

CHAPTER 6

RESPONSES TO *THE VALLEY* & WHY IT WAS REJECTED BY PUBLISHERS AT THE THE TIME — CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Perhaps what I am saying is not true but may it be prophetic.
– Jorge Luis Borges.

There have been several reader-responses to *The Valley*, and these are discussed in this chapter. By examining these one gets an idea of the how Leipoldt is valued and the importance of *The Valley* as an oppositional/alternative history as well as how his fiction might serve as an alternative form of history to the standard histories covering that period (alternative forms of history). Of importance too is the question why *The Valley* was not published during the lifetime of C Louis Leipoldt. This is followed by a review of this thesis chapter by chapter. Finally one wonders how much *The Valley* is the prophetic voice of Leipoldt sounding a wake-up call for what is to come, for South Africa.

6.1 – J C KANNEMEYER, BIOGRAPHER OF LOUIS LEIPOLDT

J C Kannemeyer, one of ‘the most erudite, authoritative, influential and productive littérateurs in the history of Afrikaans’¹ and recipient of the Recht Malan Prize and Helgaard Steyn Prize for his biography *Leipoldt: ’n Lewensverhaal* in 2000, provides a comprehensive discussion of the separate books making up *The Valley* and some discussion on *The Valley* itself.² He raised several issues concerning *The Valley*, newly published at the time, in *Die Burger* of 17 December 2001³ and explained the reasons for the repeated rejection by publishers of the three novels. For instance, certain of the British publishing houses described the text as drawn-out and bulky, not to mention that ‘die lewensverhale van sommige karakters die maatskaplike dokumentering in so ’n mate oorstem dat dit ’n fatale dualiteit in die trilogie bring.’⁴ Furthermore, the manuscripts were untidy and slapdash and

¹The information in the following site was provided by John Kannemeyer, April 2002 <http://www.stellenboschwriters.com/kannemey.html>.

²J C Kannemeyer, *Leipoldt, ’n Lewensverhaal*, pp. 538 – 550.

³J C Kannemeyer, ‘Lywige Roman-trilogie Dra Swaar aan Mankemente’, *Die Burger*, 17 December 2001.

⁴J C Kannemeyer, *Leipoldt, ’n Lewensverhaal*, p. 548. (Translation: ‘that the life stories of certain of the characters overshadow the social documentation to such an extent that it results in a fatal duality in the trilogy.’) Kannemeyer quotes Stephen Gray stating that Leipoldt is acting ‘as argivis en skriba [wat] die geskiedenis van die gemeenskap van die vallei dokumenteer’ and then follows with his own opinion that ‘selfs al moet ’n mens

required the hand of Stephen Gray to prepare them for public consumption.⁵ Kannemeyer attacks the editors of *The Valley* for their views that they think it is a worthy work of art.⁶ For Kannemeyer *The Valley* is a disappointing experience.⁷ The article finishes with a suggestion that *The Valley* can mostly be of use to those readers wishing to compare Gray's edited version with the original and in the process, he asks if there are any readers who would actually take the time to read a book like this with its unnecessary, drawn-out digressions and endless tediousness.⁸

Like Kannemeyer, M P O Burgers criticizes some of Leipoldt's novels as lacking in plot and structure although conceding that he does bring across a strong sense of the human element in his work.⁹ This supplants the higher artistic element in Leipoldt's writing, which Burgers explains as follows: 'Ons moet toegee dat Leipoldt soms meer mens as skepper was. Die mens in hom het dikwels die kunstenaar verdring.'¹⁰ Burgers suggests that this might well be why Leipoldt could not always take universal images and give form to them in his works and why character formation is so incomplete in these works.¹¹ The remarks from Kannemeyer and Burgers in a way strike a chord with P C Schoonees, editor of the *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal*, who remarked that Leipoldt, the well-versed journalist could find unending enjoyment in *Galgsalmander* and that he preferred to cover numerous topics on which he could digress at length without being overly concerned about his central characters.¹²

byvoeg dat die lewensverhale van sommige karakters (soos Everardus Nolte in *Gallows Gecko* en die prokureur in *The Mask*) die maatskaplike dokumentering oorstem en 'n fatale dualiteit in die trilogie bring.' J C Kannemeyer, *Leipoldt, 'n Lewensverhaal*, p. 548.

⁵The reference is to Gray's 1980 hard back edition of *Stormwrack*; and the two paperback editions, one of *Gallows Gecko*, under the name *Chameleon on the Gallows* (Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 2000) and *Stormwrack* (Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 2000). *The Mask* was not published until 2006.

⁶J C Kannemeyer, 'Lywige Roman-trilogie Dra Swaar aan Mankemente', *Die Burger*, 17 Desember 2001. (Translation: 'From the way they refer to Manzoni and Mahler we must deduce that the editors value *The Valley* highly as a work of art and view Stephen Gray's strongly edited version as an unpermitted encroachment on an untouchable work of art.'))

⁷J C Kannemeyer, 'Lywige Roman-trilogie Dra Swaar aan Mankemente' *Die Burger*, 17 Desember 2001. (Translation: 'Getting to know *The Valley* in its entirety is however a disappointing experience, because what we have here is a writer that knows no limits and just throws something of everything into his novels, to such an extent that the unity is irretrievably lost. One can have divergent views on aspects of Gray's work but he deserves the credit that he has made Leipoldt's unreadable and untidy novels accessible.'))

⁸J C Kannemeyer, 'Lywige Roman-trilogie Dra Swaar aan Mankemente', *Die Burger*, 17 Desember 2001.

⁹M P O Burgers, *C. L. Leipoldt, 'n Studie in Stof-keuse, -verwerking en -ontwikkeling*, Nasionale Boekhandel Bpk, Cape Town, Bloemfontein, Johannesburg, 1960, p. 318.

¹⁰*Ibid.* (Free translation: 'We have to concede that Leipoldt showed more of a human quality than that of an artist. The person in him sometimes supplanted the artist in him.'))

¹¹M P O Burgers, *C. L. Leipoldt, 'n Studie in Stof-keuse, -verwerking en -ontwikkeling*, p. 318.

¹²P C Schoonees, 'Leipoldt as Prosaskrywer' (translation: 'Leipoldt as a prosaist'), *Die Huisgenoot*, 6 Desember 1940. BC94 A8.13 (Jagger).

But does what some suggest about the way Leipoldt structures his novels actually detract from *The Valley* as an important literary work? There seems to be more than sufficient examples of careful and positive evaluation of Leipoldt's works that make up *The Valley*, such as by Peter Merrington, Wium van Zyl, Riaan Oppelt and Salomé Snyman, to counter the rather negative view of Kannemeyer.¹³

The Valley as Leipoldt wrote it, should be seen for what it is worth — it might not have the strong plot-structure expected from a star-studded novel, but it nevertheless is first-class causerie, discussing the historical, social and political insights Leipoldt gained as a journalist. Now, writing in the late 1920s and early 1930s, when segregationist measures under the Hertzog government were gaining momentum, the sharp, critical eye of Leipoldt was mapping the gradual, ever-growing social injustices emerging in South Africa society, especially the inability of the new generation to open its eyes to the true conditions that lay before them. His strong voice of protest emerges here again, against the Nationalist government, as it critiqued the march of folly of the Boer Commandoes and British authorities at the time of the South African War, alike. Leipoldt's thoughts are allegorically transposed, warning against the impending disasters for the nation. The voice of Mabuis III might well be the voice of Leipoldt criticizing Santa for her dissenting voice:

‘What binds you together today is that senseless, childish and to my mind utterly valueless irritation against England. And for the life of me I cannot quite understand why you, my dear young lady, should possess it. I ... well, I was a *burgher* of the old Republic – I even had a vote in the Transvaal, although I came from the Cape. I may claim to have a legitimate grievance against England because it conquered my country and subdued me by force. But you, who have lived under responsible government all your life, who know as well as I do that whatever England may have done in the past – and she did nothing worse than any other country would have done to its overseas settlements, and infinitely better than the old Company did to our forefathers – she is not going to interfere with you now ... honestly, I cannot understand your position. And I should like to understand it. You are a puzzle to me, Miss Vantloo.’¹⁴

6.2 – RIAAN OPPELT

Literary student of English studying *The Valley*, Riaan Oppelt presented a seminar at the University of Stellenbosch in 2009 entitled ‘Appreciation of Nature displaced by Organic Destruction in C. Louis Leipoldt's *Valley* Trilogy’ and refers as follows to the

¹³Salomé Snyman gives a very thorough account of Leipoldt's *The Mask* as an important literary work, in her ‘Chapter 3: *The Mask* (1930) by C.Louis Leipoldt.’ Salome Snyman, “The Small-town Novel in South African English literature (1910-1948)”, unpublished D.Litt thesis, submitted at the University of Pretoria, 2009.

¹⁴C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 558.

ways in which he [Leipoldt] 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 favors bonds between man and earth in most prose narratives, and poems.¹⁵

More than that, however, Oppelt produced his MA dissertation on Leipoldt, entitled ‘The valley trilogy: a reading of C. Louis Leipoldt’s English-language fiction circa 1925-1935,’ (University of the Western Cape, 2007, spanning 180 pages). Whilst he places the emphasis on the literary side of *The Valley* he nevertheless sketches some of the historical background to Leipoldt’s writing:

During his youth in the Hantam, Leipoldt witnessed a friendly co-existence between English and Dutch/ Afrikaner settlers, despite increasing tensions between the two groups in other areas of the Cape Colony, and the Afrikaner Republics. While Leipoldt’s upbringing was largely Cape English with a notable patrician influence, his exposure to and familiarity with the Dutch/Afrikaner population was as influential, especially with the greater emergence of the Afrikaans language, which had begun to overshadow Dutch as a popular language in the country. He had blood relations on both the English and Dutch/Afrikaner sides, and like many in the Cape, could profess loyalty to either. On the English side, there was a natural or adopted loyalty to Queen Victoria and to English culture; the British army had, by the 1890s, secured much of the modern world. On the Afrikaner side there was a strong sense of establishing a separate national identity, in which the Afrikaner could claim to be the founder of his own country and culture, based on the events of the Great Trek of the 1830s that saw the establishment of the independent Afrikaner Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

With reference to Peter Merrington’s article on ‘the Contested Nationalisms of C. Louis Leipoldt’s Valley Trilogy from *Current Writing* in 2003’ (which I have on a number of occasions used and referred to in my thesis), Oppelt raises the point that Merrington’s was ‘the first truly scholarly piece of writing on the trilogy after Gray and Kannemeyer’s work.’¹⁶

6.3 – PETER MERRINGTON

Professor Peter Merrington of the University of the Western Cape has contributed most significantly to an analysis of *The Valley*.¹⁷ Merrington discusses the fact that whereas Leipoldt ‘has long been received as a major figure within the Afrikaans literary canon’, Leipoldt’s *The Valley* trilogy reveals him as a ‘dedicated liberal’ at a time his Afrikaans peers subscribed to isolationist policies, and in this connection Merrington refers to it as:

¹⁵Riaan Oppelt, *Husbandry to Organic Destruction: The Role of Nature in C. Louis Leipoldt’s Valley Trilogy*, Seminar presented at the University of Stellenbosch, Department of English. 27 August 2009.

¹⁶An email from Riaan Oppelt to Paul Murray, dated Mon 2012/02/13 12:19 PM.

¹⁷Peter Merrington, ‘C Louis Leipoldt’s ‘Valley Trilogy’ and Contested South African Nationalisms in Early Twentieth Century’, *Current Writing*, 15(2), October 2003.

a sustained imaginative project which runs through the fiction trilogy, engaging with a historical sweep from the 1830s to the 1920s, as well as with an intense debate on the meaning of liberalism and national sentiment within Leipoldt's contemporary and highly contentious political milieu in the Union of South Africa between the two world wars.¹⁸

Merrington stresses the intensity of the process as

reinforcing Afrikaner group identity, and of securing full recognition of this language as a national language with its own deep (though recent) literary tradition. The intensity of this process has, however, obscured the fact that Leipoldt held views on questions of nationhood and nationalist policies that diverged considerably and at times sharply from those of the Afrikaner cultural establishment of his day.¹⁹

Merrington comments that Leipoldt's English novels demonstrate his resistance in the late 1920s and the 1930s to 'sectarian and race-based Afrikaner Nationalist politics' and that he was 'hostile to the polarizing implications of group identity, and to racial prejudice.'²⁰ He strove for an inclusive South African society, 'claiming that social values need such rooted and elemental continuity; and they dramatise an emotional energy which insists on fellow-feeling and compassion rather than sectarian animus.'²¹ In discussing these and other points, Merrington's article gives credence to the point about the publication of *The Valley* as a whole, as it provides the chance to get a bird's eye view of Leipoldt's worldview through his fictional medium. Merrington's article ends on a note that is particularly important for this thesis, referring to Leipoldt, and the fact that *The Valley* as fiction, can be viewed as an alternative form of history:

While his fiction is at times stilted, or melodramatic, or overly picturesque, and not as authentic in style as his documentary prose, the recent publication of the complete Valley Trilogy is a significant moment in the revision of South African literary history, reflecting an alternative fictionalisation of social thought.²²

Needless to say such a statement and much more from Merrington, gives credence to the value of *The Valley* and strengthens the argument that Leipoldt's three English novels can be seen as an alternative form of history, unlike Kannemeyer's statement that does not seek to place *The Valley* in a wide context. But most of all, the way Merrington has explained *The Valley* in its full thrust, informed by the historical constructs of Preller's Voortrekker history, as a counter to the very *volksgeskiedenis* propagated by Preller, has

¹⁸Peter Merrington, 'C Louis Leipoldt's 'Valley Trilogy' and Contested South African Nationalisms in Early Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 15(2), October 2003, p. 34.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 32 – 33.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 33.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 33.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 47.

enabled this thesis to expound on a significant debate, namely the Preller-Leipoldt dialectic as suggested in the the preceding chapters.

6.4 – SANDRA SCOTT SWART

Sandra Scott Swart, in Chapter 5 of her unpublished thesis, ‘A “Ware Afrikaner” – an examination of the role of Eugène Marais (1871–1936) in the making of Afrikaner identity’,²³ states:

This chapter contributes to the challenge to this historiographical construction of the rural socio-intellectual world of the Afrikaner, as an extension and exploration of ideas suggested by Hexham on white-black socio-religious interactions, drawing on the challenge presented to the conventional stereotype of the Afrikaner by Du Toit. This is effected through the investigation into the world of the Bushveld Boer through the work of Eugène Marais (1871–1936) and Christian Frederick Louis Leipoldt (1880–1947).

Swart shows the departure from Calvinist theology and Western medicine towards an interest in African beliefs and traditional medicine – captured in Leipoldt’s term *bushveld magic* (an alternative form of history). Both Merrington and Swart show another side to this interesting and versatile person. They have provided a new perspective on C Louis Leipoldt, better known as one of the inaugural poets of the Afrikaans language and avid writer of stories, our own Robert Louis Stevenson, our own Tusitala (‘teller of tales’).

6.5 – WIUM VAN ZYL

Wium Van Zyl has conducted extensive research on Leipoldt’s war writing, the results of which have greatly enhanced opportunities for an intertextual reading of Leipoldt and considerably furthered the Leipoldt English discourse. Delivering the Leipoldt Memorial Lecture at the 2011 Cederberg Festival, Van Zyl stated that Stormberg Publishers enabled a ‘correction’ to take place by publishing the English novels *Gallows Gecko*, *Stormwrack* and *The Mask* in their original form in a single volume entitled *The Valley*, which Leipoldt completed between 1930 and 1931.²⁴ It should furthermore be noted that Van Zyl identifies

²³Sandra Scott Swart, A “Ware Afrikaner” – an examination of the role of Eugène Marais (1871–1936) in the making of Afrikaner identity. Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Modern History, University of Oxford, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2001.

²⁴Wium van Zyl, the Leipoldt Memorial Lecture, at the Cederberg Festival, Saturday 30 April 2011 – Professor van Zyl kindly sent me a full unedited electronic transcript of the text he delivered, entitled ‘Leipoldt as Rebel’. An abridged version of his speech appeared in the cultural supplement entitled ‘Erfenis’, in *Die Burger*, Saturday 7 May 2011.

links from some of Leipoldt's earliest war texts namely, *De Rebel*²⁵; *The Rebel*²⁶ and *Oom Gert Vertel*²⁷ and has explained their inter-relatedness and with the text he edited, *Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie*. With these texts in mind, Van Zyl comes to certain conclusions about Leipoldt; firstly by comparing him to the Dutch dissident writer Multatuli (Eduard Douwes Dekker); and by viewing Leipoldt's war texts in their broader perspective, which is in the context of 'die drie Engelse romans' (*The Valley*). When Van Zyl wrote in 2002 that reading *Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie*²⁸ makes one realize that a more thorough appraisal of Leipoldt's earlier journalism, can throw light on his later oeuvre, at the time he might not have seen *The Valley* (1930 – 1931) as the most important phase of Leipoldt's dissident writing; and he subsequently acknowledges Stormberg Publishers for bringing out *The Valley* in its original form.²⁹

Van Zyl appraises *The Valley* (Leipoldt's 'latere literêre oeuvre') especially for the revisionist way the events at the time of the South African War are scanned through the eyes of progressive, moderate loyalists in a colonial town at the time.³⁰ Theirs could well be the voice of Leipoldt himself, decrying the proclamation of the ultimatum by Britain; the harshness of the measures imposed by the British military authorities; and the havoc wreaked by the Boer commandos passing through parts of the Colony.

According to Van Zyl, *The Mask* exposes the morally corrupt actions of the Nationalists against those who are presented as morally correct – moderates who demonstrate true concern and love for their country.³¹ In this respect, we are reminded of the character 'Gallows Gecko' in the eponymous novel whose nationalism excludes no section and does not limit itself to any creed or persuasion.³² His attitude is a far cry from that of the Hertzogites of the 1920s whose political actions and policies reflect a sectarian animus that eventually leads to sectionalism and division between the two elements Leipoldt was hoping would form a closer cultural union. Van Zyl explains how Leipoldt corrects himself in the

²⁵It appeared in 1900 in the Dutch publication *Elseviers Geïllustreerd Maandblad*.

²⁶It appeared in 1904 in British publication, *The Monthly Review*.

²⁷It appeared in his first anthology *Oom Gert Vertel en Ander Gedigte* in 1911.

²⁸C Louis Leipoldt's *Hierdie Land van Leuens: 'Brieven uit de Kaap Kolonie'* (ed. Wium van Zyl), Africana Uitgewers, Cape Town, 2002, p. 18.

²⁹Wium van Zyl, the Leipoldt Memorial Lecture, at the Cederberg Festival, Saturday 30 April 2011.

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹Wium van Zyl, 'Leipoldt, die rebel', *Die Burger*, in the section entitled 'Erfenis', 7 May 2011, pp. 11 – 12.

³²C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 591.

three novels through the voices of the moderates who protest against the harsh actions of the authorities; whereas in Leipoldt's earlier life he showed sympathy for the Boer cause.³³

To have someone in the academic field with high standing such as Professor Wium Van Zyl (and the same can be said of Professor Merrington) come out in such support for *The Valley* most notably by the way he commended Stormberg Publishers for publishing the trilogy in its entirety so as to get the full sweep of the history Leipoldt covered in his project, is heartening.

6. 6 – WHY *THE VALLEY* WAS NOT PUBLISHED AT THE TIME AND SUBSEQUENT EFFORTS TO PUBLISH IT

Leipoldt made several attempts to have the trilogy published. In his diary of 5 August 1930 he wrote that he had sent 'Idols'³⁴ to the overseas publisher Curtis Brown. Curtis Brown at that stage was a well-established international literary and talent agency whose clients included well-known writers such as Kenneth Graham, A A Milne, D H Lawrence and Winston Churchill. Curtis Brown particularly believed in promoting the publishing of literature between countries to foster a wider understanding of the world. On 28 September 1930 he wrote in the diary that Curtis Brown does not think he can place *Idols (The Mask)*.³⁵ He was writing *Stormwreck* at the time (started on Saturday 12 July 1930). On 4 April 1930, he sent off the manuscript of *Gallows Gecko* to Curtis Brown and then on 5 July 1930 Leipoldt heard from him that they were trying to place the manuscript.³⁶ Eventually, on 22 February 1931, he received *Gallows Gecko* back from Curtis Brown 'which had gone the round of publishers unavailingly.'³⁷ Leipoldt then sent the manuscript to A Knopf in New York on 24 February 1931.³⁸ Knopf, currently a division of Random House, was a leading American publisher who had published the books of, among others, well-known writer Jack London and Thomas Mann, whose *Buddenbrooks* at that stage Leipoldt was well aware of. Leipoldt was possibly considering a hard cover book of fictional history, the kind

³³Wium van Zyl, 'Leipoldt, die rebel', *Die Burger*, in the section entitled 'Erfenis', 7 May 2011, p. 12. It can however be quite difficult to call this a 'correction' as it is not a straightforward point; Leipoldt could not have regretted his own earlier espousal of the Boer cause, concerning the concentration camps during the War and recanted. It does not seem to be the same thing as espousing nationalism in the 1930s at all.

³⁴BC 94 A4.19 (Jagger).

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*

³⁷BC94 A4.20 (Jagger). Entry 22 February 1931.

³⁸*Ibid.*

of which A Knopf was experienced in. There are no further entries about the state of the publishing of the manuscripts, until 29 March 1932 when Leipoldt wrote that Curtis Brown had returned 'Quakerley' with a comment it was too long and not of interest for the English market; and he decided to send it to America.³⁹ It seemed his efforts were in vain but the question remains if Leipoldt ever actually sent *The Valley* in its full thrust for publishing?

After Leipoldt's death a friend, Miss G Tibbs attempted to get the middle volume of the trilogy, *Stormwrack*, published, sending the typescript to well established publishers, John Murray (1947); The Bodley Head Limited (1948), Hodder & Stoughton (1949) and later to Constable, and to Allen & Unwin. In South Africa it was sent to CNA (1950) and also to Howard Timmins.⁴⁰ Comments such as that it falls between two stools (from Hodder & Stoughton); that it suffers from redundancy (Howard Timmins); and that it would not procure sufficient sales (CNA) were comments that were returned.⁴¹ Stephen Gray comments that, in his opinion, in *Stormwrack* (and the same can be said for *Gallows Gecko*), 'the writing is marred by a kind of generous overkill', and that Leipoldt's enthusiasm waxes and wanes, and, 'as he warms to the story he becomes inflatedly prolix, and when bored with it he cuts corners, leaving key scenes which should have been developed with merely a passing mention.'⁴² To this one can add the view of Oppelt from his MA thesis:

However, these are novels of ideas, and their unpublished status must always be considered. Leipoldt was untapped as an English novelist, and made a quantum leap from very average Afrikaans efforts (detective novels and obviously, *Galgsalmander*) to the highly ambitious project he set himself with the trilogy. *Stormwrack* in particular is a singularly groundbreaking achievement in South African literature.⁴³

Peter Merrington in an article on Leipoldt's *The Valley* refers to the fact that the entire trilogy was brought out in a single (compendium) volume in 2001 edited by T S Emslie *et al.*, and acknowledges the difference in the intentions of someone such as Gray, and says as follows, referring to Murray and Emslie: 'They followed a different editorial principle from Gray,

³⁹BC94 A4.21 (Jagger). A name Leipoldt was possibly going to use for *Stormwrack*.

⁴⁰C Louis Leipoldt, *Stormwrack* (ed Stephen Gray), Human & Roussouw, Cape Town, Pretoria & Johannesburg, 2000, p. 13.

⁴¹BC94 E1.9 (Jagger).

⁴²Stephen Gray, 'Leipoldt's prequel to *Stormwrack*: an interim report on an editing project', *Standpunte*, 37(2), April 1984, p. 27.

⁴³Riaan Oppelt, 'The valley trilogy: a reading of C. Loius Leipoldt's English-language fiction circa 1925-1935' MA dissertation, University of the Western Cape, 2007.

keeping strictly to the original text of manuscripts ...⁴⁴ Emslie and Murray's intentions are set out in the 'Introduction' to *The Valley* publication — they tried to reproduce Leipoldt, remaining faithful to Leipoldt's *ipsissima verba* to make it possible to appreciate the true scale of Leipoldt's achievement.⁴⁵

Up to the time of the publication of *The Valley*, C Louis Leipoldt had mostly been canonized as an Afrikaans icon within the Afrikaans literary establishment, and one could say in terms of Bourdieu's theory of capital, he accrued a great deal of cultural capital in that field.⁴⁶ With Stephen Gray's edition of *Stormwrack* (1980) and subsequent paperback editions, *Chameleon on the Gallows* (2000) and *Stormwrack* (2000) the reading public became exposed to more options in reading Leipoldt. *The Valley* has certainly managed to widen Leipoldt's appeal even further and it seems as if the interest in Leipoldt is growing, not least in the area of food, as in *Leipoldt's Food and Wine*⁴⁷ and now also a republished edition by Tafelberg of *Kos vir die Kenner* (2011) with an Introduction by food *aficionado* and *cognoscente* Peter Veldsman. Riaan Oppelt also has an interest in writing about Leipoldt and Cape Malay cookery.⁴⁸

6.7 – CONCLUSION

The above paragraphs show how *The Valley* was received from different quarters. Whilst Leipoldt wrote *The Valley* for several reasons, for instance, to preserve the history of his beloved Clanwilliam, it is argued, he wrote it as a lament for the loss of Western culture as a counter to the Preller narrative, and also to produce what he imagined to be a worthy piece of South African literature. South African historian Hermann Giliomee writing in the 'By' supplement to *Die Burger* of 17 March 2012, using J C Kannemeyer's biography as his

⁴⁴Peter Merrington, 'C Louis Leipoldt's 'Valley Trilogy' and Contested South African Nationalisms in the Early Twentieth Century', *Current Writing*, 'Text and Perception in Southern Africa', 15(2), October 2003, p. 48.

⁴⁵C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. xv. See Oppelt's view about the ambition of the novel: With this background of cosmopolitanism revealed by Leipoldt's general writing in the late 1920s and early 1930s, along with the unfolding of events in a manner that he had in one way or another foreseen, the Valley trilogy has a firm basis for its ideas. However, it is severely limited because at times Leipoldt is too broad with his cosmopolitanism, threatening to abstract issues that deserved concrete discussion.

⁴⁶Elliot B Weininger & Annette Larreau, 'Cultural Capital', http://www.brockport.edu/sociology/faculty/Cultural_Capital.pdf. See Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital', in J. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, Greenwood, New York, 1986, pp. 241 – 258.

⁴⁷C Louis Leipoldt, *Leipoldt's Food and Wine*, Stonewall Books, Cape Town, 2003, consisting of Leipoldt's *Cape Cookery* (1976), *Culinary Treasures* (translated by Dr W L Liebenberg from *Polfyntjies vir die Proe*) and *Three Hundred Years of Cape Wine* (1952).

⁴⁸Riaan Oppelt, 'Louis Leipoldt and the Role of the "Cape Malay" in South African Cookery', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 28(1), 2012, Special Issue: 'Der Mensch ist was er isst (Feuerbatch) – Texts on Food, the Eating Process and the Philosophy of Recipes'.

source, explains how Leipoldt represented the intellect of the Afrikaner nation by referring to the importance of factors that lie beyond Afrikaner nationalism. The debates between Mabuis III and Santa in *The Mask* corroborate Giliomee's view. When Giliomee explains how Afrikaner nationalism was built on 'dinge van die hart — op emosie en sentiment'⁴⁹ an excerpt from *The Mask* says a similar thing in the fiction, to what Giliomee was saying (in the following excerpt the arch-nationalist Santa explains to the more objective Mabuis):

'Sentiment does count, Mr Mabuis,' interrupted Santa vigorously. 'Especially with us. If you knew more about your country, you would agree with me that it is sentiment — pure sentiment and nothing else — that has brought about the present state of affairs. It is because the old party, your party — for I suppose you are SAP, for only a SAP would talk like that — made no allowance for sentiment because it thought, like you, that something else counts, that it was swept away and will remain in darkness until it alters its opinion and lives up to its principles.'⁵⁰

I

The Valley is an alternative form of history to standard histories. Linked to this, it is argued that *The Valley* belongs to an alternative historiography (in this case, to the Preller myth).

Chapter 1 is a literature survey of the theoretical works around the philosophy of history, theory and methodology in the field of historical representation. Further contextualizing literature as well as biographies and studies on C Louis Leipoldt and Gustav Preller are included in this survey. Furthermore, historical texts such as those of Ross, Keegan, Dubow and Legassick have been examined to provide a background against which *The Valley* can be read to better appreciate the stratification of South African society at the time. In addition, contextualizing literature from Leipoldt's early life as it relates to Clanwilliam is included in the discussion. Because it is a work of literary fiction, studies by literary historians and scholars Kannemeyer, Gray, Merrington, Van Zyl, Oppelt and Snyman have also been included.

II

Chapter 2 discusses *The Valley* as an alternative form of history. It is read against narrative theories in the field of the philosophy of history which includes those of pioneering philosophers as well as those more recent, especially in the construction of identity and

⁴⁹Hermann Giliomee, 'Biografie van 'n Volk (in vier boekdele)', 'By', *Beeld*, 17 March 2012.

⁵⁰C Louis Leipoldt, *The Valley*, p. 557.

national identity. At the same time the voices of criticism against the deconstructivist paradigm are heard.

III

Chapter 3 discusses the Preller-Leipoldt dialectic/polemic. On the one hand, Gustav Preller constructed a national consciousness through the use of a *volksgeskiedenis* and on the other C Louis Leipoldt was hoping to construct a South African national identity. From this, one can derive the Preller-Leipoldt polemic. The contra-fictional history of *The Valley*, imagined by Leipoldt in his three novels in their full thrust and historical weight, was informed by the Preller narrative. But the public history of Preller eclipsed Leipoldt's theory and dominated South African history from 1905 until till 1938.

IV

Chapter 4 examines the set of material used by Gustav Preller — such as history, journalism, enactments, literature, the prominence of Afrikaans, and artistic design — to reflect the Afrikaner's history, for the compilation of his *volksgeskiedenis*. His work over a period of about thirty-three years (1905 – 1938) resulted in a public history which became the dominant, national historical narrative for the Afrikaner, constructed around the romantic history of the Voortrekkers. It was this history that Leipoldt gallantly took on in his historical fiction, *The Valley*.

V

Chapter 5 shows how *The Valley* reflects a liberal, Cape-based belief in tradition and various supporting notions making up this tradition, such as the topics of genealogy and breeding, progress among families, the arrival of the English settlers in the Valley, farming and husbandry, Cape vernacular architecture, the cordial relations between the English and Dutch, universal brotherhood, the value of gardens and botany, genetics, and the gains of Western culture in conventions of gastronomy, gormandising, language and literature. Leipoldt employed this set of *topoi* in his fictional construct written in a Cape loyalist-unionist paradigm, to serve as a possible counter-history to the Preller narrative.

VI

Chapter 6 looks at the different responses to *The Valley*, both positive and negative. J C Kannemeyer criticized the appearance of the trilogy citing various reasons why few

would read it. He criticized Leipoldt for being slap-dash in his editing and the manuscript for being untidy and furthermore for not succeeding in the emancipation of historical facts to the art of fiction. Others praised Leipoldt's work, demonstrating the great insights it held for South African history at the time. There were questions asked why *The Valley* was not published at the time.

VII

Leipoldt's narrative construct, *The Valley*, made up of fictions, is an alternative form of history to standard history, although the voices of criticism against the deconstructivist paradigm need to be heard. Whilst *The Valley* has been read against narrative theory in the field of the philosophy of history, newer trends have been noted.

Not only is it argued that *The Valley* is an alternative *form* of history, but also an alternative history, a counter-history to the triumphalist *volksgeskiedenis* of Gustav Preller. Preller constructed a history of the exiled Voortrekkers who abandoned deep, local tradition by leaving the Cape, in search of personal and national freedom. It is this public history of Preller, constructed over a period from 1905 – 1938, that informs the entire logic of *The Valley* in its full thrust.