

THE EVOLUTION FROM
PRIMITIVE ELVISH TO
QUENYA

BY

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EDITED WITH NOTES AND COMMENTS BY

VICENTE S. VELASCO

REVISED, EXPANDED AND UPDATED VERSION



“ARDALAMBION — Of the Tongues of Arda” is a website dedicated to the study of the languages created by J.R.R. Tolkien.

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Preface by the Editor

This article was originally written by Helge Kåre Fauskanger as part of his Ardalambion website. I have taken the liberty to edit the original text, limiting myself largely by correcting some grammatical errors, reorganizing and tightening the text from redundancies, as well as changing some of his orthographical conventions (mostly because of the limitations of the Rich Text Format) so it would be as close to his original intentions as I deemed possible. I have confined my own comments, additions and annotations to endnotes. Helge's own notes originally interspersed in the main text are moved to the footnotes. He was also kind enough to send me revisions and additional annotations to be included in the final version.

Abbreviations Used in this Article

(All page references refer to the standard hardbound or trade paperback editions unless otherwise indicated.)

Etym: *The Etymologies*, in *The Lost Road and Other Writings*, pp. 347-400

Letters: *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*. References refer to page number, not letter number.

LotR: *The Lord of the Rings*. Page references are from the standard one-volume edition first published in 1991; all subsequent re-set editions have the same pagination.

LR: *The Lost Road and Other Writings*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 5

LT1: *The Book of Lost Tales, Part 1*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 1

LT2: *The Book of Lost Tales, Part 2*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 2

MR: *Morgoth's Ring*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 10

PM: *The Peoples of Middle-earth*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 12

QL: *Qenya Lexicon (Qenyaquetsä)*, published in *Parma Eldalamberon 12*

RGEO: *The Road Goes Ever On*.

SD: *Sauron Defeated*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 9

Silm: *The Silmarillion*. As published by Houghton Mifflin: both the First Edition (1977) and the Second Edition (2001) have identical paginations.

WJ: *The War of the Jewels*. The History of Middle-earth, vol. 11

UT: *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth*.

VT: *Vinyar Tengwar*. Journal of the Elvish Linguistic Fellowship and the Mythopoeic Society. References refer to issue number and page.

CE: Common Eldarin

Kh: Khuzdul

PQ: Primitive Quendian

Q: Quenya

S: Sindarin

T: Telerin

INTRODUCTION

Whereas many students of J.R.R. Tolkien's languages would be inclined to focus on their “classical” form—that is, Quenya and Sindarin as they are supposed to have existed at the time when the narratives of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* took place—the author himself is often seen to focus rather on the long evolution of these languages from the earliest forms of Elvish. Observes Christopher Tolkien, “My father was perhaps more interested in the processes of change than he was in displaying the structure and use of the languages at any given time” (LR:342). Elsewhere, he comments on how his father worked out a “minutely refined historical development of Quenya and Sindarin” (PM:367).

To the academic, the fact that the historical development was so important to Tolkien should be sufficient to warrant a careful study of it. A deeper understanding of how the languages were supposed to have evolved during the long ages of Arda will also lead to a fuller apprehension of the method, spirit and focus of Tolkien's work. Yet this study does not have to be wholly “academic”: People who want to develop a Tolkien-language like Quenya into a useable system, even coining new words from Tolkien's roots to supplement the existing vocabulary, must know what rules Tolkien himself applied when developing Quenya vocabulary. It is a matter of debate whether a post-Tolkien Quenya word can be counted as a “genuine” word, but everybody would agree that a word that was not derived in accordance with Tolkien's rules and does not fit into his system couldn't be counted as genuine in any sense.

What follows is a comprehensive (not “exhaustive”!) list of phonological changes that occurred during the evolution of Quenya. Though I briefly describe the nature of the changes, I have focused more on providing a survey of the observed changes than on formulating abstract “rules” that may seem to govern the sound-shifts. The changes have been listed in what may be assumed to be something *roughly* similar to their chronological order. The material has been grouped under the following headings:

- Primitive Quendian
- Common Eldarin
- Pre-Record Quenya
- Changes Producing Valinorean Quenya; and
- Changes Producing Exilic Quenya.

In some cases, it is obvious where a certain phonological change belongs (Tolkien may even have made an explicit statement about it). In many cases, it is less than obvious. It should be understood that this is in no way a “canonical” or “definite” listing as regards the chronology of Quenya sound-shifts. This said, the material here presented is quite sufficient to explain how the vast majority of Quenya words reached their “classical” or “contemporary” form.

I mention many of the clues and deductions that may throw some light on the chronological order of the changes, but when one studies these things in detail, it soon becomes obvious that the material is not entirely consistent. For instance, Tolkien seems to have experienced considerable trouble trying to figure out precisely *when* the shortening of

the long final vowels of Primitive Elvish took place. Some of his “reconstructed” forms may seem to imply that this happened already during the Common Eldarin stage. On the other hand, the form **Valinōrē** “Valinor” in WJ:413 implies that the long final vowels were still in place as late as after initial **b-** had become **v-**, a change entirely characteristic of Quenya. (See also Appendix: Some Special Cases.)



Some practical matters: In his notes, Tolkien mentions many primitive, “reconstructed” forms, and usually he even places an asterisk before such ancestral forms to mark them as “unattested”. Since Tolkien's own supposed “reconstructions” must be assumed to be *rather more authoritative* than my own, much more genuine reconstructions, I have distinguished between them here. Tolkien's alleged reconstructions are marked with the symbol ◻ instead of *, the asterisk being reserved for my own reconstructions – forms that are really unattested in Tolkien's published material. (A double asterisk ** marks a wrong form.) Most of the forms here marked ◻ are found in *Etym*. To the extent primitive forms here mentioned cannot be readily located, the wordlist appended to my article about Primitive Elvish will provide references to the primary sources.¹

In the sources, Tolkien usually marks long vowels by means of a *macron*, a line above the vowel, so we will use them here as well: **ā, ē, ī, ō, ū**. However, in the Quenya forms we will eventually reach, long vowels are marked by means of an accent instead: **á, é, í, ó, ú**.

The nasal sound *ng* as in English *king* is here represented by **ñ**, a spelling often used by Tolkien himself². However, in accordance with Tolkien's own spelling the clusters **ng** and **nk** (**nc**) in the middle of words are so represented, though this is technically **ñg, ñk**.

Syllabic consonants are here separated from the preceding part of the word by means of a dot, e.g. ***hek·l** (the final **l** being syllabic, somewhat like English “little” is pronounced *lit·l*.) An initial syllabic consonant is followed by a dot: ***n·dūnē**. A syllabic consonant in the middle of a word is both preceded and followed by a dot: ◻**k^went·r·o**.

In Tolkien's spelling of primitive forms, the semi-vowel *y* as in English *you* is inconsistently represented as either **y** or **j** (and in *Etym* as published in LR, Christopher Tolkien in most cases altered his father's original spelling, changing **j** to **y**). In this study, we have consistently used the grapheme **j** when actual, primitive words are quoted, switching to **y** when we reach Quenya forms. (However, for easy reference, we maintain **y** when referring to entry-heads in *Etym*, e.g. YUR rather than JUR. Inevitably there are here some orthographic inconsistencies, as when we quote the primitive form ◻**wājā** while referring to the entry WAY in *Etym*, but the graphemes **j** and **y** in any case refer to the same sound in all Elvish forms.)

The *aspirated* sounds of primitive Elvish are here marked by means of a raised **h**, as in **p^h, t^h, k^h**. (In published sources, Tolkien simply wrote **ph, th, kh**.)

Elvish has certain *labialized* sounds, consonants pronounced with poised lips. The labialized quality of the consonant is here indicated by means of a raised **w**, e.g. **k^w, g^w, n^w, ñ^w**. (However, in normal Quenya orthography **k^w** is written **qu³**, and the other groups are represented as simple digraphs in **-w**, e.g. **nw**. The distinction between **nw** as a unitary labialized consonant **n^w** and **nw** as a genuine cluster **n + w** is not upheld in the normal orthography. Indeed Tolkien does not uphold this distinction in any of his published writings.)

INTRODUCTION

Palatalized consonants are here indicated by means of a raised **j**, e.g. **n^j** (= palatalized **n**, like Spanish **ñ**) and **t^j** (more or less like the initial *t* of English “tune”). In Quenya orthography, the same sounds are represented as **ny** and **ty**, though these combinations may also represent genuine clusters **n + y**, **t + y**.

The English alphabet has separate letters for only two *spirant* sounds, **f** and **v**. We will also use the special letters **þ** (more or less = English *th* as in *think*) and **ð** (= voiced English *th*, as in *these*). The “back spirant”, spirant *g*, Tolkien sometimes represented as **ʒ**, and we will use **ʒ** here as well. For *ach-Laut* in the ulterior forms we will use Greek letter **χ** (as *ch* in Scottish *loch*—not as in English *church*, a sound that does not occur in any known Eldarin language), but we will represent the same sound as **ch** in Sindarin words.

Unvoiced w, **n**, **m** are here represented as digraphs **hw**, **hn**, **hm**. The digraph **hy** likewise represents voiceless **y** (= German *ich-Laut*), as in the normal orthography of Quenya.

It will be noted that by introducing these special spellings, the exact pronunciation of primitive words “reconstructed” by Tolkien is made more specific than his original spellings are. While I do believe the interpretations here set forth are generally sound, they should not be taken as “Tolkien fact”. For instance, the word here cited as **ϙk^went•r•o** (with the symbol **ϙ** to indicate a primitive form actually given in Tolkien's material) simply appears as “*kwentro*” in the source. While there are good reasons to assume that the initial “kw” is meant to be a unitary, labialized consonant **k^w**, and that the **r** at some point became syllabic, these phonological details are not directly confirmed by Tolkien's spelling and do not have absolute authority.

As this discussion reaches a recognizable form of Quenya, we introduce LotR-style Quenya orthography. (The relevant spelling conventions are set out in the Introduction to my Quenya course.) We have already commented on the use of **y** instead of **j**; also notice the use of **c** rather than **k** as well as **x** rather than **cs/ks**, plus the marking of certain vowels with diaereses (**ë** is so marked when occurring finally and in the combinations **ëa**, **ëo**). These divergences from the spelling of primitive forms do not suggest any phonological distinctions.

We will now attempt to survey the changes that occurred during the evolution of Quenya from the earliest forms of Elvish, as far as Tolkien's intentions can be reconstructed. It must be understood that this discussion focuses on *phonological* developments: Of course there were also changes that had nothing to do with the regular sound-shifts (as when the old plural ending **-i** was in many cases replaced by the ending **-r** – according to PM:402 a “new device”).

EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 This can be downloaded at <http://www.uib.no/People/hnohf/primelv.htm>.
- 2 Although he also used special forms of the letter *n* to express the same phoneme, like **ŋ** as in **ŋoldo** (See in particular the pre-1994 Ballantine paperback edition of *The Return of the King*, p. 500).
- 3 I believe this would be a good place to insert a differing opinion made by Lukas Novak in Elfing message 7706 (January 2, 2002). He writes:

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“Throughout your [Helge’s] article, you maintain that the [k^w] and [k^l] graphemes can sometimes mean unitary labialised/palatized consonants, since *inter alia* a) they are allowed to stand initially; and b) they allow syncope virtually producing a [three]-consonant cluster [but see p. 26, footnote—Ed.].

“This does not seem to me so convincing. The main reason is that you have to assume then that there are both genuine clusters of this type and their unitarized counterparts in the language. That seems to me very probable (no explicit data confirm this; Tolkien never [mentioned]...any difference in [the] pronunciation of these letters, although he [indulged] himself on such minor variations of pronunciation like nasal **n** vs. [ñ?], **lw** vs. **lv** > **lb**, slight palatization of **l** in **el**, **il**, etc.) I think the data could perhaps be better explained by [simply] acknowledging that these clusters have [a] somewhat exceptional position in the language—due to the [semi-vocalic] character of the **y** and **w** sounds. They simply share *some* characteristic of the clusters (most markedly they [lengthen the syllable in which they occur]), but not *all* of them [Emphasis on the original]. Your argument that “they are unitary consonants because all clusters share certain characteristics, but these supposed clusters do not share all of them” is circular, since you must presuppose that they are not clusters in order to have the major premise true. If I am right, then the sound **hy** should be considered only as an *ich-Laut* [ç], but as a similar “semi-cluster” *ich-Laut* plus **y** [çj]. Otherwise there would have to be two phonemes in Q: si[m]ple *ich-Laut* in initial position (e.g. Q *hyarmen*) and an *ich-Laut* plus **y** medially (or only in accented syllable?), which seems also improbable.”

My thanks to Mr. Novak for letting me quote him directly for this revised version of the article, which I edited for clarity.

PRIMITIVE QUENDIAN

The “primeval” stage of Elvish speech, the language originally invented by the Elves at Cuiviénen, cannot be seen as a static and unchanging entity even within the primitive period. Tolkien explicitly refers to the “common *development* of primitive Quendian” (VT39:8, emphasis added). There would be divergent developments even within the most primitive period, but there was apparently one unique point in pre-history when the various ultra-primitive language-constructions were unified and coordinated so that all Elves achieved one single language: “The hundred and forty-four Quendi [that originally awoke] dwelt long together by the lake, until they all became of one mind and speech, and were glad” (WJ:423).

Tolkien wrote in an early source: “Roots...are not words in use at all, but serve as an elucidation of the words grouped together and a connection between them” (LT1:246). In all later forms of Elvish, the roots (stems, bases) can certainly be treated as abstract raw material for actual words, mere skeletons to be fleshed out with various derivational endings, producing the kind of words that can actually be used in speech. Yet if there was ever a stage where the roots themselves existed as *actual words*, it must be the most primitive form of Elvish. At the very beginning, we must probably imagine a fleeting era when as yet undifferentiated morphemes exist in a linguistic limbo, predating all derivation, all inflection, all distinguishing between different parts of speech. The first word ever spoken by the Elves was supposedly **ele**, “a primitive exclamation, ‘lo!’ ‘behold!’ made by the Elves when they first saw the stars” (WJ:360).

Later proto-words, if that is what they are, seem in most cases to have consisted of two (usually identical) short vowels separated by a medial consonant. Usually there was also an initial consonant, though it could be missing (as in **ele**). Forms later considered “roots”, such as DELE “walk”, HEKE “aside” or ABA “refuse” (WJ:360,361), may be seen as representing actual, ultra-primitive words. This pattern came to be especially preferred in the case of stems with a *verbal* significance. At some point there occurred a “reorganization of [...the] basic structure” of the language (WJ:392), some originally monosyllabic stems being expanded to conform with it. Hence the primeval root having to do with vocal speech, K^WE, which also appeared in elaborated forms K^WENE and K^WETE (the former underlying the very word **Quenya**, the latter producing the Q verb **quet-** “say, speak”).

The “reorganization” Tolkien hints at seems to suggest that the first Elves eventually developed a feeling for distinct parts of speech, their language gradually assuming a more well-defined structure. There appear derivational elements assisting the transfer of morphemes from one part of speech to another, or modifying the meaning of the proto-words, which eventually begin to assume the function of “roots” from which actual words are *derived*.

Later, in Valinor, the Eldar would analyze a Quenya word like **tuilë** “spring” as representing *tu-yu-le*, becoming *tuyle* > *tuile* by the loss of the second vowel in the root TUJU (TUYU) “sprout, bud” (VT39:7). Tolkien seems to hint that this analysis was essentially correct, or at least “later Loremasters” are said to have held similar views—“when Quendian origins had been further investigated” (VT39:11 note 6). Given the form of the root TUJU, it might seem that the word for “spring” was originally simply this verbal root with the abstract ending **-lë** attached: hence ***tujulë** “sprouting, budding”.

However, Tolkien in *Etym* listed $\text{ɔ}t\text{u}i\text{l}\ddot{e}$ as the primitive form producing Quenya **tuilë**. One of the very first phonological changes in Quendian may have been a primitive *syncope* whereby the second of two identical short vowels in many cases disappeared before a derivational ending:

tjulē** > (tjĵlē** >) $\text{ɔ}t\text{u}i\text{l}\ddot{e}$ “spring” (or “budding”)

Many of the words that seem to have been syncopated very early involve two-syllable bases (sometimes “original”, sometimes extended from simpler roots, e.g. **ÁNAK** from **NAK** or **WENED** from **WEN[E]**). In most cases only the fact that Tolkien listed the base itself (with the second vowel intact) allows us to deduce or theorize that some kind of syncope is operating. Some examples:*

From the base **ÁSAT**: ***asatō** > $\text{ɔ}a\text{s}t\ddot{o}$ “dust” (Quenya *asto*, Sindarin *ast*)

From **ÁNAK**: ***anakā** > $\text{ɔ}a\text{n}k\ddot{a}$ “jaw” (Q *anca*, S *anc*)

From **PARAK**: ***parakā** > ***parkā** “dry” (Q *parca*, S *parch*)

From **TÁWAR**: ***tawarē** > $\text{ɔ}t\text{a}ur\ddot{e}$ “forest” (Q *taurē*, S *taur*)

From **TÉLEK**: ***telekō** > ***telkō** “leg” (Q *telco*, S *telch*)¹

From **ÚLUG**: ***ulugundō** > $\text{ɔ}u\text{l}g\text{u}\text{n}\ddot{d}\ddot{o}$ “monster” (Q *ulundo*, S *ulun(d)*)

From **WENED**: ***wenedē** > ***wendē** “maiden” (Q *vendē*, S *gwend*)

Here we list the eventual Sindarin forms as well as the Quenya forms, in order to demonstrate that these vowels must have been syncopated quite early. In Quenya, the second of two identical short vowels would have a “second chance” to become syncopated, but this happened after the branch of Elvish leading to Sindarin had separated from the branch leading to Quenya: When Quenya and Sindarin “agree” in having syncopated a certain vowel, we can often assume that the syncope occurred already in their common ancestral language. In *Etym*, the entry **USUK** provides a good example: Tolkien listed a primitive word $\text{ɔ}u\text{s}(u)k\text{-}w\ddot{e}$ “reek”, producing Q **usquë** and S **osp**. It seems that ultra-primitive $\text{ɔ}u\text{s}u\text{k}\text{-}w\ddot{e}$ turned into $\text{ɔ}u\text{s}k\text{-}w\ddot{e}$ (or ***usk^wē**, the labio-velar **k^w** becoming **p** in the Lindarin branch that Sindarin is a part of). ***Usuk^wē** with no syncope might (via Old Sindarin ****usupe**, ****uhupe**) have produced Sindarin ****uhub** instead of **osp**.

In the branch of Elvish that leads to Sindarin, an *unaccented vowel* in the first syllable of a word is very often syncopated, resulting in an initial consonant cluster: for instance, the base **BORÓN-** produces Sindarin words in **br-** (e.g. **brûn** “old” from $\text{ɔ}b'r\ddot{o}n\ddot{a}$, the first vowel of the original base dropping out). However, in the branch of Elvish that leads to Quenya, the first vowel of a base is nearly always preserved even where it was originally unaccented. We seem to have only one divergent example: the Quenya word **ráca** “wolf” Tolkien referred to $\text{ɔ}d'r\ddot{a}k$, a syncopated form of the stem **DARÁK**. Actually the complete primitive word must have been ***d'rākā**, reduced from even earlier ***darākā**.

As is evident from the example ***tjulē** > (***tjĵlē** >) $\text{ɔ}t\text{u}i\text{l}\ddot{e}$ “spring”, a semi-vowel **j** occurring at the end of a root might turn into a full vowel **i** when it occurred in front of a consonant (or was brought into contact with one after the syncope). In a similar environment, **w** became **u**. In *Etym*, the bases **TÁWAR** (extended from **TAWA**, VT39:7) and **TUY** (= **TUJU**, VT39:7) produce primitive forms like $\text{ɔ}t\text{a}ur\ddot{e}$ “forest” and $\text{ɔ}t\text{u}i\text{l}\ddot{e}$ “spring”. Such words may be reworked from ***tawrē** and ***tjĵlē**, the syncopated forms of ***tawarē** and

* It will be noticed that Tolkien in many cases indicated (by means of an accent) that it is the *first* vowel of the relevant two-syllable bases that receives the stress. Where the stress was on the second vowel, no syncope occurred at this stage. Thus $\text{ɔ}m\ddot{o}r\ddot{o}k\ddot{o}$ “bear” from **MORÓK** did not become ****morkō** (though the word did eventually end up as **morco** in Quenya, because of a later syncope).

***tujulē** . Cf. also one word derived from the base LAWAR: **laurē** “golden light” (for ***law’rē**?)

The syncope of the second of two identical short vowels in concomitant syllables is not entirely regular in the primitive language. There are quite a few examples of words that escaped this syncope. Examples of words in which the second vowel was *not* lost include **galadā** “tree”, **k^hjelesē²** “glass” and **kjelepē** “silver” (cf. Sindarin **galadh**, **hele**, **celeb** with the second vowel still intact: though it was eventually syncopated in Quenya **al’da**, **hyel’lē**, **tyel’pē**, this is a later development). It may indeed be doubted whether there was a primitive syncope at all, since some words mysteriously seem to have escaped it. When Tolkien lists a word like **hekla** “outcast” as a derivative of a root he quotes as HEKE (WJ:361) are we to assume that **hekla** must necessarily be shortened from even earlier ***hekela** by a primitive syncope, or did the derivational patterns of Primitive Quendian allow the suppression of the second vowel of the root from the start? Regarding the situation in Common Eldarin, Tolkien did note that both leaving out and retaining the second root-vowel in derivatives were “legitimate and regular” procedures (VT41:9) – apparently simply a matter of choice. Anyhow: whether in PQ we have a somewhat sporadic and unpredictable syncope, or a somewhat unpredictable suppression of reduplicated root-vowels in derivatives, is mainly an academic question. Of course, Tolkien may have imagined it differently at different times – and in any case even he himself preferred to deal with Primitive Quendian as a somewhat vague and hypothetical entity: The precise details were not necessarily to be pinned down in all cases, but were allowed to remain obscured by the passage of long ages.

Besides this early syncope, if it ever occurred, some *final* vowels may also have disappeared in the early period—so early that their former presence seems to have no influence on any of the later stages. In VT39:6, Tolkien states that in Quenya, “all final consonants had probably lost a vowel, if remote Quendian origins were considered”. Earlier, in *Etym*, he had nonetheless cited a few forms that he himself identified as Primitive Quendian even though they ended in a consonant: **atar** “father”, **dēr** “man”³, **māz** “hand”.⁴ Perhaps we are to understand that there was an even more primitive stage of PQ where these words did have a final vowel, but what its quality might have been, we can only speculate about.

The normal plural marker **-ī** evidently had to be *shortened* following a long vowel (or any vowel?); the Primitive Quendian plural “Lindar” (Elves of the Third Clan) is given as **Lindāi**, not ****Lindāi** (WJ:378). If the latter form ever existed, it must have been altered very early. Perhaps the plural of a word with a short final vowel, such as **swanda** “sponge”, likewise appeared as ***swandai** rather than ***swandāi** (the ultra-primitive form?) But a short final **-e** seems to have been displaced before **ī**, as when the plural of **k^wende** “elf” was **k^wendī** (for ultra-primitive ***k^wenderī**?)

We will list some more very early changes, but whether they occurred in late Primitive Quendian or early Common Eldarin is difficult to say. Tolkien stated that the metathesis **bm** > **mb** occurred in Common Eldarin at the latest, but added that it was “possibly earlier” (WJ:416), which necessarily implies that it may have occurred already in Primitive Quendian:

- ◻**labmā** > ◻**lambā** “[physical] tongue” (Q *lamba*)
- ◻**labmē** > ◻**lambē** “tongue, language” (Q *lambë*)

(Given the form of the root LABA whence these words are derived, we may perhaps assume that their ultra-primitive, pre-syncope forms were **labamā*, **labamē*.) The change **bm** > **mb** is an example of metathesis of a stop and a nasal sharing the same place of articulation; this is also the case with **dn** > **nd**, which seems to be another example of very early metathesis:

□*adnō* > **andō* “gate” (Q *ando*)
 □*sjadnō* > □*sjandō* “cleaver” (Q *hyando*)

A long vowel **-ā**, **-ē**, **-ō**, or **-ū** + **-i** becomes a diphthong **-ai**, **-ei**, **-oi**, or **-ui**:

□*Lindāi* > □*Lindai* “Lindar” (WJ:378 vs. WJ:385), sg. □*Lindā*
**ornēi* > □*ornei* pl. “trees” (SD:302), sg. □*ornē*

(If the combination **-īi** ever occurred [e.g. **tārīi* “queens”?], it was presumably contracted to **-ī**.)

The combination Tolkien spells *kw* is probably to be taken as a labialized sound **k^w**; thus, this is a single consonant rather than a cluster **k** + **w**. However, it seems that even genuine clusters **k** + **w** very early were assimilated to unitary consonants **k^w**:

□*hek-wā* (root HEK(E) + ending **-wā**) > **hek^wā* (Q *hequa* “except”)
 □*salāk-wē* (root SALĀK + ending **-wē**) > **salāk^wē* (Q *salquē* “grass”)

Notice that the latter example will later undergo syncope in Quenya: the second **a** has disappeared in the Quenya form. However, as will be discussed below, such syncope did *not* occur in front of a consonant cluster. We are therefore able to tell that by the time the syncope occurred, the original cluster **kw** had merged into a single labialized consonant **k^w**. This **k^w** survived into Quenya (in regularized spelling written **qu**, but the fact that Tolkien in early sources represents it by means of the single grapheme **q** also suggests that it is to be taken as a single consonant—*salquē* is indeed spelt “*salqe*” in the primary source).

The aspirates are reduced to unaspirated stops before certain consonants. The aspirates **k^h** and **t^h** (we have no example for **p^h**) evidently become simple **k**, **t** before **s**:

**lok^hsē* (root LOK^H) > **loksē* (Q *loxē* = *loksē*)
**k^hotsē* (root K^HOT^H) > □*k^hotsē* “assembly” (no known Q descendant)*

Possibly, **k^h** becomes simple **k** before **t**: The Quenya verb **rihta-** “to jerk” may descend from either **riktā* or *rik^htā*; Tolkien gave the root as RIK(H), either RIK^H or RIK. But the Quenya form would be **rihta-** in any case, so we cannot be sure.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 In an earlier draft of this treatise, the ulterior forms of **telco** were assumed to be **teleku*, **telku*. However, Helge pointed out “the plural form **telqui** is said to be ‘analogical’, evidently suggesting that it is not really justified by an archaic form **telku* rather than **telkō*.”
- 2 However, in a later source, Tolkien changed the etymology, with S. *heledh* a loan-word from Kh. *kheled* (Silm:360, cf. the place name *Kheled-zāram*, “the Mirrormere”), apparently obsolescing the root

* The example □*k^hotsē*, “reconstructed” by Tolkien himself, could also be taken to mean that aspirates could not occur before **s** even in Primitive Quendian, some phonological restraint prohibiting such combinations. The question has only academic interest.

K^hJEL(ES) and its derivatives in *Etym* (LR:365). Helge wrote that he included this example for purposes of analyzing phonological development in Quenya, as an attested example of how the primitive phoneme ***kh**ⁱ- developed in Quenya. The only other example of ***kh**ⁱ- that has by all indication survived externally is the stem K^hJAR. While no attested ulterior forms are attested as of yet, the Q form *hyarmen* “south” can be reasonably speculated to have descended from ***k^hjarmen**.

- 3 This example can perhaps be seen as a variant form of ***nēr** < NERE.
- 4 But in both earlier and later sources (LT2:339 or QL:57, and VT39:11), the primitive word for “hand” is said to have been **□maha**.

COMMON ELДАРIN

Common Eldarin was the language spoken by the Eldar (as opposed to the Avari) during the Great March from Cuiviénen. This is the last common ancestor of all the later Eldarin tongues—Quenya, Telerin, Sindarin and Nandorin. Common Eldarin should not be thought of as an entirely homogeneous structure; apart from the linguistic changes that occurred during the March, there were already some minor dialectal differences. For instance, it seems that the Teleri had already turned the original labialized sound **k^w** into **p** (whereas it remained **k^w** = **qu** among the Noldor and the Vanyar).

The aspirate **t^h** and the voiced stop **d** both become **s** before **t**:

***k^hot^htā** > ***k^hostā** “to collect” (Q **χosta-* > *hosta-*; cf. root K^hOT^h)

***kot^htā** > ***kostā** “to quarrel” (Q *costa-*; Tolkien changed the root from KOT to KOT^h)

***ledtā** > ***lestā** “to leave” (Q *lesta-*, cf. the entries ÉLED, LED in *Etym*)*

Another example of **dt** > **st** was **□wed-tā** > ***westā** “to swear” (Q **westa* > *vesta*), but Tolkien dropped this word because it clashed with [***bestā** >] *vesta* “to marry”. See entries WED and BES in *Etym*, and cf. **lesta** above.

A **t** may also become **s** before another **t** when they are perceived to belong to different morphemes:

***put-tā** (root PUT + verbal ending -tā) > ***pustā** “to stop” (Q *pusta*)

***lot-tā** (root LOT + the same ending) > **lostā** “to bloom” (Q *losta*)

The latter example comes from VT42:19, Tolkien explicitly commenting on the change “*t-t* in inflexion > *st*”. This change does not occur when **tt** occurs within a unitary word. Indeed the same root PUT (see LR:382 s.v. PUS) that is the source of **pusta-** also yields Quenya **putta** “stop (in punctuation)”, which is clearly meant to represent primitive ***puttā**. It may be similar in sound to the primitive word that produced Q **pusta**, but here the double **tt** occurs as a medial fortification of the final consonant of the stem PUT. This ***puttā** is therefore perceived as a unitary word, and the change **tt** > **st** does not occur.

The above-mentioned Quenya word **costa** “to quarrel” was originally an example of **tt** > **st**, Tolkien referring it to **□kot-t[ā]**, but then he changed the root from KOT to KOT^h.

The nasals **m** and **ñ** both become **n** when preceding a **t** or **d**:¹

***kemtanō** > ***kentanō** “potter” (Q *centano* – the first element seems to represent the root KEM “earth”)

***pilimda** (final vowel uncertain, may also be -o or -e) > ***pilinda** “arrow” (Q *pilin* with stem *pilind-*; cf. the base PÍLIM, LR:382)

***wiñtā** > ***wintā** “to scatter” (Q *winta* > **winta*; if this word is to be related to the noun *wingē* as suggested in PM:376, it seems to require a root *WIÑ)

Final **-wō** changes to **-wā**:

□**nidwō** > ***nidwā** “cushion” (Q *nirwa*)

Final **-mā** becomes **-mē** after a dental consonant:

□**jatmā** > ***jatmē** “bridge” (Q *yanwē*)

* It is not entirely clear whether the word **lesta** was rejected or not; the entry ÉLED where it occurred was “replaced” by another version—but the phonological rule **dt** > **st** may be “valid” all the same.

(Cf. also “Old Noldorin”/Old Sindarin **katwe** from earlier ᠔katwā , demonstrating that **-wā** likewise becomes **-wē** > **-we** following a dental consonant – see the entry KAT in *Etym.*)

Medial ṅ^w turns into ṅg^w :

᠔liṅ^wi > *liṅg^wi “fish” (Q *lingwē*)

᠔neṅ^wi > *neṅg^wi “nose” (Q *nengwē*)

Evidently quite early (or even from the “start”), a *long final vowel* is shortened if the word in which it occurs appears as the first element of a compound:

᠔andā “long” + ᠔mbundā “snouted” = ᠔andambundā (not *andāmbundā) “long-snouted”

᠔lassē “leaf” + $\text{᠔k}^w\text{elēne}$ “fading” = $\text{᠔lassek}^w\text{elēne}$ (not $\text{*lassēk}^w\text{elēne}$) “autumn”

᠔tuilē “spring” + ᠔lindō “singer” = ᠔tuilelindō (not *tuilēlindō) “spring-singer, swallow”

In some cases, but not regularly, the nasal element of the initial nasalized stops **nd**, **ṅg**, **mb** develops into an independent syllabic consonant:

᠔ndūnē > $\text{*n}^w\text{dūnē}$ “sunset” (Q *andúnē*)

*ṅjō > $\text{*ṅ}^w\text{gjō}$ “grandchild, descendant” (Q *indyō*)

$\text{*ṅ}^w\text{alē}$ > $\text{*ṅ}^w\text{g}^w\text{alē}$ “torment” (Q *ungwalē*)

*mbarta > $\text{*m}^w\text{barta}$ “fate” (Q *umbar*)

In origin, this development seems to have functioned as a kind of “strengthening” that may also modify the meaning of the word: From ᠔ṅōlē “philosophy” is derived $\text{*ṅ}^w\text{gōlē}$ “deep lore, magic”, and these words continue to coexist (eventually producing Quenya **nólē** and **ingolē**, respectively). But in most cases the “original” form with no syllabic nasal seems to have been lost completely, replaced by the “strengthened” form.

Later Quenya developments suggest that the initial nasal of the group ṅg^w - became labialized by assimilation to the following g^w , so that the whole group is technically $\text{ṅ}^w\text{g}^w$ (or $\text{ṅ}^w\cdot\text{g}^w$ where the nasal came to be syllabic); perhaps $\text{*ṅ}^w\text{g}^w\text{alē}$ above should more strictly be represented as $\text{*ṅ}^w\cdot\text{g}^w\text{alē}$.

Some cases of haplology:

᠔kukūwā > *kūwā or *kuwā “dove” (Q *cua*)

᠔tuilelindō > *tuilindō “spring-singer” = “swallow” (Q *tuilindo*)

The changes above may have occurred in the earliest stages of Common Eldarin. Some of the changes listed below may be imagined to have occurred later – say, after the Eldar had crossed the Hithaeglin. (By this time, Common Eldarin would not be entirely “common” anymore, since the Nandor had already left the march.)

It may seem that relatively early, the aspirates t^h , p^h , k^h became normal **t**, **p**, **k** immediately following another consonant. The Quenya word **ilfirin** “immortal” is evidently meant to be derived from $\text{*l}^w\text{p}^h\text{irin-}$ (root P^hIR), but in the relevant entry in *Etym*, Tolkien seems to indicate that this should regularly have produced Quenya *ilpirin instead. The actual form Quenya **ilfirin** was apparently reformed after **firin** “mortal” (< $\text{*p}^h\text{irin-}$).

During the Common Eldarin stage, tk^h was apparently assimilated to **kk**. Perhaps tk^h first became **tk** in accordance with the rule set out above, and this in turn becomes **kk** (evidence from Sindarin indicates that **tk** of whatever origin normally became **kk**, whence Grey-elven **ch**). The later Quenya word **eccaira** “remote, far” must come from *ekkairā , but since the root is given as K^hAYA , we must probably assume that at an even older stage, the word appeared as $\text{*etk}^h\text{airā}$ with the prefix **et-** “out-” prefixed.

In one attested case, **tk** does not become **kk**, but undergoes metathesis to **kt** instead: oket-kele^* “out-flow” early becomes *ektelē (later oketele , whence Quenya **ehtelē** “spring, issue of water”).

S is voiced to **z** before a voiced stop:

$\text{oesdē} > \text{oezdē}$ “rest” (WJ:403 seems to place this change in the CE era)

Another example of the same would seem to be okmazgā “pliant”; given the base MASAG, this must come from earlier *masgā .

D becomes **t** before **s**:

$\text{oksjadsē} > \text{oksjatsē}$ “cleft, gash” (Q *hyatsē*)

Before an unvoiced consonant, the back spirant **ʒ** lost its voicing by assimilation, producing **χ**. The first of the examples below is explicitly identified as an “Eld” (Common Eldarin) form in *Etym*.

$\text{okmaztā} > \text{okmaztā-}$ “to handle” (Q *mahta-*)*²

$\text{*wazsē} > \text{okwaxsē}$ “stain” (Q $\text{*waxē} > \text{vaxē}$)†,³

As the latter example indicates, **χ** eventually becomes **k** before **s**, producing **ks = x**.

THE LOSS OF MEDIAL **ʒ** (OR **H**) AND \tilde{N}

Except initially, these sounds normally disappeared, though **ʒ** became **χ** before unvoiced consonants (see above) and \tilde{n} survived before **g** and **k** (including labialized \mathbf{g}^w , \mathbf{k}^w – the labialized sound \tilde{n}^w arising from $\tilde{n} + w$ had already become $\tilde{n}\mathbf{g}^w$ and thus preserved \tilde{n}). Much later, the language would re-acquire **ʒ**, developed from earlier **g**, only to lose it once again (even initially). The loss of “original” **ʒ** and this “later” **ʒ** has certain parallels, but whereas the “later” **ʒ** survived into historical times (it was recorded in Rùmilian orthography, at least in initial position), the “original” **ʒ** or **h** was lost very early: Tolkien also referred to the loss of intervocalic **h** as “prehistoric” (VT39:11). Even more definite is the statement made in WJ:368: “Medial *h* was very early lost without trace in CE”—tying this change to the Common Eldarin stage.

A final **ʒ** following **u** might develop into **w** (or perhaps rather: the loss of **ʒ** triggered the development of a semi-vowel **-w** from the corresponding full vowel **-u**, as if to compensate for the lost **ʒ**):

$\text{okuz} > \text{okuw}$ “bow” (Q *cú*)

Sometimes, the loss of intervocalic \tilde{n} and **ʒ/h** would not cause any further changes, but simply leave two vowels in hiatus; occasionally a new diphthong might arise after the loss, like **ai** in the second example below:

$\text{*teñā} > \text{*teā}$ > “indicates” (Q *tēa*; cf. VT39:6)

$\text{okmaziti} > \text{*maiti}$ “handed” (Q *maitē*)⁴

* In *Etym*, entry MA3, the CE word is spelt **mahtā-**, but it is clear that Tolkien is here using the letter **h** for **χ** rather than a simple breath-**h**; cf. Quenya **mahta-**, where it is clear from the descriptions in LotR:1087 that **ht** represents **χt**.

† Again Tolkien's actual spelling of the primitive word is “*wahsē*”.

The primitive dual pēñū producing Quenya **peu** “pair of lips” would also be an example of a new diphthong arising after the loss of **ñ**. Whether **eū** became **eu** “directly”, or remained as two vowels in hiatus until the much later shortening of the final vowels, has only academic interest.

The Quenya genitive ending **-o** is derived from the root HO after this loss of medial **h** (a primitive postposition **hō** “from” being directly suffixed and turning into ***-ō**, later becoming **-o**).⁵

Two identical short vowels brought into contact by the loss of **ñ** or **z/h** would merge into one (long) vowel:

- $\text{pēñe} > \text{pē}$ “lip” (VT39:11; still *pé* in Quenya)
- $\text{maha} > \text{mā}$ “hand” (VT39:11; still *má* in Quenya)*

However, if the last vowel was *long*, and the loss of **ñ** or **z** brought it into contact with another vowel of similar quality (long or short), the first vowel might be dissimilated, like **eē** > **iē**:

- tezē or $\text{teñē} > (*\text{teē} > *)\text{tiē}$ “path” (Q *tiē*; see the entries TE₃, TEÑ in *Etym*, the latter replacing the former)

Possibly the form ***teē** survived for a while, the actual dissimilation to ***tiē** taking place much closer to historical times: Similar dissimilation can be observed later as well, as when wēzē produces Quenya **viē** “manhood” (via $\text{*wēē} > \text{*wīē}$). But in this case **z** is not original; it is altered from **g**, since the root is not ***WE₃**, but **WEG** (LR:398). The change **g** > **z** (and its subsequent loss) occurred much later.

Where **z** or **ñ** disappeared before a consonant, the preceding vowel was lengthened in compensation:

- $\text{dozmē} > *\text{dōmē}$ “night” (Q *lómē*)⁶
- tezrā or $\text{teñrā} > *\text{tērā}$ “straight, right” (Q *téra*; again see TE₃, TEÑ in *Etym*)
- $\text{wazrā} > *\text{wārā}$ “dirty” (Q **wára > vára*)⁷

It should be noted that while *medial h/z* disappeared, it surprisingly seems to have survived *finally*, being lost only much later in that position. This phenomenon is not explicitly referred to in Tolkien's published writings, but we shall probably need final **z** later, to explain the Book Quenya accusative – formed by lengthening the final vowel of a noun. This probably indicates the former presence of a final **z** as a primitive accusative ending. But if we let final **z** disappear already in Common Eldarin, it would be lost too early to exert any influence over the final vowels of later Quenya. So a word like ***lassēz** or ***lassēh**, the probable primitive accusative of lassē “leaf”, must remain unchanged for now.

During the Common Eldarin stage, the short final vowels **-a**, **-e** and **-o** were lost. Examples:

* These examples are interesting, indicating that the loss of medial **ñ** and **h** occurred very early, since short final **-a** and **-e** were lost during the Common Eldarin stage; see below. pēñe was evidently contracted to **pē** before pēñe would have been reduced to ****pēñ** (with the same lengthening of the vowel as in PQ $\text{k^wene} > \text{CE k^wēn}$). While ***pēñ** would probably also have produced Quenya **pé**, this does not seem to have been the way Tolkien imagined it, since he referred to **pē** as a “contraction” of pēñe (VT39:11).

Loss of final short **-a**; where the ending **-la** is so reduced, the remaining **l** came to be syllabic:

- ◊**swanda** > ***swand** “sponge” (Q *hwan* with stem *hwand-*)
- ◊**jakta** > ***jakt** “neck” (Q *yat* with stem *yaht-*)
- ◊**hekla** > ***hek·l** “outcast” (Q *hecil*)
- ◊**makla** > ***mak·l** “sword” (Q *macil*)
- ◊**tankla** > ***tank·l** “brooch” (Q *tancil*)
- ◊**tekla** > ***tek·l** “pen” (Q *tecil*)

Loss of final short **-e**:

- ◊**i-ndise** > **indis** “bride”
- PQ ◊**k^wene** “person” > CE ◊**k^wēn** (WJ:360)
- ◊**nerē** “man” > **nēr** (WJ:393)

Loss of final short **-o**:

- ◊**abaro** “refuser” > ◊**abar** (WJ:371 identifies the latter as a CE form)
- ◊**ndōro** > ***ndōr** “land” (Q *nór*, WJ:413)
- ◊**Spanturo** > ***Spantur** “Cloud-lord” (Q *Fantur*)⁸
- ◊**tollo** > ***toll** “island” (Q *tol* with stem *toll-*)
- ◊**Denwego** > ***Denweg** (personal name, Q *Lenwë*)⁹

As is evident from the examples ◊**k^wene** “person” > CE ◊**k^wēn** (WJ:360) and ◊**nerē** “man” > **nēr** (WJ:393) already quoted, a word that becomes monosyllabic by the loss of a final vowel has its stem-vowel lengthened in compensation. But where the word occurs compounded or with endings and thus is not a monosyllable, the vowel remains short. Therefore the CE plural of ◊**k^wēn** is given as ◊**k^wenī** (WJ:360), not ****k^wēnī**. This variation is still reflected in Quenya **quén** pl. **queni** (WJ:361; likewise **nēr** “man” pl. **neri**, MR:213).

Where the loss of a final short vowel made a semi-vowel **-w** final, it turned into a full vowel **u**:

- (◊**angwa** >) CE ***angw** > ***angu** “snake” (Q *ango*)^{*}

A final semi-vowel following a long vowel could likewise develop into a separate vowel:

- (PQ ?***rāwa** >) CE ***rāw** > ◊**rāu** “lion”

This is our sole certain example of this phenomenon (Tolkien only provided the root **RAW** and the form ◊**rāu**). This **-u** was later lost, evidently also during the Common Eldarin stage. It is unclear whether we should generalize a rule “a short final vowel immediately following a long vowel is lost”:

- ◊**rāu** > **rā** “lion” (still *rā* in Q)[†]

After the loss of a final vowel by any of the processes described above, the plural forms were evidently reformed by analogy with the new simplex form. In Primitive Quendian, the

* Compare the entry-head **ANGWA** in *Etym* with the stem-form **angu-** of the Quenya noun **ango**, seen in the compound **angulócë**, entry **LOK**. Like **-w** became **-u**, a **-j** becoming final would likewise turn into **-i**; cf. the example ◊**talrunja** “sole of foot” producing Quenya **tallunë**, evidently via ***talrunj** and then ***talruni**; see below. In this case the loss of a final **-a** is later than CE, indicating that the rule for how final **-w** and **-j** behaved (turning into **-u** and **-i**) continued to operate in the earliest stages of Quenya.

† If the entry-head **NOWO** in *Etym* is taken as representing a PQ word ***nowo**, Quenya **nó** “conception, idea” *might* arise in this way: PQ ***nowo** first becomes CE ***nōw** (just like **k^wene** becomes **k^wēn**), this ***nōw** then turns into ***nōu**, and the final **-u** is subsequently lost leaving only ***nō** = Q **nó**.

plural of \varnothing **swanda** “sponge” must have been ***swandaī** or (later?) ***swandai**, but when \varnothing **swanda** was reduced to ***swand** in CE, its plural was altered to ***swandī** (still reflected in Q *hwandi*) – as if this were a normal consonant stem. The original plural of PQ ***rāwa** (or ***rāwe**, ***rāwo**) “lion” must likewise have been altered from ***rāwai** (or ***rāwei**, ***rāwoi**) to ***rāwī**. Here, **w** was not final and therefore did not become **u**, later lost as described above. So in Quenya, the plural of **rā** “lion” is still **rāvi**, reflecting CE ***rāwī** and the original root RAW.

Evidently during the latter part of the Common Eldarin stage, short final **-i** turned into **-e**:

- \varnothing **dōmi** > ***dōme** “twilight” (Q *lómē*)¹⁰
- \varnothing **pori** > ***pore** “flour, meal” (Q *porē*)
- *kari** > ***kare** “does” (aorist form of the verb **kar-**) (Q *carē*)
- *karini** > ***karine** “I do” (aorist with pronominal ending; cf. Old “Noldorin”/Sindarin **yurine** “I run”, Q *carin*); see footnote below.
- *talruni** > ***talrune** “sole of foot” (Q *tallunē*)

The vowels did *not* change their quality when they were not final, and so in Quenya we still have the variation seen for instance in the aorist, as in **carē** “does” besides **carin** “I do” (the first evolving from ***kari** with the change **i** > **e**, the second from ***karini** with a 1st person ending, the pronominal suffix ***-ni** precluding the change **i** > **e** because the vowel was not final).

As a parallel to the change from short **-i** to **-e**, short final **-u** becomes **-o**:

- *kuru** > **kuro** “skillful device” (in Q still *curo* with stem *curu-*; the examples below must also have stems in *-u* when endings are added to them)
- \varnothing **smalu** > ***smalo** “pollen” (Q *malo*)¹¹
- \varnothing **tundu** > ***tundo** “hill, mound” (Q *tundo*)
- \varnothing **ranku** > ***ranko** “arm” (Q *ranco*)
- *angu** > ***ango** “snake” (Q *ango*)

However, it should be noted that before the plural ending **-ī**, words that earlier ended in **-gu** and **-ku** turned these combinations into the labialized sounds **-g^w** and **-k^w** (the sounded vowel **u** merging into a preceding velar consonant). The plural of ***angu** “snake” therefore turned into ***ang^wī** (Q *angwi*). Likewise, the plural of \varnothing **ranku** “arm” came to be \varnothing **rank^wī** (Q *ranqui*). Compare WJ:390, where Tolkien indicates that the Quenya noun *urco*, pl. *urqui* descends “as the plural form shows” deom a form that originally ended in **-u** rather than **-o**: either \varnothing **urku** or \varnothing **uruku**. The plural *urqui* comes from ***ur(u)k^wī**. When the labialized velars **g^w** and **k^w** arose (before or after **-u** turned into **-o** in simplex forms) cannot be determined, since Tolkien had the stem-forms in **-u-** surviving this shift anyway.

* We date this change to the Common Eldarin stage because it is also seen in Old “Noldorin”/Sindarin: The form **yurine** “I run” (YUR) exemplifies an I-stem ***yuri-** with an ending **-ne** “I”, whereas the form **trenare** “he recounts” (NAR²) shows that the change from older ***trenari** has already occurred: Add the ending **-ne** “I” to **trenare** so that the final **-e** is not final, and we would evidently see ***trenari-ne** with the original quality preserved. The ending **-ne** “I” would itself exemplify the change from **-i** to **-e**, since it must come from earlier **ni**; compare the stem NI², simply defined “I”. Another relevant “ON”/OS form is **barane** “brown”, which is surely meant to represent older ***barani** (cf. Quenya **varnē** with stem **varni-**). However, the change **-i** > **-e** did not happen at the *beginning* of the Common Eldarin stage; this is evident from the fact that Tolkien refers to \varnothing **p^hini** “a hair” [> Q *finē*] as a Common Eldarin form in PM:362 (cf. PM:340 for Q form). It may also be noted that *Nandorin*, Green-Elven, seems to have branched off from Common Eldarin before this change occurred; see the entry **lygn** in the wordlist appended to my article about Nandorin in the *Ardalambion* website.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 But Helge brought one case to my attention. In VT44:14 we have the derivative (factitive) verbal form **camta** “to (make) fit, suit, accommodate” from the PQ base KAM “fit, suit, agree”. Helge noted that this form (descended from ᚱkam-tā) is a rare, if not unique, case of primitive ***-mt-** not changing to **-nt-** as “it certainly contradicts evidence from *Etym*”. (Compare this with the base KAM as described in page 56, note 3.)
- 2 As noted in p. 15 note 4 above the root MA3 in *Etym* was replaced by Tolkien to MAHA. According to VT39:11 note 6, this is a case of intervocalic *h* that was preserved before *t*. Even so, this would be a case of **ht** becoming **xt** in Quenya.
- 3 There are those (I am one of them) who contend that the spirant 3 does not exist in PQ up to at least early CE, though it evidently existed during the late CE or pre-record Quenya stage as in the early Quenya form **zalda** > later **alda** as well the “Common Eldarin [root] 3OR” (VT41:11). Therefore the root must have been *WAG.
- 4 See note 2. The ulterior form should be ***mahiti** > ***maiti** > Q. *maitë*. Cf. the primitive form ᚱmagiti > ***maziti** > Q. *maitë* “shapely”, seen in the name **Maitimo** (VT41:10).
- 5 In *Etym*, the root is 3O. The later form HO is found in WJ:368.
- 6 Based on a later source, the form ᚱdōmē is attested as the primitive form of Q. *lómë*, S. *dû* (Silm:365).
- 7 See note 3.
- 8 Tolkien replaced this with *Fëantur*, and with a different etymology, but example is still valid within its purview.
- 9 The form *Denweg* is still preserved in Nandorin. Cf. S. *Denwaith*, an alteration of *Danwaith* (= Q. *Nandor*) due to the influence of *Denweg*.
- 10 See note 5.
- 11 As implied in PM:366, Tolkien changed the root from which Q. *malo* is derived to *MAL instead of SMAL in *Etym* (cf. QL:58 s.v. MALA²). The form MALAT “gold” is the extended form thereof.

PRE-RECORD QUENYA

As far as the imaginary Arda timeline is concerned, the March is now past, and the Lindarin branch of Elvish (that leads to Sindarin and Amanyā Telerin) has now definitely separated from the “Vanya-Ñoldorin branch” (VT39:10) that we will continue to pursue here. The Vanyar and the Noldor have settled in Aman, but the linguistic development of this period still has to be “reconstructed”; Quenya still has not been reduced to writing. An actual word of what seems to be pre-record Quenya is found in WJ:402: **Mbelekōro** is there said to be the “oldest Q[uenya] form” of the name **Melkor**. This word indicates that the primitive nasalized stops **mb**, **nd**, **ñg** were still in place initially, and that the syncope still had not taken place: **Mbelek-** would later become **Melk-**. Tolkien actually asterisked the form **Mbelekōro**, so it is clear that Rúmil still had not invented writing. Hence this can properly be called *pre-record Quenya*.

It was in the period that now followed that the language underwent the greatest changes. “Its altering ...[came]...in the softening and harmonizing of the sounds and patterns of the Quendian tongue to forms that seemed to the Noldor more beautiful” (WJ:20).

A long final vowel occurring at the end of a compound is normally *shortened*; Tolkien explicitly dated this change to “the earlier stages of Quenya” (VT39:6):

Eruk^hīnā** > ***Eruk^hīna** “Child of Eru” (Erū**, ***Eru-** “God” + **k^hīnā** “child”; cf. WJ:403 s.v. *Atan*)

tal-runjā** > **talrunja** “sole of foot” (runjā** “sole” combined with **tal-** “foot”; Q *tallunë*)

***pel-taksē** > **peltakse** “pivot” (**ṽtaksē** “nail” combined with **pel-** “revolve on fixed point”; Q *peltas* with stem *peltax-*)

Cf. also **-wego** as the “compound form” of **wegō** “man” (LR:398 s.v. WEG).

However, the plural ending **-ī** is not subject to this change (**ṽkala-k^wendī** “light-elves” was not reduced to ****kala-k^wendi**). It is also evident that many Quenya compounds were formed *after* this rule ceased to be effective – for instance, **Elentári** “Star-Queen” would rather have been ****Elentar** if this descended from ***Elentāri** at the oldest stage. One example mentioned above, ***kentanō** > ***kentanō** “potter”, may likewise actually be a later formation (suggesting that the rule **mt** > **nt** continued to operate in the language): If this had been reduced to ***kentano** in early Quenya, the Quenya form might have been ****centan** instead of **centano** because of the loss of certain final vowels that we will now discuss.

At some later stage, in words of three or more syllables, a short final vowel may occasionally be lost (but not wholly regularly so):

ṽ**Awadelo** > ***Awadel** “Away-goer” (Q *Auzel* > *Aurel*; this word refers to the Elves that departed from Beleriand and went to Valinor, WJ:360, 363; the form below is a variant)

ṽ**Awādelo** > ***Awādel** “Away-goer” (Q *Oazel* > *Oarel*)

ṽ**Mbelekōro** > ***Mbelekōr** “Melkor” (Q *Melkor*)

(ṽ*etsiri* >) late CE ***etsire** > Q **etsir** “mouth of a river”

(**karini* >) late CE ***karine** > Q **carin** “I do”

However, this loss seems to occur quite regularly in the case of the final vowels that had been shortened in compounds (another change dated by Tolkien to “the earlier stages of Quenya”, VT39:6):*

- (**Eru-k^hinā* >) ***Eruk^hina** > ***Eruk^hin** “Child of Eru” (later Q *Eruhin* with stem *Eruhin-*)
- (**pel-taksē* >) □**peltakse** > ***peltaks** “pivot” (later Q *peltas* with stem *peltax-*)
- (**k^hala-tirnō* >) □**k^halatirno** > ***k^halatirn** “fish-watcher” (name of a bird, English kingfisher; in later Q *halatir* with stem *halatirn-*)
- (**Mand-ostō* >) □**Mandosto** > ***Mandost** (later Q *Mandos* with stem *Mandost-*, MR:350 cf. VT39:6)

Short final **-i** at some point became **-e** just as in Common Eldarin, so it would seem that this rule continued to operate in the language: ***talruni** became ***talrune** (later Q *tallunē*). This parallels the change of **-w** > **-u** > **-o** in Common Eldarin (as when □**angwa** “snake” becomes ***angw** > ***angu** > Q **ango**), and it is essentially the same rule continuing to operate in the language (but after this stage, it apparently ceases to function).

Very early, there were some instances of *metathesis*, whereby certain sounds often switch place. One example is *dl* > *ld*, as in □**Edlō** > ***Eldō** (Q **Eldo**, a variant of **Elda** “Elf”, though ultimately with another etymology – see WJ:363). Tolkien wrote that “transposition of *dl* in primary contact to the favoured sequence *ld* not infrequently [but not universally either?] occurred in the pre-record period of Quenya” (WJ:363). Later, more systematic metathesis would occur.

This may be the stage where Quenya loses many of the initial consonant clusters of the primitive language. The initial combinations **sk-**, **sp-**, **st-** evidently turned into aspirates **k^h-**, **p^h-**, **t^h-**, merging with the original aspirates (but medially these groups were apparently unchanged, cf. **sk** surviving in a Quenya word like **rusco** “fox”). This change is not directly “attested” in Tolkien’s published papers, but we know he imagined such a change in the branch of Eldarin that lead to Sindarin. (In both Quenya and Sindarin the original aspirates *and* the initial combinations of **s + k**, **p** or **t** will later become spirants **χ** [> **h**], **f**, **þ**, respectively. However, Amanyā Telerin retains the combinations in **s-** unchanged, so this change must have happened independently in Quenya and Sindarin: If it occurred already in Common Eldarin, we would have seen it in Telerin as well.)

- skarwē** > ***k^harwē** “wound” (Q **χarwē* > *harwē*)
- skjapat-** > ***k^hjapat** “shore” (Q *hyapat*)
- ***sk^warmā** > ***k^{hw}armā** “crossbar” (Q *hwarma*)
- spangā** > ***p^hangā** “beard” (Q *fanga*)
- stankā** > ***t^hankā** “split” (Q **panca* > *sanca*)

The initial groups **sl-** and **sr-** become **hl-** and **hr-**, sc. unvoiced **l** and **r**:†

* Perhaps □**Mbelekōro** > ***Mbelekōr** also belongs in this list, if the “oldest Q form” represents a compound ***Mbelek-** “mighty” + **-ōro**, shortening of ***ōrō** “rising” or “One who rises”. The name **Melkor**—as it later appears—supposedly means “mighty-rising”, also translated “He that arises in might”.

† In the scenario of *Etym*, original initial **sl-** seems to be simplified to **l-** at a relatively early stage; as one of the primitive derivatives of the stem **SLIG** we have □**ligā** (presumably representing even earlier ***sligā**, cf. other primitive derivatives from the same root, □**signē** or □**slingē**). In *Etym*, all Quenya words derived from stems in **sl-** show simple **l-**, which is of course logical enough if **s** early disappeared with no trace. (*Etym* provides no example of how initial **sr-** came out in Quenya.) But later, Tolkien decided that primitive initial **sr-** and **sl-** produced Quenya **hr-** and **hl-**, though this had come to be pronounced as normal **r-** and **l-** by the Third Age. So when *Etym* has a primitive word like (say) □**sliwē** yielding Quenya **livē** instead of ***hlivē**, we may see **livē** as representing the Third Age pronunciation. But in reality, Tolkien probably did not imagine any intermediate stage with **hl-** when he wrote *Etym* in the thirties; the introduction of **hr-** and **hl-** as Quenya

- srāwē** > ***hrāwē** “flesh” (Q *hrávë*)
 ***slökē** > ***hlökē** “dragon” (Q *hlócë*)

The initial groups **sm-** and **sn-** are simplified to **m-** and **n-** (conceivably there may have been an intermediate stage with unvoiced **hm-** and **hn-**, paralleling **hl-** and **hr-** above, but there is no direct evidence that Tolkien imagined this to have been the case).¹

- smalinā** > ***malinā** “yellow” (Q *malina*)
 ***snardā** > ***nardā** “knot” (Q *narda*)

Perhaps it is at this stage certain primitive initial clusters in **-j** are altered. Primitive **kj** becomes **tʲ** (via **tjʲ**), primitive **sj** becomes **hy** (= *ich-Laut*), whereas primitive **gj**, **dj** and **ñgj** are all reduced to a simple semivowel **j-**:

- kjelepē** > ***tʲelepē** “silver” (Q *tyelpë*)
 □**sjalmā** > ***hyalmā** “shell, conch” (Q *hyalma*)
 □**gjernā** > ***jernā** “old, worn” (Q *yerna*)
 ***djeltā** > ***jeltā** “to loathe” (Q *yelta*)
 ***ñgjalmē** > ***jalmē** “clamour” (Q *yalmë*)

The **hw**-sound (unvoiced **w**) enters the language as a simplification of initial **sw-**:

- (□*swanda* >) ***swand** > ***hwand** “sponge” (Q *hwan* with stem *hwand-*)
 □**swesta** (read ***swestā**) > ***hwestā** “to puff” (Q *hwesta*)
 ***swinjā** > ***hwinjā** “to swirl” (Q *hwinya*, cf. the entry *SWIN* in *Etym*)

Another source of **hw** is the aspirate **p^h**, where it occurred before the vowel **u** (cf. VT41:8):

- ***p^huinē** > ***hwuinē** “gloom, deep shadow” (Q *huinë*)

BEGINNING OF THE RETRACTION PERIOD

In primitive Elvish, it was not predictable (from the shape of a word) which syllable received the stress. In a little less than 30 cases, Tolkien in *Etym* indicated by means of an accent which syllable is stressed (plus some additional cases where he indicated which syllable in the *root* is stressed). For instance, it would seem that the primitive words **barādā** “lofty”, **berékā** “wild” and **morókō** “bear” were stressed on the second-to-last syllable. But at some early point in the evolution of Quenya, the stress was moved to the *first syllable* in nearly all cases. (The only known exception is the augment, or prefixed reduplication, in verbal stems: according to WJ:366 this remained unstressed.) So now the three words above became ***bárādā**, **bérekā**, **mórokō** — but since practically all words are henceforth stressed on the first syllable, there is no point in marking the stress at all. The period from now and until the emergence of the later Latin-style stress-patterns we know and love from LotR-style Quenya is called the *retraction period* (WJ:366). It seems to cover the entire formative phase of the Quenya language, so the original stress-patterns of Primitive Elvish actually have minimal impact on the evolution of High-Elven.

Exactly when Tolkien imagined the retraction period to have begun we cannot know, but it should be noted that the vowels that were originally accented in our three examples (**barādā**, **berékā**, **morókō**), have all been *lost* in their Quenya descendants: *Varda*, *verca*, *morco*. They disappeared in the Quenya Syncope (see below). It is not probable that they

sounds was a later idea. In the pre-LotR period it would seem that he meant **sl-** to have been simplified to **l-** already in the primitive days. Cf. **sm-** and **sn-** below.

would have been syncopated if they had still been accented, so the retraction period must at any rate have begun before the syncope set in. ***Salák^{wē}** “grass” must also have transferred its accent to the first syllable (***sálak^{wē}**) before it underwent syncope to produce the immediate ancestor of Quenya *salquë*.

Shorter words that Tolkien indicated were accented on the final syllable, like the verb **barjá** “protect” or the related adjective (or participle?) **barná** “safe, protected” were also stressed on the first syllable from now on. The Quenya descendant forms *varya* and *varna* are still so accented.

THE QUENYA SYNCOPÉ

Where a word of three or more syllables commences in two concomitant syllables that contain *identical short vowels*, the second of these vowels is normally syncopated (cf. Letters:426):

- ***doronō** > ***dornō** “oak” (Q *norno*)
- ◊**galadā** > ***galdā** “tree” (Q *alda*)
- (◊*karani* >) late CE ***karane** > ***karne** “red” (Q *carne*)
- ◊*kjelepē* >) ***tⁱelepē** > ***tⁱelpē** “silver” (Q *tyelpē*)
- ***morokō** (no longer stressed on the second **o!**) > **morkō** “bear” (Q *morco*)
- ◊**neresā** > ***nersā** (Q *Nessa*, name of a Valië: WJ:416)
- (◊*p^horoti* >) late CE ***p^horote** > ***p^horte** “northern” (Q *fortē*)
- ◊**silimā** > ***silmā** “shining white” (adj.) (Q *silma*)
- ◊**turumā** > ***turmā** “shield” (Q *turma*)
- ◊**Ulumō** > ***Ulmō**, name of the Vala of all waters (Q *Ulmo*)
- (◊*salakwē* >) ***salak^{wē}** > ***salk^{wē}** “grass” (Q *salquë*)

However, the syncope did *not* take place if there was a consonant cluster *before* or *following* the second vowel. The word ***aklarē** “glory” (Q *alcarē*), where the second vowel follows the group **kl**, cannot be syncopated to ****akl^{rē}**. A word like ***kjelep^{nā}** “of silver” could not become ***kjelp^{nā}**, and therefore the second **e** still persists in Quenya *telemna* (altered from **tyelemna* under the influence of Telerin, that had *t* for *ty*). A *double* consonant likewise hinders syncope in the previous syllable: ◊**tⁱulussē** “poplar-tree” is not reduced to ****tⁱulssē** (the second *u* is still present in Quenya *tyulussē*).²

A *long* vowel could not be syncopated, so a word like **terēwā** was not reduced to ****terwā** (Quenya *tereva* “fine, acute” still preserves the second *e*; as we see it did become short

* The fact that double consonants would prevent the syncope from taking place, confirms one sound-shift set out above: **k + w** had already merged into a single labial consonant **k^w**. If ◊**salák-wē** (LR:385) had not become ***sálak^{wē}** by this stage, there would still have been a consonant cluster following the second **a**, and the syncope producing the form ***salk^{wē}** (directly underlying Q *salquë*) could not have taken place. I cannot readily explain why ◊**atak^{wē}** “building” (LR:390, later presumably ***atak^{wē}**) is not syncopated to ***atk^{wē}**; the second **a** is still present in Quenya **ataquë**. But a form ***atquë** would probably be impossible in Quenya, and a combination like ***tqu = tk^w** would maybe be disliked also at earlier stages of Vanya-Noldorin; perhaps the syncope was sometimes avoided where certain “undesirable” consonant clusters would otherwise arise. Cf. also a word like ◊**tat^harē** yielding Quenya **tasarē** (“willow”) rather than syncopated (****tat^harē** > ****tapre** >) ****tassē**—The syncope did *not* regularly take place in the branch of Elvish leading to Sindarin; hence primitive ◊**karani** (late CE ***karane**, which would also be the Old Sindarin form) comes out as **caran** in Grey-elven. Where Sindarin words are syncopated, it may at least sometimes be the result of the more sporadic syncope taking place already in Primitive Quendian. Therefore we postulated above that (◊*usuk-wē* >) ***usuk^{wē}** “reek” became ***usk^{wē}** very early and did not have to wait for the Quenya syncope: Though the Quenya form would be **usquë** in any case, “Noldorin”/Sindarin **osp** demands a syncopated form ***usk^{wē}** existing already in Common Eldarin (in the Lindarin dialect of CE actually ***uspē**).

later, but by then the syncopation had ceased to operate). Another example of the same is $\text{Q} \text{narāka}$ (read $^* \text{narākā}$), that was *not* reduced to $^* \text{narkā}$ (Quenya *naraca* “rushing, violent”). Also contrast the development of two variant forms of the same word (WJ:360, 363): CE $\text{Q} \text{awa-delo}$ “away-goer” becomes syncopated to $^* \text{aw'del} > ^* \text{audel}$ (Quenya *Auzel* > *Aurel*), whereas the variant awā-delo shows no syncope because of the long ā : This produces Quenya *Oazel* > *Oarel*, the group *oa* later arising from earlier awa (after it had been shortened from original awā , but too late for the syncope to take effect).*

Where the syncope brought j or w into direct contact with a consonant, they became vowels i , u and could form a diphthong with the previous vowel:

$\text{Q} \text{gajakā} > (^* \text{gajkā} > ^* \text{gaikā})$ “fell, terrible, dire” (Quenya *aica*, PM:363)
 $(\text{Q} \text{awa-delo} > ^* \text{awa-del} > ^* \text{awdel} > ^* \text{audel})$ “Away-goer” (Quenya *Auzel* > *Aurel*)
 $^* \text{tawarinā} > (^* \text{tawrinā} > ^* \text{taurinā})$ (Q *taurina* “of wood”)

At some early point (but *after* the final separation of the branches of Eldarin that lead to Quenya on the one hand and Amanyā Telerin on the other, and evidently also after the syncope), the consonant d is changed in many positions. Initial d is consistently altered in the proto-Quenya branch. It normally becomes l :

$(\text{Q} \text{dōmi} >)$ late CE $^* \text{dōme} > ^* \text{lōme}$ “twilight” (still *lómē* in later Quenya)
 $\text{Q} \text{dattā} > ^* \text{lattā}$ “hole, pit” (Q *latta*)

If the word $\text{Q} \text{d'rāk[ā]}$ “wolf” still survived with its initial cluster dr- (produced by syncope of the original base DARÁK-) intact, it may have been simplified to $^* \text{rākā}$ at this point. If the form $^* \text{lrākā}$ ever existed, it hardly lasted long. The original initial cluster dr- has in any case been simplified in the later Quenya form ráca , whenever the simplification may have occurred.

Occasionally, initial d becomes n instead of l :

$\text{Q} \text{dēr} > \text{nēr}$ “man” (still *ner* in Quenya)
 $(^* \text{doronō} > ^* \text{dornō} > \text{nornō})$ “oak” (Q *norno*)

In the latter case, d evidently becomes n because of assimilation with the other n in the word. In WJ:413-414, Tolkien comments on the derivation of the Q adjective norna “tough, stiff”, which is implied to come from $^* \text{dornā}$; he notes that “this is probably one of the cases in which Q initial d became n- , not l- , by assimilation to an n occurring later in the word”. (The Quenya words nenda “slope” and nendē “sloping”, derived from a root DEN, seem to display the same assimilation: primitive $^* \text{dendā}$, $^* \text{dendē}$. However, Tolkien struck out the entry DEN [LR:354].) As for $\text{dēr} > \text{nēr}$ “man”, *Etym* implies that this unexpected development is “partly due to [influence from] NĪ , NIS woman, partly to

* The fact that the syncope only occurred in words of *more than two syllables* is responsible for the fact that a Quenya word like toron “brother” is reduced to torn- before an ending (e.g. pl. torni). The singular toron had only two syllables and was therefore unaffected by the syncope, whereas the three-syllable plural form $^* \text{toronī}$ was reduced to $^* \text{tornī}$ (> Quenya torni). But sometimes, inflected forms were later re-formed on analogy with the singular form, the syncopated vowel being reintroduced. The noun elen “star” is an example of this: “The pl. form *eleni*, without syncope, is re-formed after the singular” (WJ:262). But a syncopated form $^* \text{elnī}$ had actually existed at an earlier stage, yielding an alternative Quenya plural eldi that might turn up in verse (for the change $\text{ln} > \text{ld}$, see below). Other Quenya examples of what seems to be analogical plurals are talami “floors” and filici “birds” (instead of syncopated $^* \text{talmi}$, $^* \text{filci}$; cf. syncopated nelci rather than $^* \text{neleci}$ for “teeth”).

strengthened stem *ndere* “bridegroom” (LR:354 s.v. DER); therefore this word did not end up as ****lér** in Quenya (LR:377 s.v. NĪ¹).

Medial, intervocalic **d** may also become **l** by assimilation with another **l** in the same word, but this only happens sporadically:

□**g-lada-** > ***glala-** verbal stem “to laugh” (Q *lala-*, PM:359)

Contrast □**lāda** (read ***lādā**) as a primitive word for “flat”; this did *not* become ***lālā** (which would have produced Quenya ****lāla**, but we actually see *lāra*, the consonant *r* regularly evolving from post-vocalic *d*—see below).

The primitive word ***lādā** derived from a stem DAL seems to exemplify another phenomenon: Occasionally, the initial change **d** > **l** would cause an **l** occurring later in the word to be *dissimilated* to **d**. In effect, **d** and **l** switch places, as when the root DAL seems to have become ***LAD** in the derivative ***lādā** (whence Q *lāra*). Tolkien explicitly deals with another example of this phenomenon in WJ:363: “by dissimilation”, the root DEL “go, proceed” turned into *led-* in Quenya. (*Etym* only lists LED- “go, fare, travel” [LR:368]; when writing *Etym*, Tolkien had apparently not yet “discovered” that this is actually a dissimilated form of DEL-!)

According to WJ:363, there is yet another way **d** can become **l** in Quenya: “*dj* became *ly* medially”. This is from the same paragraph that discusses DEL vs. LED, so we are obviously to assume that Quenya **lelya** “go” descends from older ***ledjā**. However, this does not agree very well with one example from *Etym*: The root MAD yields a Quenya word **marya** “pale”, clearly meant to come from ***madjā** (post-vocalic **d** regularly evolving into **r** via **ð** and **z**; see below). According to the rule Tolkien later set out, ***madjā** should have yielded Quenya ***malya** instead, the cluster **dj** becoming **ly** before **d** had the chance to become **r**. But instead of altering the word, we may simply see **marya** as a lone sample of an irregular development.

As we have seen, Tolkien could not quite make up his mind whether a specific primitive sound was to be reconstructed as **h** (presumably like English **h**), or as a back spirant **ʒ**. But if this sound was not **h** all along, the back spirant **ʒ** was changed to **h** at this stage at the very latest. We know this because Quenya was about to acquire **ʒ** from another source (changed from initial and post-vocalic **g**), and this sound would *not* behave like the older (?**ʒ** >) **h**. The latter survived into Quenya as **h** whereas the “new” **ʒ** would eventually be lost completely. Therefore, they cannot have been identical during the next stages of the linguistic evolution.

THE SPIRANTS ARISE

So far proto-Quenya did not have any *spirant* sounds (except possibly **ʒ**, which had by this stage at the latest finally become **h**, as noted above). But now a wide range of spirants would develop from two sources: the voiced stops and the unvoiced aspirates. Turning these sounds into spirants may be one of the changes Tolkien referred to as a “softening” of the older form of Elvish (WJ:20).

Initial and post-vocalic **g** and **b** became **ʒ** and **v**, respectively:

(□*galadā* >) ***galdā** > ***ʒaldā** “tree” (Q *alda*, but *ʒalda* in the archaic Rúmilian spelling—see below)

* But in a post-LotR source, Tolkien derived Quenya **nér** from a root NERE instead (WJ:393), eliminating the complications above: In the new scenario, the initial **n** of **nér** had been **n** all along.

PRE-RECORD QUENYA

- ***wegē** > **wezē** “manhood” (Q **wië* > *vië*)
 (□*Denwego* > **Lenweg* >) ***Lenweg** > ***Lenwez** (personal name, Q *Lenwë*, WJ:412)
 (□*lugni* >) ***lugne** > ***luzne** “blue” (Q *lúnë*, possibly **luzne* in Rúmilian spelling)
 □**besū** > ***vesū** “married pair” (Q **vezu* > *veru*)
 □**laibē** > **laivē** “ointment” (Q *laivë*)

It seems that **g** became **z** following **l** as well:

- ulgundō** > ***ulzundō** “monster” (Q *ulundo*)

It may be that not just **g**, but also **b** turned into a spirant following **l** (hence **lb** > **lv**), but the evidence is somewhat divergent. *Etym* has it that the cluster **lb** produces Quenya **lw** (as in □**golbā** > Q **olwa** “branch”, entry GÓLOB). But Tolkien seems to have abandoned this idea; in a post-LotR source the word for “branch” is quoted as **olba** instead (PM:340) – as if the original cluster **lb** was unchanged in Quenya. However, LotR Appendix E³ informs us that “for *lv*, not for *lw*, many speakers, especially Elves, used *lb*”. So perhaps □**golbā** does properly yield Quenya ***olva**, but many speakers would alter it back to **olba**, and it is this “alternative” form that is quoted in PM:340. The cluster **lv** is not very common in Quenya, but in some of the cases where it does occur (e.g. in the word **elvëa** “starlike”), it almost certainly comes from earlier **lb**. We can probably feel free to postulate a regular development **lb** > **lv**, though “many speakers, especially Elves” would later undo this change – apparently to distinguish this cluster more clearly from **lw**.

Paralleling the changes **b** > **v** and **g** > **z**, post-vocalic **d** became **ð**. The only direct evidence for this is Tolkien's statement (in WJ:363) that a primitive word □**edelo** would have produced Quenya □**ello** via □**eðlo**; the word □**ello** was not actually found, but the development **d** > **ð** must be “valid” all the same. Hence:

- (**tada* >) CE □**tad** > ***tað** “thither” (Q **taz*, in Exilic *tar*)
 (□*awadelo* >) ***Audel** > ***auðel** > **auzel** (Q *Auzel* > *Aurel*)
 (□*nidwō* > **nidwā* >) ***nidwa** > ***niðwa** “cushion” (Q **nizwa* > *nirwa*)

As for the first example, compare the primitive allative ending **-da** (WJ:366), hence ***ta-da** “that-to” = to that, thither. (Quenya **mir** “to the inside; into” must likewise descend from ***mida** via ***mid** > ***mið** > ***miz**.)^{*}

Possibly about the same point in time, the unvoiced *aspirates* also turn into spirant sounds. This seems to have occurred in all positions, though most of our examples involve initial aspirates. The change from aspirates to spirants seems to have happened more or less independently in all Eldarin tongues; for instance, Tolkien noted that **k^h** “became in all Eldarin tongues the spirant” – sc. the spirant **χ**, *ach*-Laut (VT41:9). Likewise, the aspirate **p^h** became the spirant **f**, whereas **t^h** became the spirant **þ**:

- (□*k^hit^hi* >) ***k^hit^he** > ***χipe** “mist” (Q **χipë* > *hisë*)
 □**tat^har** > ***taþar** “willow-tree” (Q **taþar* > *tasar*)
 □**Neth-rā** > ***neþra** “young” (Q *nessa*)⁴
 □**k^hjelesē** > ***χjelesē** “glass” (Q *hyellë*)
 □**k^hit^hme** (read ***k^hit^hmē**) > ***χipmē** “fog” (Q **χipwë* > *hiswë*)
 (□*h^hindi* >) ***t^hinde** > **þinde** “grey” (Q *þindë* > *sindë*, WJ:384)
 (□*p^hini* >) ***p^hine** > **fine** “a single hair” (still *finë* in Q, PM:362/340)

* No examples of *initial d* becoming **ð** can be quoted, since in this position **d** had already become **l** (or exceptionally **n**). Hence a primitive word like □**dozmē** produces Quenya **lómē** rather than (□*dozmē* > □*dōmē* > ***ðōme* > ***zōme* >) ***rómē*.

Since it seems that Quenya had already turned original initial **sk-**, **sp-**, **st-** into aspirates **k^h-**, **p^h-**, **t^h-**, they now became spirants just like the original aspirates (hence Tolkien was free to change his mind about whether **findē** “tress, hair” comes from **∅spindē** or **∅phindē**: LR:387 vs. PM:362!)

- (∅skarwē >) ***k^harwē** > ***χarwē** “wound” (Q ***χarwē** > *harwē*)
- (∅skjapat- >) ***k^hjapat** > ***χjapat** “shore” (Q *hyapat*)
- (∅sk^warmā >) ***k^{hw}armā** > ***χ^warmā** “crossbar” (Q *hwarma*)
- (∅spangā >) ***p^hangā** > ***fangā** “beard” (Q *fanga*)
- (∅stankā >) ***t^hankā** > ***pankā** “split” (Q **panca* > *sanca*)

It should be noted that the **p** that now arose in proto-Quenya was not quite like the sound of English *th* as in *think*. This English sound is interdental, sc. pronounced with the tip of the tongue between the teeth. The Quenya **p** was strictly dental, made with the tongue-tip behind the back of the upper front teeth, and therefore closer to **s** (and in the Noldorin dialect, it would indeed merge with **s** later). Likewise, **f** was not originally quite like English **f**; the **f** of Amanyā Elvish was originally a *bilabial* sound, pronounced using the lips only, without any friction between the teeth and the lower lip. It was quite close to **hw** (unvoiced **w**), and later – in the Vanyarin dialect – the sounds would indeed threaten to fall together. See VT41:7-8 concerning all this.

The combination **χj**, whether descended from **k^hj** or **skj**, becomes **hy** (= *ich-Laut*):

- (∅k^hjelesē >) ***χjelesē** > ***hyelesē** “glass” (Q *hyellē*)⁵
- (∅skjapat- > k^hjapat >) ***χjapat** > **hyapat** “shore” (still so in Q)

The labialized combination **χ^w** becomes **hw** (= unvoiced *w*):

- (*sk^warmā > k^{hw}armā >) ***χ^warmā** > **hwarmā** “crossbar” (Q *hwarma*)

Because of this early merger of **χ^w** with **hw**, “distinct signs for *chw* [χw] and *hw* were not required” in Fëanorian writing (LotR Appendix E)⁶. There really was a merger, for it should be noted that the sounds **hw** and **hy** were not quite new to the language: It seems that at this stage, proto-Quenya already had **hw** derived from **sw**⁷ and from the aspirate **p^h** in front of **u**, and possibly also **hy** derived from earlier **sj-** (see above).

THE SHORTENING OF FINAL VOWELS IN POLYSYLLABIC WORDS

At some point perhaps not very far from the beginning of the “historical” period, the *long final vowels* so characteristic of Primitive Elvish are finally shortened. (The late Common Eldarin and early proto-Quenya rule that final short **-i** and **-u** turn into **-e** and **-o** is no longer operating, so the final **-u** and **-i** that now develop from earlier **-ū** and **-ī** are *not* so changed.)

- ∅**kornā** > Q **cornā** “round”
- ∅**Valinōrē** (WJ:413) > Q **Valinórē** “Valinor”
- ∅**tārī** > Q **tári** “queen”
- ∅**kundū** > Q **cundu** “prince”

Evidently by analogy, the shortened vowels were also introduced in positions where the vowels were not absolutely final, as in the inflected forms of nouns. For instance, the dative of **lassē** “leaf” (earlier ∅**lassē**) is **lassen**, not ****lassén**.

The example **Valinōrē** from WJ:413 is of interest regarding the sequence of the changes: It demonstrates that the change from voiced plosives to spirants, like **b** > **v**, occurred *before* the shortening of the long final vowels.*

However, Quenya still had some long final vowels at a later stage, in the *accusative* form of nouns. In the Plotz Letter, Tolkien indicated that in the conservative “Book Quenya”, a noun like **ciryā** “ship” had the accusative form **ciryá**, whereas **lassē** “leaf” had the accusative form **lassé**. How are we to account for these forms? It has been suggested that at an older stage, there was an accusative marker ***-h**. Whereas *medial h* was lost already in Common Eldarin (WJ:368), it may be that *final -h* survived much longer. If older **◊lassē** “leaf” had an accusative form ***lassēh**, the long vowel of the latter word would initially be shortened by analogy with the development of the simplex form: the new accusative would be ***lasseh**. However, final ***-h** was apparently lost before the beginning of the historical period, and the preceding vowel was lengthened in compensation. Hence presumably ***lasseh** > acc. **lassé**, ***ciryah** > acc. **ciryá**, long final vowels arising anew. (Presumably we would even see long final vowels in the accusatives of nouns that originally had *short* final vowels.)

DEVOICING OF MEDIAL COMBINATIONS

Perhaps at this point, a number of medial clusters of two voiced sounds are seen to become *unvoiced*. Examples include **zd** > **st**, **zg** > **sk**, and **gd** > **kt**:

- (◊esdē > ◊ezdē >) **ezde** > **estē** “rest” (Q *Estē* as name of a Valië, WJ:403)
- (◊mizdē >) ***mizde** > Q **mistē** “fine rain”
- (***masgā** > ◊mazgā >) ***mazga** > ***maska** “soft” (Q *maxa*)
- (◊k^hagda [read ***k^hagdā**] >) ***χagda** > ***χakta** “mound” (Q **χahta* > *hahta*)

Moreover, we can deduce that **bd** at one stage turned into **pt**:

- (***libdā** >) ◊**libda** > ***lipta** “soap” (Q *lipsa*)

We rely on the example ◊**libda** to place the devoicing of these combinations in the period postdating the shortening of the long final vowels. The example ◊**k^hagda** points in the same direction, but other evidence suggests that the initial aspirate **k^h**- should already have turned into a spirant **χ**- when the final vowel had become short.

The combination **pt** (of whatever origin) later turned into **ps**:

- (◊**libda** >) ***lipta** > Q **lipsa** “soap”
- (***lepetē** >) ***lepte** > Q **lepsē** “finger”⁸

* Tolkien may have imagined a different sequence when he wrote *Etym*, where we find some primitive words that already seem to have shortened the long final vowels, but still have not turned the voiced stops and the unvoiced aspirates into spirants. For instance, we have ◊**rāba** (> Q *ráva* “wild”) and ◊**k^hagda** (> Q **χahta* > *hahta* “mound”) with **b** and **k^h** still intact, though the final **-a** has already been shortened. It *must* have been long at the oldest stage, or it would not have survived into Quenya (cf. ◊**swanda** > Q *hwan* “sponge”, not ****hwanda**). But then there are also words in *Etym* that would seem to confirm that the spirants entered the language *before* the final vowels were shortened. Cf. ◊**wezē** (> Q *vië* “manhood”), that comes from a root WEG and must therefore have been ***wegē** at an older stage; the form ◊**wezē** cannot be Primitive Quendian or Common Eldarin, but is rather proto-Quenya, after the voiced stops had become spirants in many positions. Yet in ◊**wezē** the long final vowel is still in place, confirming the order of changes suggested by **Valinōrē** in WJ:413. The material in *Etym* is thus not wholly consistent; we may simply assume that the macron denoting a long final vowel has dropped out in a number of cases. This is also seen in later sources; in WJ:361 a certain Primitive Quendian verb is quoted as ◊**hek-tā**, but in WJ:363 we have ◊**hek-ta** instead – plainly an error, whether the author or the transcriber is to be blamed.

For the primitive form ***lepetē**, cf. the root LEPET and the “Noldorin” cognate **lhebēd** (Sindarin ***lebed**), LR:368. Conceivably the most primitive form should rather be ***lepeti**, but the immediate ancestor of Quenya **lepsē** would still be ***lepte**.

“Before the separation of Vanyar and Ñoldor,” both clans alter **hw-** to **h-** before the vowel **u-** (VT41:8):

(**p^huinē* > **h^wuinē* >) ***h^wuinē** > **huinē** “gloom, deep shadow”

In *Etym*, this word has a Quenya side-form **fuinē** (LR:382), but according to VT41:8, **fuinē** is actually a Telerin form.

Initially, the primitive nasalized explosives **mb-**, **nd-**, **ñg-** are normally reduced to **m-**, **n-**, and **ñ-**. (As for certain alternative developments, as when **◊ndūnē** produces Quenya **andúnē** instead of ****núñē**, see below.) If we can trust the examples **◊ndeuna** and **◊ndeuro** found in the entry NDEW in *Etym*, this simplification took place *after* the shortening of the final long vowels (or we would see ***ndeunā** and ***ndeuro** with the long vowels intact):

(**ndeunā* >) **◊ndeuna** > Q **neuna** “second”
 (**ndeuro* >) **◊ndeuro** > Q **neuro** “successor”
 (◊*ñgolodō* > **ñgoldō* >) ***ñgoldo** > Q **Ñoldo** “Noldo”
 (**ñg^walmē* >) ***ñg^walme** > Q **ñwalmē** “torment”⁹
 (◊*mbandō* >) ***mbando** > Q **mando** “custody” (MR:350)
 (**mbaratā* > **mbartā* >) ***mbarta** > Q **marta** “fey, fated”^{*}

Properly, this reduction only occurs initially, but in some cases, it can be observed medially as well. The primitive word **◊andambundā** “long-snouted” produces Quenya **andamunda** “elephant” (not ****andambunda**). The latter element of a compound might be “reformed after the simplex” (LR:350); in this way Tolkien in *Etym* explained how **◊balī-ndōre** “Valar-land” could end up as **Valinor** instead of ***Valindor**: Occurring as a “simplex”, by itself, ***ndōrē** yielded Quenya **nórē** “land” – and what would be ***Valindor** was altered to **Valinor** by analogy (but see WJ:413, note 25, for a somewhat different explanation which Tolkien came up with decades later). So ***andambunda** might become **andamunda** by analogy with a related word like **mundo** “snout” (itself < **◊mbundu**). Where the second element of a compound normally does not occur as a separate word, **nd/mb/ñg** is normally preserved unchanged also medially. Prominent examples are the endings **-ndil** “friend” and **-ndur** “servant”, as in **Eldandil** “Elf-friend” (WJ:410). There are no separate “simplex” words ****nil** and ****nur**, though longer derivatives from the same stems are found in Quenya (e.g. **nildo** “friend” < ***ndildō**). Indeed we may also include the element **-ndor** “land”, as in **Valandor** “Vala-land” (WJ:413, a source written after Tolkien had rejected or forgotten his original explanation of **Valinor** – in *Quendi and Eldar* he invoked, not analogy with a simplex form, but rather confusion with a distinct root that never had initial **nd-** to explain why we do not see ***Valindor**).

NEW VOWELS

Around this stage, a number of vowels appeared “out of nothing” in Quenya. This usually occurred to turn *syllabic consonants* into normal syllables including a vowel. Henceforth, syllabic consonants were not tolerated in the language.

This explains why in some cases the pre-nasalized initial stops **mb**, **nd**, **ñg** were *not* simplified to **m**, **n**, **ñ** as set out above. As described above, during the Common Eldarin

* For the middle vowel of **mbaratā*, later syncopated, cf. the base **MBARAT** and the “Noldorin”/Sindarin cognate *barad*.

stage the nasal element had occasionally been “strengthened” so that it had come to constitute a syllable by itself. Tolkien explicitly deals with one example in PM:360: The primitive noun $\text{ᚾ}\tilde{\text{n}}\text{golodō}$ could appear both with and without syllabic $\tilde{\text{n}}$. With no syllabic $\tilde{\text{n}}$ it produced Quenya **Ñoldo** as described above. But where a syllabic $\tilde{\text{n}}$ occurred ($\text{*}\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{golodō}$), it came out as **Ingoldo** in Quenya, an **i** developing before the syllabic consonant. **Ingoldo** was a “strengthened” form, “being in full and more dignified form is more or less equivalent to *‘the Ñoldo, one eminent in the kindred’*” (PM:360). As is evident from this example, an **i** developed before syllabic $\tilde{\text{n}}$ (except in the case of $\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{g}^{\text{w}}$, see below) but before a syllabic **n** an **a** appears, and before a syllabic **m** there develops a **u**:

- ($\text{ᚾ}\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{dūnē}$ >) $\text{*}\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{dūnē}$ > **andūne** “sunset” (still *andūnē* in Q)
 ($\text{*}\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{gjō}$ >) $\text{*}\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{gjo}$ > $\text{*}\tilde{\text{i}}\tilde{\text{n}}\text{gjo}$ “grandchild, descendant” (Q *indyō*)
 ($\text{*}\tilde{\text{m}}\cdot\text{bartā}$ [final vowel uncertain] >) $\text{*}\tilde{\text{m}}\cdot\text{bart}$ > **umbart** “fate” (Q *umbar* with stem *umbart-*)

Syllabic $\tilde{\text{n}}$ before g^{w} however prefers the vowel **u** (as we noted above, it seems that this $\tilde{\text{n}}$ had itself become labialized to $\tilde{\text{n}}^{\text{w}}$ already in Common Eldarin, by assimilation to the following g^{w} – and its labialized quality colours the quality of the vowel that develops before it):

- ($\text{*}\tilde{\text{n}}\cdot\text{g}^{\text{w}}\text{alē}$ >) $\text{*}\tilde{\text{n}}^{\text{w}}\cdot\text{g}^{\text{w}}\text{ale}$ > $\text{u}\tilde{\text{n}}^{\text{w}}\text{g}^{\text{w}}\text{ale}$ “torture” (spelt “*ungwalē*” in Q)

Syllabic **l** triggered the development of the vowel **i**. As recorded in the entry LA in *Etym*, there was a negation prefix $\text{ᚾ}\text{la-}$ “not-, un-” that had lost its vowel (not a regular development), so that only a syllabic (or “vocalic”) **l** was left: This prefix became **il-** in Quenya, as in **ilfirin** “immortal” (for $\text{*}\text{I}\cdot\text{p}^{\text{h}}\text{irin-}$). It has been suggested that the Quenya verb **ilca-** “to gleam” comes from the same root that produces Sindarin **lach** “flame”, evidently $\text{*}\text{LAK-}$; if so **ilca-** could come from an original $\text{*}\text{I}\cdot\text{kā}$, an unusual primitive form suppressing the stem-vowel.¹⁰ And **i** likewise developed before the *final* syllabic **l**s that had become final after the loss of final short **-a** in Common Eldarin. This change gives these words their “final” Quenya shape (the difference **k/c** is of course purely orthographic):

- ($\text{ᚾ}\text{hekla}$ >) $\text{*}\text{hek}\cdot\text{l}$ > Q **hecil** “outcast”
 ($\text{ᚾ}\text{makla}$ >) $\text{*}\text{mak}\cdot\text{l}$ > Q **macil** “sword”
 ($\text{ᚾ}\text{tankla}$ >) $\text{*}\text{tank}\cdot\text{l}$ > Q **tancil** “brooch”
 ($\text{ᚾ}\text{tekla}$ >) $\text{*}\text{tek}\cdot\text{l}$ > Q **tecil** “pen”

It may be that the Q word **siril** “rivulet” comes from $\text{*}\text{sirla}$ > $\text{*}\text{sir}\cdot\text{l}$; if so, this would demonstrate that the vowel **i** developed before a final syllabic **l** *before* the assimilation **rl** > **ll** occurred (see below) – the intruding vowel breaking up the cluster before it could be assimilated.

In one case, an **a** rather than an **i** develops before **l**. In *Etym*, Tolkien derived the noun **cala** “light” from a primitive form “*k'lā*”, perhaps = $\text{k}\cdot\text{l}\cdot\tilde{\text{a}}$. But since the stem is given as **KAL**, it would seem very much easier to derive **cala** from $\text{*}\text{kalā}$, instead of supposing a strange primitive form that suppresses the stem-vowel only to have an identical vowel arising later.

In some cases an **a** also developed before **r**, because it had become syllabic in certain positions:

- ($\text{*}\text{k}^{\text{w}}\text{entrō}$ >) $\text{ᚾ}\text{k}^{\text{w}}\text{ent}\cdot\text{r}\cdot\text{o}$ > Q **quentaro** “narrator” (the distinction $\text{k}^{\text{w}}/\text{qu}$ is of course orthographic only)

Here we have a syllabic **r** developing after a consonant cluster. In the case of Q **tambaro** “knocker” (used = “woodpecker”), which Tolkien indicates was ultimately derived from

◊**tamrō**, we must probably assume an intermediate form ***tamb·r·o**. There are no other examples of the strange development **mr** > **mbr**, but if a group **mbr** arose, the further development would confirm that **r** became syllabic following a consonant cluster. The word **Istar** “wizard” is perhaps to be derived from ***istro** > early Q ***ist·r**, given the Sindarin cognate *Ithron* (apparently representing an extended form ***istro-n-**; the point is that for **st** to have become *th* = *þ* in Sindarin, it must at an earlier stage have been in direct contact with the following **r**).

CHANGES AMONG MEDIAL CONSONANT CLUSTERS

Around this stage, various medial consonant clusters underwent changes. Some were complete *assimilations* resulting in double consonants:

- LR > LL: (◊*talrunja* >) ***talrune** > Q **tallunë** “sole of foot”
 (◊*kalrō* >) ***kalro** > Q **callo** “hero”
 NL > LL: (***nenlē** >) ◊**nenle** > Q **nellë** “brook”
 LS > LL: (◊*télesā* > ***telsā** >) ***telsa** > Q **tella** “hindmost”
 (◊*k^helesē* > ***χelesē** > ***hyelesē** > ***hyelsē** >) ***hyelse** > Q **hyellë** “glass”
 RS > SS: (◊*neresā* >) ***Nersa** > Q **Nessa** (name of a Valië) (WJ:416)
 SM > MM: (◊*asmalē* >) ***asmale** > Q **ammalë** “yellow bird”¹¹
 SR > RR: ◊**mi-srawanwe** > ***mirrawanwe** “incarnate” (Q *mirroanwë*, MR:350)
 þR > þþ: (◊*net^h-rā* >) ***neþra** > ***neþþa** (Q *nessa* “young”)

Regarding medial **sm**, the examples are somewhat divergent. In ◊**asmalē** > Q ***ammalë** we see a straightforward assimilation. Yet Tolkien (in LR:362 s.v. KAS) has primitive ◊**kas-sa**/◊**kas-ma** yield Quenya **cassa** “helmet”; if **cassa** is to be referred to **kas-ma**, we must postulate a progressive assimilation **sm** > **ss** (and then **ammalë** should have been ****assalë** instead!) However, **cassa** is perhaps rather to be derived from ◊**kas-sa**. In a later source, the Quenya word for “helm(et)” appears as **carma** instead (PM:260). If this is to be derived from ◊**kas-ma**, the group **sm** is *not* assimilated to **mm** (or **ss**), but simply remains unchanged. (Later, **s** occurring between two voiced sounds is regularly voiced to **z**, in turn producing Exilic Quenya **r** – hence the form **carma**. But then Q **ammalë** from ◊**asmalē** should have become ****armalë** instead!) It seems that we shall simply have to accept that medial **sm** could develop in various ways.

In WJ:363, Tolkien also indicates that **ðl** would be assimilated to **ll**, though no good example can be quoted (Tolkien mentioned that a form ◊**eðlo** *would have* produced Quenya ◊**ello**, but this word he asterisked, for it was “not found”). The group **ðr** would likewise have been assimilated to **rr**, and here we may have a direct example, though a garbled one: From a primitive form **nⁱadrō**, literally ***gnawer**, Tolkien derived a Quenya word for “rat” that his son read as “nyano” (LR:379). However, this is certainly a misreading for **nyarro**, representing older ***nⁱaðro**. (In the normal Roman spelling of Quenya, **nⁱ** is represented as **ny**, but this is only a matter of orthography, like **k^w** = **qu**.) Since post-vocalic **ð** would later become **r** (via **z**) anyway, we cannot be certain that this assimilation really occurred. Otherwise, the word for “rat” would appear as ***nyazro** in the Vanyarin dialect.

The example ◊**nenle** (not older ***nenlē**) given in *Etym* would seem to indicate that the assimilation **nl** > **ll** occurred *after* the shortening of the long final vowels, so perhaps all of these assimilations can be placed at this stage.

There are also some cases of *partial* assimilation/dissimilation (not producing double consonants):

- LN > LD: (◊*skalnā* > ***k^halnā** >) ***χalna** > ***χalda** “hidden” (in later Q *halda*)

Cf. also WJ:362 about the plural form (∅*elenī* > **elnī* >) ***elni** “stars” becoming **eldi** (though it was usually replaced by the analogical form **eleni**)*.

PN and BN both > MN:†

(∅*Utupnū* >) ***Utupno** > Q **Utumno** (Melkor's first stronghold)‡
 (∅*stavnō* >) ***pabno** > Q ***pamno** “carpenter” (in later Q *samna*)
 (∅*tubnā* >) ***tubna** > Q **tumna** “low”

The nasal **m** becomes **w** following **n** or **p**:

(∅*tinmē* >) ***tinme** > Q **tinwē** “sparkle, glint; star”
 (∅*k^hit^hme* [read **k^hit^hmē*] > **χipmē* >) ***χipme** > Q ***χipwē** “fog” (in later Q **hiswē**)

There are also two attested cases wherein **bs** becoming **ps**:¹²

(**labasā?* >) ***labsa** > Q **lapsa** “to lick (frequentative)”
 (∅*abasen-* >) ***absen-** > Q **apsen-** “to forgive” (VT43:18)

There is also a unique case of **tf** (< ***tp^h**) becoming **ff**:¹³

(**et-p^hir-* >) ***et-fir-** > Q †**effir-** “expire” (VT43:34-35; the actual attested form is *effriemmo* “of our death”)

Certain other changes involved *metathesis*, two sounds switching place:

KL > LK (LC): (**aklarē* >) ***aklare** > Q **alcarē** “glory” (also short *alcar*)
 KR > RK (RC): (**lakra* >) ∅**lakra** > Q **larca** “swift”
 TR > RT: (∅*netere* >) ***netre** > Q **nertē** “nine” (VT42:26; in this source Tolkien explicitly refers to changes TL, TR “etc.” > LT, RT)

Again, we have an example (∅**lakra** instead of older ***lakra**) that would seem to place these changes in the period post-dating the shortening of the final vowels. (The example ∅**akra** “narrow” > Q **arca** [LR:348] would then skip over the intermediate form ***akra**.)¹⁴

Tolkien is seen to have changed his mind repeatedly about the behaviour of the medial cluster **sk**: Did it survive unchanged to become Quenya **sc**, or did it undergo metathesis to produce Quenya **ks** = **x**? In the entry EZGE in *Etym* (suggesting a primitive word ***ezgē**) a Quenya word **escē** is listed; this **sc** represents the **sk** that arose after the regular devoicing of older **zg**. However, the entry EZGE was struck out. In other entries, Tolkien let **sk** (whether

* It seems that occasionally, ***ln** may yield Quenya **ll** instead of (or as well as) **ld**: cf. ∅**ndulna** > Q **nulla** or **nulda** “secret” (LR:355 s.v. DUL). Such attested past tense-forms as **willē** “flew” and **ullē** “poured” may then represent older ***wilne**, ***ulne**; cf. **-nē** as a common past tense ending in Quenya. But it may also be that these past tense forms represent older nasal-infixed stems, so that the double **ll** seen in Quenya actually comes from **nl** rather than **ln**.

† In one exceptional case, **bn** becomes **mb** instead: The Quenya adjective **lebma** “left behind” is explicitly referred to ∅**lebnā** (LR:368 s.v. LEB). This must be due to an early, irregular metathesis ∅**lebnā** > ***lenbā** > ***lembā**, perhaps helped by the alternative root LEM listed in the same entry in *Etym* (LEM could have produced a form ***lembā** already in the primitive language). In the case of **sambē** “room” (LR:387 s.v. STAB), Tolkien listed both ∅**stavnē** and ∅**stambē** as primitive forms, but these are evidently meant as variants co-existing already in the primitive language: While Quenya **sambē** clearly comes from ∅**stambē**, the “Noldorin”/Sindarin word **thafn** is to be derived from ∅**stavnē**; the true “N”/S cognate of Q **sambē** is actually **tham** listed in the same entry. Thus the meaning cannot be that ∅**stavnē** became or was replaced by ∅**stambē**, so we have no second attestation of the development **bn** > Q **mb** after all. On the contrary, the entry STAB in *Etym* confirms the regular development **bn** > Q **mn**, since the Q word **samna** “wooden post” there listed is certainly meant to come from ***stavnā**. Cf. also the adjective **lumna** “burdensome”, derived from a root DUB; the primitive form is clearly meant to be ***dubnā**.

‡ The reconstruction ∅**Utupnū** is found in MR:69; *Etym* gives ∅**Utubnu** instead [LR:394 s.v. TUB], but the Quenya form would be **Utumno** in either case.

original or devoiced from **zg**) undergo metathesis to become Quenya **x** (actually spelt **ks** in *Etym*). Thus the word \varnothing **mazgā** (entry MASAG) yields Quenya **maxa** (**maksa**), and given the primitive form, this must be metathesized from an intermediate form ***maska**. The entry MISK indicates that original **sk** (not devoiced from **zg**) behaves in the same way; here we find a Q word **mixa** (**miksa**) “wet”, which given the entry-head must descend from ***miskā** at the oldest stage.

However, Tolkien seems to have changed his mind back again later: In a post-LotR source we find a word like **rusca** “red-brown” (VT41:10), which must be connected to the entry RUSKĀ in *Etym* (in the later source, Tolkien actually struck out **rusca**, but retained related words like **rusco** “fox”).¹⁵ So now there is *no* metathesis **sk** > **ks**, just as suggested by the rejected entry EZGE in *Etym*. If we are to go with Tolkien's final (?) insights on this matter, the Quenya words **mixa** “wet”, **maxa** “pliant, soft” and **maxë** “dough” (< ***miskā**, \varnothing **mazgā**, \varnothing **mazgë**) would have to be altered to ***miska**, ***masca** and ***mascë**. Perhaps we may simply assume that there were some minor dialectal differences and divergent developments within Quenya, and accept all words as they stand.

The group **rg** becomes **ry**.*

(\varnothing **targā** >) ***targa** > **tarya** “stiff”

At some point after the shortening of the long final vowels (as is evident from the example \varnothing **ektele**), the group **kt** becomes **χt**, but we are now so close to classical Quenya that we will represent **χt** as **ht** in accordance with normal Quenya orthography:

(\varnothing **et-kelē** >) \varnothing **ektele** > Q **ehtelë** “spring, issue of water”
 (\varnothing **hek-tā** >) \varnothing **hek-ta** > Q **hehta** “forsake” (WJ:361, 363)
 (***k^hagdā** > ***k^haktā** >) ***χakta** > **χahta** “mound” (in later Q **hahta**)
 (\varnothing **jakta** >) ***jakt** > ***jaht** “neck” (Q **yat** with stem **yaht-**)
 (\varnothing **nuktā** >) ***nukta-** > Q **nuhta-** “to stunt” (WJ:413)

In a few cases, this change caused confusion. The verb (\varnothing **maktā-** >) ***makta** “wield a weapon” had until now been distinct from (PQ ***maztā** > CE ***maxtā** >) ***maxta** “to handle”. But now ***makta** came to be pronounced just like ***maxta**, and the verbs fell together in the form we would normally spell **mahta** in Quenya. *Etym* records how the verbs became “blended” (LR:371 s.v. MAK).

The verb **rihta** “to jerk” may descend from either ***riktā** or **rik^htā**; Tolkien somewhat indecisively listed the root as “RIK(H)” (LR:383) – either RIK or RIK^H, or perhaps rather both. It may be that **k^h** before **t** was reduced to **k** already in Common Eldarin; if so Q **rihta** would come from ***riktā** anyhow. But if ***rik^htā** survived in this form, it became Q **rihta** (=

* In one case, Tolkien in *Etym* likewise lets **lg** become **ly**, Telerin **felga** “cave” having the Quenya cognate **felya** (P^HÉLEG). The primitive form is clearly meant to be ***p^helgā**. However, this does not agree with another example, quoted above: \varnothing **ulgundō** “monster” does not yield Quenya ***ulyundo**, but **ulundo** (evidently via ***ulzundō**). We can probably afford to ignore the entire entry P^HÉLEG in *Etym*, for it reflects an idea Tolkien later rejected: He is here explaining the origin of the first element of the name *Felagund*, which in *Etym* is “Noldorin”/Sindarin for “Cave-Prince” (cf. the entry KUNDŪ). However, Tolkien later decided that *Felagund* was not an Elvish name at all. In a post-LotR source it was re-explained as an adaptation of a Dwarvish (Khuzdul) term for Cave-Hewer: *Felakgundu* or *Felaggundu* – and it is now actually the second element *gundu* rather than the initial element *felag-* that means “cave” or “underground dwelling” (PM:352). So from a certain point of view, Quenya **felya** “cave” and all its cognates must be rejected as Elvish words. It would seem, then, that Tolkien considerably eliminated a troublesome example for us. I would not let **lg** produce Quenya **ly**, but let **lg** behave as in \varnothing **ulgundō** > (***ulzundō** >) **ulundo** instead.

riχta) already in the general change **k^h** > **χ** and did not have to wait for the change **kt** > **ht** (= **χt**).

Eventually **χ** (of whatever origin) before **t** would turn into *ich-Laut* [ç] following the vowels **e** and **i**; cf. the later Quenya pronunciation of words like **nehta** “spear-head” or **tihta** “to blink”. We cannot know at what stage this change happened (since it is not reflected in normal Quenya orthography anyway – it may well be late). In any case, **χ** remained unchanged following the vowels **a**, **o**, and **u**; cf. the later Quenya pronunciation of words like **mahta** “to handle/wield”, **ohta** “war”, **luhta** “to enchant”.

Various combinations of *voiced stops* + **m** also underwent changes. *Etym* quotes **ṛnakma** (rather than older ***nakmā**) as the origin of the Quenya word *nangwa* “jaw”; if we can trust this piece of information, this change also occurred after the shortening of the final long vowels. (In the case of a word like *sungwa* “drinking-vessel”, said to be derived from **ṛsukmā**, we may assume that Tolkien simply did not mention the intermediate stage ***sukma** with the final vowel shortened.)

KM and GM both > NGW (technically ÑGW): (***nakmā** >) **ṛnakma** > Q *nangwa* “jaw”
(**ṛsagmā** >) ***sagma** > Q *sangwa* “poison”

TM > NW: (***mbaratmē** >) ***maratme** > Q *maranwë* “destiny”

(**ṛjatmā** > ***jatmē** >) ***jatme** > Q *yanwë* “bridge” (the difference **j/y** is of course orthographic only)

As is evident from the example ***tinme** > Q *tinwë* discussed above, ***nm** also turns into **nw**. By one theory, **tm** first became **nm** and then **nw** (***maratme** > ***maranme** > Q. *maranwë*); if so, the change ***nm** > **nw** actually happened *after* this stage. Like **tm**, the group **dm** would probably also become **nw**, but we have no examples.

Probably already in the pre-record period, initial **w** is lost before long **ō** (WJ:367). Hence the prefix **ṛwō-**, meaning “together” referring to the union of two things, was reduced to **ó-** in Quenya (when unstressed shortened to **o-**), and we have for instance ***wō-mentie** > Q *omentie* “meeting (of two)”, ***wō-nōna** > Q adj. *onóna* “twin-born” (WJ:367).

Post-vocalic **s** followed by a voiced sound (any vowel or a voiced consonant) becomes **z**. (This **z** will eventually become **r** in Exilic Quenya.)¹⁶

(**ṛ^hausā** > ***pauasā** >) ***pauas** > ***pauza** “foul” (Q **pauza* > *saura*)

(**ṛbesū** > ***vesū** >) ***vesu** > ***vezu** “married pair” (Q **vezu* > *veru*)

(**ṛbesnō** > ***vesnō** >) ***vesno** > ***vezno** “husband” (Q **vezno* > *verno*)

(***pisjā** >) ***pisya** > ***pizya** “syrup” (Q **pizya* > *pirya*)

The voicing **s** > **r** does *not* take place if **s** is followed by an unvoiced consonant (including another **s**, in the case of double **ss**):

(**ṛusuk-wē** > ***usk^wē** >) **usk^we** = Q *usquë* “reek” (not ****uzquë** > ****urquë**)

(**ṛbessē** > ***vessē** >) **vesse** = Q *vessë* “wife” (not ****vezsë** > ****versë**)

The evidence is somewhat divergent regarding the behaviour of a (single) post-vocalic **s** occurring finally. In *Etym*, Tolkien let **s** become **z** (> later **r**) in this position as well, as when he derived the Quenya noun **solor** “surf” from older **ṛsolos** (implying the existence of an intermediate form ***soloz**). The first word listed in the entry **ÓLOS** is likewise **olor** (“dream”); the imagined development would be ***olos** > ***oloz** > **olor**. However, this very word reappears in UT:396, but now in the form **olos** – though its *plural* is given as **oloz/olori**. Hence Tolkien has altered the rules for what precise environment the voicing **s** > **z** occurs in. In *Etym*, the rule is that a post-vocalic **s** becomes voiced unless it is followed

by an unvoiced sound. The later rule seems to be that **s** is voiced if it occurs *between* two voiced sounds (either two vowels, or a vowel and a voiced consonant). Thus **olos** is still **olozi** in the plural, where the plural ending makes **s** intervocalic so that the voicing can occur.*

The spirant **ð** merges with the newly developed sound **z** (and will also end up as **r** in Exilic Quenya):

(\varnothing *Awadelo* > **Audel* >) ***auðel** > **auzel** (Q *Auzel* > *Aurel*)
 (\varnothing *nidwō* > **nidwā* >) ***niðwa** > ***nizwa** “cushion” (Q **nizwa* > *nirwa*)

When writing *Etym*, Tolkien imagined that non-initial **t** became **s** before the vowel **i** (at what point in the imagined timeline this change was supposed to have occurred is difficult to say; probably relatively late, since there is no trace of such a shift in “Noldorin”/Sindarin). Therefore, the adjective (\varnothing *maziti* >) **maitë** “handy, skilled” had the plural form **maisi**, ultimately < **maziti*. (From this example it is clear that this shift must have occurred after final short **-i** became **-e** in late Common Eldarin, or **t** would have become **s** in the singular form as well.) In the case of a cluster **tt**, only the second **t** changes to **s** before **i**, as when **quelet** “corpse” (stem **quelett-** < \varnothing *k^welett-*) has the plural **queletsi**. – However, it may be that Tolkien dropped this sound-shift after completing *Etym*. In a much later (post-LotR) source, Tolkien wrote **hloníti tengwi**, not ?**hlonísi tengwi**, for “phonetic signs” (WJ:395). So perhaps the plural form of **maitë**, **quelett-** could simply be ***maiti**, ***queletti** as well.

OTHER VOWEL CHANGES (INCLUDING DIPHTHONGS)

Sporadic losses of final vowels still occur; some adjectives in **-ina** are shortened:

(**melinā* >) ***melina** > **melin** “dear”
 (**sk^warinā* >) ***hwarina** > **hwarin** “crooked”
 (**p^hirinā* >) ***firina** > **firin** “dead”
 (**k^walinā* >) ***qualina** > **qualin** “dead” (by unnatural cause/s)

The Quenya descendant of ***latinā** Tolkien listed as **latin(a)**, apparently meaning that **latina** and shortened **latin** coexisted. The unattested longer forms of the adjectives above may also still be “valid”. Most adjectives in **-ina** seem to persist in their full forms (**calina** “light”, **culina** “flame-coloured”, **enwina** “old”, **malina** “yellow”, etc. etc.)

Evidently before the beginning of the “historical” period, the diphthongs **ae**, **ao** and **ei** turn into long vowels **é**, **ó**, and **í**, respectively. (**Ae** and **ao** did not change “directly”; Tolkien implied that between **ae** and **é** there was an intermediate stage, which he repre-

* If we were to impose full “consistency” on the material, we should have to alter some of the words in *Etym*. **Solor** “surf” would become ***solos** (to go with **olos** rather than **olor**), and **seler** “sister” (derived from older ***pelez**, cf. the base T^HELES) would have to become ***seles** instead. **Teler** “Telerin Elf”, in *Etym* derived from TELES, would have to become ***Teles** in the singular, though the plural could still be **Teleri** for older ***Telezi** (cf. **olos** having the pl. **olozi** > **olori** in UT:396). However, Tolkien in a post-LotR source implied that **Teler** comes from ***Telero** instead (WJ:371), so this word can stay as it is (the **r** now being original, not altered from **z** < **s**). Perhaps Tolkien changed the etymology precisely because he did not want the singular to be ***Teles** (as it would have to be according to his Revised Voicing Rules). We could follow Tolkien's example and keep **seler** “sister” as it is by assuming that it “actually” comes from primitive ***t^helere** (with a feminine ending ***-re** corresponding to masc. \varnothing -**ro** added to *T^HELE, the extended form of the root T^HEL listed in LR:390 – of which T^HELES listed in the same place is merely another possible extension). Concerning a curious example from the entry **KAS**, **cár** “head” with stem **cas-**, see the Appendix. We should probably read ***cás** with stem ***car-**.

sented as **æ**, and before **ao** turned into **ó** this diphthong first became a special A-like version of the vowel **ō** [represented by **ō̄**]. These intermediate stages may have been short-lived.)

Where one of the older diphthongs **ao** or **ei** (no examples for **æ**) had occurred at the end of a word, the language now regained some long final vowels in polysyllabic words. They survived throughout the “historical period” in Valinor and were directly recorded in the classical “Book Quenya” orthography (these long final vowels became short only after the Noldor went to Middle-earth).

Ae becoming long **é**:

(**maelā* >) **maela* > *méla* “loving”^{*,17}

Ao becoming long **ó**:

(**kaolō* >) **kaolo* > *cólo* “burden”^{†,18}

Also notice that in “Book Quenya”, nouns in **-a** are seen to have genitive forms in **-ó**, e.g. **ciryó** as the genitive of **cirya** “ship”. The genitive form **ciryó** arose at this point in the linguistic evolution and represents **kirjao*, in turn derived from older **kirjā-hō* or **kirja-hō*. The vowel of the suffixed element **-hō** “from, of” came into direct contact with the preceding vowel **a** after the “very early” loss of medial **h** treated above (WJ:368). Thus a final diphthong **-ao** arose.

Ei becoming long **í**:

(*neiti* >) **neite* > Q *nítē* “moist”

(*meinā* >) **meina* > Q *mína* adj. “eager to go” (VT39:11)

Final **-ei** also becomes **-í**, as in the plural of words ending in **-e** (the diphthong arising when the plural ending **-i** is added). The plural of **lassē** “leaf”, that had long been **lassei*, now becomes **lassí** – the form recorded in “Book Quenya” orthography.

In one exceptional case, Tolkien let **ei** become **ai** instead of **í**: In *Etym* (entry WEY), the name of the Valië **Vairē** is referred to primitive **weirē**, and there is a reference to a change “*wei* > *wai*” as if the preceding **w** has something to do with this unusual development. However, perhaps this example should be ignored. In a later source Tolkien derived Vairē's name from an A-infixing form of the stem WIR (evidently meant to be **Wairē*), in which case the diphthong **ai** would simply be unchanged since the primitive period. (VT39:10)

Virtually all final consonant clusters are simplified (the ending **-nt** for dual dative is the sole known final cluster in later Quenya); the clusters are however preserved before endings, since they are not then final:

(*jakta* > **jakt* >) **jaht* > Q *yat* “neck” (but with stem **yaht-**)

(*peltakse* >) **peltaks* > Q **peltas** “pivot” (with stem **peltax-** = **peltaks-**)

Final **-st** becomes **-s**:

(**Mand-ostō* > *Mandosto* >) **Mandost* > Q **Mandos** (with stem **Mandost-**, MR:350 cf. VT39:6)

Final clusters in **-d** lose this consonant, e.g. **-nd** becoming **-n**:

(*swanda* > **swand* >) **hwand* > Q **hwan** “sponge” (with stem **hwand-**)

* Tolkien mentioned no primitive form, but this Quenya adjective is implied to be derived from an A-infixing form of the stem MEL-; see VT39:10. However, in *Etym* he derived Q. *vére* “bond, troth, compact” from *swæde*, which in turn must come from **wæde*, with an A-infixing form of the root WED. This indicates that **ae* first became **æ** and then a regular long **é** in Quenya.

† Again, Tolkien in VT39:10 implies that an A-infixing variant of the stem KOL underlies this word.

(**t^haurondo* >) ɔ**paurond** > Q ***pauron** (Exilic Quenya *Sauron*, quite possibly with stem *Saurond-*)

For the latter example, see Letters:380. Another example involves a simplification **-ld** > **-l**: In the *Etym* scenario, the name **Taniquetil** has the stem **Taniquetild-** because the latter element of this name is reduced from **tildë** “horn”. The final **-e** was lost early, but the name must have appeared as ***Taniquetild** at one stage.

Final **-ng** (actually **-ñg**) loses the **-g** and **ñ** becomes a normal **n**. The name of the Golden Tree **Laurelin** was sometimes taken to mean “Hanging Gold” and assigned the stem **Laureling-**, the latter element being related to **linga** “hang, dangle”. To the extent this interpretation was correct, the name may indeed have appeared as ***Laureling** (i.e., ***Laureliñg**) at one earlier stage.

Final **-m** and **-k** become **-n** and **-t**, respectively. Thus the older base TALAM is the source of the Quenya word **talán** “floor”, with stem **talám-**. A word for “bird” derived from the stem P^HILIK had by now probably reached the form ***filik**; in classical Quenya we find **filit**, with stem **filic-**. Cf. also **nelet** “tooth” from an original base NEL-EK (in this case the stem-form has undergone syncope: **nelc-**).

Final double consonants are simplified, but remain before endings:

(ɔ*tollo* >) ***toll** > Q **tol** “island” (stem **toll-**)
k^welett > Q **quelet** “corpse” (stem ***quelett-**)
 (**nisse* >) ***niss** > **nis** “woman” (stem **niss-**)*,¹⁹

EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 However, it is my opinion that Tolkien had later rejected roots that begin with SM- and SN-. An example of this is the base SMAL, which he changed to *MAL (see p. 22 note 10 above); he definitely rejected the base from which the “Noldorin” word *naith* was derived in *Etym* (LR:387 s.v. SNAS; see UT:282 note 16 for its later etymology).
- 2 As it can be suggested in a later source (SD:419), the ulterior form of Q. *tyulussë* may actually be ***kⁱulussë** instead. Helge commented, “in an ‘internal’ perspective, I guess different Loremasters disagreed about the ulterior forms of certain words, and various views are reflected in the Professor’s writings”.
- 3 That is, LotR:1095.
- 4 According to a later source (WJ:404, 416) the name of the Valië Nessa was said to be Valarin in origin. However, there are those who contend that the name descended from primitive *neresā* “she that has man-like valor and strength”; this sense may not have survived in later times. The Q adjective *nessa* “young” exists independently of the name, and as the original meaning seems to be almost forgotten (except among the Loremasters), Nessa came to be called “the Ever-young”.
- 5 See page 14 note 2.
- 6 That is, LotR:1097.
- 7 Helge, in a later email communication to me, sees **sw** as an actual combination, “though David [Saló] may see it as a unitary, labialized consonant (**s^w**)”.
- 8 But primitive **pt** was retained in Q *raccalepta* “claw-fingered” in SD:72. With thanks to Helge for bringing this attention to me through email. I would like to add *tapta* “impeded” in VT39:17. Helge afterwards surmised that Tolkien may have eventually dropped the entire **ps** > **pt** rule. If so, then the

* The simplex **nis** “woman” also occurs in the form **nís**; it is difficult to account for the long vowel, unless this form is influenced by the archaic word **ní** of similar meaning.

Quenya word for “finger” would have been **leptē* instead of *lepsē*. However, in VT44:16 in a note dated c. 1968, the Quenya word for “finger” is said to be *leper*, pl. *leperi*, and *lepta* a derivative verb meaning “pick (up, out) with the fingers” (< **lep-tā*).

- 9 Spelt **ngwalme** in LotR:1096
- 10 I have to disagree with this proposed etymology of *ilca*. I don’t think this was derived from *LAK, but rather from a class of roots which end with *-IL, all with the sense of “shine” or “gleam” like NGIL (see MR:388), RIL, SIL and THIL Helge later explained to me that this was actually David Salo’s speculation, and he agreed with me in principle.
- 11 But see note 1 above.
- 12 This is a late addition suggested by Helge.
- 13 A similar case can be found in Sindarin: *ephel* “outer fence” < **et-pele*. But in this case I consider this change as unexpected, as it was assumed that **t-p^h*- would descend to **tf-* in Quenya. Besides, I believe that this form was but ephemeral, as Tolkien changed the line *sí ar lúmessē effirimmō* “now and at the our of our death” to *sí ar lúmesse ya firuvamme* (lit. “now and at the hour that we will die”) in a later version of *Aia Mária*.
- 14 This should not be confused with Q *arca* “pray”, which is speculated to be derived from RAK (< **arakā* < **a-r’k-*). See VT43:33.
- 15 The ultimate base, of course, is (U)RUS (VT41:10). The entry RUSKĀ in *Etym* should be seen as a primitive word, not as a root. Helge explains, “[I]t may be due to Christopher Tolkien’s eager ‘regularization’ of his father’s manuscript.” It may be then that it should be written as RUS + *kā*, but Tolkien struck out *rusca* in VT41:10.
- 16 But according to VT44:20 note 4: “The change of intervocalic *s* > *r* is not universal: compare, for example, *ósanwe*. An unpublished bote from the 1960s states that this changes did not occur when *s* was followed by a stressed vowel (as presumably in *ósanwe*, stressed *ōsánwe*.)” Another example, not included but would explain its existence, is the attested form *aselye* “with us” (VT43:29), hence *asélye* (the accent here is an indication of stress, not length).
- 17 Similarly, as suggested in VT39:10, the ulterior form of Q *méla* is ***mælā**.
- 18 The hypothetical intermediate ulterior form would be ***kōlō** > **□kālō** (thus S *caul*).
- 19 The plural form **nísi** is also attested (VT43:30), although this may be an ephemeral form by Tolkien. However, the presence of the long vowel may be inconsequential, as there are cases wherein Tolkien was consistent about this in his language creations.

CHANGES PRODUCING VALINOREAN QUENYA

Probably before the beginning of the “historical” period, a double **ii** (evidently two vowels in hiatus) was simplified to **i**. The old perfect form wā-wāwiiē “has passed away” (WJ:366) would have become ***awāwiiē** with a short final vowel by now; perhaps around this stage, it was further simplified to ***awāwie**. (In later Quenya this yielded **avániē**, which is *not* a regular phonetic development; the **n** replacing the last **w** intruded by association with the past tense ending **-nē**. See WJ:366.)

At some relatively late stage, **ai/ay** (but *not* **āy** with a long **ā**) becomes **e** before an unaccented vowel (or at least before **o** and **a**; examples for other vowels seem to be missing). Probably **ay** first became **ai**; then it was reduced to **e** (ë) in this position.

(wādaio [read **dajō*] > **lajō* >) ***layo**/***laio** > **lēo** “shade”

(wāgajār > **zayār* >) ***ayár**/***aiár** > ***ēár** “sea” (cf. WJ:400; in Exilic Quenya *ēar*)

($\text{wāp}^h\text{ajā}$ >) **faya**/***faia** > **fēa** “spirit”

The latter word is the first element in the name of Fëanor, Quenya **Fëanáro**; the fact that it is quoted in the form **Fayanáro** in PM:343 would seem to indicate that **aya** > **ēa** is a late change (at least post-dating the change **p^h > f**). We do not asterisk the form **faya**, since it is attested in this name. It may be that Tolkien meant this change to have taken place during Fëanor's lifetime, since his name could also be quoted as **Fayanáro**.

Paralleling this change, the group **aw** (not **āw**) before an unaccented vowel is reduced to **o** (in WJ:367, Tolkien hints that **aw** first became **au** and then **o**):

(wāwā >) ***awa** > **áua** (WJ:367, the accent probably indicating stress rather than length) > **oa** “away” (WJ:366, VT39:6)

(**lawā* >) wālawā > ***laua** > **loa** “year” (VT42:10)

(wāsrawā >) ***hrawa** > ***hraua** > **hroa** “body” (MR:349-350)

(**mi-srawanwe* >) ***mirrawanwe** > ***mirrauanwe** > **Q mirroanwë** “incarnate” (MR:350)

Strangely, Tolkien has the primitive word wātar “wood” (as material) yielding Quenya **tavar** instead of ****toar** (LR:391 s.v. TAWAR; as for **w** becoming **v** in this position, see below). In a later source, a word for “wood” is however given as **toa**, regularly derived from a root TAWA (VT39:6). The TAWAR of *Etym* could be simply an extended form of it.

At some later point, when the rule turning **ay/ai** and + a vowel into **e** had ceased to function, the combination **āj** (or in Quenya orthography **áy**) became **ai**. The older forms with **áy** seem to have survived into the historical period, so the Quenya designation of the lesser spirits of the people of the Valar can be cited as **Máyar** (PM:363,364). Yet the word normally appears in its later form **Maiar** (which did not turn into ****Mëar** since the older rule had ceased to operate, as noted above). Another example of the same is **waia** “envelope”, ultimately derived from wājā (*Etym*, entry WAY).¹

Perhaps some words escaped this change; in *Etym*, Tolkien cited the Quenya adverb “far off” as **háya** without mentioning any later form **haia**, but it does occur in SD:312.*

* The word must ultimately be derived from ***k^hājā**, closely reflecting the root K^hAYA . In Valinorean Quenya it would actually appear as **χáya*; see below concerning the shift $\chi > h$ in Exilic Quenya.

The retraction period ends. The classical stress-patterns are established: Two-syllable words are nearly always stressed on the first syllable; longer words are henceforth accented on the second-to-last syllable if that is *long*; otherwise the stress falls on the third syllable from the end.

At some point after the establishing of the new stress-patterns, a long vowel immediately preceding or following the accented vowel is usually shortened (but not universally so as far as a preceding vowel is concerned; for instance, in WJ:368 Tolkien notes that the Quenya prefix **hó-** “from” usually retained its long vowel “even when it had become unstressed”).

Shortening of vowels immediately preceding the accented vowel:

(**wō-nōnā* > **ō-nōna* >) ***ōnōna** > Q **onóna** “twin-born”

(**ōmandī* >) ***ōmandi** > Q **omandi** pl. “vowels” (but singular **ōmand-* > Q *óman* with the long vowel intact since it is stressed)*

Many three-syllable words do not behave quite like we might expect. Even where there is a long vowel in the second-to-last syllable that “ought” to attract the stress, the accent remains on the first syllable even after the end of the retraction period, and the long vowel in the following syllable is *shortened*:

(*□Awādelo* > **Awādel* >) ***Oāzel** > Q **Oazel** “away-goer” (later > *Oarel*)

(*□Arātā* >) *□arāta* > **arata** “exalted” (PM:363, VT41:9; Q pl. *Aratar* used of the chief Valar)

(**narākā* >) *□narāka* > Q **naraca** “harsh”

(*□terēwā* >) ***terēwa** > ***terewa** “fine, acute” (> Q *tereva*)

(*□terēnē* >) ***terēne** > Q **terenē** “slender”

Perhaps we should also include **ontaro** “parent” here, if the accompanying form **ontāro** listed in *Etym* (entry ONO) is to be taken as an older form rather than a mere alternative. (It is indicated that **ontāro** was at some point accented on the second-to-last syllable, but during the retraction period, the stress would have fallen on **ont-**.)

This development seems to be relatively “regular” when we are dealing with an originally long vowel in the penultimate syllable of three-syllable words: The vowel is shortened and the stress settles on first syllable. Perhaps **wō-nōnā* behaves differently (producing Q **onóna** instead of ****ónona**) because the initial syllable is a prefix so that this did not count as a quite regular three-syllable word? However, there are certainly further inconsistencies in the material on this point: The primitive form *□ñgōlē* (> ***ñ-gōlē** > ***ingōlē**) produces Quenya **ingolē** “philosophy” (PM:360), with the stress moving to the first syllable and the long vowel in the penultimate syllable becoming short, just as in **naraca**, **terenē** and the other examples just listed. Yet primitive *□ndūnē* (> ***n-dūnē** > ***andūne**) yields Quenya **andúnē** “sunset” with the long vowel in the penultimate syllable *intact*; this must also be the syllable that receives the stress. These two examples ought to be completely parallel (incidentally even in the fact that the initial vowel developed from a syllabic nasal), so why do they develop differently? If **ingolē**, why not ****andunē**? And if **andúnē**, why not ****ingólē** (and ****narāca**, ****teréva**, ****terénē** etc.)? It would seem that the outcome of the phonological evolution is not entirely predicable in this regard. Exceptionally the long vowel in the penultimate syllable attracted the stress and remained long, but in most three-syllable words the stress moved to the first syllable and the long vowel of the penultimate syllable became short.

* The plural **omandi** appears as “*amandi*” in LR:379 s.v. OM, transparently a misreading or typo.

On the other hand, another development has the stress moving towards the *end* of the word, a vowel being lengthened to accomplish this. A word ending in three short syllables would normally be stressed on the third syllable from the end. However, it seems that this stress-pattern is only tolerated in words that only consist of three syllables in all, so that the accented syllable is also the first syllable of the word. If the stress would normally fall on the third syllable from the end in a word of *more* than three syllables, and this syllable is short, the vowel in the second-to-last syllable is lengthened so as to attract the stress. Thus if we add the possessive ending *-va* to **Eldalië** “Elf-people”, the result is not ***Eldalieva** (accented on the short syllable **li**), but **Eldaliéva** (accented on **év**). Cf. also **Cuiviénen**, which is **cuivië** “awakening” + **nén**, **-nen** “water”.*

The adjective **vanima** “beautiful”, if supplied with the partitive plural ending **-li** to express “beautiful ones”, must of course become ***vanimáli**. This is only attested in the genitive form **vanimálion** (occurring in Treebeard's greeting to Celeborn and Galadriel). The first edition of LotR had **vanimalion**, but this rejected form would conflict with the apparent rule that a noun of more than three syllables cannot end in three *short* syllables. Some compounds (like **Úvanimor** “monsters”, which is **ú-** “un-, not” + **vanimor** “beautiful ones”; or the name **Altariel/Ñaltariel** = **ñalta** + **riel**, PM:347) seem to be exempted from this rule. On the other hand, we observe the expected lengthening in **Anárlion** “sun-son” = **Anar** + the patronymic ending **-ion**.²

Normally, classical Quenya does not seem to permit a *long vowel* immediately before a consonant cluster. **Mánwen** or **Mánwë** is quoted as the oldest Quenya form of the name **Manwë** (WJ:399); notice how **á** was eventually shortened before the cluster **nw**. Likewise, *Fíriel's Song* indicates that the noun **má** “hand” appears as **mannar** in the (plural) allative – perhaps for older ***mánnar**. However, long vowels seem to be allowed before clusters ending in the semi-vowel **y**: **Namárië** has **máryat** (rather than ***maryat**) for “her hands”. Some forms published in VT44 do to some extent complicate the picture. **Vénde** occurs in one text as the word for “maiden”; elsewhere (as in *Etym*, entry WEN-) the form used is **vende**. The editors suggest that **vénde** contains an “anomalous and probably unintentional long vowel” arising by confusion with the distinct word **Véne**, from which **vénde** was emended (VT44:5, 7). Moreover, Tolkien in one text used **Hristo** (but also **Hristo**) as a Quenya adaptation of *Christ* (VT44:12). Since this is not meant to be a native Quenya word anyway, it may be only partially adapted to regular Quenya phonology. The normal rule does seem to be that there cannot be a long vowel in front of a consonant cluster.

ANTICIPATORY VOWELS DEVELOPING FOLLOWING INITIAL 3+ CONSONANT

It seems that in some cases, a vowel developed following an initial consonant cluster in **3-** (representing earlier **g-**). This vowel seems to echo or rather “anticipate” the first vowel occurring after it, even where that vowel was the first element of a diphthong. Tolkien indicated that original **ɔgrauk-** underlies Quenya **rauco** and **arauco** “terrible creature” (WJ:415). Evidently **ɔgrauk-** (the complete primitive word must have been ***graukō** or ***grauku**) first became ***zgrauk-** with the general change **g > 3**. This **3** would later disappear

* Curiously, the combination **ui** seems to count as two short syllables for this purpose, as is this were a combination of two short vowels in hiatus rather than the diphthong Tolkien stated **ui** to be. Thus the possessive form of **huinë** “shadow” is attested as **huinéva** (LR:382) rather than ***huineva**, and a compound of **tuilë** “spring” + **ré**, **-rë** “day” must appear as **tuilerë** (mentioned in LotR:1082) rather than ***tuilerë**.

(see below). ***zrauk-** might either persist in this form, in which case it would simply be reduced to **rauc-** in Quenya, or it might develop an extended parallel form ***zarauk-**, the vowel developing after **z** anticipating the next vowel in the word (in this case the first element of the diphthong **au**). This ***zarauk-** would later become Quenya **arauc-**.

Etym seems to include one example of this phenomenon, though Tolkien later struck out the relevant entry: The stem GLINDI produced Quenya **ilin** “pale blue” (evidently shortened from ***ilindë**). The idea must be that GLI- first becomes ***zli-** and then ***zili-** with an anticipatory vowel, eventually reduced to **ili-** with the later loss of **z**. Another possible example was apparently also rejected by Tolkien: In MR:284, the place-name “Avathar” (evidently = **Avapar**) is said to be ancient Quenya for “the Shadows”. This must somehow be related to Sindarin **gwath** “shadow” (See the entry *gwath* in the *Silmarillion* Appendix.)³ In *Etym*, this word is derived from a root WAT^h, and the prefixing of **g-** in the “Noldorin”/Sindarin branch is secondary. However, Tolkien may at one point have considered deriving **gwath** from a stem ***GWAT^h** instead, the initial G being original and therefore also able to influence the branch leading to Quenya.

In this alternative scenario, the word “shade, shadow” might be ***gwat^hā** in the primitive language, later becoming ***zwapa** > ***zawapa** in the proto-Quenya branch, in turn producing archaic Quenya ***avapa** (see below concerning the change of post-vocalic **w** > **v**). **Avapar** could obviously be the plural of this word, so that the word could refer to the “Shadows” as Tolkien stated. This derivation is not entirely unproblematic, though: Instead of ***GWAT^h** and ***gwat^hā** we would expect ***G^wAT^h** and ***g^wat^hā** at the primitive stage; the initial combination would not strictly be a cluster **g** + **w**, but simply **g^w** = labialized **g**, a unitary consonant. Later we would then have **z^w** (rather than **zw**). Hence **z** would not really be part of an initial consonant cluster, the environment that triggers the development of an anticipatory vowel. Could the labialized quality of **z^w** really be separated from it to materialize as a separate consonant **w** > **v**, an intruding vowel splitting an originally *unitary* consonant in two (**z^w** > **zaw-**)? In *Etym*, the stem G^wEN produces Quenya **wendë** > **vendë** “maiden”, not ****evendë** for older ***z^wende**. (Cf. also **g-lada-** > ***glala-** > ***zlala-** simply becoming **lala-** in Quenya, PM:359 – but the hyphen inserted by Tolkien in the form **g-lada-** may indicate that the prefixing of **g-** was peculiar to the Lindarin branch, so that the branch leading to Quenya never had anything but simple initial **l-**.) It seems that Tolkien eventually gave up trying to find an Elvish etymology for the name Avathar, explicitly denying that it was Elvish and instead suggesting that it was a borrowing from Valarin (WJ:404). But since our source for this is the same essay that provides the example **g-rauk-** > Q **arauc-**, the idea of anticipatory vowels as such was evidently not rejected.

The semi-vowel **j** is lost when it occurs after the corresponding full vowel **i** and before another vowel. **W** is likewise lost between the corresponding full vowel **u** and a following vowel:

□*oijā* > ***oija** > Q **oia** “ever”^{*}
 (□*kukūwā* > ***kūwā** > ***kūwa** > Q **cua** “dove”

* But in later Exilic Quenya, the form ***oiya** = ***oija** might arise once again, because a glide consonant **y** occasionally developed between **i** and another vowel—see below.

Tolkien mentions **kūua** as the immediate ancestor of **cuā**, so it would seem that the **w** of **kūwa** became **u** before it simply merged into the preceding **u**. Also notice how the long **ū** becomes short when brought into contact with a following vowel. Such shortening occurs in other parallel examples from *Etym* (see below concerning **tuō**, **rië**).

In a monosyllabic word, a final **w** merging into a preceding **u** does produce a long **ū**, still surviving as Quenya **ú**:

(\varnothing ku ζ >) \varnothing kuw > **kū** “bow” (= Q *cú*)*

Older **w**, where it still survived after the various changes discussed above, in very many cases became **v**. It seems that the change of medial **w** to **v** occurred before the same change happened initially (the initial change **w** > **v** is rather a feature of Exilic Quenya – see below). But post-vocalically, **w** normally became **v** very early, and it seems that this change would have taken effect already during the Classical Valinorean period. See further discussion below (under “Exilic Quenya”). Also notice that while Tolkien still thought of **Avapar** as an Elvish name meaning “the Shadows” (before he turned it into a Valarin word), he stated that it was “ancient Quenya” (MR:284). The **v** of **Avapar** certainly represents earlier **w** (this goes whether **Avapar** is derived from a root like WAT^H “shade”, cf. LR:397, or from *GWAT^H > ***zwap-** > ***zawap-** as we theorized above). Hence, the change of post-vocalic **w** to **v** had already occurred in “ancient Quenya”, perhaps meaning pre-record Quenya.

Examples of post-vocalic **w** becoming **v**:

(\varnothing srāwē > *hrāwē >) *hrāwē > hrāvē “flesh”

(\varnothing kuiwē >) *cuiwē > cuivē “awakening”†

(*rāwī >) *ráwi > rávi pl. “lions” (cf. root RAW)

(\varnothing terēwā > *terēwa >) terewa > tereva “fine, acute”

However, it would seem that **w** remained unchanged following the vowel **o**; cf. **nówi** as the plural form of **nó** “conception” (the pl. form more closely reflecting the original root NOWO).

For some reason, **w** also persists unchanged following the diphthong **ai**. In *Etym*, Tolkien has \varnothing slaiwā yielding Quenya **laiwa** “sick” (not ****laiva**). Contrast the related word \varnothing slīwē, producing Quenya **lívë** “sickness”; here there is no diphthong **ai** to hinder the development **w** > **v**.‡ Other examples:

aiwë “bird” (< \varnothing aiwē, given as an entry-head in *Etym*)

maiwë “gull” (< ***maiwē**, with an A-infix variant of the root MIW)

vaiwa “wind” (< ***waiwā**, cf. root WAIWA)

Depending on its position, the *original* back spirant **z** had either turned into **h** (or χ) or been lost, as described above. Now Quenya had re-acquired **z** (developed from original **g**), but this sound was evidently not destined to be a lasting part of the Quenya sound-system: This “new” **z**, whether initial, medial or final, also disappeared:

* But the ultimate ulterior form may have been **kugu* < a stem *KUG.

† For the most primitive form, cf. the prefixed variant \varnothing et-kuiwē listed in *Etym*, entry KUY.

‡ Since the Quenya possessive ending **-va** evidently descends from ***-wā**, one may wonder why we see **Eldaiva** rather than ***Eldaiwa** as the pl. possessive of **Elda** (WJ:368). The explanation seems to be that **-va** had originally only occurred in the singular (**Eldava**, with no preceding diphthong **ai**); the plural form **Eldaiva** was a later, analogical formation based on the singular **Eldava**. See WJ:407.

- (*wegō > □weʒō >) *weʒo > *wëo “man” (in later Q *vëo*)
 (□Denwego > *Denweg >) *Lenwez > Lenwë (personal name, WJ:412)
 (□gassā > *ʒassā >) *ʒassa > **assa** “opening”
 (□grauk[ō] > *ʒraukō >) *ʒarauko > **arauco** “terrible creature” (WJ:455)
 (□gardā > *ʒardā >) *ʒarda > **Arda** (a name of the world, WJ:402)
 (*gondō > *ʒondō >) *ʒondo > **ondo** “rock”
 (□galadā > *galdā > *ʒaldā >) **ʒalda** > **alda** “tree”

In some sources Tolkien only speaks of how “primitive initial *g-* was lost in Q” (Letters:410), but **g** did not disappear “directly”; it first turned into **ʒ**. We know this because **ʒ** survived long enough to be explicitly recorded in Rúmilian writing: In Rúmilian orthography, the word **alda** was still spelt **ʒalda**—that is, it had an initial letter “which was known by tradition among the loremasters to have represented the open back spirant” (VT39:7). Hence we need not asterisk the form **ʒalda**. (If we knew more about Rúmilian writing, we could probably have removed the asterisk from words like ***ʒassa**, ***ʒarda**, ***ʒondo** as well.)

Between vowels, and following **l**, the spirant **ʒ** is lost with no trace:

- (**k^hugan* >) ***ʒuʒan** > ***ʒuan** “hound” (Exilic Quenya *huan*)
 (□ulgundō >) ***ulʒundo** > **ulundo** “monster”

Where a postvocalic **ʒ** was followed by a consonant, the preceding vowel was lengthened to “make up” for its disappearance (maintaining prosodic length – see SD:420 for Adúnaic parallels):

- (□lugni > *lugne >) ***luʒne** > **lúnë** “blue”
 (*rignā > *rigna >) ***riʒna** > **rína** “crowned”
 (□sagrā > *sagra >) ***saʒra** > **sára** “bitter”
 (□magrā > *magra >) ***maʒra** > **mára** “good”

It would be interesting to know whether Rúmilian orthography represented these words in a spelling similar to the (bold) asterisked forms above.*

It should be noted that a **w** that became intervocalic only by the loss of **ʒ**, “missed” the normal change of intervocalic **w** > **v**; this change had ceased to operate when **ʒ** disappeared:

- (□jagwē > *jagwe >) ***yaʒwë** > **yáwë** “ravine” (NOT > ****yávë**)

According to *Etym*, a long vowel is shortened if, by the loss of **ʒ**, it is brought into direct contact with another vowel:

- (□tūgu > *tūgo >) ***tūʒo** > **tuo** “muscle” (not ***túo**)

* The noun **huan** “hound” (descended from □*k^hugan* via ***ʒuʒan**) is said to appear as **hún-** when endings are added. This would seem to come from ***ʒuʒn-**, exemplifying the same phenomenon of vocalic lengthening. It may be that soon after **g** became **ʒ**, an unstressed non-final syllable **ʒa** lost its vowel: ***ʒuʒan-** > ***ʒuʒn-** (> ultimately **hún-**). This did not happen where no ending followed so that the combination **ʒa** was part of the *final* syllable; hence ***ʒuʒan** by itself produces Quenya **huan** with no loss of **a**.

($\varnothing r\bar{i}g\bar{e} > *r\bar{i}g\bar{e} > *r\bar{i}z\bar{e} > r\bar{i}\bar{e}$ “crown” (not $*r\bar{i}\bar{e}$)

But according to a post-LotR example (PM:347), such a vowel remains long; this is actually a variant of $r\bar{i}\bar{e}$ above:

($\varnothing r\bar{i}g\bar{a} > *r\bar{i}g\bar{a} > *r\bar{i}z\bar{a} > r\bar{i}a$ “wreath” (not $*r\bar{i}a$)

Whether we should emend Quenya **tu**, $r\bar{i}\bar{e}$ above to $*t\bar{u}o$, $*r\bar{i}\bar{e}$ is unclear. Perhaps we may rather assume that they “actually” descend from $*tugu$, $*rig\bar{e}$ instead, the stem-vowel being short from the beginning.

From one example it may seem that two identical vowels brought into direct contact by the loss of **z** merge into one (long) vowel: ($\varnothing ugu- > *u\bar{z}u- > \bar{u}-$, the Quenya negative prefix “un-” (in *Etym* derived from a stem UGU). However, it may be that the second **u** was lost already in the syncope, and that $*u\bar{z}-$, usually occurring before a consonant, turned into $\bar{u}-$ by same process that turns $*y\bar{a}z\bar{w}\bar{e}$ into $*y\bar{a}\bar{w}\bar{e}$ (see above). In other examples of two vowels of the same quality coming into contact by the loss of **z**, the first of them is dissimilated: $\bar{o}z\bar{o} > o'o > uo$, and $eze > e'e > ie$. (Compare $e'\bar{e}$ becoming $i\bar{e}$ in Common Eldarin, after the loss of intervocalic \bar{n} or **z**.)

($\varnothing K^h\bar{o}gor\bar{e}$ “heart-vigour” $> *x\bar{o}z\bar{o}r\bar{e} > *x\bar{o}'\bar{o}r\bar{e} > *x\bar{u}o'r\bar{e}$ (masc. name, Exilic Quenya *Huorë*, Sindarin *Huor*)^{*}

($*weg\bar{e} > \varnothing wez\bar{e} > *weze > *we'e > *wie$ “manhood” (Q $*wi\bar{e} > vi\bar{e}$)

By a change that first occurred in Telerin, the original bilabial **f** became a *labio-dental f*, similar to English **f** (pronounced with friction between the lower lip and the upper teeth). This change made it easier to distinguish **f** from **hw**, so the Noldor adopted labio-dental **f** from Telerin (VT41:7). The Vanyar did not, and the Noldor accused them of confusing **f** and **hw**.

In the dialect of the Noldor, unlike that of the Vanyar, **nd** is simplified to **n** before **y** (WJ:360, 361):

($\varnothing k^w\bar{e}ndj\bar{a} > Quendya > Quenya$ [†]

SECONDARY SYNCOPE

The last recorded syncope operating in Quenya involved the omission of the second of two identical short vowels where a word occurs in “long compound names” (VT41:9). We call this secondary syncope because it is unrelated to the much older, primary syncope that produced, say, **al'da** “tree” from original $\varnothing gal\bar{a}d\bar{a}$. The primitive word $\varnothing ar\bar{a}t\bar{a}$ had produced Quenya **arata** “exalted, noble” with the second **a** surviving the primary syncope because it had originally been long (PM:363, VT41:9). Yet a word like **arata** could be

^{*} We have again a long vowel being shortened before another vowel after the loss of **z**; the long \bar{o} evidently becomes short **o** and is then dissimilated to **u** before another **o**. According to the post-LotR example $\varnothing r\bar{i}g\bar{a} > *r\bar{i}z\bar{a} > r\bar{i}a$ quoted above, we might expect the vowel to remain long: $*x\bar{o}z\bar{o}r\bar{e} > *x\bar{u}o'r\bar{e}$, later $*H\bar{u}o'r\bar{e}$.

[†] A double form like **endya**, **enya** “middle” (*Etym*, entry ÉNED) may be taken as the Vanyarin/original and the later Noldorin form, respectively. However, this would mean re-interpreting *Etym* material in the light of Tolkien's later ideas, for when he wrote *Etym*, there was no such thing as a Noldorin dialect of Quenya (the Noldor were still conceived as speaking something very much like the language Tolkien later called *Sindarin*). – In the case of **indyo** “grandson” (entry ÑGYÖ), no later form $*inyo$ is mentioned.

shortened to **arta** (PM:354) when it occurred as part of a longer name (e.g. in **Artaher** “noble lord”, PM:346, or masculinized **-arto** in **Ambarto**, PM:354).⁴ We must assume that the **silma-** part of the word **Silmaril** has also undergone secondary syncope, since this element represents “the name *silima* that Fëanor gave to the substance from which [the Silmarils] were made” (the *Silmarillion* Appendix, entry *sil-*).^{*5}

EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 But the isolated form †*vëa* from the name *Vëantur* (see UT:470 for page references) seems to be likewise descended from wajä .
- 2 Helge later commented: “Since **Anar** “Sun” descends from anär- (LR:348), it may be that in **Anárion** an old long vowel is simply *preserved* long because it happened to be stressed. The simplex “sun” would still have been **Anár** in earlier forms of Quenya (SD:306): according to what Tolkien wrote in the Plotz Letter, the shortening of long vowels in the final syllable of polysyllabic words is a feature of Exilic Quenya. See below.” Lukas Novak had a similar observation way before in Elfing message 7706 (the first part of which is given in page 10 note 3):
 “I think this fact could better be explained differently. There is not only *Ñaltariel*, but also *Eldalië* itself, *úvanimor*, and perhaps some words [that] I am not aware at the moment, whereas *Alatáriel* though perhaps irrelevant (since [it is] Telerin) shows lengthening. I think [that] the explaining rule could be this: [m]ore than [three]-syllable proparoxytona lengthen the stressed syllable, if that is short and the preceding syllable is also short—thus avoiding an overlong sequence of short syllables. If I am right, this supports the first of my objections [see page 10 note 3]: according to this rule, [the example] *avaquete* ‘to forbid’ [would have its stressed syllable, i.e. the second, lengthened], but it does not, since it is already long, which shows that the initial sound *quet-* is not an altogether unitary consonant, but a “semi-cluster”. Or you should have to assume that [the] one and the same **qu** is once pronounced as a cluster and once as a [u]nitary sound—but there seems to be no phonetical reason to distinguish one unitary sound into the original sound in [the] compound. It seems much more plausible to me that (some) ‘semiclusters’ were allowed initial sounds in Q, and that somewhat different rules were applied on them than on ordinary consonant clusters.”
- 3 That is, Silm:359.
- 4 Add to this the attested examples *Artafindë* and *Artanga*, the proper Quenya equivalents of T. *Findarāto* and *Angarāto*, respectively (PM:346).
- 5 That is, Silm:364.

* In the earlier scenario recorded in *Etym*, the initial element of **Silmaril** is suggested to be the adjective **silma** “silver, shining white”, which is referred to a primitive adjectival form silimā that would have lost its second **i** already in the *primary* syncope (LR:385 s.v. SIL). Indeed a primitive form of the word **Silmaril** is provided, namely silimarille (LR:383 s.v. RIL, the final **-ā** of **silimā** is regularly being shortened when the word occurs as the first part of a compound). But the actual existence of such a primitive form is problematic for historical reasons: Surely the *primary* syncope was long since even when Fëanor invented the Silmarils? It must be placed in the unrecorded past long before he was even born. Perhaps the form silimarille is to be seen as an entirely hypothetical “back-formation” even within the fictional context? But if we accept the new scenario set out in the *Silmarillion* Appendix – that the first element of **Silmaril** represents a contemporary noun **silima** coined by Fëanor himself – we can appeal to secondary syncope regarding its reduction to **silma-** in a compound. Thus the linguistic “anachronisms” are avoided.

CHANGES PRODUCING EXILIC QUENYA

The noontime of Valinor is drawing to an end. Soon, Fëanor will lead the Noldor into exile, and Quenya will become known in Middle-earth as well as in Aman. In Middle-earth it will become a language of lore, largely shielded from further changes by the fact that it is learnt from writing by each new generation. But before the language to some extent becomes fixed like this, a few more changes will occur – some of them greatly controversial, intertwined with Valinorean politics! They will define the shape of *Exilic Quenya*, by definition the only form of Quenya known in Middle-earth. These changes also defined the *Noldorin* dialect of Quenya, as opposed to the Vanyarin dialect (though it is possible that Vanyarin did not share with Noldorin all the changes so far listed).

An important source of information about the changes affecting Exilic Quenya is the list of Tengwar names in LotR Appendix E.¹ The original name of all the relevant Tengwar includes the sound this letter originally represented. But its precise pronunciation was later altered, as when **púlë** (in LotR Appendix E spelt “*thúle*”)² came to be pronounced **súlë** instead. In some cases, a Tengwa could be renamed altogether because of the phonological changes.

Wrote Tolkien regarding the Tengwar names, “Where there are variants this is due to the names being given before certain changes that affected Quenya as spoken by the Exiles.” This should not be taken to mean that all of these changes necessarily occurred *during* the Exile, after the Noldor had actually left Valinor. We know that Tolkien imagined the shift reflected in the change **púlë** > **súlë** to have occurred in Valinor during Fëanor's lifetime. The shift **p** > **s** is indeed the most celebrated of all Quenya sound-changes, and Tolkien was able to develop an entire story around it: It was underway in Valinor during Fëanor's lifetime, but he and all the loremasters deplored it, since “it caused a great deal of homophony, and confused the derivatives of originally quite distinct stems.” (VT41:8 – actually there are very few words in our corpus that would merge in form; ***pamna** > **samna** “wooden post” vs. original **samna** “diphthong” may be one example, but these are hardly difficult to distinguish in context!)³ However, Fëanor's “advice” was presented with such arrogance and haughtiness that he rather accelerated the merger of **p** and **s**: “Into the strife and confusion of loyalties in that time this seemingly trivial matter, the change of *p* to *s*, was caught up to its embitterment, and to lasting detriment to the Quenya tongue. Had peace been maintained there can be no doubt that the advice of Fëanor, with which all the other loremasters privately or openly agreed, would have prevailed. But an opinion in which he was certainly right was rejected because of the follies and evil deeds into which he was later led. He made it a personal matter; he and his sons adhered to *p*, and they demanded that all those who were sincere in their support should do the same. Therefore those who resented his arrogance, and still more those whose support later turned to hatred, rejected his shibboleth” (PM:335-336). Hence:

púlë > **súlë** “spirit”

perindë > **Serindë** (the name of Fëanor's mother; the change annoyed both mother and son, PM:333)

pindë > **sindë** “grey”

pelma > ***selma** “will” (WJ:319)

***χipwë** > ***χiswë** “fog” (later **hiswë**)

ripil > ***risil** “circle”

naupë > **nausë** “imagination”

According to *Etym*, final **-s** might also represent earlier **-þ** sometimes: The name **Tulkas** is apparently derived from **Tulkat^ho** in LR:395 s.v. TULUK; if so its older Quenya form might be ***Tulkap**.^{*}

In *Etym*, there even seems to be an example of double **ss** representing earlier double ***þþ**; the word **nessa** “young” is ultimately derived from **ᵛnet^h-rā**, presumably via ***neþrā** > ***neþpa**. In *Etym*, this is presented as the origin of the name of the Valië *Nessa*. But in a later source Tolkien suggested that this name comes from **ᵛneresā** instead, or explained it as a borrowing from Valarin (WJ:416, 404). However, this **ᵛneresā** does not mean “young” as did **ᵛnet^h-rā**, so perhaps the two must now be considered wholly separate words, the later forms **Nessa** and ***neþpa** coinciding only in late Quenya, because of the **þ/s** merger.

The change **þ** > **s** eventually became universal in Noldorin Quenya (in Middle-earth, even the sons of Fëanor seem to have adopted the new pronunciation after his death), but the distinction was never dropped in writing (PM:332). According to LotR Appendix E,⁴ the letter now called **súlë** continued to be used for **s** derived from earlier **þ** – though we have an example of Tengwar calligraphy where Tolkien himself seems to have forgotten this, using the normal **s**-Tengwa (**silmë**) even where he “ought” to have used **súlë**.[†]

It should be noted that the change from **þ** to **s** did *not* occur in the Vanyarin dialect of Quenya, but only in the Noldorin dialect (thus **sindë** rather than **þindë** is said to be a “Ñ[oldorin] dialect” form in WJ:384). When Indis, herself a Vanya, married Finwë, she made a conscious decision to change her pronunciation: “I have joined the people of the Ñoldor, and I will speak as they do” (PM:336). Fëanor was not amused.

Another change that seems to have occurred already in Valinor, but very late, was the shift **z** > **r** in nearly all positions. (One exception: according to WJ:413, medial **z** escaped this change if there already was an **r** in the same or an adjacent syllable. If **z** thus did not become **r**, it apparently became **s** instead, for **z** was never used in Exilic Quenya.) The Tengwa that Fëanor had originally named **ázë** (“sunshine”) thus came to be called **árë**, but since there already existed another letter for **r**, **árë** ceased to have any clear function: It would seem that the distinction between original **r** and **r** changed from **z** was not upheld in writing. (In Middle-earth, the now “vacant” letter **árë** was eventually assigned a new value, double **ss**, and the letter itself was renamed **essë** to reflect this.) As in the case of the shift **þ** > **s**, the Vanyar were conservative; Vanyarin never shifted **z** to **r**, so the Vanyar would perceive this change as a dialectal feature of Noldorin Quenya. A place-name like **Ezel-lohar** indicates that **z** remained a living sound in Amanyā Elvish, though the Noldor

^{*} However, Tolkien would later explain the name of this Vala as a borrowing from Valarin: WJ:399,404.

[†] As discussed earlier, **þ** was itself derived from the aspirate **t^h**, which in turn was sometimes original and sometimes changed from the initial cluster **st-**. However, it seems that when Tolkien wrote *Etym*, he imagined the change from **þ** to **s** to have occurred in the remote past – not as late as during Fëanor's lifetime. This is evident from a note in the entry **STAR**, where Tolkien observed that the “Noldorin” word **tharn** (meaning “sapless”) was “not in Q” – that is, had no Quenya cognate – “since it would coalesce with **sarnā**”. **Tharn** comes from ***starnā** (the “Old Noldorin” form **st^harna** is given), whereas **ᵛsarnā** comes from a distinct root **SAR** and produces the Quenya adjective **sarna** “of stone”. According to the later scenario, ***starnā** would become ***t^harnā** and then ***þarna**, remaining distinct from (**ᵛsarnā** >) **sarna** until the merger **þ/s** occurred. Since Tolkien did not say that the words *did* coalesce so that one of them was suppressed, but implied that one had never been in Quenya because it *would* have coalesced with the other, we can infer that the merger **þ/s** was originally imagined to have taken place already in the pre-record period. One remark in the entry **SIL**, to the effect that this stem and **T^hIL** “in Q cannot be distinguished normally”, points to the same conclusion. Later, Tolkien moved the merger **þ/s** forward in the imagined time-line and had it occurring in Fëanor's day.

probably came to say ***Erellohar** instead. In WJ:363, the forms **Aurel** and **Oarel** (evidently Noldorin Quenya) are *contrasted* with **Auzel** and **Oazel** in the Vanyarin dialect; these Vanyarin forms also reflect the older, common Vanya-Noldorin pronunciation. This also seems to confirm that the Noldorin change of **z** > **r** occurred already in Valinor, or there would be little point in using it to contrast the Vanyarin and Noldorin dialects of Quenya.

The **z**'s that now become **r** may derive from either **d** or **s** in the primitive language:

(**olosī* >) **olozī** > **olori** pl. “dreams” (sg. *olos*, UT:396)
 (**nidwō* > **nidwā* > **niðwā* >) ***nizwa** > **nirwa** “cushion”

With this change, the already very limited number of consonants that Quenya can have finally is further reduced by one; after this change, only **-t**, **-l**, **-n**, **-s** and **-r** (original or derived from **-z**) remain.

The letter **harma** Fëanor originally meant to represent *ach-Laut*, the spirant **χ**, and undoubtedly the original pronunciation of its name was ***χarma**. However, LotR Appendix E records how [x] “became breath *h* initially (though remaining [x] medially)”.⁵ Hence:

(*sk^herū* > **χerū* >) ***χeru** > **heru** “lord” (cf. Letters:282 and VT41:9)
 (*sk^hugan* > **χuzan* >) ***χuan** > **huan** “hound”
 (*skarwē* > **k^harwē* > **χarwē* >) ***χarwē** > **harwē** “wound”

The early Quenya forms in **χ**- are implied to have existed, but no such form is directly quoted in the published material, so we must asterisk them. In *Etym*, only the Exilic Quenya forms in **h**- are recorded (that is, what would be Exilic Quenya forms in Tolkien's later scenario). It may be that Tolkien originally held this change to have occurred further back in history, in the pre-record period. But in the linguistic scenario as it appears in the LotR appendices, this weakening of initial **χ** to **h** can perhaps be ascribed to Sindarin influence on Quenya as spoken by the Exiles in Middle-earth: Sindarin had also turned initial **χ** into **h**. However, Tolkien noted that this change occurred in “all Eldarin tongues” (VT41:9), which would include the Telerin of Aman; hence this change was not unheard of in Valinor either. Perhaps it was already beginning in Valinor shortly before the Exile, but occurring too late to be reflected in the original Fëanorian orthography. The Tengwa **harma** was therefore renamed **aha** (“wrath”), since in this word the middle consonant was still pronounced **χ**. Perhaps this is why ***aχa**, as it must originally have been pronounced, is nonetheless spelt **aha** in Appendix E: In the end, medial **χ** also came to be pronounced **h** – “in most cases”. The exceptions are probably the combinations normally spelt **aht**, **oht**, **uht**, where orthographic “h” ever remained a full spirant **χ**. In the combinations **eht**, **iht** it turned into *ich-Laut*, but in these groups it was quite possibly still represented by the letter **aha** in Tengwar orthography – though we have no examples.

When initial **χ** became **h**, it seems that it *merged* with the initial breath-**h** that already existed in Valinorean Quenya. This breath-**h** was in most cases derived from primitive **ʒ** (or, if Tolkien was in that mood, it had been **h** already in the primitive language and never changed – e.g. Primitive Quendian *sk^hekla* “outcast” > Quenya **hecil** in WJ:361, 365). Exceptionally **h** was also derived (via **hw**-) from the aspirate **p^h** before **u**, as in **huinē** “gloom”. Initial **χ** was on the other hand derived from the aspirate **k^h**- (original or changed from even older **sk**-). The change **χ**- > **h**- in Exilic Quenya lead to some cases of homophony. The word **harwē** “treasury”, representing primitive ***χarwē** (root ʒAR, LR:360) would have had breath **h** already in Valinorean Quenya. But the word **harwē** “wound” was

not originally a homophone; this comes from primitive ɔskarwē , which (after first becoming $*\text{k}^{\text{h}}\text{arwē}$) yielded Old Quenya $*\text{ɣarwē}$. Only with the change $\text{ɣ} > \text{h}$ did the words coincide in form.*

The name of the Tengwa **wilya** was pronounced **vilya** in Exilic Quenya. It would seem, then, that initial **w** became **v** (merging with **v** derived from earlier **b**). Above we have discussed how **w** became **v** *medially*, and one may well ask why we cannot let initial and post-vocalic **w** become **v** at the same time – but there is good reason to believe that post-vocalic **w** normally became **v** much earlier than the initial shift occurred. Consider this: The loss of **ɜ** must be placed very *early* in the historical period, since it was only by the “tradition among the loremasters” anyone knew what sound had once been represented by the initial letter of such a Rúmilian spelling as **ɜalda** (VT39:7). Yet the medial shift **w** > **v** must *predate* the loss of **ɜ**: In the case of ($\text{ɔjagwē} >$) $*\text{yaɜwē} > \text{yáwē}$ “ravine” a **ɜ** that was later lost hindered the development of post-vocalic **w** to **v**. A later shift **w** > **v**, *after* the loss of **ɜ**, would have turned $*\text{yaɜwē} > \text{yáwē}$ into **yávē** (producing a homophone with the word for “fruit”, itself < $*\text{jābē}$).

So the evidence might seem to be contradictory: One line of reasoning leads to the conclusion that the shift **w** > **v** cannot be later than the earliest parts of recorded history, whereas Tolkien elsewhere seems to imply that **w** and **v** remained fully distinct at the time Fëanor devised the Tengwar – the sounds merging only in Exilic Quenya. The only way of reconciling all the evidence is to distinguish between a shift of *post-vocalic* **w** > **v**, which took place very early before the loss of **ɜ** (and which $*\text{yaɜwē} > \text{yáwē}$ thus escaped), and an *initial* shift **w** > **v**, which took place only *after* Fëanor invented the Tengwar and is reflected in the change **wilya** > **vilya**. Since Eärendil is said to have named his ship **Wingalótë** or **Wingelótë** (PM:370, 371) with initial **w** still intact, this change may have occurred after the end of the First Age. It would seem, then, that changes like the following happened among the Exiles in the Second Age or later:

wéra > **véra** “private, personal, own” (PM:340, where it is made clear that this change occurred after the stage Tolkien called “Old Quenya”)

waia > **vaia** “envelope”

wán > **ván** “goose”

waiwa > **vaiwa** “wind”

wendë > **vendë** “maiden”

* There is one problem; in *Etym* Tolkien derived the word **harma** from a root ɜAR , and then it should have had breath **h** already in Valinorean Quenya. Yet Tolkien picked this word as the name of the Tengwa originally denoting ɣ , which would imply that it was earlier pronounced $*\text{ɣarma}$ instead. We could assume that earlier breath **h** merged with ɣ in Valinorean Quenya, later reverting to **h** in Exilic Quenya (when original ɣ also became **h**). However, LotR:1097, footnote, indicates that even the original Fëanorian system had distinct signs for breath **h** (originally represented by the sign **halla**, a raised stem with no bow) and the spirant ɣ (represented by **harma**). This would suggest that **h** and ɣ coexisted in Valinorean Quenya. Perhaps Tolkien simply changed his mind about the derivation of **harma** “treasure”, deriving it from a stem $*\text{K}^{\text{h}}\text{AR}$ instead of ɜAR , so that it would originally have had initial ɣ . If the word **halla** (“tall”) contained breath **h** already in Valinorean Quenya, Tolkien may have altered its derivation as well: It is not actually listed in *Etym*, but it would probably have to be referred to the root $\text{K}^{\text{h}}\text{AL}^2$ as a cognate of “Noldorin”/Sindarin **hall** “exalted, high” (older form $\text{k}^{\text{h}}\text{alla}$ given). But **halla** with original breath **h** would require a stem $*\text{ɜAL}$ (or, $*\text{HAL}$). Conceivably, **halla** “tall” simply describes the form of the letter (a raised stem) rather than exemplifying the sound it denoted: If the root is to remain $\text{K}^{\text{h}}\text{AL}$, this word must have been pronounced $*\text{ɣalla}$ in Valinorean Quenya.

Where Tolkien quotes Quenya forms in **w-** only, as he sometimes does, we must assume that he intends them to be “Old Quenya”, First Age Quenya. *Etym* is quite inconsistent in this regard: Quenya words derived from bases in **w-** are sometimes quoted with initial **w-**, sometimes with initial **v-**, and sometimes both. All contradictions are resolved when we recognize the forms in **w-** as Old Quenya, whereas the forms in **v-** are later. (In one case, **vilin** “I fly” derived from the root **WIL**, Christopher Tolkien interprets his father's notes to mean that he “changed” it to **wilin**: LR:399. However, there can be no question of **vilin** being *rejected* in favour of **wilin**; for some reason, Tolkien decided to quote this verb as an Old Quenya form rather than the “modern Quenya” variant.) – It is not clear whether the distinction between **w** and **v** was upheld in Tengwar writing (the letter **vilya** still being used for initial **v** even after it had been changed from **w**), or whether all initial **v**'s came to be spelt with the letter **vala** regardless of derivation. (**Vala** originally represented the **v**'s that were present already in Valinorean Quenya; when initial they were always derived from older **b-**.) In his RGEO Tengwar transcription of *Namárië*, Tolkien did use the letter **vala** to spell the initial **v** of the word **vanwa** “lost”, though this is understood to represent primitive ***wanwā** and must have been ***wanwa** in Old Quenya. (But then he also used **silmë** to spell the **s** of **hísië** “mist”, though this **s** represents earlier **p** and should have been spelt with the letter **súlë** according to the rules he set out elsewhere!)

Another change implied by the Tengwar names involves initial **ñ** becoming normal **n** (this includes labialized **ñ^w** becoming **n^w**, normally spelt **nw** in Roman Quenya orthography). In LotR Appendix E,⁶ Tolkien records how the Tengwa originally called “*ngoldo*” (alternative spelling of **ñoldo**) had its name changed to **noldo**, and “*ngwalme*” (that is, **ñwalmë**) similarly became **nwalmë**. In the same Appendix, Tolkien noted that the sound of **ñ** (or “ng”) “also occurred initially in Quenya, but has been transcribed *n* (as in *Noldo*), according to the pronunciation of the Third Age”. *Etym* hints at a similar change. In the case of **ñarmo** “wolf” from the root **ÑGAR(A)M**, the later form **narmo** is also listed. In other cases, Tolkien is quite inconsistent about whether he lists the “older” form in **ñ-** or the “later” form in **n-**; he may even be inconsistent within the same entry in *Etym*, as when the root **ÑGAW** yields **ñauro** “werewolf” next to **naulë** “wolf-howl”: When **naulë** had reached this form (from older ***ñaulë**), **ñauro** had likewise become ***nauro**! In the case of some words that are obviously related to **ñwalmë** > **nwalmë** “torment” in LotR Appendix E, namely **nwalya** “to pain” and **nwalca** “cruel” from the root **ÑGWAL**, only these “later” forms are recorded in *Etym*: Given the form of the root, the words must earlier have appeared as ***ñwalya** and ***ñwalca**.

In the Plotz letter, Tolkien mentioned certain changes that occurred before Quenya ceased to be a birth tongue among the Noldor, hence early in their exile. To the extent Quenya was spoken in Middle-earth, it reflected these changes: At the end of polysyllabic words, all long vowels became short. This affected the long final vowels Quenya had reacquired *after* the pre-historic shortening of the long final vowels of primitive Elvish. It included **-ī** as the nominative plural ending of words in **-ë** (this long **-ī** being reduced from **-ei** at an older stage) as well as **-ō** in the genitive forms of nouns in **-a** (reduced from earlier **-ao**). Thus “Book Quenya” forms like **lassī** “leaves” or **ciryō** “of a ship” now became **lassi**, **ciryō**. This shortening of final vowels also resulted in the loss of distinct accusative forms that in “Book Quenya” were formed by making a short final vowel long (e.g. **ciryā** as the accusative of **ciryā** “ship”, but now **ciryā** was reduced to **ciryā** and merged with the nominative form).

Another change mentioned by Tolkien in the Plotz letter affects final **-ai** at the end of polysyllabic words. This diphthong first became a long **-æ** (with the same quality as the vowel of English *cat*, but longer). Then, like other long vowels at the end of polysyllabic words, it was shortened and turned into a regular final **-ë**. In this way adjectives in **-a** came to have plural forms in **-ë**, e.g. **lintë** as the plural form of ***linta** “swift”, **lintë** representing earlier ***lintai**. Adjectives in **-ëa**, that originally had plural forms in **-ëai**, came to have plural forms in **-ië** (obviously dissimilated from ***-ëe**).

In Plotz, Tolkien also mentioned another late change: In polysyllabic words, a long vowel occurring before a final consonant might also be shortened. Some of these long vowels had occurred in a final syllable since ancient times, others had ended up in the final syllable by the loss of some final vowel. Shortened forms of names, such as **Valinor** (for ***Valinór** as a shorter form of **Valinórë**) would also belong on this list:

- **Anār** > **Anar** “sun” (SD:306)
- **terēn** > **teren** “slender”
- (□ **gajār** > ***ǰayār** > ***ayār** >) **ëár** > **ëar** “sea”
- (□ **Mbelekōro** > ***Mbelekōr** >) ***Melkór** > **Melkor**
- (***Eruk^hīnā** > ***Eruk^hīna** > ***Eruk^hīn** > ***Eruk^hīn** >) ***Eruhín** > **Eruhīn** “Child of Erú” (but still **Eruhín-** before endings)
- *Valatár** “Vala-king” > **Valatar** (but still **Valatár-** before endings)
- *Valinór** (*shortened form of Valinórë*) > **Valinor**

The Quenya word for “Middle-earth” is usually cited as **Endor**, a shortened form of **Endórë** (both forms are mentioned in MR:126). **Endór**, possibly the intermediate form between **Endor** and **Endórë**, occurs in the phrase **Aran Endór** “King of Middle-earth” (MR:121).

Where a word occurs compounded or with endings, an originally long vowel might stay long because according to the normal stress rules it happens to receive the accent. The singular ***Eruhín** > ***Eruhīn** thus retains the plural **Eruhīni** with the long vowel intact. (But the plural of **ëar** is **ëari** rather than ***ëári**; as we noted above, three-syllable words tend to move the stress to the first syllable and shorten the vowel in the second-to-last syllable.)

Quenya as spoken in Valinor possessed voiceless **l** and **r**, spelt **hl** and **hr**. In Appendix E of LotR it is indicated⁷ that by the Third Age, **hl** was “usually pronounced as [normal, voiced] *l*”. It may be assumed that **hr** was likewise normally pronounced as a voiced **r** in Frodo’s day, though there is no explicit statement to this effect. (However, it seems that the digraphs **hl-** and **hr-** persisted in the established *spelling* of Quenya.)

Between **i** and another vowel, a glide consonant **y** could develop, breaking up the hiatus. Citing a word for “shingle” as **sarnië**, Tolkien also listed **sarniyë** as a parenthetical alternative (VT42:11). This glide consonant may also develop between a *diphthong* in **-i** and a following vowel, as when older **waia**, **vaia** “envelope” could also appear as **waiya**, **vaiya** (*Etym*, entry WAY). These examples suggest that it is difficult to pinpoint exactly *when* the glide consonant developed: was it before or after initial **w-** became **v-**, a change we tentatively assume to have occurred in the Second Age? As suggested by the example **sarni(y)ë**, the presence of such glide consonants seems to be an “optional” feature of Exilic Quenya, and their representation in writing is apparently rather irregular. There is no trace of glide consonants in *Namárië* in LotR; we have forms like **laurië** and **namárië** rather than ***lauriyë**, ***namariyë**. On the other hand, Frodo speaking in tongues in Cirith Ungol employs the word **aiya** for “hail!”, this form representing older **aia** (so in Tolkien’s Quenya translation of the *Hail Mary*—see VT43:28).

Lastly, certain assimilations seen to occur in contact may be listed; it is difficult to say at what stage these assimilations “happened”. Perhaps the combinations in question were assimilated already in Valinorean Quenya, but were treated likewise in younger compounds.

The groups **nl**, **nm**, **nr**, **ns** are all assimilated to double consonants **ll**, **mm**, **rr**, **ss**:

Númen “West” + **lótë** “flower” = **Númellótë** “Flower of the West”

elen “star” + **macil** “sword” = **Elemmacil** “Star-sword”

elen “star” + **rína** “crowned” = **Elerrína** “Star-crowned”

elen “star” + **sar** “stone” = **Elessar** “Star-stone” (or “Elf-stone”)

The cluster **ll** may also arise from **rl**, e.g. **Casalli** as the partitive plural of **Casar** “Dwarf” (**Casar** + **-li**). Notice also that **nm** is now assimilated to **mm** instead of becoming **nw**, as in the prehistoric period.

EDITORIAL NOTES

1 See LotR:1096-97.

2 Ibid, p.1096.

3 Tolkien later changed his mind regarding *samna* “diphthong”. According to VT44:13, Tolkien rejected the base SAM in *Etym*, to be replaced by KAM, thus *okamna* in lieu of *osamna*. In any case, by the time Tolkien wrote *Quendi and Eldar* the Quenya words for “diphthong” became *ohlon* and *ostime*. Still there is another root SAM meaning “mind, think, reflect, be aware” (VT41:5), but as Helge himself wrote, “these are hardly difficult to distinguish in context!” Cf. p. 22 note 1.

4 See LotR:1088, cf. 1096

5 That is, *ibid*, pp. 1096-97.

6 That is, *ibid*, p. 1096. See also p. 10, note 2 above.

7 That is, *ibid*, p. 1088 [cf. 1097, footnote]

APPENDIX: SOME SPECIAL CASES

I will briefly discuss certain words and phonological features that do not readily agree with the system sketched above.

In *Etym*, Tolkien derived the name **Melko** (Melkor) from \varnothing **Mailikō**, an A-infixed variant of the extended base MIL-İK supplied with the masculine ending **-ō**. The name is apparently here meant to suggest *”Greedy One”. This seems like a strange *ad hoc* etymology. It is difficult to get from \varnothing **Mailikō** to **Melko**. The shortening of final **-ō** to **-o** is of course regular enough, but Tolkien here has the second **i** undergoing syncope in a word that does not have two identical short vowels following one another – the environment normally triggering such syncope. Or are we to assume that the final element of the diphthong **ai** in the initial syllable constitutes the first of this pair of identical vowels? The intermediate form ***Mailko** is then supposed to become **Melko**, the diphthong **ai** collapsing into a monophthong **e**. This development is apparently meant to be triggered by the following consonant cluster; yet this does not agree with other material from *Etym*, cf. a word like **aista-** (entry GÁYAS) failing to become ****esta-**. In any case, Tolkien abandoned the etymology here proposed for the name **Melko**. In a post-LotR source, this alternative name of Melkor is said to mean simply “Mighty One”, derived from a stem **melk-** or **melek-** having to do with force and strength (MR:350, 360). This **mel(e)k-** may be taken as the Classical Quenya form of the original **mbelek-** seen in the old form **Mbelekōro** “Melkor” (WJ:402). So according to Tolkien's later ideas, the shorter name **Melko** is certainly meant to come from ***Mbelekō**, and the troublesome evolution \varnothing **Mailikō** > **Melko** presupposed in *Etym* does not have to be considered part of the “classical” linguistic scenario.¹

The same goes for **malarauco** as the Quenya word for “Balrog”. It is listed in *Etym*, entry RUK, and explicitly referred to a primitive form \varnothing **ñg^walaraukō**. However, the idea that initial \varnothing **ñg^w-** is to produce Quenya **m-** is blatantly contradicted by the entry ÑG^wAL (though there is actually a cross-reference to it in the same entry RUK!) From ÑG^wAL-Tolkien derived words like **nwalya** “to pain” and **nwalca** “cruel”—not ****malya** and ****malca**, though the primitive forms are obviously meant to be ***ñg^waljā**, ***ñg^walkā**. We can be certain that the words **nwalya** and **nwalca** reflect Tolkien's final decision on how primitive initial ***ñg^w-** is to come out in Quenya, for what is obviously another derivative from this stem occurs as the name of a Tengwa letter in LotR Appendix E²: **nwalmë** “torment” (earlier “ngwalme” = **ñwalmë**).

So why does \varnothing **ñg^walaraukō** produce **malarauco** instead of the expected form ***nwalarauco** in *Etym*? Comparison with earlier material reveals that **malarauco** as the High-elven word for Balrog is influenced by such early “Quenya” forms as **Malkarauke** (LT1:250). However, the **m-**forms can be ignored altogether, for Tolkien later decided that in Quenya, a Balrog is called a **Valarauco** (WJ:415; VT39:10). This is clearly meant to be derived from ***balaraukō**, and the phonological evolution would be quite regular.

The word **palantír** is somewhat puzzling. In the Plotz letter, Tolkien explicitly stated that a long vowel in the final syllable of a polysyllabic word became short; yet the long **í** of **palantír** apparently persisted as late as in the Third Age. On the other hand, **palantir** with a short **i** is mentioned as the name of a Númenorean king in the LotR appendices.

In Letters:427, Tolkien refers **palantír** to a primitive form \varnothing **palantírā** or \varnothing **palantīra**; he marked the final **-a** with a diacritic indicating that it could be either long or short. (This

“primitive” form must be seen as a hypothetical back-formation, since the palantíri were made and presumably named by the Noldor after the end of the “pre-historic” period.) According to the rules set out above, \varnothing palantīrā should have produced Quenya *palantíra, whereas \varnothing palantīra should have yielded palantír, attested as the personal name of Tar-Palantir of Númenor. (\varnothing Palantīrā could also have produced palantír if the primitive form was recognized as a compound, so that the long final vowel was shortened at an early stage.) So what are we to make of the form palantír occurring in LotR? Perhaps we are to assume that since the Seeing Stones were so closely associated with “ancient lore” and were rarely mentioned otherwise, the word persisted in its older Valinorean form rather than undergoing the normal sound-changes? Of course, the long vowel may also have been re-introduced into the singular by analogy with the plural form palantíri.

Another example of a word with a long final vowel persisting in the final syllable is **Erusén**, translated “children of God” in RGEO:74. This form is doubly perplexing, for judging by the translation, it should be a plural form. Yet there is no plural ending. Is this a collective of some sort?³

The noun “head” is given in *Etym* as **cár** with stem **cas-**; the root is KAS. This makes little sense within the later phonological framework; it seems to be a form carried over from Tolkien's earliest “Qenya” (QL:45: notice that the K-stems are among the oldest parts of *Etym*, apparently never thoroughly revised). In *Etym*, Tolkien lets a final postvocalic **-s** become **-r**, as when the root TELES produces Quenya **Teler** “Teler-elf”. The root KAS, or rather a primitive form *kasa > Common Eldarin *kās, *kas-, might therefore produce **cár** via *cáz. However, this would not have a stem-form **cas-**, e.g. plural **casi “heads” – no more than the plural of **Teler** was **Telesi even within the *Etym* scenario (the plural **Teleri** occurs in the entry TELES). According to the system Tolkien employed in most of *Etym*, the word for “head” ought to be *cár with stem *car-. Later Tolkien apparently decided that a final original **-s** remained unchanged, though the development **s > z > r** does occur between vowels; thus we have **olos** “dream”, pl. **olori** for older **olozi**, in UT:396. If the noun **olor** of *Etym* (entry ÓLOS) was later emended to **olos**, the noun **cár** “head” (KAS) must also become *cás, though the stem-form remains (*caz- >) *car-. A possible attestation of “cas” as a word for “head” occurs in the compound **cas-roya** “tressure” (literally “head-net”), later becoming **carrëa** (VT42:12). Interestingly, the form **cas-roya** is not asterisked, and it is spelt with a **c** rather than **k** also in the primary source – suggesting that this is a “historical” or “attested” Quenya form. Perhaps, then, **cas-roya** is meant to represent the form of the word in Valinorean Quenya of the early historical period, the “classical” form **carrëa** arising within recorded history. (The assimilation of medial **sr** to **rr** probably began already in the prehistoric period, but perhaps it continued to operate and was eventually applied even to more recent compounds.)

According to *Etym*, the stem ÑOL yielded the Quenya word **holmë** “odour”. This must be derived from primitive *ñolmë. So does initial *ñ- produce Quenya **h-**? If so, this change must have occurred before the ancient initial combination **ñg-** was simplified to **ñ-**, since the latter persisted in Valinorean Quenya (becoming normal **n-** in the Third Age). However, in a much later source, Tolkien lets primitive **ñ-** remain unchanged in Quenya: the word **ñalta** “radiance, glittering reflection” he referred to primitive \varnothing ñalatā. So why does *ñolmë produce Quenya **holmë** instead of *ñolmë? Some think **holmë** is simply a misreading for *nolmë in Tolkien's manuscript. *nolmë could be the later pronunciation of *ñolmë.⁴

APPENDIX: SOME SPECIAL CASES

The view presented above is that the shortening of the long final vowels of primitive Elvish took place at a relatively late stage (after Common Eldarin), whereas original short final **-a**, **-e** and **-o** disappeared during the Common Eldarin stage. Examples supporting this view are cited above. However, counterexamples can certainly be found. In some sources, Tolkien cites Common Eldarin words with short final vowels that survive unchanged into Quenya, as when the forms \varnothing **sloga** and \varnothing **netere** are said to be the origin of Quenya **hlōa**, **nerťe** (VT42:9,26). According to the system here reconstructed, these CE words would rather produce Quenya ***hló**, ***neter**. To reach the “desired” outcome in Quenya we would have to assume that the CE forms were ***slogā**, ***neterē** with long final vowels. We could assume that after original short **-a**, **-e**, **-o** were lost, but still during the Common Eldarin stage, the original long final vowels were shortened so that ***slogā**, ***neterē** turned into the forms \varnothing **sloga**, \varnothing **netere** mentioned by Tolkien. Some examples from *Etym* may also seem to support such a view, as when Tolkien mentioned \varnothing **daio** as the primitive form of **lěo** “shade” (LR:354 entry DAY). The final **-o** must in all likelihood have been a long **-ō** at some earlier stage, but here it may seem to have been shortened quite early, before initial **d-** had become **l-**. The latter change must in turn have occurred before initial and post-vocalic **b**, **d**, **g** became spirants **v**, **đ** (> **z** > **r**), **z**, respectively, or primitive initial **d-** would have produced Quenya **r-** instead of **l-**. Yet this is totally contradicted by one attested example referred to above: **Valinōrē** as an early Quenya name of Valinor, with a long final vowel intact as late as after initial **b-** has become **v-** (WJ:413). There is hardly any way all the “evidence” can be worked into a single system. We must probably conclude that Tolkien in some cases failed to mark long final vowels as such. Of course, he may also have changed his mind (repeatedly!) about the precise order of certain phonological changes.

In some sources, Tolkien seems to be toying with the idea that a double consonant is to be simplified before a long, accented vowel. Thus **Elerrína** “*Star-crowned” (assimilated from ***Elenrína**) appears as **Elerína** in LR:355. Likewise, the name of Tuor's ship **Eärámē** (WJ:352) is probably to be understood as **Eär** + **rámē**, i.e. “*Sea-wing”, rather than **Eä** + **rámē** “Universe-wing”. However, Tolkien may have abandoned this idea. **Elerrína** is so spelt in the published *Silmarillion*, and I think this form is to be preferred.

Finally, although Tolkien explicitly wrote “PQ *h* survived in the dialects of Aman [i.e. Vanya-Ñoldorin Quenya and Telerin]” (WJ:365), there is evidence that this rule was not always followed. A case to consider is **endē** and related derivatives of the base ÉNED in *Etym*. It seemed that Tolkien changed his mind as to the root from which they were derived. In VT41:16 note 5 he proposed the base HEN or (extended form HENET). Thus we have **endē** or **entē** (noun) and **endēa** or **entya** (adj.). But compare Q **Endor** and T **Hendor**! In the same vein, in the manuscript version of *Notes on Óre* we have the root HOR “urge, impel, move”, from which is derived the word **órē** “heart, inner mind”. But compare the impersonal verb **orē** “urge, impel, move” with T. **hore**.

There also exists a base HAN “add to, increase, enhance, honour (esp. by gift)” (VT43:14), from which we have derivatives **han** “beyond” and †**hantalē** “thanksgiving”. But there may be a relation between this root and ANA¹ in *Etym*: “to, towards” from which we have the derivatives **anna** “gift” and **anta** “to give”. Therefore, I would not be surprised that **aran** and other derivatives of base ARA “noble” would have a related base ***HAR** (cf. \mathfrak{z} AR in *Etym*).⁵

EDITORIAL NOTES

- 1 Maybe so, but we can also consider the putative descendent form **Mailiko* as a variant of *Melko*, a play on words of which the Eldar are pretty much capable. We have also the case of the name *Sauron*, which can be interpreted as “the Abhorred” (< $\text{✧}^{\text{h}}\text{aurond-}$ < root THAW) or “the Foul One” (< $\text{*}^{\text{h}}\text{auzond-}$ < THŪ, with *a*-infixion), or the name of the Valië *Nessa* (see p. 40 note 4). In Sindarin we have *Belegûr*, the Sindarin cognate of Q *Melkor* but there is also the punning variant *Belegurth* “Great Death”. Although Tolkien explicitly wrote that the word *Melko* (and *Melkor*) is derived from a stem **mel(e)k**, it is reasonable to assume that there is a variant stem-form **MBELEK* underlying this (Sindarin derivatives *beleg*, *Belegûr*). And there is one more case that should bear consideration as well. In VT41:14 and 19 note 19 we encounter the name **Ekyanāro** “Sharp Flame” (Sindarized *Eignor*) as a variant form of **Aikanár(o)** (Sindarized *Aegnor*); the first element of the former is suggested to be derived from stem EKE “stab, prick with a sharp point”, while that of the latter is from GAYA “dread, awe”. It is rather puzzling why Tolkien chose to present these forms so late in his life—considering that the form *Aikanāro* is attested in a contemporaneous source (PM:347)—unless he intended it as a punning variant as well. However a better explanation for is is that this could also explain the existence of the Sindarin element *aeg* (as seen in the attested forms *Aeglos* and *Hithaeglir*) as an alteration of *eig* (< $\text{*}^{\text{h}}\text{ekjā}$) when it was written explicitly that the descendant forms of the primitive adjectival form $\text{✧}^{\text{h}}\text{gajakā}$ were not preserved in Telerin and Sindarin (PM:363, note 45). If I am correct, then the “genuine” Sindarin forms would have been **eiglos*, **Hitheiglir*.
- 2 That is, LotR:1096
- 3 But in MR:423 note 1 we encounter the form **Erusēni**. Cf. **Eruhîni** and **Eruhîn** in VT39:34 note 5.
- 4 I tend to agree with Helge; I have personal doubts as well that ÑOL is the correct reading of the root form in *Etym*. But what if the actual stem is **HOL* instead? This would have made better sense, for not only would have resulted in Quenya **holmë*, but also because primitive *h* disappeared altogether in Sindarin, this would have resulted in the descendant form **ûl**, and indeed it does.
- 5 See also page 53, footnote.