was interested in and would have known of.

and see them? They are waiting outside, and Uncle Jerry is burning to show us his tobacco plantation.¹⁵

In *The Valley*, Leipoldt was writing from an alternative perspective, very much from a Cape and South African ‘loyal-unionist’ point of view in the context of the period of ‘Closer Union’ to the British Empire.¹⁶ At the same time, from a broader cultural perspective, he was also writing to promote reconciliation, forgiveness and forgetting after the tragedy of the South African War of 1899 – 1902.¹⁷ Against this Gustav Preller was propagating a history with the intention of constructing an Afrikaner *volksgeskiedenis*. In *The Valley*, the character of Santa represents the new generation, concerned about her own political and other interests that are so different from her mother’s traditional past and noble virtues of tolerance and respect held up as dear and lasting characteristics among the more well-established Dutch-Afrikaner families of the District. In *The Mask*, Leipoldt mocks Santa and her anti-English, republican ideals through the voice of the character Mabuis III, showing his disdain for the narrow nationalism propagated by writers such as Gustav Preller. Leipoldt is commenting on what is ‘puzzling in the relations between the races’¹⁸ and it is possible that he is using the voice of Mabuis III to explain allegorically how the society of the Valley was changing, also for South Africa.

1.3 – THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

One aim of the thesis is to view *The Valley* as an alternative to the Preller discourse. The second aim is to see *The Valley* as a possible, alternative *form* of history (reading of the past) as historical narrative. For this reason the novels are read against works of historical theory. Hard to ignore for such a study is the pioneer in the field of the role of narrative in the philosophy of history, the American medieval scholar-turned-literary critic, Hayden White. White’s view is that because the past is not knowable, rhetorical construction is justified. We get to know the past through deferred meaning, derived through the traces (interpretation) that we emplot in a story (narrative – representation). The ‘new wave’ of intellectual and cultural historians, Hayden White and leading scholar and philosopher of history

¹⁵C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 673.

¹⁶See L M Thompson’s account in Chapter II entitled ‘The Impulse towards Union’ in which he discusses the initiative taken by the Kindergarten, and the South African Response, towards closer Union — L M Thompson, *The Unification of South Africa: 1902 – 1910*, Oxford University Press, London, 1960.

¹⁷Peter Merrington, ‘Carrying the Torch: Dorothea Fairbridge and the Cape Loyalist Imagination’, Paper presented at the University of Pretoria, 2002, www.childlit.org.za/KonfBoerMerrington.html.

¹⁸BC94 A7.7 (Jagger).

Frank Ankersmit place the emphasis on form **and** content of the historical work, for historical understanding. Alun Munslow, a proponent of White, recognizes ‘the rediscovery in the past 22 years of the importance of narrative (referring to White) as an access to the tell-able worlds of the past (which) is very much ... the result of White’s purposeful and formalistic rhetorical constructionism.’¹⁹

The Valley is based on historical events and the characters in it are drawn from real persons and based on types such as Leipoldt’s ‘Oupa’ who surfaces as a character in the first of the novels, *Gallows Gecko*, as the wise cleric Pastor Johann von Bergmann. The story begins with the time of the Dutch farmers living in the Valley during the British Occupation. The arrival of the English²⁰ settlers in 1820 changes the dynamic as the Dutch element comes to accept its new neighbours, a point that can be supported by the following account reflecting Leipoldt’s belief that culturally the two groups were compatible:

Afrianders and British are not so far removed from each other culturally as to admit of the subject being treated from opposite aspects. Their association in South Africa has been too close for that. The cultural development of each has indeed lain long lines of its own; but the one has so markedly influenced the other that it is possible to recognise, even at the present stage [written between 1926 – 1936], the beginnings of a national South African culture that is assimilating to itself the best and most lasting characteristics of the cultural development of each section, fashioning from them a culture as representative of the country as that which is being evolved in almost analogous circumstances in Canada.²¹

White’s theory that a text can be ‘examined for its possibilities of meaning’²² (other ways to the past), in contrast to ‘modernist historians which incline them (methodological aims) towards the ultimate viability of correspondence between evidence and interpretation ...’²³ makes it possible to examine *The Valley* as a work of historical fiction. This claim is further

¹⁹Alun Munslow in <http://www.history.ac.uk/resources/e-seminars/munslow-paper>.

²⁰See Andreas Bester’s column ‘Op die Voorgond’ entitled ‘Clanwilliam hou sy veldblomskou nou in die historiese N G Kerk’ in *Die Burger*, 2 September 1995 for a brief description of some of the Irish families who came to settle there in 1820.

For a comprehensive study of the topic of the Irish settlers at Clanwilliam in 1820, see G B Dickason, ‘Irish Settlers to the Cape: History of the Clanwilliam 1820 Settlers from Cork Harbour’, A. A. Balkema, Cape Town, 1973. Leipoldt placed English characters (and not Irish) an example of which is an actual resident of Clanwilliam, Charles Montague-Fryer, around whom he constructs the English gentleman, Andrew Quakerley (the acknowledged reference to this point is made elsewhere in this thesis).

²¹C Louis Leipoldt, Chapter XXXII of *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, Volume VIII, ‘South Africa, Rhodesia and the Protectorates’, A P Newton & E A Nienans (General Editors), E A Walker (Advisor in South Africa), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1936, p. 844.

²²Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, p. 16.

²³*Ibid.*

supported by Alun Munslow's explanation that the new historicism, 'like deconstructive history, is built on assumptions that directly challenge the empiricist paradigm.'²⁴

These statements as well as the point that 'because there is no direct way in which historians can acquire first-hand historical knowledge'²⁵ provide an opportunity to view fictional texts in a way that is similar to viewing historical texts. Furthermore, one can assume that 'history as a literary form is about the unique and contingent event' which means that 'the real nature of causality must consequently always remain unresolved.'²⁶ In the light of these assumptions, it is argued, it may be possible to examine historical fiction as an alternative way to the past, although the voices of criticism against the deconstructivist/narrativist paradigm must also be heard.

The view of Munslow that 'the distinction between cultural history and other literary disciplines has disappeared under new historicist thinking about the conventions underpinning the representation of factual as well as fictional texts'²⁷ thus opens up the possibility of an 'analysis of the form of history's written form'.²⁸ When we analyse emplotment and style as in fictional literature, we can also do this to the historical text, and to the sources, so that 'the narrative form of explanation is now redeemed as a central feature of historical enterprise, and the notional distinction between historical and literary language disappears'.²⁹

In addition to Munslow's point that historical 'facts' are constructed artefacts, the following point from Nancy Partner is that they (facts) are 'no different in cognitive origin than any other made thing of fiction'.³⁰ In some cases, on the topic of history and fiction, it might even be that E M Forster's words, 'In this direction fiction is truer than history, because it goes beyond the evidence and each of us knows from his own experience that there is something beyond the evidence'³¹ ring true.

²⁴Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997, p. 31.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 32.

³⁰Adam Bencard, 'Life Beyond Information: Contesting Life and the Body in History and Molecular Biology', in Susanne Bauer and Ayo Wahlberg (eds.), *Contested Categories: Life Sciences in Society*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2009, p. 142.

³¹E M Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*, (1927), reprinted by Harmondsworth, London, 1962 and 1990, pp. 69 – 70.

1.4. – CONTEXTUALIZING LITERATURE

This section examines pioneering and leading, as well as less well-known, philosophers of history, and also newer trends in the field of historical representation. At the same time, it is acknowledged that the voices of serious criticism against this postmodernist and deconstructivist paradigm need to be heard, such as the voices of Chris Lorenz, Eric Hobsbawm, G G Iggers, and most notably Richard Evans in *In Defence of History*.

1.4.1 – WORKS OF A THEORETICAL NATURE AGAINST WHICH *THE VALLEY* CAN BE READ

A classic work in the field of the philosophy of history is the pioneering thinker, Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-century Europe*.³² White explains that historians take events from the past and construct a story in a narrative form. The story is made through the arrangement of events in a specific order, relating what happened, including some and excluding other detail and then stressing some detail more than other detail. White's model is important for *The Valley* as a possible, alternative form of history.

Philosophers of history Nancy Partner,³³ Richard Vann³⁴ and Ewa Domanska³⁵ have taken up the cudgels for White's narrativism and Alun Munslow remains primary for an understanding of White's historical representation. Munslow proclaims 'at its most basic [level] White maintains [that] historical narrative cannot carry the reality of the past because its story form is not discovered, but imposed by the historian.'³⁶ Thus, according to Munslow, 'the genuine nature of history can only be understood when it is viewed not as an objectivised empiricist enterprise, but rather as a literary project which must self-reflexively take account of the imposition by historians of a particular narrative form on the past.'³⁷ Munslow concludes that White's challenge to narrative as a distinct form of historical understanding poses the

³²Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1973.

³³Nancy Partner, 'Hayden White: The Form of the Content', *History and Theory*, 37(2), 1998, pp. 162 – 172; and Nancy Partner, 'Hayden White (and the Content and the Form and Everyone Else) at the AHA', *History and Theory*, 36(4), Theme Issue, 1997, pp. 102 – 110.

³⁴ Richard T Vann, 'The Reception of Hayden White', *History and Theory*, 37(2), 1998, pp. 143 – 161.

³⁵Ewa Domanska, 'Hayden White: Beyond Irony', *History and Theory*, 37(2), 1998, pp. 173 – 181.

³⁶Alun Munslow, 'Deconstructing History'; <http://www.history.ac.uk/resources/e-seminars/munslow-paper>.

³⁷*Ibid.*

question most recently addressed by historian Robert Berkhofer, when he enquires whether historians re-tell the story of the past, or impose a story on it.³⁸

However, there are criticisms of White's representationalism. Philosopher of history Eelco Runia argues that whilst White's theory of representation has been successful over a period of twenty years, 'by now it has lost much of its vigor and it lacks explanatory power when faced with recent phenomena such as memory, *lieux de mémoire*,³⁹ remembrance, and trauma.'⁴⁰ A way forward for 'representationalism' according to Runia, is to argue for the 'presence paradigm' which is the way the past is made present in the present and the notion that metonymy is a metaphor for discontinuity, or put another way, the entwining of continuity and discontinuity is exposed by metonymy as presence through the unconscious enactment of the past event.⁴¹

Leading scholar and philosopher of history, F R Ankersmit, appeals to Runia's notion of so-called 'parallel processes' in order to analyse this variant of historical representation.⁴² These are described as enactments not as much as *in vitro*⁴³ representations but as *in vivo*⁴⁴ interactions.⁴⁵ It is suggested that this notion of 'parallel processes' ('the unintended ripple of subconscious processes')⁴⁶ is to be found in the re-enactment of aspects of Leipoldt's own life as expressed in the text through some of his characters in *The Valley* for instance the role of unconditional love in *The Mask* and the specific reader-responses to this.

Philosopher of history Jonas Grethlein explains the possibility of extending the field of historical meaning.⁴⁷ He argues for experience and narrative working together: 'Besides

³⁸Robert F Berkhofer, *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1995, in Alun Munslow, 'Deconstructing History'; <http://www.history.ac.uk/resources/e-seminars/munslow-paper>.

³⁹The phrase *lieux de mémoire* means "places" or "sites of memory". See Pierre Nora, *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, ca. 2005. He is well-known for the theory that 'history becomes manipulated by memory to become something else and thus "facts" of history are mostly transfers of actual historic events into cultural memory which transforms the events of the past into copies of themselves that are used in order to describe and define the present.' See the following site also for a book summary: <http://www.shvoong.com/humanities/history/5714-memory-history-les-lieux-memoire/>.

⁴⁰Eelco Runia, 'Presence', *History and Theory*, 45(1), p. 1.

⁴¹Ethan Kleinberg, 'Presence in absentia', *Storia della Storiografia*, 55, 2009, p. 53.

⁴²F R Ankersmit, "'Presence" and Myth', *History and Theory*, 45(3), 2006, p. 328.

⁴³In the mirror reflections.

⁴⁴In real life situations.

⁴⁵F R Ankersmit, "'Presence" and Myth', *History and Theory*, 45(3), 2006, p. 330.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷Jonas Grethlein, 'Experientiality and "Narrative Reference," with thanks to Thucydides', *History and Theory*, 49(3), 2010, pp. 315 – 335.

representing and giving shape to experience, narratives are received in the form of (reception) experience.’⁴⁸ He states further: ‘Through their temporal structure, narratives are crucial to letting us re-experience the past as well as to representing the experiences of historical agents.’⁴⁹ A way of being able to ‘restore history’s experientiality’⁵⁰ is through what is called ‘side-shadowing’⁵¹ and Grethlein uses the case of Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*, by way of illustration⁵² explained as follows: ‘Through “side-shadowing” narrative can challenge the tendency toward teleologies inherent in merely retrospective histories and can re-create the openness intrinsic to the past when it still was a present’⁵³ which Grethlein explains as follows, and appeals to historians to examine alternative forms of history:

However, the “side-shadowing” devices used by Thucydides are fictional. To conceptualize the price and gain of “side-shadowing” in historiography, the paper advances the concept of a “narrative reference” (a concept analogous to Ricoeur’s “metaphorical reference”). Introspection, speeches, and other “side-shadowing” devices sacrifice truth in a positivist sense, but permit a second-level reference, namely to history’s experientiality. In a final step, the paper turns toward modern historians—most of whom are reluctant to use the means of fiction—to briefly survey their attempts at restoring the openness of the past.⁵⁴

The point from Grethlein and the point from Morson that the text is ‘a shifting set of fields of possibility’ that ‘helps to liberate us from the false certainties of dogmatism’ and ‘creates a healthy scepticism of present orthodoxies, and makes us aware that there are moral choices available to us’, enables the historical fiction of C Louis Leipoldt to be examined for its historical meaning (as a possible, alternative form of history). In *Stormwrack*, for instance, the notion of experientiality can be felt through introspection and the speeches, in the dialogue. The calm and moderate voice of the English magistrate Storam (probably the privileged voice of Leipoldt) debates the situation of the possibility of war reaching the Valley. Even though at that stage the arena of war is very far away from Clanwilliam (who would ever have thought that war would reach such a remote area as Clanwilliam?⁵⁵), it

⁴⁸Jonas Grethlein, ‘Experientiality and “Narrative Reference,” with thanks to Thucydides’, *History and Theory*, 49(3), 2010, p. 315.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹Gary Saul Morson’s work in his book *Narrative and Freedom, The Shadows of Time*, Yale University Press, 1994, uses this term to illustrate the possibilities for historical meaning by the way writers write and readers read texts. See chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion.

⁵²Jonas Grethlein, ‘Experientiality and “Narrative Reference,” with thanks to Thucydides’, *History and Theory*, 49(3), 2010, p. 315.

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴*Ibid.*

⁵⁵See the extract from R R Langham-Carter’s *Clanwilliam: the Town, the District, and St John’s Church*, Diocesan College Press, Rondebosch, 1993, where he writes about the insurgence of the Boers into the Cape

changes when the Boer Commandos enter the region. The narrative dialogue in *Stormwrack* based on Leipoldt's own experience as a reporter during the South African War is an example of this 'narrative referencing', which restores the openness to the past, and takes the reader there as if he or she is experiencing the events at the time. Through 'side-shadowing' and an absence of prolepsis (back- and fore-shadowing) the open dialogue empowers the reader to experience the tension and emotions through the words of the characters.

Yet another pioneering philosopher of history is Paul Ricoeur whose statement that 'the world of fiction leads us to the heart of the real world of action'⁵⁶, is important to note. In his book *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* he asks: 'Could we not say, in conclusion, that by opening us to what is different, history opens us to the possible, whereas fiction, by opening us to the unreal, leads us to what is essential in reality?'⁵⁷ Here again, getting to know the feelings and emotion of the characters in the Leipoldt text (in *Stormwrack*) can be important especially when the reader is trying to make sense of the decisions that average inhabitants are faced with and the pressure on them to decide who to support — their (fictitious) Queen Alexandrina Victoria (representing loyalty to the British Empire), or their blood relatives in the Boer Republics. The question remains whether standard history texts are as well-equipped as fictional texts such as *The Valley* to show these emotions.

There are also newer trends in the philosophy of history that need to be examined for this thesis, such as from theorists Aleida Assmann, Ann Rigney and Astrid Erll. Rather than a multi-disciplinary approach, they examine the importance of inter-disciplinary studies in the field of cultural memory. As memory research does not have a single standpoint but rather relies on dialogue among disciplines the intersections between memory and culture are uncovered. These views on cultural memory are important for this thesis in the way they may relate to *The Valley*.

Colony and the subsequent fighting between Boer and British forces in the Clanwilliam district, an unlikely arena for war: 'Clanwilliam seemed to be a long distance from the likely scenes of warfare and it must have come as a surprise when Boer commandos began entering the district.' (p. 29).

⁵⁶Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, edited and translated by John B. Thompson, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981, reprinted 1982, p. 296.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

1.4.2 – A NUMBER OF SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORIOGRAPHIC WORKS AGAINST WHICH *THE VALLEY* CAN BE READ

Two works explaining the stratification of South African society — one by Timothy Keegan⁵⁸ and another by Robert Ross⁵⁹ — are important for this chapter and thesis. Keegan examines the shaping of South African society prior to the mineral age (up to the 1850s), which can provide a solid background for an understanding of the development of the Valley community during the first half of the nineteenth century. Ross traces the development of the ‘White’ population of the Cape Colony in the pre-industrial eighteenth century and also discusses the very complex topic of religion, central to an understanding of the mentality of Afrikaners.⁶⁰ The fact that certain groups of Afrikaners saw themselves as elect by God influenced their position and social behaviour in the District. In this light, it is interesting to see Leipoldt’s own disdain for the ‘relegie’ (religion) when he refers to it as ‘die prulvlag van Kalvinistiese verdoemnisloer.’⁶¹ A reading from the relevant sections from Keegan and Ross can thus enable the reader to form a better understanding of the relations between the English and Afrikaans speakers at the time that the story of *The Valley* takes place.

In addition however, due cognisance should be taken of the nature of this relationship, between English- and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans at the time, namely that ‘the uniting of the ‘two great races’ of Dutch and English-speaking South Africans was an ideal promoted by political lobbies, from both sides of the divide that had been caused by the South Africa War of 1899 – 1902 in the drive towards forming the Union in 1910.’⁶² This statement presupposes that the relations might have seemed more cordial on the outside, or as Merrington puts, ‘it remained largely a rhetorical sentiment among anglophile, cosmopolitan,

⁵⁸Timothy Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order*, David Philip, Cape Town & Johannesburg, 1996. Of importance for a study of *The Valley* is the development of the gentrification and stratification of society in the areas beyond Cape Town such as Clanwilliam, as gradually these areas were populated by Dutch farming communities such as the fictitious families of *Gallows Gecko*, the Rekkers and the Gersters. Chapter Two entitled ‘Dutch Beginnings’, pp. 15 – 36, refers.

⁵⁹Robert Ross, *Beyond the Pale, Essays on the History of Colonial South Africa*, Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1994.

⁶⁰*Ibid.* See the article entitled ‘Going Beyond the Pale: On the Roots of White Supremacy in South Africa’ (with D van Arkel and G C Quispel) in Chapter Two: ‘Racial Stratification and Ideologies’, pp. 74 – 81, for an account of the development of religion at the time. Leipoldt saw the role of the Dutch-Reformed Church in South Africa as inculcating intolerance and inimical to culture: see C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, pp. 556 – 557.

⁶¹In a letter to Dr J du P Erlank (a.k.a. Eitemal) dated 18 January 1935, BC94 B14.174.1 (Jagger). (Translation: ‘it’s shoddy flag of Calvinist damnation lore.’)

⁶²Peter Merrington, ‘C. Louis Leipoldt’s “Valley trilogy” and Contested South African Nationalisms in the Early Twentieth century’, *Current Writing*, 15(2), 2003, pp. 34.

empire-loyalist and more-or-less liberal white South Africans.’⁶³ The point in the previous sentence can be corroborated by the fact that in 1924 when the National Party ascended to power, the South African Party received a major blow, which reinforced what Merrington describes as ‘the inherent divisions within South African white society and — further — to eclipse the pressing questions of political and social justice for black South Africans.’⁶⁴

The view on race is expressed in *Gallows Gecko* by the liberal cleric and Rhenish missionary, Pastor Johann von Bergmann, (drawn from the character of his grandfather, ‘type’ ‘Oupa Esselen’)⁶⁵ in discussion with the character Everardus Nolte the newcomer to the Valley.⁶⁶ The voice of Leipoldt on the same topic comes across in his scientific work, *Bushveld Doctor* when he says ‘I am of those that can see no specific distinctions in the human race and that recognize all mankind as belonging to one family, however diversified by colour, custom, or creed its various components may be.’⁶⁷ Leipoldt’s political liberalism can be further corroborated by the character in *The Mask*, the expatriate Pierre Mabuis III, recently returned to the Valley, the place where his ancestors were once prominent farmers. He finds himself in a polemical conversation with the young Nationalist and newly qualified medical doctor, Santa Vantloo, recently returned from her studies abroad. She and Mabuis debate the issue of the racial problem facing South Africa.’⁶⁸ The point of the statement above is corroborated in *Bushveld Doctor* where Leipoldt writes:

The present tendency is to imagine that our native problem can be solved by what is known as segregation: which in practice means that the native should no-where compete with the white man but that the white man should, where convenient, make use of the native.⁶⁹

These views of Leipoldt, on race and class, resonate with ideas from the writings of current historians such as Martin Legassick and Saul Dubow. According to Paul Rich, Legassick ‘emphasized the role of class rather than ethnic divisions in white politics as an ideology of segregation began to be mobilized in defence of white settler power.’⁷⁰ According to Rich,

⁶³Peter Merrington, ‘C. Louis Leipoldt’s “Valley trilogy” and Contested South African Nationalisms in the Early Twentieth century’, *Current Writing*, 15(2), 2003, pp. 34.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 35.

⁶⁵BC 94 A5.6 (Jagger).

⁶⁶C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 38.

⁶⁷C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1937, p. 193.

⁶⁸C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 550.

⁶⁹C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, p. 339.

⁷⁰Martin Legassick, ‘The Making of South African “Native Policy” 1903 – 1923: The Origins of Segregation’, London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies (mimeo), 1972, quoted in Paul B Rich, *Hope and Despair – English-Speaking Intellectuals and South African Politics 1896 – 1976*, British Academic Press, London, New York, 1993, p. 13.

Dubow defined segregation ‘more as an extension of Victorian fears of the “dangerous classes”’.⁷¹ One can suggest that the character in *Gallows Gecko*, Pastor Von Bergmann’s idea of race relates to Legassick’s emphasis on class structure rather than making it just a racial question. From this we can see how it is possible to transcend barriers of race if given opportunities, over time. Everardus Nolte’s restrictive ideas on race can follow the point by Dubow, about segregation as an extension of Victorian fears of the ‘dangerous classes’, seen in the following extract where Nolte is in discussion with Von Bergmann:

‘But, Your Reverence ... Your Reverence will pardon me, but surely Your Reverence does not for a moment imply that we are no better than the Hottentots? Why, we White men are infinitely superior. They haven’t got the brains, Your Reverence. They can never attain to our ... our civilisation, Your Reverence.’⁷²

The repressive policies of race followed by the Hertzog government in the second half of the 1920s, was accompanied by the oppressive Mines and Works Act (Colour Bar Act) No 25 of 1926, reserving skilled work for whites only. In the same year, the government published its four Native Bills that were to start the process of ending the liberal Cape African franchise under the Native Administration Bill of 1927, which set up a separate legal system for the administration of African law, in return for seven white native representatives. These restrictive measures did not go unnoticed by Leipoldt as he remarked on their possible effect for South Africa, expressed through the voice of the character Pierre Mabuis III, about a future South Africa, in which there are restrictions on blacks.⁷³ His criticism of the National Party’s segregationist ideology of the 1920s, especially the threat to the colour-blind franchise in the Cape, sharpened. A classic example of his satire is in his poetry, entitled ‘Segregation.’⁷⁴ The poem accuses the policymakers, who speak in Christ’s name, of being hypocrites (as in *The Mask*), who hide behind their masks – he refers to their ‘harlot faith’ and the poem mocks the ‘new-made world, part white and part un-white ...’, satirizing the breeding of Afrikaners who themselves inevitably have mixed blood.⁷⁵

⁷¹Saul Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919 - 36*, London and Basingstoke, The Macmillan Press, 1989, p. 24, quoted in Paul B. Rich, *Hope and Despair – English-Speaking Intellectuals and South African Politics 1896 – 1976*, British Academic Press, London, New York, 1993, p. 14.

⁷²C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 38.

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 671.

⁷⁴C Louis Leipoldt, *Versamelde Gedigte* (ed. J C Kannemeyer), Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1980, in the anthology ‘The Ballad of Dick King and Other Poems’ (1949), ‘Segregation’, p. 438. [There are two versions of this poem in BC94 A6.79-80 (Jagger).]

⁷⁵*Ibid.*

It was not only the topic of race that appealed to Leipoldt, but also that of the subject of genetics which we read of in his scientific views in *Bushveld Doctor*.⁷⁶ One of his theories was about the mixing of races that invigorates the stock such as in the harsh terrain of the Bushveld. The opposite side of the coin was the degeneration in families, and also in plants.⁷⁷ His work as a medical doctor took him to parts of the Bushveld where he was in a position to conduct studies in the field.⁷⁸ In *Bushveld Doctor* he makes certain interesting claims, for instance, that in Kenya, medical men have shown consensus that ‘the child of Nordic parents brought up under Kenyan conditions shows deterioration.’⁷⁹ This is not so ‘with first- and second-generation white children anywhere in South Africa’; but ‘there seems to be evidence that later generations are affected, and the crux of the matter is whether or not the race can be perpetuated in Nordic integrity without constantly drawing upon new blood and new stamina for its regeneration.’⁸⁰

One imagines Leipoldt’s knowledge of topics such as degeneration and decadence date from his time at Guy’s hospital in London where he qualified as a medical doctor but also from his field work as Medical Inspector of Schools in the Transvaal. Other factors might also account for this such as Thomas Mann’s *Buddenbrooks* (1901) reflecting the topic of social standing and mobility⁸¹ and the *fin-de-siècle* fiction reflecting moral ambiguity in the light of new fields such as psychology, anthropology, and biology. Further factors might also have influenced his thoughts such as social Darwinism, primitivism, the vote for women, workers’ unionization and debates over aestheticism, decadence, and degeneration, all topics that came into the spotlight in areas of national identity, amid rapid social change.

⁷⁶C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, see Chapter XI entitled ‘Black and White’, pp. 185 – 201.

⁷⁷*The Valley* has some reference to this topic of degeneration: ‘We have had good farms, good stock, good men, and what have we left? Everything seems to degenerate, somehow. It’s the same with my sowing.’ (C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 317.); ‘The good old families were dying out, degenerating, the third and fourth generations showing themselves much inferior, in initiative, in energy, and in ability, to their forebears.’ (C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 305). Leipoldt links up his theory of genetics, between humans and plants; the following excerpt refers to the degeneration in plants, referring to Andrew Quakerley and his garden: ‘It was like his perennials. His perennials were the bane of his life. He got them as seed from the best seedsmen in England and Germany, and the first season they were a delight to look upon, but the next [word missing in text, probably meant to be ‘year’ or ‘season’] they failed miserably, running to root and stem, and lacking in foliage and flower.’ (C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 306.)

⁷⁸Leipoldt practised as Cape Town’s first registered paediatrician, in 1925, having worked as a medical inspector of schools for the Transvaal Education Department from 1914 – 1923.

⁷⁹C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, p. 57.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹T Kontje, *The Cambridge Introduction to Thomas Mann*, p. 31.

On 2 September 1929 Leipoldt wrote to his close *confidante* F V Engelenburg to explain that he was busy writing a novel *à la Mann's Buddenbrooks* to describe the fortunes of two Cape families; the first (of the novels) appearing in *Die Huisgenoot*, but the rest of their adventures could not be printed there, as the church and politicians will take umbrage, thus he will be writing in English.⁸² The topic of degeneration is present in all three novels, so it would be difficult to dismiss its importance – moral decadence features in Chapter 6 of *Gallows Gecko*⁸³ and *Stormwrack* shows a dark side, where there is moral exhaustion and degeneration in the fourth generation, and degradation⁸⁴ and in *The Mask*, the topic of moral degeneration is prevalent.⁸⁵

Chapter III entitled 'Settlers' Children' in Leipoldt's scientific work, *Bushveld Doctor* (1937) discusses the topic of the degeneration of plants, and it might well be that the interest displayed by Leipoldt in the topic of degeneration emanated from his close studies in the field of botany. The following observations concerning plants were made by him: 'they lose their pristine vigour after the second year and their offspring cannot compare with seedlings or cuttings grown under similar conditions in Europe.'⁸⁶ From his own experimentation with *oxalis*, he observed that gradual deterioration set in over the course of many generations of growing, from the same parent strain.⁸⁷ And, amazingly similar views about degeneration are expressed about people, especially in third- and fourth-generation white children in South Africa; 'there are factors that tend to promote similar decay at work among them.'⁸⁸

The topic of degradation and degeneration applies also to the political state of things as politicians re-arranged their stances, and a new political party emerged.⁸⁹ There is a discussion in *The Mask* to illustrate this, between the vociferous, new nationalist Santa and the wise Dr Buren, about issues such as patriotism and how the National Party justifies its stance; and Dr Buren shows how it is not right to justify one's views which are frankly too narrow, and these narrow views can be based on false assumptions – whatever the outcome,

⁸²BC94 B10.14 (Jagger).

⁸³C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 47.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 305.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 590 – 591.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*

⁸⁷C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, pp. 56 – 57.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁸⁹The National Party was established in 1914.

they are intransigent and this intransigence will lead to further degeneration in relations, as families experience degeneration in their rank and file.⁹⁰

In his closing chapter in *Bushveld Doctor*, Leipoldt expresses his concern that South Africa was following on the road to disaster because the politicians bent on a sectarian line were too complacent ‘to go to the roots of the evils from which the country to-day suffers.’⁹¹ He was referring here to deep-rooted problems of health risks in communities, particularly malaria and red-water; to the problem of a strong peasant community gravitating to the towns and cities (urbanization); and a potential problem in the rising generation of Europeans which lies in, according to his observations: ‘more than half of the school-going population (being) physically defective’.⁹²

Not only topics such as race and genetics, but also one closely linked to it, namely that of miscegenation, was of great interest to Leipoldt. The 1920s saw an increasing literary interest in this topic which might be explained by the ‘mounting anxiety in white political circles over the possible threat to white racial “purity” through sexual “miscegenation” with black Africans.’⁹³ Sarah Gertrude Millin’s novels of the 1920s, *Dark Water* (1921) and *God’s Stepchildren* (1924) ‘exemplify this preoccupation with inter-racial sexual liaisons and the emergence of a supposedly degenerate “half caste” progeny.’⁹⁴ *The Mask*, the third of the novels of *The Valley*, in fact, satirises the legislation against sex across the colour-bar promulgated as the Immorality Act of 1927. Leipoldt maintained that there was no likelihood of keeping people from having sexual relations when they live in close physical proximity to each other as in the remote parts of the Bushveld.⁹⁵ He asks that the subject of miscegenation be approached with tact, because of the strong colour prejudice that existed in his country where ‘Intermarriage between white and non-white is everywhere deprecated; by law it has been made a criminal offence in the Transvaal.’⁹⁶ He writes:

‘No human laws can stop intercourse between white and non-white where circumstances conduce towards such intercourse, as I have already said, and there is ample evidence to show that it prevails everywhere.’⁹⁷

⁹⁰C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, pp. 592 – 593.

⁹¹C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, p. 342.

⁹²*Ibid.*

⁹³Paul B. Rich, *Hope and Despair – English-Speaking Intellectuals and South African Politics 1896 – 1976*, British Academic Press, London, New York, 1993, p. 25.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁹⁵C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, p. 193.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*

⁹⁷*Ibid.*

The Dutch farming community in the Valley formed over centuries, from the early eighteenth century, into the nineteenth century. There are several theories from different historians who explain this stratification and gentrification of the District's community and society such as Keegan, Ross, Legassick and Dubow. A reading of Keegan and Ross explains the time-honoured traditions of the Dutch inhabitants who were the first European farmers to settle the district in the seventeenth century — these traditions were firmly established and therefore leaving them behind as the Voortrekkers did when they embarked on their inward journey to Natal, was a move closer to barbarism.

The views of Dubow and Legassick are important for a discussion of the topic of race. The government's repressive racial policies excluding blacks and the policies of racial hegemony in South African society are strong contributing factors to the escalation in sectarianism. Santa is the character in *The Mask* that reflects this attitude through her intransigence and support for Anglophobe nationalism. These are the views that Gustav Schoeman Preller, Leipoldt's rival from the North, propagated in his narrow ideology of nationalism.

Contrary to this, in *The Valley*, Leipoldt was hoping for a true South African nationalism, as expressed through the voice from one of his characters in *The Mask*: 'Once you honestly and frankly confess that our destinies are bound up, radically, with those of the Empire, by which I mean the group of communities concentrated round England and still true to the tradition in which they have been founded – once you do that, my dear, you will have every Englishman who thinks as I do a member of your party, prepared to work hand-in-hand with you.'⁹⁸

1.4.3 – CONTEXTUALIZING THE LITERATURE OF LEIPOLDT'S EARLY LIFE THAT IS APPLICABLE TO *THE VALLEY*

This section discusses some of the available literature on the history of Clanwilliam which can then be compared to the fiction in Leipoldt's *The Valley*. Local historian J J Muller's text discusses the settling of the area by the Dutch in the eighteenth century⁹⁹ while

⁹⁸C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, pp. 592 – 593.

⁹⁹J J Muller, 'Die Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling van Clanwilliam' – Brosjure Opgestel in Opdrag van die Plaaslike van Riebeeck-Feeskomitee, 22 Maart 1952.

R R Langham-Carter is important for the background history to Clanwilliam's English¹⁰⁰ and Irish foundation: 'British folk first settled in the Olifants River Valley in 1820.'¹⁰¹ Jan Disselsrivier as it was called then was proclaimed on 1 February 1808 and renamed Clanwilliam in 1814 but a great tragedy was the razing of its official buildings in a fire during the South African War in 1901. Unfortunately, this resulted in a large amount of historical material being lost to posterity.¹⁰² The abovementioned two texts as well as a limited number of others are therefore exceptionally useful for establishing details of the history of Clanwilliam.

The Valley provides important detail about Clanwilliam, the Cederberg and its environs. The story of *The Valley* opens when the central character of the first novel *Gallows Gecko* arrived in the area to purchase a farm, which is fictitiously named *Knolkloof*, around the 1830s. A descendant of one of Clanwilliam's most distinguished families, Anne Paterson (nee Bergh), and her husband Robert and I, one Saturday morning of the last weekend of the month of April 2009, followed the descriptions in *The Valley*, and eventually came to the remnant of a dilapidated Cape Dutch house which fits the descriptions in the novel.¹⁰³ Readers are told that by the time Nolte came to stay in the District, several of the well-established farmers, such as the Rekkers, had been farming there since the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁴ Muller refers to the names of families who over the centuries have been closely associated with the history of Clanwilliam, and although Leipoldt cast some of them as characters in his novel, he assigned them fictitious names, such as the Reverend Mance-Bisley (probably drawn from the Reverend Hampden-Jones).¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰One of the families that settled in the Valley is the Fryers, and they were specifically English, and not Irish, see pp. 25 – 28 in R R Langham-Carter, *Clanwilliam – the Town, the District, St John's Church*, Diocesan College Press, Rondebosch, 1993.

¹⁰¹R R Langham-Carter, *Clanwilliam – the Town, the District, St John's Church*, Diocesan College Press, Rondebosch, 1993, p. 3.

¹⁰²J J Muller, 'Die Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling van Clanwilliam.' – Brosjyre Opgestel in Opdrag van die Plaaslike van Riebeeck-Feeskomitee, 22 Maart 1952. On page 9, Muller describes the difficulties researching the local history of Clanwilliam and one deduces from this that the same would have applied to Leipoldt; the fire that razed the official buildings, including the library and Magistrate's Office on 11 August 1901, meant a great loss of documents and archives containing the town's rich history.

¹⁰³C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 7 describes the place in the Valley where Everardus Nolte settled.

¹⁰⁴C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*; on p. 9 we read of the well-established Rekker farm, *De Hoek*, which judging from Anne Paterson's (nee Bergh) descriptions, match those of the farm formerly owned by her forebears. The Berghs are today still prominent farmers in the District.

¹⁰⁵See also the names of families in R R Langham-Carter, *Clanwilliam – the Town, the District, St John's Church*, Diocesan College Press, Rondebosch, 1993, pp. 25 – 28; as well as J J Muller, 'Die Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling van Clanwilliam' – Brosjyre Opgestel in Opdrag van die Plaaslike van Riebeeck-Feeskomitee, 22 Maart 1952, p. 16.

Furthermore, Leipoldt's jottings show he had specific characters in mind when constructing his fiction¹⁰⁶ such as his paternal grandfather, his maternal grandfather (Pastor Johann Von Bergmann), his father (Pastor Uhlmann), and Andrew Quakerley (Charles Fryer), probably according to their characteristics, to suit the role they would assume in his fiction. His maternal grandfather is the political liberalist (like Leipoldt), and his own father is restrained and tolerant, and this is how he cast them. It is not sure whom Everardus Nolte was modeled on, but in Langham-Carter there is a specific reference to Henry Benjamin Shawe who owned a farm, and was a member of the Cape Legislative Assembly, and seems to be the kind of person who resembles the magnanimity of Nolte, although J H Brand was the other representative in the Cape Legislative Assembly. It would therefore be hard to determine precisely on whom Leipoldt based this character.¹⁰⁷

Reference was made to Fryer, as the character of Quakerley. Leipoldt's jottings indicate that the character of Andrew Quakerley was drawn from a combination of two persons; one of Clanwilliam's prominent residents, Charles Montague-Fryer, and 'type Knobel's father' (Leipoldt's mother's descendants, including her grandfather, Baron Friedrich von Buchenröder).¹⁰⁸ What historian R R Langham-Carter writes about Charles Fryer, namely that he was buried in the St John's Anglican Church in 1901, matches the time of Quakerley's death in *The Valley*.¹⁰⁹ This period coincides with the invasion of the district by both Boer and British forces at the time of the South African War¹¹⁰ and so the timing of the fighting that destroyed Quakerley's garden, more or less fits in with the chronology of *The Valley*. In Leipoldt's jottings one can see how he constructed the events according to the age of the character, for it to fit in with the timing of events.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶Genealogical tables and sketches are to be found in the jottings. BC94 A5.1 – A5.19 (Jagger).

¹⁰⁷ Further useful source material for the history of Clanwilliam is an article written by Andreas Bester which describes the early settlement of the area. See Andreas Bester, 'Clanwilliam hou sy Veldblomskou nou in die Historiese NG kerk', in 'Op die Voorgrond', *Die Burger*, 2 September 1995.

¹⁰⁸BC94 A5.6 (Jagger). J C Kannemeyer in *Leipoldt, 'n Lewensverhaal*, pp. 19 *et seq*, covers aspects of the history of the Knobel family, including the descendants from Germany, the Buchenröders.

¹⁰⁹R R Langham-Carter, *Clanwilliam – the Town, the District, St John's Church*, Diocesan College Press, Rondebosch, 1993, p. 40, refers to Charles Fryer, a resident of Clanwilliam, so he is a real person.

¹¹⁰Furthermore, details about the South African War in the Clanwilliam area are in Langham-Carter, pp. 29 – 31, where he refers to the presence of British military forces in Clanwilliam in 1901; more extensive details about the South African War in the region, and in Clanwilliam in particular, can be found in the addendum containing dates of the war in P L Scholtz's 'Die Historiese Ontwikkeling van die Onder-Olifants Rivier; 1660 – 1902', Departement Geskiedenis, UNISA, Januarie 1964.

¹¹¹BC 94 A5.3; A5.8 (Jagger).

As for the actual fighting in the outskirts of the town during the war as we read in Leipoldt's fiction, this was certainly possible if one considers the size of the plots and gardens in Clanwilliam at the time, as these pieces of land stretched from Park Street right down to the Jan Dissels River, approximately 200 to 300 metres in length and about 50 metres wide. It is also the case that the British maintained a garrison there.¹¹² The fighting in the garden of one of the residents, Charles Fryer, does not lie outside of the bounds of possibility, and Leipoldt used this image for Chapter 40 of *Stormwreck* to show the fictitious character Andrew Quakerley, realizing 'what he has lost and is completely shattered by the tragedy that has overtaken the Valley'¹¹³ and here we see a resemblance that the fiction has to the history (the garden destroyed in the fighting, is probably modeled on the real garden of Charles Fryer which Leipoldt describes in his article 'Clanwilliam: Herinneringe aan 'n Ou Dorpie', in *Die Huisgenoot*, 5 November 1926, and in the fiction in Chapter 3 of *Stormwreck*): 'Old Andrew stood speechless, almost breathless, before the first savage onslaught of the reality of all this wreck.'¹¹⁴

Reference has been made to the invasion of Clanwilliam by military forces, at the time of the South African War. The logistics of this can be explained in terms of the plans of the military, on both sides. The Boer Commando decided to prevent British supplies from the Atlantic Ocean reaching the forces stationed inland. British bases were set up in remote places such as Clanwilliam, in response to the Boer invasion. One of the ironies of the novel *Stormwreck* is to be found in a discussion between the characters that the war is too far away for it ever to reach the District. However, tragedy strikes the peaceful Valley, and a distant thought becomes reality; as if the fiction becomes history.

A work against which *Stormwreck* can be read for an understanding of the invasion of the Hantam district by the British forces and the response from the Boer Commandoes, is the unpublished doctoral thesis of P L Scholtz.¹¹⁵ His study follows the social, economic and political development of the region and of particular importance is a chronology (time-line) of events of the South African War in the Clanwilliam district. In addition, important information about Clanwilliam at the time of the war may be obtained from Leipoldt's

¹¹²R R Langham-Carter, *Clanwilliam – the Town, the District, St John's Church*, Diocesan College Press, Rondebosch, 1993, p. 31.

¹¹³BC94 A7.6 (Jagger).

¹¹⁴C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 490.

¹¹⁵P L Scholtz, 'Die Historiese Ontwikkeling van die Onder-Olifants Rivier; 1660 – 1902, Departement Geskiedenis', UNISA, Januarie 1964.

father's notebook in which he commented on certain of the actions of the British military (to which Leipoldt had access, as it eventually ended up in his possession).¹¹⁶ The book review of *Stormwrack* by Chris van der Merwe entitled: 'Waarde van Leipoldt se roman is politieke insigte' in *Die Burger* of 20 Augustus 2007, devotes some discussion on the invasion into the Clanwilliam area and the town itself and its social impact, effects and implications. Van der Merwe lauds *Stormwrack* for the insights it shows about the political situation at the time, and comments on its relevance for us in South Africa today.

Stephen Gray's account of the way 'C. Louis Leipoldt absorbed living oral Afrikaans history and converted it into written Afrikaans documentation' is significant.¹¹⁷ Afrikaans literator P C Schoonees describes the connection between Leipoldt's writing as a journalist and as a writer of literature, and this combination leads him (Schoonees) to conclude that Leipoldt's thorough knowledge of the social, political and ecclesiastical conditions of Clanwilliam at the beginning of the nineteenth century can never be exhausted¹¹⁸ (implying it has huge value from a historical point of view). Leipoldt's journalism is an important factor to consider for *The Valley*, especially by the way it is written, to engage the reader in Leipoldt's causerie.¹¹⁹ This point is made in view of Leipoldt's own recognition of the role of journalism in his work, although he leaves it to the reader to decide which is his strongest genre, drama, prose or poetry.¹²⁰ The implication nonetheless is that his journalistic abilities form a strong side to his writing, added to which is his great love for causerie¹²¹ that discusses and argues polemical issues such as nationhood, universal suffrage and literature. Leipoldt loved literature from his earliest years, and began his writing career with a story being published in the *Boy's Own Paper* at nine.

Mention has already been made of the fire that razed the town in 1901. Leipoldt was greatly aggrieved by the loss of official documents and books as a result of the destruction of the

¹¹⁶BC94 C11.5 (Jagger).

¹¹⁷S Gray, 'Leipoldt's Valley Community: The Novelist as Archivist', *Social Dynamics*, 10(1), pp. 46 – 51, 1984, p. 46.

¹¹⁸P C Schoonees, 'Leipoldt as Prosaskrywer' (translation: 'Leipoldt as prosaist'), *Die Huisgenoot*, 6 December 1940, p. 19.

¹¹⁹Causerie are topics of discussion, that one engages with, in a typical social fashion. These topics make for good discussion, and encourage debate; they are current opinion pieces often the kind of which are read in newspapers.

¹²⁰Dr P De V Pienaar in 'Jaarboek' van die Afrikaanse Skrywerskring', 1936, in an article entitled 'n Onderhoud met Leipoldt', in *Leipoldt in Beeld en Woord* (red. P J Nienaber), Perskor-Uitgewery, Johannesburg, 1980, p. 84.

¹²¹M P O Burgers, 'Leipoldt as Mens en Digter', in *Leipoldt in Beeld en Woord* (red. P J Nienaber), Perskor-Uitgewery, Johannesburg, 1980, p. 55.

library in Clanwilliam in this fire. It was in this very library that he ‘devoured’ Browning and Scott, two authors among many more important writers of the classics that Leipoldt read that greatly inspired him, particularly Scott’s *Waverley* (Leipoldt’s ‘Quakerley’?). Taking this into account, one can almost say that the town’s library (where he worked as a librarian in his matriculation year in 1897)¹²², was, to some extent the *fons et origo* of *The Valley*.

In fact, it can be argued that a reason for writing the Afrikaans version of *Gallows Gecko*, *Galgsalmander*, was to capture the history of Clanwilliam, lost in the official documents in the fire.¹²³ According to a local historian W P L van Zyl, it is not clear whether the British or Boers set the buildings alight.¹²⁴ Mrs Leipoldt, mother of C Louis Leipoldt, however, seems to think it might have been the result of direct action by the Boers.¹²⁵ Apart from describing the fire, Mrs Leipoldt was aggrieved at the fact that martial law and censorship ‘acts like an extinguisher on one’s hearth, mind and soul, at least it does on mine, so one cannot write as one would like to.’¹²⁶ The following is a description of the fire, by her:

I rushed into the back street and saw a flame up to the heavens in the direction of the court room exactly like the pictures one sees of the destruction of Sodom and not a smoke smouldering one but as if the whole part from earth to heaven was one big bonfire, with a fireworks display in the midst. We ran as fast as we could to the village the noise cracking, roaring, hissing; shouting sounded as if the Boers had come to set fire to the place and were fighting. It was awful.¹²⁷

Further important background information on the history of Clanwilliam and its surroundings is D A Kotzé’s book on the history of the area.¹²⁸ This work contains first-hand accounts of incidents in the South African War, which clearly show the tensions that existed between the local inhabitants and the British military. Details of these incidents corroborate the point that the tensions led to a deterioration of the relations between the English and Afrikaans-speaking elements of the Valley and the Village, a theme in *Stormwrack*.

¹²²D A Kotzé, ‘Van Roodezand tot Gariep – Die 150-jarige Bestaan van die N.G. Gemeente Clanwilliam 1826 – 1976’, Nasionale Boekdrukkery, Cape Town, 1981, p. 110.

¹²³On 31 August 1901, Leipoldt’s mother, Christina Leipoldt, wrote to Mrs Howard about the fire which broke out on 11 August 1901. BC94 C12.74 (Jagger).

¹²⁴D A Kotzé, ‘Van Roodezand tot Gariep – Die 150-jarige Bestaan van die N.G. Gemeente Clanwilliam 1826 – 1976’, Nasionale Boekdrukkery, Cape Town, 1981, p. 101.

¹²⁵BC94 C12.74 (Jagger).

¹²⁶*Ibid.*

¹²⁷*Ibid.*

¹²⁸D A Kotzé, ‘Van Roodezand tot Gariep – Die 150-jarige Bestaan van die N.G. Gemeente Clanwilliam 1826 – 1976’, Nasionale Boekdrukkery, Cape Town, 1981.

What we also get from a reading of Kotzé is a different view of the person of C Louis Leipoldt. One of the contributors in this work, H W J Rheeder, explains how Mrs Nortier, the wife of Leipoldt's close friend Dr Le Fras Nortier¹²⁹, did not tolerate his strange habit of entering the kitchen of their home and lifting the casserole dishes to see what was cooking on the stove.¹³⁰ A further account is from a retired teacher of Clanwilliam, Mr Rossouw, who remarked on Leipoldt's lack of good manners.¹³¹

On the other hand, Leipoldt and Dr Nortier had a close friendship to the end of Leipoldt's life. Shortly before Leipoldt's death he happened to mention to a close friend of his, Lulu Bolus, that she should send his cremated ashes to Nortier, who would know what should be done. Leipoldt died on the 13 April 1947. South African industrialist Dr J G Van der Horst conducted the service, which was held in a natural spot on the Pakhuis Pass outside Clanwilliam, and thirteen people attended. Nortier was one of the speakers, and confessed he did not know what to say, until the thought of Keats¹³² came to mind, who was buried in Rome, and the words:

If you knew that you would be buried in so beautiful a spot,
You could almost fall in love with death.¹³³

The Valley can be read against the accounts referred to in this chapter to see the connections between the history of the place Leipoldt wrote about, his experiences as a boy, and his later impressions about Clanwilliam. These are contained in his autobiographical sketches entitled 'Jeugherinneringe'. Whilst there is certainly a great deal of overlapping history with Leipoldt's fictional work, *The Valley* nevertheless expresses something that standard histories generally do not, and that is the deep emotions of its characters, for instance, Andrew Quakerley when he sees his garden destroyed. In the synopsis to *Stormwrack*, Leipoldt describes how 'Andrew's loyalty and attachment to his ingrained English ideals are gradually sapped, and he finds himself more and more in sympathy with his neighbours.'¹³⁴ In this way, historical fiction can be 'truer' than formal history when it closely conveys the feelings and emotions experienced by the inhabitants of the Valley, as *Stormwrack* does.

¹²⁹Nortier practiced as a doctor in Clanwilliam from 1916 to 1955, when he died.

¹³⁰D A Kotzé, 'Van Roodezand tot Gariep – Die 150-jarige Bestaan van die N.G. Gemeente Clanwilliam 1826 – 1976', Nasionale Boekdrukkery, Cape Town, 1981, p. 111.

¹³¹*Ibid.*

¹³²John Keats (1795 – 1821) and C Louis Leipoldt (1880 – 1947) qualified as medical doctors at Guy's Hospital, Chelsea, London.

¹³³Notes from an interview by Morkel van Tonder, with Dr P Nortier, about C Louis Leipoldt, 20 April 1954. The interview was conducted on Dr Nortier's farm, 'Rondawel', outside Clanwilliam.

¹³⁴BC94 A7.6 (Jagger).

Furthermore, as the historical novel falls under the aegis of cultural history in the interdisciplinary field of cultural memory, the dialogue we encounter in *The Valley* paints a realistic picture of the circumstances that were developing in a microcosmic way in the District, the Valley and the Village, in the fiction in *The Valley* although it can be argued that Leipoldt had in mind these circumstances for a broader representation of South African history.

1.4.4 – CONTEXTUALIZING LITERATURE — SEMINAL LEIPOLDT AND OTHER TEXTS THAT HAVE A BEARING ON *THE VALLEY*

One of the themes in *The Valley* is the dilemma that many of the inhabitants of the Cape Colony were confronted with at the time of the South African War (1899 – 1902). The Leipoldts themselves were not freed from this predicament as the eldest son Johnny fought in the Republican artillery and Leipoldt's Uncle Ewald Esselen, his mother's brother, worked in the South African Republic at that time. Furthermore, the name Leipoldt being German placed undue pressure on the family during the war.

Literary historian Professor Wium van Zyl of the University of the Western Cape has conducted substantial research on Leipoldt's war text *Oom Gert Vertel*, a poem about the inaction of an aged farmer of the backveld.¹³⁵ Van Zyl's work editing letters penned by Leipoldt in the South Africa War for a pro-Boer Dutch readership, *Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie*¹³⁶ and his article on *Oom Gert Vertel*, are important literary repositories for an understanding of Leipoldt as a dissident writer and for *The Valley*. The topic of Van Zyl's address took the form of a comparison between Leipoldt and the Dutch dissident writer Multatuli.¹³⁷ Furthermore, Van Zyl commented on the importance of *The Valley* in its full thrust and sweep.¹³⁸ One reflects on what Van Zyl said in the 'Introduction' to *Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie* namely that to understand Leipoldt's later literary oeuvre (including *The Valley*) it is important to consider his earlier journalism.¹³⁹ Lord Coleridge's sketch of the

¹³⁵W van Zyl, "'Oom Gert Vertel' en Multatuli", *Tydskrif vir Nederlands en Afrikaans*, 6(1), 1999, pp. 63 – 77.

¹³⁶C Louis Leipoldt's *Hierdie Land van Leuens: 'Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie'* (ed. Wium van Zyl), Africana Uitgewers, Cape Town, 2002.

¹³⁷Multatuli is the pseudonym of Eduard Douwes Dekker born in Amsterdam (1820 – 1887), who went to work in the East Indian Civil Service in 1838. He is well-known for his novel *Max Havelaar* written in 1859 and published in 1860. The novel is a critique of the way the local inhabitants were treated by their Dutch overlords in the Dutch East Indies at the time.

¹³⁸Van Zyl kindly sent me the full transcript of his lecture.

¹³⁹C Louis Leipoldt's *Hierdie Land van Leuens: 'Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie'* (ed. Wium van Zyl), Africana Uitgewers, Cape Town, 2002, p. 18.

illegalities involved in martial law at the time, presented in a significant speech entitled ‘The Illegality of Martial Law in Cape Colony’ in the House of Lords in 1902, explaining that the Queen was ‘justly beloved by her Dutch subjects in South Africa’¹⁴⁰ can be read against *Oom Gert Vertel* as well as two other works by Leipoldt, his novellas *De Rebel* (1900) and *The Rebel* (1904), which cover the same theme of changing sympathies.

A point that aggrieved Leipoldt was that the Republican military generals had the audacity to lead military campaigns into the Cape Colony during the South African War and if they were caught, would be spared the fate that befell Cape Afrikaner soldiers, viz., who could be arraigned on a charge of treason and face the ‘empty chair’¹⁴¹ or be hanged in public. This is a theme of *Stormwrack*, which Leipoldt claims he wrote as a pendant to Reitz’s *Commando: A Boer Journal of the South African War* (written in 1903¹⁴² when he was exiled in Madagascar) which gave merely the Republican side. This is a classic example of an oppositional text written against the ‘official’ history if one considers Reitz was serving in the Republican forces at the time.¹⁴³

Important early works to be consulted for an understanding of Leipoldt’s young life are the letters he wrote to his *confidante* Dr Harry Bolus which have been edited by Dr E M Sandler, a former medical practitioner in Cape Town who published them under the title of ‘*Dear Dr Bolus*.’¹⁴⁴ This correspondence is at the heart of an important topic, namely a possible alternative world-view as part of the Cape Loyalist-Union paradigm, seen for

¹⁴⁰The speech delivered on 17 March 1902 entitled ‘The Illegality of Martial Law in Cape Colony’(sic) in the House of Lords in Britain by the Right Honourable Lord Coleridge can be found at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/20360443/1902-Illegality-of-Martial-Law-in-Cape-Colony>.

When it is asserted by the magistrate Storam in *Stormwrack* that martial law is a ‘legal fiction’ (C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 375), it resonates with Coleridge’s assertion on page 7 of ‘The Illegality of Martial Law in Cape Colony’ that the imposition of martial law in South Africa was a violation of the British Constitution. Monsignor Kolbe, who wrote the leader page of *The South African News* at the time Albert Cartwright was imprisoned, had strong views on the iniquitous actions of British military rule in South Africa during the time of the South African War. It might be that a young, impressionable Leipoldt was influenced by this. For further reading see Frederick Hale’s ‘A Catholic voice against British imperialism: F C Kolbe’s opposition to the Second Anglo-Boer War’ <http://www.unisa.ac.za/default.asp?Cmd=ViewContent&ContentID=7374>.

¹⁴¹A term of bitter irony signifying that the soldier would be shot by firing squad.

¹⁴²D Reitz, ‘Herinneringen van 1899 – 1902’ written on Croxley paper in Madagascar in 1903, re-written as *Commando*, Faber & Faber, 1929.

¹⁴³G J Calitz, ‘Deneys Reitz (1882 – 1944): Krygsman, Avonturier en Politikus’, D Phil thesis, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, 2008. <http://upetd.up.ac.za/thesis/available/etd-05312009-205128/>.

¹⁴⁴C Louis Leipoldt, ‘*Dear Dr Bolus*’, *Letters from Clanwilliam, London, New York & Europe written mainly during his medical education by C. Louis Leipoldt to Harry Bolus in Cape Town from 1897 to 1911*, edited with an introduction, notes and index by E M Sandler, published for the University of Cape Town by A.A. Balkema, 1979. The full bank of letters by Leipoldt is BC94 B1.1 – B1.94 (Jagger). Not all the letters have been used in Sandler’s publication.

instance in a British affiliated national identity from which some of the *topoi* in *The Valley* emanate. Bolus was part of this loyal-union paradigm especially by the way he contributed to Cape Town's horticultural history. Botanical gardens such as Kirstenbosch in Cape Town served as a form of identity within the Empire, as did the Mountain Club, formed in Cape Town in 1891. The Botanical Society was formed in 1913 to realise the dream of the first incumbent of Bolus' chair in botany, for an African Peradinya at Kirstenbosch. Society membership rose steadily from the original 243 in 1913, to more than 1 000 in 1928 and near 2 000 by 1939, with members quickly converting their private gardens into 'Little Kirstenbosches', helped by the new garden's provision of free seed and horticultural advice to its subscribers.

The letters from Leipoldt to Bolus from the winter of 1908 – 1909¹⁴⁵ when Leipoldt sailed aboard the luxury steamboat of the blind American newspaper magnate, J D Pulitzer, to whom he acted as personal physician during the journey, provide an interesting archive from which Afrikaans novelist Karel Schoeman, drew inspiration for his book *Die Reisiger*.¹⁴⁶ Schoeman uses Leipoldt's presence aboard Pulitzer's yacht *Liberty* to give an interpretation of Leipoldt as a young man, without providing biographical detail, and thus purely a fictional-psychological account.¹⁴⁷ Afrikaans author Hennie Aucamp has written a commentary on Schoeman's book, entitled 'C Louis Leipoldt, 'n Fiktiewe Portret.'¹⁴⁸ Aucamp made the comment 'Die belangrikste faset van *Die Reisiger* is dat dit 'n psigologiese portret van C Louis Leipoldt bied - 'n portret wat nie wegskram van Leipoldt se vermeende homofiele verlangens nie'.¹⁴⁹ According to J C Kannemeyer, *Die Reisiger* even though a fictive account, is nevertheless a sensitive rendering of the image of the young Leipoldt, with the effective back-shadowing (terugspeel) on experiences from his youth in Clanwilliam.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵The northern hemisphere winter.

¹⁴⁶Karel Schoeman, *Die Reisiger*, Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 1980. The Slatow Collection in the Archives of the University of South Africa contains important vignettes of Leipoldt's appreciation of travel, especially through Italy, as a medical student, visiting hospitals which he worked in, along the way. The inscriptions on the post cards attest to an early development of a liking for aesthetical things, such as gormandising. The idea of the Grand Tour was very important in the formulation of a young person's world-view and the year 1908 when Leipoldt conducted such a tour greatly extended his cultural and aesthetical horizons and expanded his world-view.

¹⁴⁷J C Kannemeyer, in footnote 83 of Chapter VII of *Leipoldt, 'n Lewensverhaal*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1980, p. 694, commenting on Karel Schoeman's *Die Reisiger*.

¹⁴⁸Hennie Aucamp, 'C Louis Leipoldt, 'n Fiktiewe Portret', <http://www.oulitnet.co.za/gay/aucamp08.asp>.

¹⁴⁹Hennie Aucamp, <http://www.oulitnet.co.za/gay/aucamp08.asp>. (Translation: 'The most important aspect of *Die Reisiger* is that a psychological picture is presented of C Louis Leipoldt, a picture that does not shy away from Leipoldt's alleged homophile tendencies.')

¹⁵⁰J C Kannemeyer, in footnote 83 of Chapter VII of *Leipoldt, 'n Lewensverhaal*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1980, p. 694, commenting on Karel Schoeman's *Die Reisiger*.

The novel by Schoeman, Kannemeyer's observations and Aucamp's reference to Leipoldt's possible homophilia, are important in the context of the response by some to Leipoldt's sexual orientation, as the article in 'Perspektief' in *Rapport*, dated 28 August 2005 entitled 'Was hy of was hy nie?' written by Sonja Loots, explains. Here, Loots discusses a series of articles that appeared in the *South African Medical Journal* on the topic of Leipoldt's sexual orientation, for instance, one by R M Kaplan, a medical doctor formerly from South Africa, at the time of writing, living in Australia, who responded to an article by Dr J C (Kay) de Villiers, by suggesting no study of Leipoldt could ever be complete without some reference to his sexual orientation.¹⁵¹ One could however argue that instead of trying to box or pigeon-hole Leipoldt, one should see his views on sexuality in the same broad perspective, for instance, as his political liberalism.

M P O Burgers raised an interesting point about Leipoldt's experiences of contacting older men in Cape Town, from his home town of Clanwillaim. He did this in order to obtain scientific information on rare plants which he discovered as a child in the Cederberg area. There is at least one plant named after him, the spiderhead, technically referred to as *Serruria Leipoldtii*.¹⁵² Botany and writing were two strong interests Leipoldt pursued virtually his entire life, and as quite a lonely person in his youth, he found solace in the areas and environs of these floral kingdoms such as the Cederberg. His fascination with plants was induced by his father's interest in botany added to which as a young boy, with a flora-rich area his garden, he regularly ventured off into the wilds looking for specimen. Cape Town botanist Professor MacOwan, director of the Cape Town Botanical Garden and curator of the Cape government herbarium, never for a minute imagined the sender of the plant specimen received from Clanwilliam was that of a young boy. The eventual meeting of the two resulted in MacOwan taking great care over showing the enthusiast the technique of preserving and drying plants.

Chapter 1 of *Stormwrack* explains how the young Andrew Quakerley climbed the slopes of Devil's Peak in the company of renowned botanists.¹⁵³ This point might be autobiographical as in Leipoldt's own life he regularly met up with famous botanists such as Rudolph

¹⁵¹R M Kaplan, 'Louis Leipoldt', *South African Medical Journal*, 94, 2004, pp. 796 – 797.

¹⁵²This is a rare Cederberg endemic plant, occurring in sandstone between 1000 and 1400m altitude.

¹⁵³C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 225.

Schlechter¹⁵⁴ and others, who left a deep impression on Leipoldt's mind. The role botany played in Leipoldt's life with several men part of this great outside adventure cannot be emphasized enough. The relationship with Dr Harry Bolus, introduced to him through Dr Peter McOwan, developed into a close mentor-mentee one, even though the division in age between the two was enormous. Leipoldt's close associations with men served as a way of conveying his feelings and sharing experiences as in his letters to Dr Bolus.¹⁵⁵ Other influences from men include a Mr Combrink and a Frenchman whose name we do not get to know.¹⁵⁶ The one taught him to memorize information and the other encouraged him in the art of writing.¹⁵⁷ It was remarkable however how the young boy associated so easily with older men. Needless to say, this extended his horizons across many areas, not least the field of botany which remained an indelible part of his world-view.

A further example of Leipoldt's world-view was Buddhism which provided him with a sense of tolerance and an appreciation for universal brotherhood. There are several comments about Leipoldt's Buddhism worth noting. Medical Doctor, E M Sandler has said that 'it would appear, from all accounts, that he (Leipoldt) had a strong leaning towards Eastern religions and it is said (but unconfirmed) that at registration at Guy's Medical School he indicated that his religion was Buddhism.'¹⁵⁸ Professor M M Walters's interesting monograph touches on Leipoldt's alleged Buddhism.¹⁵⁹ Leipoldt travelled to the Dutch East Indies as a ship's doctor on the cargo steamer *S S Ulysses* in 1912 while recuperating from an appendectomy and recorded the voyage of his experiences in a diary entitled *A visit to the East Indies*.¹⁶⁰ Subsequently, a cycle of poems called "Uit my Oosterse Dagboek" was published as part of

¹⁵⁴Schlechter made a deep impression on Leipoldt, especially with his profound knowledge of German literature.

¹⁵⁵See 'Dear Dr Bolus' C. Louis Leipoldt, *Letters from Clanwilliam, London, New York & Europe written mainly during his medical education, by C. Louis Leipoldt to Harry Bolus in Cape Town from 1897 – 1911*, edited with an introduction, notes and index by E M Sandler, published for the University of Cape Town by A.A. Balkema, 1979. BC94 B1.1 to B1.94 (Jagger).

¹⁵⁶C Louis Leipoldt, *Jeugherinneringe*, pp. 19 – 20, BC94 A7.21 (Jagger).

¹⁵⁷The experiences Leipoldt had of meeting Mr Combrink and the Frenchman, is reflected in an article entitled 'Leipoldt — Outobiografiese Fragment', *Standpunte*, 5(2), pp. 82 – 84, also in *Jeugherinneringe* by C Louis Leipoldt.

¹⁵⁸E M Sandler, 'C.Louis Leipoldt – Medical Student Extraordinary', Address at A J Orenstein Memorial Lecture, The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand, 8 October 1980, (abridged), p. 14.

¹⁵⁹M M Walters, 'C Louis Leipoldt 1880 – 1947' – Pamphlet published by the 'Foundation for Research and Development: Man and His Environment', undated, p. 15.

¹⁶⁰BC94 A7.16 (Jagger). This is an unpublished manuscript written by Leipoldt subsequently supplied with possible chapter headings by Dr M P O Burgers, when lacking in the original. There are valuable insights from Leipoldt on a broad range of socio-economic and political points pertaining to Javanese society and therefore the manuscript lends itself to further study to compare Javanese and South African societies where they are similar/different.

the volume *Uit Drie Wêrelddele* in 1923 as well as a series of sixteen weekly articles published in *Die Huisgenoot* in 1931 and also a travel book entitled *Uit my Oosterse Dagboek* (1932).¹⁶¹

A number of texts and articles cover Leipoldt's experiences of the East. Professor Louise Viljoen of the University of Stellenbosch comments on Leipoldt's enthusiastic depiction of the Orient.¹⁶² Afrikaans author Elsa Joubert's *Gordel van Smarag* is based on her experience of her travels following in the footsteps of C Louis Leipoldt in the East Indies.¹⁶³ Leipoldt's Buddhist tendencies could also have influenced the depiction of the woman's forgiving and unconditional love towards her hypocritical husband in *The Mask*. The hypocrisy of idolized politicians, who very often are nothing other than weaklings ready to be unmasked, is another theme in *The Mask*. It relates to the unmasking of individuals when people's true characters are revealed and they prove not to be what they are held up to be — idolized, hence Leipoldt's preferred title for the book, *Idols* (*Afgode* in Afrikaans). The topic of hypocrisy is taken further by Leipoldt to include situations we sometimes find ourselves in, and tend to resort to inaction (turn a blind eye) because of the way the situation suits us.¹⁶⁴ Inaction is also a theme in Leipoldt's war poetry, whereby some choose not to fight, even if their age might prevent it as in the case of the character Oom Gert.

Leipoldt's epistolary correspondence with one of his mentors Dr F V Engelenburg is an important repository of the intellectual thought of C Louis Leipoldt for the period 1924 – 1937; which includes the years *The Valley* (1929 – 1932) was being written.¹⁶⁵ Leipoldt was Engelenburg's junior by seventeen years and the two first met in 1914 when Engelenburg was already editor of *De Volkstem*.¹⁶⁶ The intellectual interaction between the two was

¹⁶¹C Louis Leipoldt, *Uit my Oosterse Dagboek*. ['From my Oriental Diary'], Nasionale Pers, Cape Town, 1932.

¹⁶²L Viljoen, 'Leipoldt and the Orient: a Reading of C.L. Leipoldt's Travel Writing in the Context of Orientalist Discourse', University of Stellenbosch; an English version from L Viljoen, 'Leipoldt en die Ooste: Leipoldt se Reisbeskrywing *Uit my Oosterse Dagboek* en die Diskoers van die Oriëntalisme', *Stilet*, 8(2), 1996, pp. 53 – 71.

¹⁶³Elsa Joubert, *Gordel van Smarag*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1997.

¹⁶⁴This is referred to as 'defensive hypocrisy' (in C Louis Leipoldt, *Bushveld Doctor*, p. 80); see also the term 'dignified hypocrisy' which is used in *The Mask*, in *The Valley*, p. 596, which he defines as 'expert fence-riding'.

¹⁶⁵This correspondence is housed in the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa, Head Office, Pretoria. Copies by J M H van Aardt of C L L's letters (1924 – 1937) to Dr Engelenburg made for Dr M P O Burgers from the originals in the Engelenburg Papers in the State Archives, Pretoria, are in BC94 B10.1 – 10.17 (Jagger).

¹⁶⁶*De Volkstem* was the first Afrikaans-Dutch newspaper north of the Orange River appearing for the first time in Pretoria on 8 Augustus 1873 and thereafter every two weeks under the name *De Volkstem*, *Nieuws- en Advertentieblad*. The name changed officially on 1 January 1927 to *Die Volkstem*. It became the mouthpiece for General Smuts's United Party. Leipoldt worked on the editorial from 1923 – 1925.

instantaneous according to Burgers.¹⁶⁷ One of the many areas their interests overlapped was in the field of literature and both possessed a satirical sense of humour.¹⁶⁸ Yet it is ironic that Leipoldt should place such an amount of confidence in Engelenburg, a person also greatly admired by Gustav Preller, in a sense Leipoldt's rival from the north. The correspondence between Leipoldt and Engelenburg forms an important archive of Leipoldt's views on the status of South African literature at the time and the correspondence between these two can provide a valuable monograph on South African intellectual history of the time. On 2 September 1929 he wrote to Engelenburg to explain that he was busy writing a novel *à la* Mann's *Buddenbrooks* to describe the fortunes of two Cape families; the first (of the novels) appearing in *Die Huisgenoot*, but the rest of their adventures could not be printed there, as the church and politicians will take umbrage, thus he will be writing in English.¹⁶⁹

E M Sandler's study 'C. Louis Leipoldt — Medical Student Extraordinary' has already been referred to.¹⁷⁰ It gives important insights into C Louis Leipoldt in a medical context as do the views of medical doctors who knew Leipoldt personally, such as J H Louw, J C de Villiers, P Shields and S S B Gilder. Important insights on Leipoldt are shared in their respective articles in the *South African Medical Journal* of 6 December 1980.¹⁷¹ As medical practitioners who knew Leipoldt (Leipoldt himself was a medical doctor) their perspectives can be quite hard-hitting and this is important for the thesis, to see the different sides of the person. Louw's article entitled 'Leipoldt the Paediatrician' includes interesting biographical information about Leipoldt's chaotic bridge parties; it reveals furthermore that as a doctor in private practice he failed to earn a useful living because he hardly ever sent out accounts. It confirms that as far as Louw is concerned Leipoldt cannot be hailed as a great paediatrician.¹⁷²

Mr Billy Muller, a resident of Cape Town, was a personal friend of Leipoldt. I interviewed Muller when he was 101 years old but still clear of mind.¹⁷³ Muller related many things

¹⁶⁷M P O Burgers, 'Ou Briewe van Leipoldt Ontdek', *Die Huisgenoot*, 5 December 1955, p. 37.

¹⁶⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹BC94 B10.14 (Jagger).

¹⁷⁰E M Sandler, 'C.Louis Leipoldt — Medical Student Extraordinary', Address at A J Orenstein Memorial Lecture, The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand, 8 October 1980, (abridged).

¹⁷¹*South African Medical Journal*, 58(23), December 1980.

¹⁷²J H Louw, 'Leipoldt the Paediatrician', *South African Medical Journal*, 58(23), December 1980, p. 920.

¹⁷³On 24 September 2009, Billy's son, Dirk Muller (SC), at the time of Silwood Road, Rondebosch, took me to see his father at his home in Cape Town. The visit lasted approximately ninety minutes. Billy talked at length about his close association as a personal friend of C Louis Leipoldt. Needless to say, it was a rare and

including that Leipoldt was a prince of hearts in his home, that he enjoyed entertaining, that he was not particularly good at bridge, neither by any means at tennis. There is no claim from Leipoldt that he was necessarily good at any of these but mention of bridge and chess nevertheless features in his correspondence with friends whom he entertained at his home. The Van Zijls (Paul and Helm) came to play bridge and tennis on a regular basis and of course gourmandize with Leipoldt, who had the most bizarre palate. Two of his favourite dishes were octopus and snails, and he threatened to provide guests with a Chinese delicacy — baby white mice boiled in honey.¹⁷⁴

1.4.5 – BIOGRAPHIES, WORKS AND STUDIES AGAINST WHICH *THE VALLEY* CAN BE READ

M P O Burgers's *C.L. Leipoldt, 'n Studie in Stof-keuse, -verwerking en -ontwikkeling*, includes an important study of the psychological aspect of some of Leipoldt's works.¹⁷⁵ Burgers's work is very important for a better understanding of Leipoldt's alleged Buddhist tendencies and sexual orientation, respectively. But Burgers criticizes Leipoldt for not making the chronicle of the Valley in *The Valley* come full circle, which is central to the idea behind the trilogy.¹⁷⁶ This is a fair comment but at the same time the way Leipoldt worked was quite haphazard and he was re-working material.

J C Kannemeyer's important and meticulous biography on Leipoldt is divided into sections. 'Deel I' covers the time from birth in 1880 to the time Leipoldt left South Africa to work as a journalist for the pro-Boer paper, the *Manchester Guardian* in 1902. 'Deel II' covers the London period, from 1902 – 1914, including the trips abroad in 1908 to work in hospitals in Germany, Italy and Russia. During this time Leipoldt served as ship's doctor to J D Pulitzer for four months from October 1908 and he undertook a voyage to the Far East in 1912. 'Deel III' covers his work in the Transvaal¹⁷⁷ as a medical doctor working in schools from 1914 – 1923. The experiences gained from his work in the Bushveld led to the important

fascinating experience. He told me that Leipoldt was quite useless at bridge, as well as at tennis, where he liked to stand at the net. The food served at dinner parties was nothing spectacular. But Leipoldt was a very good host and loved to have people visiting his home 'Arbury' in Kenilworth.

¹⁷⁴J H Louw, 'Leipoldt the Paediatrician', *South African Medical Journal*, 58(23), December 1980, pp. 917 – 918.

¹⁷⁵M P O Burgers, *C. L. Leipoldt, 'n Studie in Stof-keuse, -verwerking en -ontwikkeling*, Nasionale Boekhandel, Cape Town, 1960.

¹⁷⁶*Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹⁷⁷Today known as Gauteng.

publication in 1937, of *Bushveld Doctor*. The final part is ‘Deel IV’, covering his second Cape Town period from 1925 until 1947 when he died. He was most prolific as a writer from the late twenties and early thirties, penning, among others, several novels and plays, including *Die Laaste Aand* (1930), *Die Donker Huis* (1931), *Afgode* (1931), *Die Kwaksalwer* (1931), *Die Bergtragedie* (1932), *Skoonheidstroos* (1932), *Die Rooi Rotte en ander Kortverhale* (1932), *Galgsalmander* (1932), *Die Moord op Muizenberg* (1932), *Die Dwergvroutjie* (1937), *Die Verbrande Lyk* (1934) and *Die Moord in die Bosveld* (1939). Historical works including *Die Groot Trek* (1938), *Die Hugenote* (1939) and *Jan van Riebeeck: die Grondlegger van ’n Blanke Suid-Afrika* (1938). Then there are a number of other topics, such as books on cookery, *Kos vir die Kenner* (1933) and *Polfyntjies vir die Proe* (published posthumously in 1963, from articles in *Die Huisgenoot* between 1942 – 1947), a travelogue, *Uit mij Oosterse Dagboek* (1932), the scientific study, *Bushveld Doctor* (1937) and a comprehensive cultural history, namely Chapter XXXII in Volume VIII of *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* (1936). It was during his second Cape Town period that he wrote the three novels that make up *The Valley* (1929 – 1932).

Kannemeyer’s Leipoldt-biography won him the Helgaard Steyn award in 2000. Apart from Kannemeyer’s biography on Leipoldt,¹⁷⁸ he published other works on Leipoldt, including *Uit die Skatkis van die Slampamperman: ’n Leipoldt-omnibus*, (1999) and *So Blomtuin-vol van Kleure: Leipoldt oor Clanwilliam* (1999) as well as a number of articles. The importance of J C Kannemeyer the biographer of Leipoldt also lies in his (Kannemeyer’s) critical approach to textual studies. Kannemeyer has been described as one of ‘the most erudite, authoritative, influential and productive littérateurs in the history of Afrikaans.’¹⁷⁹ Important from the view of research for this thesis is Kannemeyer’s discussion about the three books making up the trilogy as well as the trilogy itself. Kannemeyer raised strong views about *The Valley*,¹⁸⁰ newly published at the time, in *Die Burger* of 17 December 2001 and these views are examined in Chapter 6 of this thesis. It is possible that Kannemeyer later on changed his mind about the actual value and quality of the trilogy, which was told to me by another student of the work of Leipoldt, Riaan Oppelt.¹⁸¹ Several literary historians who have written

¹⁷⁸J C Kannemeyer, *Leipoldt, ’n Lewensverhaal*, Tafelberg, Cape Town, 1999.

¹⁷⁹For a biography of J C Kannemeyer see <http://www.stellenboschwriters.com/kannemey.html>.

¹⁸⁰The title of Kannemeyer’s article is ‘Lywige roman-trilogie dra swaar aan mankemente.’

¹⁸¹Oppelt in an email to me dated 16 January 2012 said that Kannemeyer might have changed his mind about the literary value of *The Valley*: ‘In a casual conversation I had with J C Kannemeyer two years ago, it almost seemed to me as if he may have been re-assessing the trilogy in his mind, but one never knows.’

about *The Valley*, however, are positive about its value and contribution to South African literary biography and Merrington as one of these strongly emphasizes the importance of reading and understanding it in its full thrust.

Merrington observes that *The Valley* was written ‘when the white Union of South Africa experienced contestation between Anglophone and Dutch or Afrikaner political lobbies’.¹⁸² This is an important point from which to try to understand *The Valley*, as one of its main themes is the changing relations between English and Afrikaans speakers in South African history during the period 1820 – 1930. Merrington discusses the fact that whereas Leipoldt has been received ‘as a major figure within the Afrikaans literary canon’, *The Valley* nevertheless reveals him ‘as a dedicated liberal, squarely set against the isolationist policies of his Afrikaner peers.’¹⁸³ Merrington’s article, however, alerts one to the important Preller-Leipoldt polemic and debate. Out of all the articles covering *The Valley* Merrington’s have proved by far the most comprehensive for an understanding of what Leipoldt wrote against: the Preller-Afrikaner-Voortrekker-based, heroic history – *volksgeskiedenis*, that dominated Afrikaner historiography for approximately 33 years, from 1905 to 1938 (and even beyond). The inspiration to study the Preller-Leipoldt debate/polemic stems directly from a reading of the Merrington’s articles.¹⁸⁴

Merrington has emphasized that *The Valley* must be seen in its full thrust by the way it discusses the basic themes and *topoi* that informs its logic such as the importance of deciding not to trek, the value of local, deep tradition, and for Leipoldt important themes such as degeneration. Just as the nationalists drew on a set of memory-based features, namely history, poetry, publications, enactments, buildings, monuments, all celebrating the Afrikaner past, to construct their Afrikaner nationalist *volksgeskiedenis*, so Leipoldt draws on material from the 1890s, into the 1920s, such as architecture, literature, husbandry, botany and scientific advancement. Merrington explains however, that Leipoldt was writing about a nostalgic past, of a possible South African identity, formed through Leipoldt’s broad world-

¹⁸²Peter Merrington, ‘C. Louis Leipoldt’s ‘Valley trilogy’ and Contested South African Nationalisms in the Early Twentieth century’, *Current Writing*, 15(2), 2003, pp. 32.

¹⁸³*Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴These texts are: Peter Merrington, ‘Carrying the Torch: Dorothea Fairbridge and the Cape Loyalist Imagination’, paper presented at the University of Pretoria, 2002, www.childlit.org.za/KonfBoerMerrington.html. Peter Merrington, ‘C. Louis Leipoldt’s “Valley trilogy” and Contested South African Nationalisms in the Early Twentieth century’, *Current Writing*, 15(2), 2003; Peter Merrington, ‘A Staggered Orientalism: The Cape-to-Cairo Imaginary’, *Poetics Today*, 22(2), 2001, pp. 323-364.

view, but lamentably that this did not materialize because of the way the Nationalists established their ideology of race supremacy, and sectionalism. A study of the Preller-Leipoldt debate features in Chapters 3 to 5 of this thesis. In addition Merrington's views on the role of *The Valley* as South African fiction, is also used/explained elsewhere in this thesis.

Stephen Gray's work on marginal characters as major witnesses to their times, has included several studies on Leipoldt. One such study is the value of 'the related aspects of interpreting historical fiction as historical source material.'¹⁸⁵ Of significance in this paper is a point already referred to, namely how Leipoldt absorbed 'living oral Afrikaans history and converted it into written Afrikaans documentation.'¹⁸⁶ Gray worked on editing two of Leipoldt's novels; *Gallows Gecko* and *Stormwrack*. *Stormwrack* appeared in hard cover in edited form in the centenary year of the birth of Leipoldt (1980).¹⁸⁷ A paperback edition was published by Human & Rousseau in 2000. Gray explains the 'structural emendations' that he made to *Chameleon on the Gallows* (the name Gray gave to *Gallows Gecko*) for stylistic reasons, in the 'Introduction' to his edited version.¹⁸⁸ He explains *Chameleon on the Gallows* as an 'alternative version of history to the Trekker myth of white superiority'.¹⁸⁹ The voice of the character Everardus Nolte represents those who decided not to trek and who thus contributed significantly to the society where he lived (the district of the Cederberg). Everardus Nolte was worthy of admiration because he decided to stay behind and 'to fight for a bigger, better South Africa'.¹⁹⁰

Riaan Oppelt has contributed a number of literary studies on Leipoldt's *The Valley*. One such study was presented in 2009 at the University of Stellenbosch, entitled 'Appreciation of

¹⁸⁵S Gray, 'Leipoldt's Valley Community: The Novelist as Archivist', *Social Dynamics*, 10(1), 1984, p. 46.

¹⁸⁶*Ibid.* For the problem of oral to written memory see the review by Hans G Kippenberg, 'The Problem of Literacy in the History of religions', in *Numen*, Vol. XXXIX, Fasc. 1, June 1992, pp. 102 – 107. There are several articles that are reviewed, about the differences in orality and writing and the problem of memory, for instance, *Schrift und Gedächtnis : Beiträge zur Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation I* by Aleida Assmann, Jan Assmann & Christof Hardmeier, W Fink, Munich, 1983; *Kanon und Zensur. Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation II* by Aleida Assmann and Jan Assmann, W Fink, Munich, 1987; *Weisheit. Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation III* by Aleida Assmann. These volumes suggest a new era for the development in the study of religions, according to the reviewer Kippenberg, and that 'texts are forced to anticipate the reception of readers', which can point to a bigger role for reception ethics also in historical-fictional novels such as *The Valley*.

¹⁸⁷C Louis Leipoldt, *Stormwrack* (ed. Stephen Gray), David Philip, Cape Town, 1980.

¹⁸⁸C Louis Leipoldt, *Chameleon on the Gallows* (ed. Stephen Gray), Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, Pretoria, Johannesburg, 2000. See the 'Introduction' pp. 5 – 16.

¹⁸⁹C Louis Leipoldt, *Chameleon on the Gallows* (ed. Stephen Gray), p. 12.

¹⁹⁰*Ibid.*

Nature displaced by Organic Destruction in C. Louis Leipoldt's *Valley Trilogy*.' Oppelt refers to Leipoldt as a pioneer of Afrikaans drama, remembered for the:

...ways in which he depicted nature in most of his works, with his reputation as a composer of romantic odes to the South African landscape and scenery possibly unchallenged in Afrikaans literature, which historically favours bonds between man and earth in most prose narratives, and poems...¹⁹¹

Discussing the novels under sub-headings, as follows, 'The uses of nature and the natural environment in the novel as a form of utopianism' (*Gallows Gecko*); 'Organic Destruction' (*Stormwrack*); and 'Social progress combined with environmental and moral "degeneration"' (*The Mask*), Oppelt examines each of the three novels together making up *The Valley* 'for its use of natural imagery' in serving Leipoldt's trajectory of growth and collapse and outlines his thesis as follows:

The recent publication of Leipoldt's *Valley* trilogy, three novels written in English in the 1930s, but not published in his day, now reveals Leipoldt as an equally ardent 'nature scribe' in English-language South African literature. In the *Valley trilogy*, published in 2001, three novels, following each other chronologically, establish Leipoldt's commentary on how the unfolding of historical events in South Africa takes [*sic*] a negative impact on the South African landscape by way of using one particular setting, a Valley community in the Western Cape/Cape Colony, as a microcosm for viewing the contrast between the arrival of modernity and the gradual loss of natural scenery. By implication, Leipoldt's concept of modernity includes the growth of industry through the mining booms outside the Cape Colony, warfare between the two white sections of the Valley community, the generational seceding of language, nationalist political agitation and the formalizing of racial boundaries. Nature, in Leipoldt's employment, is the paper on which this tension is documented and while the overall historic sweep of the three novels, beginning in the 1840s and ending in the 1920s, is perhaps too ambitious for Leipoldt's many literary motifs, his thematic interest in natural scenery and its contribution to his sustained narrative emerges as purposeful and distinguished.¹⁹²

Salomé Snyman has conducted studies on literature, to include a chapter on Leipoldt's *The Mask* in her doctoral dissertation and explains its historical importance:

Leipoldt's novels therefore present an absorbing portrait of a period which deserves more attention for its historical interest alone. He also skilfully exploits the allegoric-referential possibilities of the small-town microcosm to comment on the country as a whole and to expose the discrepancies in South African society with regard to the actual/ideal dichotomy developed by Kearney in his work, *Representing Dissension: Riot, Rebellion and Resistance in the South African English Novel* (2003), by showing

¹⁹¹Riaan Oppelt, 'Appreciation of Nature displaced by Organic Destruction in C. Louis Leipoldt's *Valley Trilogy*.' The paper was delivered at the English Department of the University of Stellenbosch on 25 August, 2009, and attended by me.

¹⁹²Riaan Oppelt, 'Appreciation of Nature displaced by Organic Destruction in C. Louis Leipoldt's *Valley Trilogy*.'

how his ideal of a liberal, tolerant, compassionate society was debased to a divisive, intolerant society, driven by prejudice and resentment.¹⁹³

Burgers, Kannemeyer, Merrington, Gray, Oppelt, Snyman and Van Der Merwe, have all somehow commented on the status of *The Valley*, some positively and in a few cases, negatively. Whatever the case, it does however seem that there is much literary benefit to be derived from reading *The Valley*, and that out of a reading of this work, a strong historical component emerges, such as the changes brought about in society because of degeneration, the use of a small-town microcosm to paint a bigger picture of the future of South Africa, changing national identities, an alternative version of South African history (the Great Trek myth), the contestation between English and Afrikaans ideology, and, not forgetting the invaluable role of the translation by Leipoldt of orality to the written text. Most of all, however, *The Valley* can be viewed as an oppositional text, to the dominant Afrikaner narrative of Gustav S Preller.

1.5 – CONCLUSION

This chapter has introduced *The Valley* of C Louis Leipoldt as a literary work of fiction that has the possibilities of exposing readers to an alternative history to the Preller project, and as an alternative form of history as a work of fiction, to standard histories. The development of historical events in South Africa in the 1920s began to disturb Leipoldt. He was certainly hoping for a South African national identity, above the emerging sectarian Nationalist one that was rising, which to a large extent was propagated by Preller. Preller's historiography is the summative, contrary emphasis at the end of the full sweep of *The Valley* in its fullest possible thrust. Leipoldt conducts this sustained debate that local, deep-rooted tradition, as part of the Western cultural development, is preferable to and more lasting than Preller's partisan, sectionalist, sectarian, racist-based history that idolizes the Voortrekker movement from the Cape and establishes an inclusive political ideology as a result. Thus Leipoldt boldly took on Preller's foundational myth and presented his own world-view based on a Cape-based, Unionist-loyalist paradigm that campaigned for universal brotherhood, as a lasting way forward for a country plagued by division. In this way he was also prophetic.

¹⁹³Salome Snyman, "The Small-Town Novel in South African English literature (1910-1948)", unpublished D.Litt thesis, University of Pretoria, 2009.

Although the fiction Leipoldt wrote in *The Valley* took the form of prose inter-dispersed with dialogue, it might also be seen as the work of a journalist conveying the immediacy of the situation, as if writing up the lead-page in the morning journal. Take, for instance, the incident of the fire during the war that was responsible for the destruction of the books he used to love reading there, such as Browning, Scott and other classics. What of the way he felt about the lot of average inhabitants caught up in the cross-fire in the war between Kruger and Milner? And now more recently, he feels in the twenties in South African history that the hypocrisy of ‘clever’ politicians, promoting their cause through anti-English sentiment among other things, is taking the country down the narrow path of sectionalism. It might well be that Leipoldt was writing the fiction from the history of the great tragedy that befell a Cape Colonial town such as Clanwilliam, as an allegory for what he saw was coming.

As we are dealing in this study with history and fiction, the theory and methodology employed needs to examine *The Valley* against the background of a number of different (kinds of) theoretical texts and contextualizing literature. The first kind is obviously the purely theoretical kind, from the field of philosophy of history that covers the issue of historical representation and representationalism. For this *The Valley* was analysed in terms of Hayden White’s theory of historical representation. As his theory seems to have lost its vigour when faced with phenomena such as memory and trauma, philosopher of history, Eelco Runia sees it necessary to posit a variation to White through the ‘presence paradigm.’ By this is meant ‘the unrepresented way the past is present in the present.’ The possibility of *The Valley* for this variation in the field of history was examined, especially where communities and descendants are faced with phenomena such as memory, remembrance and trauma.

F R Ankersmit’s theory that presence together with myth can enhance the understanding of representation and his appeal to Runia’s notion of ‘parallel processes’, was examined. The theory espoused by philosophers of history Jonas Grethlein and Paul Ricoeur, respectively, revealed it might be possible to extend the scope for access to the past, by a reading of Leipoldt’s historical fiction. Grethlein’s notion of ‘side-shadowing’, and Ricoeur’s views of the intertwining of history and fiction, can serve as examples for this. Not least resulting from a study of the theories of these philosophers of history, is the fact that reader response and ethics, in the process, can be enhanced. In all these ways, the chances for the scope for historical knowledge to be expanded become more possible.

The second kind of text is the one that serves as historiographic background to the history that Leipoldt writes about. The works of historians such as Robert Ross, Timothy Keegan, Saul Dubow and Martin Legassick serve as suitable examples of this. This contextualizing literature can demonstrate that *The Valley* as a book corresponds to so much that occurred in South Africa at the time and that it is historically based. Leipoldt saw South African politics and culture changing, possibly heading for another catastrophic situation, another disaster, another *stormwreck*. These ideas were fuelled by the policies of the Hertzog administration from the mid-1920s, taking the nation on a course less inclusive and representative of the people in the country at the time. It took someone as astute as Leipoldt, which we can see from his fiction corroborated in his scientific work, to predict the gloomy future derived from the segregationist system that befell South African society and lasted for half a century.

This is followed by the contextualizing literature from Leipoldt's early life, particularly as it relates to Clanwilliam, the place of his birth. We therefore come to appreciate how the building blocks for *The Valley* as they are constructed, fit in. At the same time, we get a glimpse into the world of Leipoldt's fiction, to see just how much history there really is behind *The Valley* project. Added to these are other seminal texts, a knowledge of which provides a broader understanding of Leipoldt's fiction, such as the letters to Dr Bolus, Aucamp's fictitious account of the voyage on Pulitzer's yacht, Leipoldt's correspondence with Engelenburg, to name some. One can see the other side of Leipoldt, from this, and this provides a valuable counter view — rare insights into why *The Valley* was written.

Finally, we read about the views of others, on *The Valley*. J C Kannemeyer held the view that as a literary work, it was not worthy of publication as such (although he conceded it could be of value for students wishing to pursue further studies). Others such as Gray, Merrington, Van Zyl, Oppelt and Snyman see *The Valley* in a much more positive light, literary speaking, although each in his/her own way comment on the historical side of the novels as well. They recognise it for the way it gives a number of insights into Leipoldt, as well as the circumstances of the time he was writing about. But not least are the insights and views of Leipoldt himself, in *The Valley*, much of which has been corroborated from other works and from history. Above all, it is argued, reading *The Valley* can provide an understanding of the deep-seated emotions and sentiments that characterized the thinking of society at the time his novels are set, something which is not so easy to get from the reading of first-referenced history texts. Leipoldt was ahead of his time, but his thoughts did not just

fall from heaven like manna. They were the result of his own carefully thought-out theories such as on language, nationhood, race, degeneration and genetics, some of which he expressed in his fiction. It behoves us the readers to translate a knowledge of them into reality.