

BINDING SERVICES
Tel +44 (0)29 2087 4949
Fax +44 (0)29 20371921
e-mail bindery@cardiff.ac.uk

THE CREATIVE USES OF SCHOLARLY KNOWLEDGE IN THE WRITING OF J.R.R. TOLKIEN

By

Dimitra Fimi

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Cardiff School of History and Archaeology
Cardiff University

September 2005

UMI Number: U584004

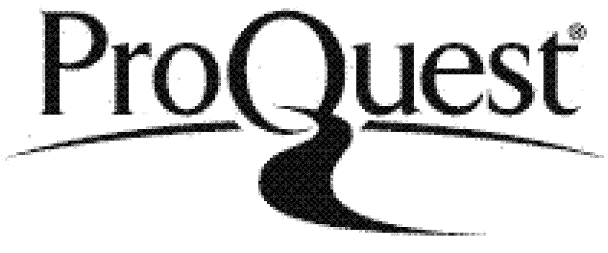
All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U584004
Published by ProQuest LLC 2013. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.
All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

To Apostolis (†1981) and Dimitra (†1995) Fimi
and Kostas (†1983) and Georgia (†2004) Papaliveriou

Summary

This thesis is an interdisciplinary study of Tolkien's writing, seeking to place his work within the framework of the historical period within which it was created. The thesis concentrates on four areas of Tolkien's expertise and experience and explores how their historical development informed the creation of Tolkien's legendarium. The Introductory Chapter presents an overview of Tolkien criticism and defines the scope and range of the thesis. Chapter 2 concentrates on the question of the centrality of the Elves in the Middle-earth mythos and explores how the evolution of their image corresponds to the development of the science of folklore. Chapter 3 examines the influence of contemporary anthropology on Tolkien's ideas and how the decline of racial anthropology left its mark in the conception of the different creatures that inhabit Middle-earth. Chapter 4 is a new, detailed analysis of Tolkien's 'invented languages' as an integral part of his fiction. The chapter looks at the principles of Tolkien's language invention, contextualises the creation of his imaginary languages within a long philosophical and literary tradition (that of the search for the perfect language) and explores the role of philology and the – then emerging – science of modern linguistics in the construction of the languages of Middle-earth. This chapter is complemented by an Addendum on the Writing Systems of Middle-earth. Chapter 5 takes the previously almost entirely neglected topic of Tolkien's awareness of contemporary archaeology and its role in his work. The chapter focuses on the depiction of material culture in Middle-earth, mainly through examining the human 'cultures' of Tolkien's invented world, but also treating such issues as the anachronistic material culture of the hobbits, and the creation of Middle-earth landscapes. The Epilogue recapitulates the main conclusions of the thesis and further examines the interplay of biography and literature in Tolkien's case, by using the concept of 'biographical legend'.

Table of Contents

Summary 1

Contents 2

List of Figures 7

Conventions and Abbreviations 8

Lists of Abbreviations 9

Tolkien Studies *Abbreviations of Tolkien's Works* 9

Rest of Abbreviations of Tolkien's Works 11

Acknowledgments 14

Chapter 1: Introduction 16

1. Tolkien Scholarship: A Review 16

2. Tolkien's Literature: A Historical Approach 21

3. Scope and Range of the Thesis: The Sources 23

4. The Structure of the Thesis 26

Chapter 2: Elves and Fairies: Tolkien and Contemporary Folklore 30

1. Introduction 30

2. The Image of Tolkien's Elves: Change over Time 33

2.1. The Early Poems 34

2.2 The Creation of the Saga 41

2.3. Tolkien's Children's Literature 46

2.4. The Era of The Lord of the Rings 53

2.5. The Epilogue: Tom Bombadil *and* Smith of Wootton Major 58

3. Tolkien, the Fairies and Folklore 61

3.1. Tolkien and the Fairies 61

3.2. Fairies, Faith and Magic 62

3.3. Folklore and the 'Mythology for England' 71

4. Conclusions 81

Chapter 3: 'Races' in Middle-earth: Tolkien and Contemporary Anthropology 84

1. Introduction 84

2. Contemporary Anthropology and Tolkien's Views 86

3. Races in Middle-earth 98

3.1. Elves: A Higher Race 98

3.2. The Elvish Inner Hierarchy 102

3.3. Men 106

3.4. Racial Mixture: The Problem of the Half-elven 113

3.5. Orcs 117

4. Conclusions 119

Chapter 4: The Linguistic Inspirations of Middle-earth: Tolkien's Invented Languages 123

1. Introduction: The Impossibility of Tolkienian Linguistics 123

2. Tolkien's Views on Language-Invention and Myth-Making 138

2.1. Invention of Languages: 'A Secret Vice' 138

2.2. Language Attitudes 143

2.3. Sound Symbolism 148

2.4. Language as Art and the Myth of a Universal Language 151

2.5. Language Creation vs. Myth Making 157

2.6. The Process of Language Invention 163

2.7. An Unexpected Difficulty: The Theory of Translation 172

3. The Languages of Middle-earth and Contemporary Linguistics/ Philology 176

3.1. The Indo-European Languages and the Stammbaumtheorie 177

3.2. Language Change: The Concept of Language Decay and Sound Laws 181

3.3. From Philology to Modern Linguistics 188

3.4. Middle-earth Sociolinguistics: 'High' vs. 'Low' Languages and the Issue of Dialects 191

3.5. Racial Linguistics 195

4. Conclusions 202

Addendum to Chapter 4: The Writing Systems of Middle-earth 204

1. Introduction 204

2. Creation of Languages – Creation of Alphabets 206

3. Printing and Carving: The Tengwar and the Cirth 212

4. The Tengwar, Universal Alphabets, and the Spelling Reform of English 215

5. The Cirth and the Problem of the Germanic Runes 224

6. Writing Systems and the Issue of Race 227

7. Conclusion 229

Chapter 5: Material Culture and Materiality in Middle-earth: Tolkien and Contemporary Archaeology 231

1. Introduction 231

2. Tolkien and the Archaeology of his Time 232

2.1. Anglo-Saxon Archaeology and the 'Migration Theory' 232

2.2. Beowulf *and Archaeology* 241

2.3. Philology and Archaeology 246

3. Exploring Materiality and Culture in Middle-earth 249

3. 1. The Idea of European Prehistory and Historical 'Cultures' 249

3.2. The 'Cultures' of Men in Middle-earth: Gondor and Rohan 256

3.3. Victorian Countryside and Relics of the Industrial Revolution: The Material Culture of the Shire 273

3.4. Romancing Archaeology 281

4. Creating Middle-earth: The Construction of a Landscape 284

4.1. Tolkien and the Beginnings of Landscape Studies 285

4.2. The First Age: The Era of the Great Monuments 287

4.3. The Third Age: Personal Landscapes and 'Explanations' 293

5. Conclusions 300

Chapter 6: Epilogue: Deconstructing Tolkien's Writings and the Construction of a 'Biographical Legend' 304

1. Deconstructing Tolkien 304

2. 'Biographical Legend' and Researching Fiction and Biography 308

Appendices

Appendix 1: 'The Tree of Tongues (earlier form)' 311

Appendix 2: 'The Tree of Tongues (later form)' 312

Appendix 3: The 'Tree of Tongues' as described in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* 313

Bibliography 314

1. Work by J.R.R. Tolkien, cited in chronological order 314

2. J.R.R. Tolkien's Unpublished Manuscripts 320

2.1. Bodleian Library 320

2.2. British Library 321

2.3. Marquette University, Special Collections and Archives 321

3. Other Works Cited 321

List of Figures

Figure 1: Third leaf from the Book of Mazarbul 211

Figure 2: Third copy of King's letter 211

Figure 3: Detail from Item 185 in Hammond and Scull 1995 220

Figure 4: Detail from Item 186 in Hammond and Scull 1995 220

Figure 5: The Tengwar Chart 222

Figure 6: Francis Lodwick's Universal Alphabet 222

Figure 7: The Crowns of Egypt 263

Figure 8: The Crown of Gondor 263

Figure 9: The Chosen Slain 265

Figure 10: Odin and Brunhild 265

Figure 11: The Winged Crown of Gondor 266

Figure 12: The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the-Water 275

Figure 13: Sarehole Mill 278

Conventions and Abbreviations

Recent Tolkien scholarship has established the use of abbreviations to refer to Tolkien's numerous works, since their reference by date would be rather confusing than helpful. Unfortunately, however, the recent few books that have been using this method have not been using the same list of abbreviations, which only makes things complicated.[1] This thesis, instead of setting its own list of abbreviations, has used the list provided by the editors of the new academic journal on Tolkien, namely *Tolkien Studies* (2004), in the hope that these will prove to be more persistent and finally universally accepted by Tolkien scholars. The list is reproduced below. In the case of Tolkien texts for which the *Tolkien Studies* journal does not provide an abbreviation, I have devised my own abbreviations, which are given underneath the *Tolkien Studies* list.

Apart from abbreviations, a few more conventions have to be noted here. The first is the case of the Silmarillion. In this I have followed the convention introduced by Christopher Tolkien in his *History of Middle-earth* series (1983-1996), according to which when the title is printed in italics it indicates the work as published in 1977, while when it is printed in inverted commas it indicates the body of stories developed by Tolkien during his lifetime. Finally, when it comes to the spelling of Tolkien's nomenclature, a few problems might arise as well, since many names changed in terms of spelling through the years. I have dealt with this problem by adhering to Tolkien's own spelling at the different stages that I am referring to.

---

[1] Compare for example the lists of abbreviations in Flieger's and Hostetter's (eds) *Tolkien's 'Legendarium': Essays on the History of Middle-earth* (2000: xv), in Chance's (ed.) *Tolkien the Medievalist* (2003: xv), and in Christopher Tolkien's *History of Middle-earth* series (1983-1996).

Lists of Abbreviations

Tolkien Studies *Abbreviations of Tolkien's Works*

B&C	*Beowulf and the Critics* (2002)
Bombadil	*The Adventures of Tom Bombadil and other verses from the Red Book* (1962)
FR	*The Fellowship of the Ring: Being the First Part of The Lord of the Rings* (1954)
H	*The Hobbit* (1937)
Jewels	*The War of the Jewels: The Later Silmarillion, Part Two: The Legends of Beleriand* (1994)
Lays	*The Lays of Beleriand* (1985)
Letters	*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien: A Selection* (1981)
Lost Road	*The Lost Road and Other Writings: Language and Legend before* The Lord of the Rings (1987)
Lost Tales I	*The Book of Lost Tales, Part One* (1983)

Lost Tales II	*The Book of Lost Tales, Part Two* (1984)
LotR	*The Lord of the Rings*
MC	*The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays* (1983)
Morgoth	*Morgoth's Ring: The Later Silmarillion, Part One: The Legends of Aman* (1993)
Peoples	*The Peoples of Middle-earth* (1996)
RK	*The Return of the King: Being the Third Part of The Lord of the Rings* (1955)
S	*The Silmarillion* (1977)
Sauron	*Sauron Defeated: The End of the Third Age, The Notion Club Papers and The Drowning of Anadûnê* (1992)
Shadow	*The Return of the Shadow: The History of* The Lord of the Rings, *Part One* (1988)
Shaping	*The Shaping of Middle-earth: The Quenta, the Ambarkanta, and the Annals together with the earliest 'Silmarillion' and the first Map* (1986)

TT	*The Two Towers: Being the Second Part of The Lord of the Rings* (1954)
Treason	*The Treason of Isengard: The History of* The Lord of the Rings, *Part Two* (1989)
UT	*Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth* (1980)
War	*The War of the Ring: The History of* The Lord of the Rings, *Part Three* (1990)

Rest of Abbreviations of Tolkien's Works

BBC Interview	'Now Read On', BBC Radio Interview (1970)
Beorhtnoth	'The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth, Beorhthelm's Son' (1953)
Chaucer	'Chaucer as a Philologist' (1934)
Exodus	*The Old English Exodus* (1981)
Farmer Giles	*Farmer Giles of Ham* (1949)
FCL	*The Father Christmas Letters* (1976)

Finn and Hengest	*Finn and Hengest: The Fragment and the Episode* (1982)
GF	'Goblin Feet', *Oxford Poetry, 1915* (1915)
GL	'I-Lam na-Ngoldathon: The Grammar and Lexicon of The Gnomish Tongue' (1995)
Guide	'Guide to the names in *The Lord of the Rings*' (1975)
Katherine Group	'MS Bodley 34: A Re-Collation of a Collation' (1948)
LUV	'An Evening in Tavrobel', 'The Lonely Isle' and 'The Princess Ni', in *Leeds University Verse 1914-1924* (1924)
Niekas Interview	'An Interview with Tolkien', *Niekas* (1967)
Nodens	'Appendix I: "The Name 'Nodens'"' (1932)
Pictures	*Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien* (1979)
QL	'Qenyaqetsa: The Qenya Phonology and Lexicon together with The Poetic and Mythologic Words of Eldarissa' (1998)
Road	*The Road Goes Ever On: A Song Cycle* (1968)

Roverandom	*Roverandom* (1998)
SWM	*Smith of Wootton Major* (1967)
SWM Essay	'Smith of Wootton Major' (essay) (2005)
TB	'The Adventures of Tom Bombadil', *The Oxford Magazine* (1934)
YWES 1923	'Philology: General Works', *The Year's Work in English Studies* (1923)
YWES 1924	'Philology: General Works', *The Year's Work in English Studies* (1924)

Acknowledgements

During the last three years, a number of people were instrumental for the successful completion of this PhD. First of all, I wish to thank my supervisor, Professor John Hines, for believing in my research project and for his continuous encouragement, enlightened guidance and unreserved offer of assistance. I am also grateful to my department, the Cardiff School of History and Archaeology, for enabling me to undertake research and attend conferences outside Cardiff, many times abroad, by funding an important part of my travelling and accommodation expenses through the Postgraduate Quality Committee and the Cyril Fox Fund. From within the Department, I would also like to thank especially Dr. Alan Lane and Dr. Vicki Cummings, as well as Mr. Aled Cooke, for their willingness to assist me every time I needed them.

While conducting my research I worked in numerous libraries and archives. I am indebted to Mr. Matt Blessing, and his assistant, Mrs. Susan Stawicki-Vrobel, of the Special Collections and Archives Department of Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI, where many of Tolkien's literary manuscripts are found. During my stay there they often went out of their way to make sure that I would be able to complete my research within the limited number of days I could stay in Milwaukee. Mr. Colin Harris, of the Department of Special Collections and Western Manuscripts of the Bodleian Library, also offered me great help when studying Tolkien's academic manuscripts there. I am obliged to the Tolkien Estate for allowing me to quote from Tolkien's unpublished manuscripts in the thesis, and particularly to Mrs. Cathleen Blackburn, the Solicitor for the Estate who handled my requests. I would also like to thank Ms. Kerry York, the librarian of the King Edward's School Archive, for her

assistance. Last but not least, Mr. Peter Keelan and Mr. Tom Dawkes, subject specialists of the Arts and Social Studies Library of Cardiff University, saved me time and effort many times throughout the last three years.

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of my family. I am also obliged to Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, the Lynne Grundy Memorial Trust, and the President's Fund for awarding me research grants towards the completion of my thesis. The Greek community of Cardiff also embraced me and offered me practical help and support. I want to thank particularly the families of Dr. Alex Karseras, of Gerasimos Sklavounos, and of Prokopis and Maria Karudi. Finally, thanks to Dr. David Wyatt, who gave me the opportunity to teach part of the contents of this thesis as a module in the Cardiff Centre for Lifelong Learning in spring semester 2005, as well as my students for making me think afresh on my research questions.

This thesis benefited from the feedback of many colleagues, who read drafts of it. I wish to thank in particular Andrew Cochrane, Oliver Harris, Daniela Hofmann, Dr. Kostas Kanakis, Giorgos Kotzoglou, Dr. Spyros Sakellaropoulos, Dr. Steven Trick, and Dr. Juliette Wood. Many thanks also to all of my colleagues that worked with me in the Postgraduate Office of the School of History and Archaeology for support, short interludes of laughter, and endless cups of tea. Finally, I am grateful to all of my family, both in Athens and in the island of Salamina, for believing in me more than I believed in myself, and to Andrew Davies for being by my side.

This thesis is dedicated to my grandparents, Apostolis and Dimitra Fimi and Kostas and Georgia Papaliveriou. Though they are not with us anymore, if it was not for their hard work and their belief in the value of education, I would never have reached this stage. I will remain forever grateful.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Tolkien scholarship has a history of seven decades. It started immediately after the publication of *The Hobbit* in 1937; became much more extensive and much more heated with the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55); continued after Tolkien's death in 1973 with the gradual posthumous publications of his works; and is still going on with a new impetus after the three films by Peter Jackson have been made and released (2001-3).

1. Tolkien Scholarship: A Review

In a recent article, inspired by the publication of Tom Shippey's book *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (2001), Michael D. C. Drout and Hilary Wynne (2000)[1] attempted not only a review of the book but also a general overview and evaluation of the scholarship on Tolkien so far. The main achievement of this article is that it outlines all the difficulties that serious academic work on Tolkien can be faced with: for instance the enormous number of non-academic books and articles listed in the MLA database under the subject 'Tolkien', which confuses and perplexes anyone planning to undertake any serious work on this literature; the common practice of Tolkien scholars not reading each others' work, which ends up in having the same areas covered again and again; and, finally, the lack of a complete

[1] The obvious discrepancy of dates between Drout's and Wynne's article and Shippey's book is due to the fact that the volume of *Envoi* where the article appeared did not get published until 2001.

bibliography on Tolkien studies from the early years until recently (Drout and Wynne 2000: 101, 103-4).[2]

Despite these adversities, however, Tolkien scholarship has recently changed dramatically for the better. This can be seen as a result of various historical factors. First of all, what Judith Johnson has termed 'the cult years', meaning the time between the mid-1960s and 1970s, marked by abundant fan activity, numerous publications, and heated controversies over Tolkien work's worth, has definitely ended now. It is unlikely to be surpassed even by any further reactions of such a kind to the Jackson film trilogy. Indeed, some of the most mature early works on Tolkien were produced just after that period had ended and the commotion over Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings* had calmed down, such as Jane Chance's *Tolkien's Art: 'A Mythology for England'* (Chance Nitzsche 1979), Tom Shippey's *The Road to Middle-earth* (1982), and Verlyn Flieger's *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World* (1983). Any new scholar attempting to write on Tolkien now belongs to a different generation, and is constrained by the fact that Tolkien's work has stood the test of time, and has already gone through one layer of criticism and interpretation. Secondly, this situation has allowed scholars to distance themselves from 'popular' or 'sub-cultural' reactions to Tolkien,[3] which are mainly confined today to role-playing and computer games, and to the internet, and only partially to 'popular' publications. They can concentrate instead on Tolkien's texts, which at the same time have been augmented considerably during the last two decades and a half. Indeed, since 1973,

[2] The bibliographies on Tolkien published are Richard C. West's *Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist* (1981) and Judith Johnson's *J.R.R. Tolkien: Six Decades of Criticism* (1986), which trace Tolkien scholarship from its origins until 1984. Drout, with the aid of a number of other scholars, has attempted to rectify the lack of a complete Tolkien scholarship bibliography by undertaking the task to complement the previous two. The fruit of this research is at the moment available through the Internet (Drout et al. 2002).

[3] Of course I am not referring here to students of popular culture or film studies, some of which have produced very remarkable scholarship regarding the 'Tolkien phenomenon' (see for example Brian Rosebury's *Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon* (2003)). This is a perfectly legitimate – but totally different – field of study.

when Tolkien died, not only were the much-awaited *Silmarillion* and *Unfinished Tales* published, but a whole corpus of fragments, unfinished stories, and revisions and earlier versions of the Middle-earth saga appeared in print in twelve volumes edited by Tolkien's son, Christopher, under the general title *The History of Middle-earth* (1983-1996). This monumental collection has changed the way that Tolkien scholarship has been operating in an unprecedented way, and scholars are still in the process of digesting the immense wealth of information in order to incorporate it effectively in their analyses.[4]

Finally, the recognition of Tolkien as a legitimate subject of study by a number of influential scholars and institutions has given a new respectability to the field. The debate about canonizing Tolkien has reopened with Shippey's latest book (2001) and is now conducted in much more favourable terms. Since 2001 the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo has included sessions specifically on the work of Tolkien, presided, co-organised and supported by a number of eminent scholars who have published outstanding academic works, like Jane Chance, Verlyn Flieger, and Douglas Anderson. A selection of papers that have been presented in previous Tolkien sessions of the Congress have been published in two collections of articles, edited by Jane Chance, under the titles: *Tolkien the Medievalist* (2003) and *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth: A Reader* (2004), both of which have contributed substantially to this new tradition of serious scholarship on Tolkien.[5] As a capstone of these developments, a new peer-reviewed academic journal has appeared recently, its first volume published in 2004 and the next one expected to be released in the next

[4] A first attempt of evaluating this material has been the excellent collection of articles: *Tolkien's 'Legendarium': Essays on the History of Middle-earth*, edited by Verlyn Flieger and Carl F. Hostetter (2000).

[5] There is also a third collection of articles from papers given at Kalamazoo due to appear shortly, co-edited by Jane Chance and Alfred Siewers, entitled *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages* (2005, forthcoming).

few months of 2005, entitled *Tolkien Studies*, which is 'dedicated to the scholarly study of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien' (Anderson, Drout and Flieger 2004: v).

Alongside an awareness of the important issues of seriousness and academic standards in the history of Tolkien scholarship, it is also essential to rate the main areas in which it has concentrated. Johnson refers to works on Tolkien focusing variously on religious issues, gender, psychological approaches, sources and motifs, symbolism, the Inklings, and on literary style (1986: 23, 51, 134). Drout and Wynne, on the other hand, have attempted a more systematic grouping of Tolkien scholarship, classifying it into four main approaches: source studies, good and evil in Tolkien, the 'mythology for England', and the defence of Tolkien (2000: 106-117). Although this broad-brush approach of Drout and Wynne ignores other contributions on different aspects of Tolkien scholarship, which might be fewer in number, it does in general terms give a realistic image of the main areas that Tolkien criticism has been preoccupied with all through the years. At the same time, this classification serves as a convenient reference typology of Tolkien criticism, since it condenses narrower fields into broader categories, like, for example, grouping together studies on Tolkien's influences, be they modern or medieval, under 'source-studies', or including the numerous works linking Tolkien's literature with Christian theology in the category of 'good and evil in Tolkien'.

Especially source studies have been a favourite approach of Tolkien criticism, initiated by Shippey's seminal study *The Road to Middle-earth* (1982) and followed by numerous others, which has in time led to the production of hundreds of articles – of varying quality and academic standards. Although Shippey's work had a central thesis which combined all of his findings on Tolkien's sources into a coherent argument, many other contributions – especially earlier ones and the majority of those

found in Tolkien fanzines – have only played the source-hunting game in a very superficial way, without making any effort to illuminate their role or creative use in Tolkien's literature, and often overstretching the evidence to fit their own preconceived ideas. Drout's and Wynne's article provide very characteristic examples of such cases, like the simplistic comparison that K.C. Fraser (1998) makes between *The Lord of the Rings* and Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*, or Elizabeth M. Allen's (1985) far-fetched case for Persian influences in Tolkien's mythology (2000: 106-7). There have been of course numerous excellent studies as well, a great part of which has concentrated on Tolkien and his medieval sources. An article by Jane Chance and David Day, written more than ten years ago, has summarised the approaches and themes of 'Medievalism in Tolkien' until then (1991), and with the inclusion of Tolkien sessions in the International Medieval Congress at Kalamazoo, this area of Tolkien criticism has flourished and will continue to do so, but it is also fated to became more and more specialised and partial. As Chance and Day predicted: 'Future studies will doubtless continue the work of *isolating, and analysing individual episodes, characters, images, or passages*, and it is also hoped that the influences of medieval thought on Tolkien's philosophical and critical speculations will be further elucidated' (1991: 387, my italics). As a consequence, the overall impression of source-studies relating to Tolkien is either that they are not particularly illuminating or that there is little more left to be said.

Tolkien's mythical creation can not be seen as anything other than 'derived from (previously digested) epic, mythology, and fairy-story' (*Letters*: 31), as he himself pointed out, verifying Kristeva's notion of 'intertextuality', a theory that broke with earlier traditional notions of the author's 'influences' and the texts' 'sources' and argued for the literary work not being the product of a single author, but

of its relationship to other texts (1986). However there is more to Tolkien's literature, and to any literature, than that. I have chosen to comment on Tolkien source studies in particular since the title of this thesis might suggest that this study is another effort to establish Tolkien's sources and to look for overlooked motifs and intertexts. However, as it will be seen in the next part, Tolkien's 'scholarly knowledge' as referred to in the title of this thesis is concerned with something broader and deeper than his awareness of mythological and literary texts.

2. Tolkien's Literature: A Historical Approach

The outstanding character of Tolkien's achievement in appropriating medieval and early modern textual sources and creating a new mythology, that was agreeable to his personal taste, consistent with his nationalistic project (at least at its early stages), and expressive of his own metaphysical anxieties, cannot be overemphasised. However, as shown above, these areas of Tolkien studies, especially that of source studies, have been covered again and again by various scholars. This thesis takes a more historical position. Its aim is not to show that the Middle-earth saga is just a work of a man of literary genius, but how it is the work of a man of literary genius who *lived in a specific place and historical circumstances*, and incorporated in that saga – mostly unconsciously – reactions to his own historical locus and tempus. It is true that no literature can be fully understood without reference to the historical period within which it was produced. It has been argued convincingly that no literary text can escape the historical reality of its period. In Keith's words:

> ...novels, plays and even the wildest pieces of fantasy have to make enough contact with the world of their time in order to be intelligible

> to their readers. Their language and their content will locate them in time and space; and they will make incidental allusions...to the manners and assumptions of the day. (1988: 11)

The thesis, then, is an interdisciplinary study of Tolkien's literature, seeking to place his work within the framework of the historical period within which it was written. The thesis concentrates on four main areas of scholarly knowledge and explores how the contemporary ideas within these four disciplines shaped Tolkien's thought and creative process. Academic knowledge itself is never 'objective' and unhistorical, but is always determined by social and historical circumstances. The way we think about certain scientific disciplines today can be totally different from how they were conceived one century, or even half a century, ago. By means of Tolkien the scholar, then, this thesis attempts to explore the work of Tolkien the author not only as a remarkable creation but also as a product of its times. In this context, 'Tolkien the scholar' does not strictly mean Tolkien, the Anglo-Saxon Philologist, but Tolkien, the member of academia, the Oxford don who was exposed to the development of academic disciplines during his time, including some that were not directly linked to his own special area of expertise. This distinction is important since this thesis deals not only with Tolkien's scholarly knowledge that was a part of his own specialised topic, but also with other areas of scholarship he was aware of and influenced by, but not an expert on.

At the same time, by researching into the area of intellectual history and the history of ideas, this thesis also seeks to discuss certain facts about Tolkien's biography that have been taken for granted by Tolkien scholars in the past as important to his literature, but cannot really be proved historically. Here, the concept of the 'biographical legend', discussed by Boris Tomaševskij, proves to be useful. The notion of 'biographical legend' does not refer to the author's actual curriculum

vitae, but to his 'ideal' biography, which is a product of 'the author's subjective outpourings and confessions', and ultimately created by the author himself (Tomaševskij 1995: 86-7). The immediate success of Tolkien's books, as well as the 60s Tolkien craze when *The Lord of the Rings* reached the USA, created a need for more information on the author himself. Tolkien participated in a number of interviews and radio programmes, and he thus found himself feeding his fans' hunger for mythical biographical details, which he finally eventually came to believe in some measure himself. An important example of this is his declaration that Middle-earth was subsequent and consequent to his creation of imaginary languages, which needed subjects to speak them, a topic treated in detail in Chapter 4 (§ 2.5).

3. Scope and Range of the Thesis: The Sources

The thesis concentrates on Tolkien's 'Middle-earth' literature, using as its main sources *The Hobbit*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. Also, all the supplementary material edited and published posthumously by Tolkien's son Christopher, namely *Unfinished Tales* and the twelve volumes of the *Histories of Middle-earth* series, is included, since this gives invaluable information on earlier stages of the development of plots, characters, and ideas which add to our understanding of Tolkien's greater conception of the Middle-earth saga. Of course, it should be noted that *The Silmarillion* was also published after Tolkien's death by Christopher, but it was presented as one coherent narrative, with no evident attestation of Christopher's intervention. In contrast, in all the subsequent works of Tolkien published posthumously, Christopher clearly undertakes the role of the editor and he

has not interfered with the texts, but has rather provided commentaries and notes on them. The study will not discuss in detail any of the other literary works of Tolkien that have no direct association with the Middle-earth cosmos, sometimes referred to as 'Tolkien's Shorter Fiction' (Shippey 1991), but references to them are made occasionally, where they reveal aspects of Tolkien's thought that might be relevant to his 'Middle-earth literature'. Apart from Tolkien's literary works, this thesis also makes extensive use of Tolkien's biographical material, such as his letters, edited by Humphrey Carpenter (*Letters*), and various interviews and reminiscences of and by Tolkien, scattered in different sources, most of which are quite rare and difficult to locate. Tolkien's academic works are also quoted at length in the thesis, not only his essays found in *The Monsters and the Critics: and Other Essays* collection, but also the rest of his publications associated with his research into philology.

The author of this thesis has also conducted extensive research into Tolkien's unpublished manuscripts, especially those held in Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, in the British Library in London, as well as in the Library of the Germanic Institute in London. Very few quotations from this material have been used in the thesis in an effort to comply with copyright law. In the cases where extracts from Tolkien's unpublished manuscripts have been reproduced in the thesis, permission by the Tolkien Estate has been granted. It should be also noted that, while the bulk of Tolkien's manuscripts are found in Marquette University and in the Bodleian Library, there are still parts of them that are restricted and there is no way for any scholar to access them. Christopher Tolkien has indeed made accessible a great quantity of his father's unpublished – and almost always unfinished – material through the publication of *The History of Middle-earth* series, but it is well-known to scholars, mainly through Tolkien's 'authorised' biography by

Humphrey Carpenter (1977), that there is more material that has not been made available. As a consequence, scholars have to deal with a 'managed' image of the manuscripts, being aware that they cannot have the overall picture of Tolkien's work. As this material will not be made available by law till several decades later, Tolkien scholars should always keep in mind that the research they undertake might be subject to mistakes or misinterpretations in the face of future findings within Tolkien's papers that are inaccessible at the moment.

When it comes to quotations of Tolkien's published works, this thesis has followed the 50th Anniversary edition of *The Lord of the Rings*, as well as the annotated edition of *The Hobbit*, which are currently considered as the definitive texts of these works. Drout and Wynne have touched upon the complexity of setting an authoritative text for *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, since both works underwent various editions by different publishers which created as a consequence: 'multiple layers of both misprints and revisions' (2000: 105). In his book on Tolkien's languages, published in 1978, Jim Allan already lists eight editions of the text of *The Lord of the Rings*, each one including slight changes or misprints (xi-xii), and this clearly anticipates future problems of the lack of a definitive text.[6] Drout and Wynne have concluded that 'the Houghton Mifflin editions of the *LotR* after 1994 and the 2001 edition of *The Hobbit* can be considered "clean" and definitive texts' (2000: 105). In this thesis, however, the 50th Anniversary editions of *The Lord of the Rings* and the *Annotated Hobbit* have been preferred, since the acclaimed Tolkien scholars Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, who laboured on *The Lord of the Rings*, and

[6] It should be noted here that both *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* went though revisions by Tolkien not only because of misprints, but for other reasons as well. In the case of *The Hobbit*, a whole chapter was dramatically changed to fit the story of *The Lord of the Rings* (see Carpenter 1977: 203 and Anderson 2002: 128-135) and as for *The Lord of the Rings* itself, when the Ace Books case was finally resolved, Tolkien's authorised publishers asked him to make a few revisions so that the book would be technically 'new' and they could register their edition as copyright (Carpenter 1977: 227). For a detailed presentation of the textual history of *The Lord of the Rings*, see Anderson 2004.

Douglas Anderson, who undertook the edition of *The Hobbit*, worked thoroughly with all the editions of the text, having the privilege to have access to all the relevant Tolkien manuscripts, as well as the co-operation of Christopher Tolkien, and restored numerous corrections to both texts (Hammond and Scull 2004; Anderson 2002).

4. The Structure of the Thesis

The areas of Tolkien's knowledge and experience that the thesis looks at are those of folklore, linguistics and philology, anthropology and archaeology. The second chapter serves as a further curtain raiser to the whole thesis, by exploring one of the most important concepts in Tolkien's mythology: that of the centrality of the Elves. It first explores in detail the development of the image of Tolkien's Elves, from the tiny fairies of his first poems to the sombre and tragic Elves of *The Silmarillion*, outlining the phases they went through and the functions they served during each stage. After this thorough investigation, the chapter concentrates on the question of contemporary folklore and its role in the early development of the Middle-earth saga and its focus on elves and fairies. Especially the issue of fairy lore and fairy belief as an integral part of the development of folklore as an academic discipline during the late Victorian and early Edwardian eras is taken into consideration, and Tolkien's early work is examined in terms of these developments. It is through this analysis that basic concepts and preoccupations of Tolkien's mythology can be contextualised and explained, and it is in this way that the production of his mythology can clearly be seen as indissolubly associated with its historical period.

The next three chapters have a stricter and more regular structural organization, by presenting first Tolkien's knowledge or awareness of the developments in each academic discipline they deal with, and then examining how this knowledge impinged upon his creative process and how it is reflected, or rather echoed, in his Middle-earth literature. Chapter 3 concentrates on Tolkien and contemporary physical anthropology, and especially Tolkien's changing views on the anthropological developments of his time, especially what is today defined as the decline of the 'science of race'. First, the chapter explores Tolkien's awareness of racial anthropology and its waning by looking at his academic essays and his letters, and then it examines how such concepts entered Middle-earth in a transformed way, or how they were used by Tolkien himself to 'explain' events in Middle-earth. Such issues as higher and lower races, as well as racial mixture in the Middle-earth world are discussed, and they are linked to specific theories that were not only popular, but also considered as scientifically true and valid. The chapter is not concerned to judge whether Tolkien was racist or not, since this is irrelevant to its content. The concept of racism is a later one and this chapter is not concerned with judging Tolkien from a current perspective but with showing how his creation was rooted in his own historical period.

Chapter 4 focuses on Tolkien's invented languages, admittedly one of the major strands of his mythology, and how their creation, as well as their function and role in the Middle-earth cosmos, was shaped by Tolkien's deep knowledge of philology and by his awareness of developments of contemporary linguistics. The chapter starts with an overview of previous scholarship on Tolkienian linguistics, outlining the difficulties and problems it is faced with, as well as the fascination and appeal this topic has held ever since the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*. It goes

on to examine Tolkien's particular views about such issues as the aesthetics of languages, the relationship of the mythmaking process with that of language invention, and the actual process through which Tolkien 'invented' his languages. This part attempts to explain Tolkien's fascination with certain languages, as well as his slightly metaphysical views on their aesthetics, by utilising the concept of language attitudes from modern linguistics, and by examining his awareness of sound symbolism, a theory that – though always marginal to mainstream linguistics – has remained a constant source of fascination to those who study languages. The chapter also is a contribution to contextualising Tolkien's 'mad hobby' within the intellectual history of his time, since it shows how the invention of Tolkien's imaginary languages can be placed within a very long tradition of language invention and writing fiction, ultimately associated with philosophical concerns about the search for the perfect language. This chapter also deals with the incorporation in Middle-earth of such long held concepts from philology – a science Tolkien was a specialist in – as the *Stammbaumtheorie* and the idea of language decay, as well as with more contemporary developments like sociolinguistics and the discourse of race and language. This chapter is complemented by an addendum on the writing systems of Middle-earth. This part draws on Tolkien's knowledge of manuscripts and medieval palaeography and concentrates on the two main scripts of Middle-earth, namely Tengwar and Cirth, tracing their 'invention' to Tolkien's knowledge of real alphabets and writing systems. Again, in this section, the desire for universal languages is taken up, this time focusing on universal alphabets and the spelling reform of English. Finally, the issue of race is discussed again briefly in relation to Tolkien's invented scripts and their attribution to certain creatures of his mythology.

The fifth chapter takes up a yet untrodden – or very superficially examined – path in Tolkien criticism, namely that of Tolkien's depiction of material culture and materiality in Middle-earth. Following the structure of the previous two chapters, it begins with an examination of what Tolkien actually knew of theories and developments of his contemporary archaeology, especially Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian archaeology, and the relationships between archaeology and his own area of expertise, philology. It then moves on to Tolkien's literature and explores how such ideas as those of prehistory and historical 'cultures' fit into Middle-earth. The 'cultures' of Men in Middle-earth are examined in relation to specific historical cultures that Tolkien compared them with, and a rather innovative approach is taken with the materiality of the Shire by analysing it through the perspective of Industrial Archaeology. Finally, the tentative associations of Middle-earth with the rising discipline of Landscape Archaeology are explored, in terms of the creation of the landscape of Middle-earth, its cartography, and its changing geography and landmarks.

Chapter 2: Elves and Fairies:

Tolkien and Contemporary Folklore

1. Introduction

The Elves are considered as one of the major creations of Tolkien, as they stand at the centre of his 'legendarium'. Indeed, Tolkien himself acknowledged that his mythology is 'Elf-centred', or mainly concerned with the history of the Elves (*Letters*: 31, 129, 146, 174, 237, 285). It is a fact that the *The Silmarillion* concentrates on the history of the Elves, while *The Lord of the Rings* is set in the period when the history of these beings is drawing to an end, as the Elves are about to leave Middle-earth and the domination of Men begins.

Exploring the question of Tolkien's knowledge of mythology in one chapter of a thesis could either be vast in scope, considering his profound knowledge of Northern European mythological texts, let alone the classical repertoire, or really narrow, making due acknowledgement of the numerous source-studies that have already been conducted on Tolkien's creative uses of mythological sources, be these classical, medieval, or early modern:[1] the only thing this chapter could offer in the second case would be a summary, tracing the loose ends and presenting in a well-structured way all of this previous research. However, the question of the centrality of the Elves in Tolkien's creation is an intriguing one, especially if one considers the role of such creatures in 'primary' or 'real' mythologies, where they are just a

[1] A good example is the recent volume edited by Jane Chance (2004), which includes articles on Tolkien's use of Plato, Ovid, Boethian philosophy, the *Edda* and the *Kalevala*, as well as Anglo-Saxon material.

peripheral part of the official pantheon.[2] Indeed, bearing in mind Tolkien's early project for creating, or 'reconstructing', 'a mythology for England' (see below, § 3.3), the presence of such creatures as the European elves and fairies in it is not inappropriate or any revolutionary innovation: they could be expected. But their centrality marks them as special, and this makes Tolkien's 'mythology' different from the ancient ones he was trying to imitate.

In her book *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World*, first published in 1983, with a new, revised, edition appearing in 2002, Verlyn Flieger has discussed Tolkien's creation of languages as well as of the fantasy world of Middle-earth in terms of his religious and philosophical pursuits. Taking into consideration his theory of 'sub-creation', as expressed in his essay 'On Fairy-Stories', as well as the linguistic theories of Tolkien's fellow Inkling Owen Barfield and their metaphysical echoes, she has argued convincingly for *The Silmarillion* being dominated by the theme of Light as well as by Tolkien's Christian mission to 'sub-create', to imagine a world in the likeness of God's creation of the primary one. Indeed, this aspect of Tolkien's work gained more and more prominence after the 'On Fairy-Stories' essay and towards the end of his life.[3] In his letters, he more than once claimed that the 'theme' of *The Lord of the Rings* is Death and Immortality (*Letters*: 246, 284), something that has been shown to be one of the main themes of *The Silmarillion* as well (Flieger 2002: xxi). In the same light, Tolkien's Elves can be perceived as the focus of this sub-creative effort. In a letter probably written in 1956, Tolkien claims that:

---

[2] For example, the Greek *nymphs* and *dryads*, or the Norse *álfar* are never central characters but only marginally referred to together with the gods. See Larson 2001 and Turville-Petre 1964 respectively.

[3] Carpenter gives a good account of how Tolkien was looking for a higher cause to justify his writing of fairy-stories, and thus ended up with their defence and the 'sub-creation' theory (Carpenter 1977: 190-2).

> Of course, in fact exterior to my story, Elves and Men are just different aspects of the Humane, and represent the problem of Death as seen by a finite but willing and self-conscious person. In this mythological world the Elves and Men are in their incarnate forms kindred, but in the relation of their 'spirits' to the world in time represent different 'experiments', each of which has its own natural trend, and weakness. (*Letters*: 236)

This interpretation of the Elves, as a different 'experiment' in terms of their 'spirits' to the world in time, sees them as a parallel creation to that of Men, including fall and exile (which parallels the Fall of Man and his Exile from Eden), representing Tolkien's sub-creative impulse and incorporating major Christian themes and anxieties. In that case, the centrality of the Elves would be justified exactly in terms of their function in Tolkien's theological pursuits, and not in terms of mythological or folklore analogues in Tolkien's effort to create a 'mythology'.

Was this true from the beginning though? Could it be claimed that Tolkien had a uniform and consistent plan for his 'legendarium' from the late 1910s, when he started writing the first version of the Silmarillion saga, 'The Book of Lost Tales', to his late writings after *The Lord of the Rings*? Is the question of myth and folklore in the creation of the Elves to be dismissed totally? And if not, in what degree may awareness of folklore, not only of data but also of its theory, have influenced Tolkien's most praised creation? This chapter will attempt to address these questions: first, by exploring how the portrayal of the Elves changed in Tolkien's works, from his early poems up to his last published works, in order to echo his shifting ideas on the nature, external description and spiritual role of the Elves. The second part of the chapter then discusses the folklore influences on Tolkien's work, mainly in the historical period during which Tolkien started creating his 'legendarium', by concentrating on explaining why the early 'fairies' are substituted by the later 'Elves' and how the creation of a 'mythology' in imitation of primary ones was finally

transformed into a spiritual and theological goal. The chapter pays careful attention to the late Victorian and Edwardian prominence of fairies in relation to the development of folklore as an academic discipline, and the effect this had on Tolkien's works as well as on Tolkien's early project for a 'mythology for England'.

2. The Image of Tolkien's Elves: Change over Time

Tolkien's Elves have been standardised in readers' minds as a higher race of beings, immortal, with exceeding beauty, wisdom and a strange grief, 'the fairest race that ever was made and the wisest...' (Day 1979: 84). However, this image of the Elves is mainly found in *The Lord of the Rings* and in *The Silmarillion* and is not totally consistent even with that found in works like *The Hobbit*, and even less so in his earlier poems and drafts. Indeed it has been argued that it is the inconsistency and complexity of the Elves throughout Tolkien's works that add to their fascinating nature (Gunnell 2002). It is, then, intriguing to investigate how this standard image of the Elves differs from equivalent creatures in the rest of Tolkien's works, to question their consistency throughout his writings, and to explore how it has evolved, reflecting Tolkien's changing conceptions of Elves in time. In the following paragraphs the appearance of such characters in Tolkien's work will be examined chronologically, starting from Tolkien's very early attempts to write poetry, and following his literary production in the order it was originally composed.

2.1. The Early Poems

The first appearance of such beings in Tolkien's work was in his early poems, written between 1910 and 1916.[4] Carpenter records a part of the first such poem, entitled 'Wood-sunshine' and written in 1910, where fairy-like creatures appear for the first time:[5]

> Come sing ye light fairy things tripping so gay,
> Like visions, like glinting reflections of joy
> All fashion'd of radiance, careless of grief,
> O'er this green and brown carpe; not hasten away.
> O! come to me! Dance for me! Sprites of the wood,
> O! come to me! Sing to me once ere ye fade!
> (1977: 47)

The creatures are described as happy and gay and at the same time as somewhat transparent. They can sing and dance, but an implied sorrow is also there as they seem to be transitory, bound to 'fade'. It is interesting that Tolkien hesitates to give them a title, calling them 'fairy things' or 'sprites of the wood', as if he is not too sure about which is the right word to refer to them. The same hesitation is obvious in all his early poems, where he uses a wide selection of popular or literary terms, usually interchangeably, to refer to these beings, and does not really settle on the term 'Elves' until much later.

After 'Wood-sunshine', Tolkien seems temporarily to have lost interest in such characters until 1915. That year, however, saw the production of numerous poems, many of which were indeed populated by fairy-like beings. A 'leprawn' called

[4] The dating of the poems in this section is based on Carpenter (1977), Drout (2003), as well as Christopher Tolkien's notes in *Lost Tales I* and *II*.

[5] Carpenter's *Biography* is the only source available for this poem, and there are no details offered on how long the poem is, or how central the fairy creatures are in it. We are only told that the extract is part of 'a descriptive piece about a forest scene' (1977: 47). The case of this extract of 'Wood-sunshine' being available, outside the context of the rest of the poem it belongs to, is indicative of the problems caused by scholars not having access to all of Tolkien's unpublished material. It is not known, for example, if this is a central part of the poem, or just a very small extract, and, consequently, its role in Tolkien's imagination of the time can be over- or under-estimated.

Tinfang Warble,[6] who runs gaily here and there playing his pipe appears in a poem recorded by Christopher Tolkien, but he does not provide the early version (*Lost Tales I*: 108). About the same time, though, another 'fairy poem', the quite well-known and much published 'Goblin Feet', was written (*GF*).[7] The fairy beings encountered in this poem are still gay and carefree, playing music and trotting happily. There is still the same hesitation over their name, as they are called 'leprechauns', 'gnomes', or nothing at all, leaving the reader to guess what they are by their description, or by other key words in the poem, which however are not definitively attributed to the creatures themselves: their 'goblin feet', or the 'fairy lanterns' and the 'crooked fairy lane' in the poem's setting. Indeed, the power of the poem is that it creates a whirled image and an enchanting atmosphere, where little supernatural beings are imagined without concrete detail. We are mostly given in detail the noises these creatures make, what they wear and what they hold, but no clear description of themselves. They are a 'slender band' and seem to sing and dance in 'fairy-rings'; they might be winged, they wear robes and jewels, and they carry lights. In 'Wood-sunshine' no reference is made to the stature of the fairy beings, but here they are clearly of diminutive size. Words like 'little' and 'tiny' prevail in the poem and are mostly used to refer to the creatures' feet or dressing, or to the noise they make. At the same time, the little beings are nearly insect-like, as they are grouped together with 'beetle-things', bees, worms and 'little pretty flittermice'.

What is common to both 'Goblin Feet' and 'Wood-sunshine' is an inherent, melancholic sense of the 'fading' or 'passing' of all these supernatural beings found in them. Ryan suggests that the final note of sadness in the former might express the

[6] One of the senses of the verb 'warble' given in the OED is 'to modulate the voice in singing; to sing with trills and quavers. In later use...to sing softly and sweetly, in a birdlike manner; often merely a jocose substitute for sing'.

[7] For details on the reprints of the poem see Carpenter 1977: 268.

unrequited desire of the poet to follow the creatures, but also 'both the tragedy of their passing, and, perhaps, the tragedy of mortality' (1969: 101). However, it seems to me that there is no question of the death of these creatures. Tolkien is careful about the words he uses. The fairy folk 'fade' or 'fly', and it is only their magic and the echo of their feet that actually 'dies'. The whole image created, especially in 'Goblin Feet', is that of a procession of magical beings that are 'passing', going somewhere the poet does not know, frustrated at their disappearance and his inability to follow them. This 'passing' of, and consequent sorrow accompanying, the 'elvish' beings is one of the ideas that will persist in Tolkien's writings and will become one of the major characteristics of the Elves of Middle-earth. Other elements found in 'Goblin Feet' that look familiar to the Tolkien reader, are the silvery voices of the fairy creatures and their being dressed in grey.

By November 1915, Tolkien had written three more 'fairy' poems, which gradually provide more information on the beings referred to in his previous ones. The first one is 'You and Me/ and the Cottage of Lost Play' (*Lost Tales I*: 27-30). This poem is given by Christopher Tolkien in two versions. It talks about a land where supernatural beings live. Significantly, they are again unnamed, only referred to as 'shapes' or simply 'folk', but the fact that they are living in 'fairy towns' and dancing in 'fairy rings', as well as the lack of any other term for such beings in the poem, suggest that it is justified to refer to them as 'fairies'. An extract of the poem can give an impression of how these creatures are imagined:

> And all the paths were full of shapes,
> Of tumbling happy white-clad shapes,
> And with them You and Me.
> And some had silver watering-cans
> And watered all their gowns,
> Or sprayed each other; some laid plans
> To build them houses, fairy towns,
> Or dwellings in the trees;

And some were clambering on the roof;
  Some crooning lonely and aloof;
And some were dancing fairy-rings
  And weaving pearly daisy-strings,
Or chasing golden bees;
(*Lost Tales I*: 29).

These 'fairies' remain the diminutive creatures of the previous poems and demonstrate a gay and cheerful mood, which is strengthened by the description of their merry, even foolish, pastimes. Strangely enough, this poem does not clearly refer to the 'passing' or 'fading' of the fairies, but this is mainly because they are already not in this world, but in a place where they can only be reached in dreams. Indeed, the poem narrates the story of two children getting lost while sleeping and travelling in their dreams in the land where the fairies live. However, there is another important element introduced, concerning time. The 'fairies' of this poem seem to have a past, a long history from where their 'rhymes of long ago' derive. It is the first time that these creatures acquire any depth in time, in contrast to their transitory presence in the previous poems.

A very strange and difficult to classify poem was written later on in the same year: 'A Song of Aryador' (*Lost Tales I*: 138-9). It has a sinister atmosphere as it refers to 'shadow-folk', to the sound of 'ghostly bells' and to 'songs of olden gods'. What would justify its discussion here, however, are some traits of this peculiar 'shadow-people' that seem to remind us of the previously discussed 'fairy' beings: they dance all night, they sing 'ancient songs', they are implied to be responsible for the 'wandering beams of light' in the woods, and they appear to be 'marching'. In addition, all this activity is long gone and forgotten now, as the whole poem refers to a time in the past where the 'shadow-folk' *used* to dwell in Aryador. It will be shown below that these creatures are the origin of the 'lost fairies' or 'lost elves' of 'The Book of Lost Tales'.

The third 'fairy poem', entitled 'Kortirion among the Trees', was written in November 1915 (*Lost Tales I*: 32-36). Here, the destination that the 'passing' or 'fading' fairy beings ultimately reach is finally named: it is Kortirion, the 'fading town', also called 'the Land of Elms' and 'Alalminórë in the Faery Realms' (*Lost Tales I*: 33), the same place that is implied in 'The Cottage of Lost Play'. This is the first time that Tolkien clearly describes a location out of this world, a Faery Realm, where these creatures live after their 'passing'. Indeed the scenes of this 'passing' are longer and more lyrical than before: they leave in a slow process, while singing nostalgically of 'things that were and could be yet', and the ordinary people gradually forget them. The creatures are unhesitatingly called 'the holy fairies and immortal elves' (*Lost Tales I*: 34). This is the first time the term 'elf' appears in any of Tolkien's works and it is significant that, together with the term 'fairy', which is used to describe the same creature, it immediately has a divine quality. The elves and fairies are no longer merry and gay, even rather foolish, beings, but semi-divine characters, untouched by death. Of course, they still dance and sing, but these activities become less frequent. Also, they are described in greater detail than before, and their splendid clothes and their asphodel-coloured hair enhance their magnified profile in this poem (*Lost Tales I*: 35).

At the end of 1915 and towards the beginning of 1916, Tolkien revisited his Tinfang Warble character, writing a new poem about him entitled 'Over Old Hills and Far Away' (*Lost Tales I*: 108-110). Tinfang Warble in this poem is again a merry piper running fervently and dancing, but he is no more a 'leprawn', but instead an 'old elf', with white hair (*Lost Tales I*: 110). This rather oxymoronic schema, of an elderly creature dancing and moving like the wind, is further reinforced by additional information on his appearance and movement: he has a silver laugh, he wears slippers

with twisted toes, he is able to leap in the air, and he is rather small in stature as the poem refers to his 'little feet' and his 'slim little body' (*Lost Tales I*: 109). Tinfang brings to mind the gay fairy beings encountered in earlier poems of Tolkien, but at the same time demonstrates an additional quality that makes him very different from any other such creature, and which here appears for the first time in Tolkien's concept of the Elves: the element of allurement. The little old piper, as another Piper of Hamelin, indirectly calls the poet to follow him, and this call seems to be irresistible. When at some point in the poem Tinfang seems to be gone, the poet feels disappointed and melancholy, until he appears again and he eagerly follows him. What seems to become consolidated in this last poem – before the 'Lost Tales' period – is the idea of a Fairyland, a place where the fairies dwell, a locus which is not defined geographically except that it is definitely not in this world. This is the place to which Tinfang leads the enchanted poet, and it is a concept that would occupy Tolkien's imagination for a long time afterwards.

One further poem, written in 1916, also deserves to be mentioned here, entitled 'The Lonely Isle', and dedicated 'to England' (*Letters*: 437; *Lost Tales I*: 25). The poem is mostly concerned with the description of the island, but we are also told that on its coasts 'the shoreland spirits ride', and we are introduced to 'old haunts of many children robed in flowers' as well as 'fairies with a wistful heart' who dance to the music of harps and viols (*LUV*: 57). The poem is mostly dominated by the poet's nostalgia and longing for the island, which, as has been suggested by Garth, might reflect Tolkien's homesickness while serving in France during the Great War (2003: 144). However, it is not clear at all that the isle of the poem should be equated with England, despite the dedication, especially if one takes into account Tolkien's later envisioning of the 'Lonely Island' as the home of the Elves.

Having examined Tolkien's early poems that include beings close to his later Elves, a few general conclusions can be drawn about the concept of these creatures during this first period of his literary production. First, their name is not standardised, as a great variety of terms are being used to refer to them, although towards 1916 the words 'elf' and 'fairy' seem to prevail. They are presented as merry folk, usually of diminutive size, but they also trigger a peculiar grief and melancholy, mostly in connection with their 'passing', a concept that remains very vivid throughout the poems. They generally have a depth in time, and they live in a 'fairyland' place, in an undefined location.

Alongside the poems with a purely 'fairy' subject-matter, Tolkien during this period wrote other poems that proved later on to be very important for his image of the Elves. A poem inspired by a line from Cynewulf's *Crist*, entitled 'The Voyage of Earendel the Evening Star', about a mariner travelling with a star-ship, was composed in 1914 (Carpenter 1977: 71);[8] a character known as 'the Man in the Moon', taken from the well-known nursery rhyme, and his funny adventures appeared in a poem written during the period 1914-15 (Carpenter 1977: 73-4); and during 1915 'The Shores of Faery' was written, as part of a 'Lay of Earendel', which describes the land of Valinor, the 'city of gods' (Carpenter 1977: 76-7).

[8] Carpenter ascribes the Anglo-Saxon poem *Crist* to Cynewulf, which is what Tolkien's contemporaries would have thought. However, this view is no longer generally held. The three *Crist* poems, once ascribed collectively to Cynewulf, are no longer read as a single sequence and evidence for a Cynewulfian authorship exists only for *Crist II*. *Crist I*, which contains the reference to Earendel, is now generally thought to be anonymous. See Fulk 2001.

2.2 The Creation of the Saga

The poems discussed above, especially those composed during 1915, give the impression of a more structured 'story', or 'mythology' that underlies them. During the same period of time, Tolkien had started composing the 'Qenya Lexicon', a dictionary of entries of an imaginary language based on Finnish, which he had come to decide was the language spoken by the fairies of his emerging mythology (Carpenter 1977: 76).[9] As Garth has argued, the 'Qenya Lexicon' was 'a writer's notebook', in which names of characters and places were noted down, while the stories were developing in Tolkien's mind (2003: 63). Tolkien took the big step and proceeded to write this 'story' in 1917, while recovering in the hospital from trench fever. Carpenter describes vividly the painful personal incidents that led to this decision and records that:

> On the cover of a cheap notebook he wrote in thick blue pencil the title that he had chosen for his mythological cycle: 'The Book of Lost Tales'. Inside the notebook he began to compose what eventually became known as *The Silmarillion*. (1977: 90)

'The Book of Lost Tales' was published posthumously, as is also the case with *The Silmarillion*, by Tolkien's son, Christopher. Any reader familiar with the latter will recognise its origin in the former. A big difference between the two works, however, is the presence of 'mediation' in the former. 'The Book of Lost Tales' is introduced by Eriol, a man who travels with his ship 'by desire of strange lands' (*Lost Tales I*: 13) and ends up in the Lonely Island (Tol Eressëa), inhabited by people called interchangeably 'fairies' or 'elves', who seem to be capable of 'magic' and who narrate to him stories of the past when the 'fairies' still lived in Valinor.

[9] The relations between Tolkien's invented languages and his mythology are explored in detail in Chapter 4: § 2.5.

It is by means of this work that many lacunae and queries regarding characters and places in the earlier poems, as well as in the 'Qenya Lexicon', are finally filled and answered.[10] The history of the 'elves' or 'fairies' is unfolded and many things are explained. Thus, the 'elves' or 'fairies' live now in Kortirion, which is the chief town of Alalminórë in Tol Eressëa, ages after their first awakening in the Great Lands,[11] their journey to and sojourn in Valinor, and its abandonment by some of them to return to the Great Lands. The outline of the history of the Elves in *The Silmarillion* is roughly the same, with minor or more important details, names and places that differ, signs of an earlier stage of the evolution of the Silmarillion Saga. However, if rather than seeing the work as an ancestor of *The Silmarillion*, one considers it as the next step in the development of Tolkien's creative imagination after his early poems, there are very significant observations to be made.

Bearing in mind the issue of the terms that refer to his 'elvish' creatures in the poems, 'The Book of Lost Tales' shows that Tolkien had decided that it was perfectly legitimate to maintain a series of names for them: Elves or elves, Fairies or fairies. All these terms seem to be used interchangeably. It seems, then, that 'fairy' and 'elf' are two terms used for exactly the same beings, as was the case in 'Kortirion among the Trees'. For example, we are told that Manwë Súlimo is 'Lord of *Elves* and Men', but also that 'Gwendeling was not *elf* or woman but of the children of the Gods'; at the same time Tinúviel is referred to as 'Princess of *Fairies*', while Gilfanon as 'one of

[10] On some occasions the 'Qenya Lexicon' provides glimpses of earlier layers of 'The Book of Lost Tales' that were developing in Tolkien's mind but never came to be written down. For example, the name of the female deity 'Erinti', described in QL as 'the Vala of love, music, and beauty' (36), does not appear anywhere in the 'Book of Lost Tales', while there are a series of even more mysterious and intriguing entries, associated with Christianity, like evandl ('Christian missionary'), evandilyon ('gospel'), *manimuine ('Purgatory'), and (ana)tarwesta ('crucifixion'), (*QL*: 36, 58, 89). Although we know nothing of how Tolkien was planning to use such terms in his mythology, they might have to do with the purifying role of the fairies as envisaged by young Tolkien as part of the 'mission' of the TCBS (see below, § 3.2).

[11] The term Middle-earth does not figure at all in 'The Book of Lost Tales'. Instead the term Great Lands is used.

the oldest of the *fairies*' (*Lost Tales I*: 52, 175; *Lost Tales II*: 8, 26, my italics). It is also important that a lot of compounds with the word 'fairy' occur, such as 'fairy speech' or 'fairy music', as well as the adjective 'elfin' in phrases as 'elfin maiden', or 'elfin language'. These beings belong in three sub-divisions, the Gnomes, the Noldoli and the Solosimpsi.[12] The word 'Gnome' is thus used for one of the divisions of the 'elves'/'fairies' and has no connotation of a dwarfish, rather ugly creature which would have been the common preconception in Tolkien's time.[13] It can thus be suggested that it is possible that the 'gnomes' found in 'Goblin Feet', although coupled with 'leprechauns', are not really the traditional gnomes, but a kind of 'fairy' species, something suggested also by the 'fairy atmosphere' of the poem.

The diminutiveness of the 'fairies/elves' does not seem to be maintained in 'The Book of Lost Tales', at least in the versions of the stories that have been published. Christopher Tolkien, while commenting on the earlier poems in comparison with the *Lost Tales* states:

> Likewise, all the 'elfin' diminutiveness soon disappeared...Yet it is to be observed that in early notes Elves and Men are said to have been 'of a size' in former days, and the smallness (and flimsiness and transparency) of the 'fairies' is an aspect of their 'fading', and directly related to the domination of Men in the Great Lands. (*Lost Tales I*: 32)

Also, when editing one of the 'outlines' of 'Gilfanon's Tale',[14] Christopher records the following additional note by his father:

> Men were almost of a stature at first with the Elves, the fairies being far greater and Men smaller than now. As the power of Men has grown the fairies has dwindled and Men waxed somewhat. (*Lost Tales I*: 235).

---

[12] Equivalent to the threefold division of Elves in the later Middle-earth works of Tolkien, namely Vanyar, Noldor and Teleri.

[13] It seems that Tolkien intended the word 'gnome' to be understood in terms of the Greek word 'γνώμη' (*gnōmē*), meaning thought, intelligence, but the associations of the word with *pygmaeus* because of Paracelsus led to its abandonment (*Letters*: 318, 449). Garth has also added the unwanted connotations of 'the later British fad for ornamental garden gnomes' (2003: 76).

[14] Tolkien used to write sketches or outlines for his stories, some of which never reached the form of a full text.

The only direct reference to the small size of the 'fairies/elves' in 'The Book of Lost Tales' as published is in the introductory story of 'The Cottage of Lost Play', where the cottage is described as very small and Eriol thinks he will not be able to enter unless 'if he might of his own good wish to become small enough'; but when he enters he finds that the cottage is much more spacious than he thought (*Lost Tales I*: 14). All these elements are somewhat ambiguous and the issue of size is not fully discussed anywhere in the published text.

As one continues reading 'The Book of Lost Tales', one sees that more pieces of the jigsaw of the early poems fall into place. The 'ancient gods' from 'A Song of Aryador' and from 'The Shores of Faery' are the Valar, the 'gods' that helped in the creation of the world. The 'shadow-people' of Aryador are the 'lost elves', the ones that can still today be seen on Earth, the ones that remained in the Great Lands and did not go to Kortirion as the rest of the Noldoli did (*Lost Tales I*: 48-50, 68).[15] Tinfang Warble is 'a quaint spirit' of mixed origin, who seems to have the ability to pass into the World of Men to play his pipe (*Lost Tales I*: 95-6). Finally, the Man on the Moon is Uolë Kúvion, an old elf that stepped unseen on to the moon when it was made and dwells there ever since (*Lost Tales I*: 192-3).

This first version of the 'Silmarillion Saga' was more or less completed by 1923. By then the 'elves/fairies' were considered as the oldest creatures on earth, created before men by the One, and their history is turned into a complete mythological cycle, including a cosmogony and an attempt to explain their presence or non-presence in the contemporary world. Although these creatures are indeed very close to the later Elves, they are more naïve and light-hearted as characters, even

[15] According to other manuscripts they are an unknown people, distinct from elves/fairies, encountered by the Noldoli in Hisilómë (*Lost Tales I*: 237; 291).

when they commit the kin-slaughter and leave Valinor. Their later maturity is less sinister and overall they could be placed somewhere in the middle between the gay creatures of the early poems and the Elves in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*.

The next step in the development of the Silmarillion saga is represented in two long poems, 'The Lay of the Children of Húrin', developing more the story of Turin Turambar, and 'The Lay of Leithian', narrating the story of Beren and Lúthien (*Lays*: 3-130, 150-329). During this time, Tolkien wrote the 'Sketch of the Mythology', which Christopher Tolkien has called the 'Earliest Silmarillion', being an outline of his mythology in order to provide the necessary background for reading the two lays (*Shaping*: 11). Although it is brief and hasty, the 'Sketch' is indeed the 'earliest Silmarillion' in the sense that it departs from the fairy and light-hearted 'Book of Lost Tales' and moves much closer to the later *Silmarillion*. It is also significant that the term 'fairy' practically disappears in these works, apart from a single instance in 'The Lay of Leithian' where it is used as an equivalent of the term 'elves' (*Lays*: 156). However, in the period of the 'Sketch' and the 'Lays' and after 'The Book of Lost Tales' another two poems by Tolkien featuring fairies appeared in print. These were 'An Evening in Tavrobel' and 'The Princess Ni', both published in *Leeds University Verse* (*LUV*: 56, 58). The former refers to happy 'gleaming spirits' with 'tiny faces' who dance all noon, and drink the Sunlight from buttercups, a poem very much in the spirit of his Tolkien's earliest fairy-poems before 'The Book of Lost Tales'. The latter is much more playful and describes the princess Ní, evidently a fairy-creature: she has 'elfin hair', she wears 'silver slippers' made of 'fishes' mail', and she is dressed in clothes decorated with feathers and insects. The 'fairyness' of the creature is taken to extremes, then, so that the poem could even be characterised as a parody. Apart from

these two new fairy-poems, Tolkien also revised 'Tinfang Warble' and 'Over Old Hills and Far Away'. In the first, Tinfang is no longer called a 'leprechaun', but what is even more intriguing is the re-writing of the latter, where all words containing the term 'fairy' have been substituted by the term 'Elf' (*Lost Tales I*: 110). It seems, then, that Tolkien's uncertainty over the interchangeable use of 'fairy' and 'elf' in 'The Book of Lost Tales' shifted slowly and gradually towards a preference for the latter term.

2.3. Tolkien's Children's Literature

The period from 1920 to 1939 was the time when most of Tolkien's children were born and spent their childhood years. It is, therefore, not strange that some of his writings became child-oriented. Of course nothing had been published yet, apart from some of his early poems, but part of his interest was now turned towards stories that would amuse his children. This is how *The Hobbit* was born and how the *Father Christmas Letters* and *Roverandom* were written.

The Father Christmas Letters is a collection of decorated letters, usually with pictures attached to them, which the Tolkien children have been allegedly receiving from Father Christmas every Christmas Eve. The letters were edited in 1976 by Bailie Tolkien, and according to her introduction the first letter arrived in 1920. The published collection covers the letters from 1925 to 1939.[16] What is very significant about the letters is that, although in the beginning the main characters involved in Father Christmas's adventures – which are the main topic of the letters – are only himself and the Polar Bear (and it seems that this is also the case with the letters

[16] The last letter does not appear in the book having the date as its title, as the rest do, but is entitled 'The Last Letter'.

before 1925, which do not appear in the edition), later on more characters appear, and they seem to correspond to traditional Tolkien Good and Evil species: Elves, Gnomes and Goblins.

Elves first appear as 'Snow-elves' in the 1929 letter but do not appear again until 1933, after which their presence is important in almost every letter. They are called Elves, or sometimes Red Elves, and only once a possibly different kind of elves appear, called Green Elves. What their difference may be is not at all explained in the letters, but in the pictures the Elves are usually wearing red clothes, and that may be an indication for the explanation of their name, especially when in the only letter where Green Elves appear, elves dressed in green are also present in the relevant picture (*FCL*: 1936). Elves are invariably good and help Father Christmas with practical tasks, they have their own language, they are rather jolly and playful and 'somewhat vertically challenged' (Gunnell 2002). From 1936, a number of them seem to have moved to Father Christmas's house for good, and this is when a specific elf, called Ilbereth,[17] appears to be writing part of the letter. Ilbereth is upgraded to the post of Father Christmas's secretary in 1937, which post he never subsequently gives up. It is in 1937 too that there appears a specimen of an elvish language, as Ilbereth writes a Christmas wish in 'Elvish', as he calls it, to the Tolkien children.

The Gnomes appear as 'Gnomes' or 'Red Gnomes', first in the 1932 letter, and are defined as the worst enemies of Goblins. They are not described at all, but in the pictures they appear as very similar to elves: they wear hoods, and they are short and thin. However, the aspect about them which is emphasised is their ability to fight the evil Goblins, instead of helping Father Christmas as the Elves end up doing. They

[17] The name itself is very significant, as it immediately brings to mind 'Elbereth', the Sindarin name of the Valar Queen Varda Elentári, which means 'star-lady'. Of course, there can be no similarity between the two characters, but the choice of an elf name is important for Tolkien, even if it is only a small slim elf, dressed in red and wearing a pointed hood.

are strong fighters, but do not seem to be very sociable, as they are never invited into Father Christmas's house. Bearing in mind the term 'Gnomes' used in 'The Book of Lost Tales' to refer to one of the three divisions of elves/fairies, especially to the one that left Valinor after the kin-slaying and wandered in the Greater Lands, it could be noted that despite their diminutive stature and their funny outfits, these Elvish people are in a way a more child-like interpretation of the earlier Gnomes.

In the mid-1920s, a story about a little dog was created by Tolkien, to console his son Michael who had lost a little toy-dog that he liked a lot (Carpenter 1977: 161-2). It is the story of a real dog, which is cursed by a wizard and becomes a toy-dog, has amazing adventures, including a trip to the moon and another one to the bottom of the sea, and is finally restored to his original size and nature (*Roverandom*). The story is a mishmash of folklore and mythological characters that Tolkien knew, like the Man on the Moon, mermaids, a sea-serpent that greatly resembles the Norse Midgard-Serpent, and a reference to the Red and White dragons found in Geoffrey of Monmouth. All of these characters are simplified to comply with the humorous nature of the story. There are also 'fairies' in *Roverandom*, but they are mainly equated with the mermaids, as they are called 'sea-fairies' which seems to be just another name for them. However, there is a very significant instance, when Roverandom travels on the back of the whale Uin, and while passing the 'Uncharted Waters', he gets:

> ...glimpses of lands unknown to geography, before they passed the Shadowy Seas and reached the great Bay of Fairyland (as we call it) beyond the Magic Isles; and saw far off in the last West the Mountains of Elvenhome and it be light of Faery upon the waves. Roverandom thought he caught a glimpse of the city of the Elves on the green hill beneath the Mountains, a glint of white far away; but Uin dived again so suddenly that he could not be sure. If he was right, he is one of the very few creatures, on two legs or four, who can walk about our own lands and say they have glimpsed that other land, however far away. (*Roverandom*: 73-4)

This is an unmistakable reference to Valinor and the Lonely Island, taken straight from the Silmarillion saga and incorporated into the fairy-tale world of *Roverandom*. It is characteristic that here Tolkien refers to Elves spelled with capital E, and makes sure that they are totally distinct from whatever other 'fairy' creatures are found in the story.

During the period in which the letters from Father Christmas were still being written, Tolkien had started writing what became *The Hobbit*, although it was left unfinished until 1936, when it was read by Susan Dagnall of Allen & Unwin; at her suggestion Tolkien finished it and it was subsequently accepted for publication (Carpenter 1977: 177, 180). *The Hobbit* was finally published in the autumn of 1937, and was very successful with young readers. The book clearly had a target readership of children, as is obvious in the style of writing. In the story elves appear, which are spelled Elves towards the end of the book, and this is the last time the word 'fairy' is used in a Middle-earth context. This is at the very beginning of the story, when Bilbo's family and its impact on his character are discussed. Thus, the taste of his Took part for adventure is here attributed to an alleged marriage of a hobbit with a 'fairy'. Having examined the earlier works of Tolkien, the use of this term does not seem so absurd. However, the later hostility of Tolkien towards 'fairies' and his use of the term 'Elves' consistently throughout his writings from the mid-1920s onwards (as well as throughout *The Hobbit* with this small exception discussed here) has led Rogers to suggest that '... "fairy" in the language of Middle-earth was a word used for elves – by hobbits who did not believe in elves. These would be the provincial-minded hobbits of the period Tolkien is writing about' (1975: 70). This view may be true for the post-*Lord of the Rings* edition of *The Hobbit*. While Tolkien was writing *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit* was published again with some minor changes in

order that the story would fit with its continuation. It seems to me that it was then that Tolkien decided to keep the word 'fairy' as a vulgar reference to Elves by ignorant hobbits. My impression is that the use of the term in the first edition of *The Hobbit* reflects his continuing uncertainty about which term to finally adopt, especially when writing a children's story. It was only later on, when due to the progress of *The Hobbit*'s sequel the whole hobbit-matter got incorporated into the Silmarillion Saga, that Tolkien decided that 'Elves' is the right term and stuck to it. Elves in *The Hobbit* are still not exactly the creatures of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. Helms has argued that *The Hobbit* can be described as a children's version of *The Lord of the Rings*, noting similarities in the plots of both works (mainly the quest motif) and claiming that there exists the same sense of good and evil, which however is undercut in *The Hobbit*, since it is addressed to a readership of children. According to this argument it is perfectly legitimate that the Elves, as presented in *The Hobbit*, should also be undercut:

> When Bilbo arrives at Rivendell, he finds not the exalted and mysterious elves of the Rings, but gay and chattering Little People, eager to tease and joke, lacking in all but the power to amuse. In the children's version of Tolkien's story, the elven-folk sing delicious nonsense, gay and carefree...The elves of the Rings are another order entirely... (Helms 1976: 34)

Although there may be similarities in plot between *The Hobbit* and its 'sequel', which could justify the argument of Helms about the latter being a more serious version of the former, addressed to an adult audience, it seems to me that the case of the Elves as found in *The Hobbit* is not so simple to explain. First, it is known that while writing *The Hobbit* Tolkien had not really realised that it would fit into his greater mythological cycle, and it started as a completely independent work (Carpenter 1977: 176-7). So, when the scenes where Elves figure in the book were being composed, Tolkien may have had in mind his former creations, but certainly he

did not think of them as the creatures – or even ancestors of the creatures – that were the heroes in his Silmarillion Saga, as found in 'The Book of Lost Tales'. I would suggest that these Elves were one more experimentation on the specific species of beings, being done in a very light-hearted way, with the conscious knowledge that an audience of children was being addressed, but still retaining some elements that would let them evolve into the 'entirely different order of beings' of *The Lord of the Rings*. They have elements originating in the Elves of his early poems, and their childlike character (merry and teasing fellows singing nonsensical songs and being cutely rude, as well as gossipers) is also following the tradition of the Elves in *Father Christmas Letters*, where Elves are simplified for children. Gunnell notes that:

> ...they might have grown in size...but their nature remains similar to that imagined by the youthful J.R.R. When we first meet them in Rivendell, they carry 'bright lanterns' and 'laughed and sang in the trees', 'Elvish singing' being 'not a thing to miss, in June under the stars, not if you care for such things.' And then we have the songs themselves. (2002)

The songs are indeed 'pretty fair nonsense' and 'ridiculous', these being characterisations used by *The Hobbit*-narrator figure himself (*H*: 92). The Elves are called Good People or Merry People (*H*: 93, 219, 358), and they are scolded by Gandalf about their 'merry tongues', as 'valleys have ears' (*H*: 93). But at the same time Bilbo seems to be frightened of them for some reason (*H*: 92), as if they can be dangerous. Indeed, later on, when the reader is told about the origins and the nature of the Wood-elves that the company meets in Mirkwood, they are described as 'more dangerous and less wise' than the High-elves that went to 'Faerie in the West' (218-9). Also, elves seem to be omniscient and Gandalf's familiarity with them makes them much more respected characters (*H*: 92). The Wood-elves are also reminiscent of older 'fairy-beings' of Tolkien, since they feast in the Woods and sing and have a king crowned in leaves or flowers, according to the season (*H*: 204-6, 223), very

much like the one in 'The Little House of Lost Play'. However, they are more dark and sinister, as they take prisoners, they hold bows, and their king has a certain desire for treasure.[18] Of course, they are still Good People, and they treat even their worst enemies well (*H*: 219-221).

Towards the end of *The Hobbit*, things get serious, when 'The Battle of the Five Armies' takes place, which, despite having a fortunate end, has casualties, some of whom are among the main characters of the book. It is at this point Tolkien starts spelling dwarves, elves and men as 'Dwarves', 'Elves' and 'Men' (*H*: 339). However, he switches back to 'elves' when Bilbo returns to Rivendell on his way back and encounters them again singing, although their song is not as nonsensical as before (*H*: 355-6).

The Elves in *The Hobbit* can thus be described as somewhere between the 'fairies/elves' of the Lost Tales and the Elves of *The Lord of the Rings*. They are more light-hearted and naïve than the latter but at the same time they have a history – which does not concern the main plot of the story – and they are divided into groups, the main division being between the Elves who went to Faerie and those that did not. Their standard form, which had started emerging shortly after 'The Book of Lost Tales' and reached its full form in *The Lord of the Rings*, was the next step of Tolkien's creation.

In 1937, 'Kortirion among the Trees' was revised. The poem is not very different from its earlier version but it is significant that all references to 'fairies' have been substituted by 'Elves' (*Lost Tales I*: 36-39). This is a process already seen above with the revision of 'Over Old Hills and Far Away', and this time Tolkien seems finally to have decided that this is the term he is going to use.

[18] The elf-king resembles very much Thingol, the king of the Grey-elves in Doriath found in *The Silmarillion*, as the latter also lives in a cave-palace and has a lust for treasures, mainly represented by his demand for a Silmaril in order to allow the marriage of Beren and Lúthien (*S*: 166-7).

2.4. *The Era of* The Lord of the Rings

In 1937, at the suggestion of Stanley Unwin, Tolkien began to write a sequel to *The Hobbit*. As he did so he felt that the new work was gradually getting more serious than the latter. The story continued being written slowly, with great pauses, until 1939, when Tolkien wrote his 'essay' 'On Fairy-Stories', which was delivered as an Andrew Lang lecture at the University of St. Andrews (Carpenter 1977: 182-90). It seems that the issue of 'fairy-stories' had occupied Tolkien's mind a lot while he was writing what became *The Lord of the Rings*. Carpenter observes that:

> ...*The Hobbit* was clearly designed for children and *The Silmarillion* for adults, but he [Tolkien] was aware that *The Lord of the Rings* was less easy to categorise...But he felt that fairy-stories are not necessarily for children, and he decided to devote much of his lecture to the proof of this belief. (1977: 190)

The lecture was the point of emergence of Tolkien's sub-creation theory: the creation of a Secondary World as being the highest function of man (*MC*: 43-50). After the lecture Tolkien '...returned with a new enthusiasm to the story whose purpose he had justified...' (Carpenter 1977: 191).

Part of the lecture was also devoted to 'fairies' themselves, as well as to the realm of 'Faërie'. Helms rightly observes that it is here that Tolkien explicitly states for the first time that the realm of Faërie is perilous and he claims that this is a result of what his children's story, i.e. *The Hobbit*, had taught him (1976: 110). It is true that *The Hobbit* ended up including sinister aspects of the Fairy land, which Tolkien felt had crept into it unnoticed, like the 'Necromancer' (Carpenter 1977: 178). And of course, the Middle-earth world into which Tolkien's new story was taking place was much more frightful and dangerous, full of threats right from the beginning. It is to be expected then, that his Elves would no longer be happy and gay. Talking about 'elves'

or 'fairies' Tolkien openly rejects their representation as diminutive, which he claims is 'a product of "rationalization", which transformed the glamour[19] of Elfland into mere finesse, and invisibility into a fragility that could hide in a cowslip or shrink behind a blade of grass...' and blames Shakespeare and Drayton for this misunderstanding (*MC*: 12-13). It sounds as if he thinks that, in contrast, his Middle-earth Elves are rather taller than the average Man. Chance Nitzsche also notes that in 'On Fairy-Stories' Elves present a duality as far as their approach towards men is concerned:

> ...In 'On Fairy-Stories' the elves and fairies represent tempters: 'part of the magic that they wield for the good or evil of man is power to play on the desires of his body and his heart'... Yet elsewhere in 'On Fairy-Stories'...the elves appear as guides of goodwill toward others, a nobler and wiser species than any other. (1979: 52)

Indeed, this duality is also true for *The Lord of the Rings*.

The first time that Elves appear in *The Lord of the Rings* is when Frodo and his company encounter a host of Elves led by Gildor. The first impressions of this scene are not very far from the Elves as presented in *The Hobbit*. There is a playful tone at the beginning of their conversation, with the same kind of slightly rude comments on the Elves' part, that is very reminiscent of the first encounter of the dwarves' company with Elves in Rivendell in *The Hobbit*, where the latter are teasing the dwarves for their long beards. The Elves' approach is betrayed by their singing, as the hobbits hear a 'sound like mingled song and laughter' in the 'starlit air' (*FR*: 78). However, their singing is not the silly rhymes of *The Hobbit*, but rather a hymn in the High-Elven tongue, parts of which only Frodo understands and thus can identify them as High-Elves. When they introduce themselves they call themselves 'Exiles'. They are not described in detail but we are told that they are surrounded by light, as the

[19] Shippey has argued that the word 'glamour' is used by Tolkien in its older sense, meaning 'magic, enchantment, spell' (1982: 40).

starlight 'glimmered on their hair and in their eyes' and also seemed to fall on their feet (*FR*: 80). The tone of the whole scene soon becomes more serious when the Black Riders are mentioned. Again, some elements from *The Hobbit* are present later on, when the Elves are sitting around the fire, having torches on trees and having food and drink, a scene very like the feasting of the Wood-elves in Mirkwood. However, now the elvish food and drink is extraordinary. Also, the Elves are not the light-hearted Merry Folk of *The Hobbit*. Pippin calls them 'Wise People', while Gildor hesitates to give advice to Frodo because 'advice is a dangerous gift'. He seems to know a lot about the Riders but prefers not to scare Frodo and only warns him against them.

Glorfindel is the next one of the Elven-folk that the company of hobbits meets before they reach Rivendell. Aragorn introduces him as one of the house of Elrond and he is presented as a skilled rider, sent by Elrond to bring news from Frodo. In his case there is no light-hearted tone nor idle conversation. He speaks in a soft voice like the Elves did before, and he also offers the hobbits a drink that refreshes them, but at the same time he seems to have played some part in disarming the Black Riders, and Gandalf describes him as 'an Elf-lord of a house of princes' (*FR*: 223).

After the encounter with Glorfindel, it is obvious that no more chattering and humorous Elves are to be met again. The plot of the book is also getting more serious and dark, but this is not the only reason. From this point onwards the standard image of the Elves, as the superior and oldest race of Middle-earth beings, who are full of beauty, wisdom and grief, an image very consistent with that of *The Silmarillion*, is slowly coming into the foreground: the ageless Elrond, Arwen's beauty and queenly aura, the 'perilous but fair' Galadriel, the Elf-warriors of Lórien. Elves in legendary tales of the past emerge in poems, such as Eärendil, Lúthien and Nimrodel. Their

history is outlined in the Appendices at the end of the third volume, where Tolkien seems anxious to give the main characteristics of his Elves and to distinguish them from the popular notion attached to the word:

> Elves has been used to translate both Quendi, 'the speakers', the High-elven name of all their kind, and Eldar, the name of the Three Kindreds that sought for the Undying Realm and came there at the beginning of Days (save the Sindar only). This old word was indeed the only one available, and was one fitted to apply to such memories of these people as Men preserved, or to the making of Men's minds not wholly dissimilar. But it has been diminished, and to many it may now suggest fancies either pretty or silly, as unlike to the Quendi of old as are butterflies to the swift falcon – not that any of the Quendi ever possessed wings of the body, as unnatural to them as to Men. They were a race high and beautiful, the older Children of the world, and among them the Eldar were as kings, who now are gone; the People of the Great Journey, the People of the Stars. They were tall, fair of skin and grey-eyed, though their locks were dark, save in the golden house of Finarfin; and their voices had more melodies than any mortal voice that now is heard. They were valiant, but the history of those that returned to Middle-earth in exile was grievous; and though it was in far-off days crossed by the fate of the Fathers, their fate is not that of Men. Their dominion passed long ago, and they dwell now beyond the circles of the world, and do not return. (*RK*: 1137)

Gunnell comments on the heroic status of the Elves, which he claims, however, is more true of *The Silmarillion*, especially its last parts, where the Elves fight in battles together with Men and seem to be more active than in *The Lord of the Rings*. He adds that their new role in *The Lord of the Rings* is, instead of taking active part in the fighting, to be something like:

> ...godlike donors...and spiritual helpers from afar. This especially applies to the Lady Galadriel who Sam manages to call on at a distance when he is fighting Shelob, whose glass phial provides light and hope in the darkness of Mordor, and whose earth and seeds bring The Shire promptly back to life after the ravages of Saruman at the end of the book. (2002)

In the same line of argument it could be added that Elrond is also held responsible for the flood at the Ford, which disarms the Black Riders and saves Frodo just before he gets to Rivendell (*FR*: 224).

It is later on, in *The Silmarillion*, that the full stature, history and character of the Elves are fully unfolded and narrated. I would suggest that as far as the standard form of Middle-earth Elves is concerned, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion* should be regarded as one coherent body of information,[20] as the one is the historical continuation of the other. In *The Silmarillion* the history of the Elves, as presented in 'The Book of Lost Tales', is further elaborated and refined, resulting in a species far superior to men, immortal, with an inclination to artistic creation and expression, with heroic ideals and a depth of time. Tolkien does no longer use his Elves to 'explain' popular ideas of the elves and fairies in the real world, neither does he suggest that they still exist, as he clearly does in 'The Book of Lost Tales'.[21] The Elves have passed to Valinor forever, and by the end of *The Lord of the Rings* even the very last ones abandon Middle-earth. They are a pre-Man creation of the God, and their history in this earth has ended.[22]

What should be also added is the issue of the term 'magic', which re-appears in Tolkien's best known works for the first time after 'The Book of Lost Tales' long before. In the latter, the 'elves/fairies' are capable of 'magic' and a lot of things are described as 'magic' in their surroundings. The Elves are also attributed the power of 'magic' on several occasions in *The Lord of The Rings*, but this is a totally different thing, a result of the confusion and wrong ideas people have for elves. Tolkien himself, in a letter written in 1951 explains that:

> I have not used 'magic' consistently, and indeed the Elven-queen Galadriel is obliged to remonstrate with the hobbits on their confused use of the word both for the devices and operations of the Enemy, and for those of the Elves. I have not, because there is no word for the latter...But the Elves are there (in my stories) to demonstrate

[20] Despite their discrepancies, Tolkien himself seems to be referring to both works as 'the Saga of the Three Jewels and the Rings of Power' (*Letters*: 138).
[21] See above, § 2.2.
[22] As noted in Chapter 5 (§ 3.1) Tolkien seems to have regarded Middle-earth as Northern Europe in an era very far back in the past.

> difference. Their 'magic' is Art, delivered from many of its human limitations: more effortless, more quick, more complete (product and vision in unflawed correspondence). And its object is Art not Power, sub-creation not domination and tyrannous re-forming of Creation. (*Letters*: 146)

This is also clear from *The Silmarillion*. 'Magic', either in its lighthearted or in its darker sense, does not exist there. The Elves are seen here in their proper nature, a higher race of beings with specific characteristics different from the other races, but they do not possess any 'extraordinary' powers and their tragic history does not justify the use of this word.

2.5. *The Epilogue:* Tom Bombadil *and* Smith of Wootton Major

In 1962, while Tolkien was preparing *The Silmarillion* for publication, *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil and Other Verses from the Red Book* was published. The book is a selection of poems written by Tolkien, most of them much earlier than the composition of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. The effort made by the author to incorporate these early verses into the tradition of the historical period of *The Lord of the Rings* is evident in the preface. Most of the poems are attributed to Bilbo, or other hobbits, and a whole manuscript tradition is invented to make them fit with *The Lord of the Rings* (*Bombadil*: 61-64). Recognisable characters and incidents from both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are found throughout the book, and the collection also includes poems that refer to Elves. Helms explains that the simplistic ways of referring to the Elves in the poems, in comparison to their presence in *The Lord of the Rings*, is justified by Tolkien by attributing them to the hobbit's simple mind, although the truth is that the poems really express earlier views of Tolkien himself on the nature of Elves (1976: 118). At this stage, Tolkien has indeed

clearly rejected all his old ideas about these beings, but still he feels that these poems should be communicated to the audience, through the technique of attributing them to hobbits, who were so popular. One poem which was a candidate for this collection but did not finally appear is 'The Trees of Kortirion'. It was revised again in 1965 or earlier (*Lost Tales I*: 39). In this last revision, not only does the word 'fairy' not figure, but also a more melancholic atmosphere becomes apparent, since the poem agrees now with the 'tradition' of *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*.

A little fairy-tale entitled *Smith of Wootton Major* was meant to be the final epilogue of Tolkien's most praised creation. This was published in 1967, and arose in a strange way, since Tolkien wrote it as he was preparing a preface for a new edition of George Macdonald's *The Golden Key*, and was trying to explain to the young readers for whom the edition was intended the meaning of the term 'Fairy' by means of a short story (Carpenter 1977: 242). The story includes a character called Alf, who by the end of the story proves to be the King of Faery. Alf is described as soft-spoken, serious and polite. He does not grow up externally, and seems to remain youthful until the end of the story, when Smith – the main hero – has aged (*SWM*: 8-9, 13-4; Chance Nitzsche 1979: 68). The Faery realm is also depicted as a perilous country, to which Smith gains access, but:

> ...he soon became wise and understood that the marvels of Faery cannot be approached without danger, and that many of the Evils cannot be challenged without weapons of power too great for any mortal to wield... (*SWM*: 24)

The elvish creatures of this Faery realm, then, are as beautiful and dangerous as the Elves in *The Lord of the Rings* and in *The Silmarillion*. Apart from the serious and little-spoken Alf, the Queen of the Faery realm is also tall, radiant and full of 'majesty and glory', while a description of a disembarking of 'elven mariners' shows how akin they are to Middle-earth's Elves:

> ...He [Smith] stood beside the Sea of Windless Storm...He saw a great ship cast high upon the land, and the waters fell back in foam without a sound. The elven mariners were tall and terrible; their swords shone and their spears glinted and a piercing light was in their eyes. Suddenly they lifted up their voices in a song of triumph, and his heart was shaken with fear, and he fell upon his face, and they passed over him and went away into the echoing hills. (*SWM*: 28)

In this story Tolkien is sure about his creation. He has reached his conclusions and he is using the Elves in a consistent way with that pictured in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*. At the same time he once more rejects the fanciful diminutiveness of elves, but in a more mature and lenient way acknowledges that the popular idea of little fairies might be the point of initiation for the discovery of the real Elves. The scene where Smith sees the Queen of Faery in her majesty and glory, and suddenly he thinks in shame of the 'little dancing figure with its wand' which is the Fairy Queen as represented by the Cook on top of the Cake, is very characteristic as far as the Queen's answer is concerned:

> 'Do not be grieved for me...Better a little doll, maybe, than no memory of Faery at all. For some the only glimpse. For some the awaking...' (*SWM*: 37-8)

Indeed, maybe at this point Tolkien himself looks backward at his own route in writing about Elves, and realises that the fairy creatures found in his early poems are not the correct depiction of his later Elves, but still they were the first that triggered his interest and eventually led him to discover the real Land of Faery.

3. Tolkien, the Fairies and Folklore

3.1. Tolkien and the Fairies

As shown in the previous sections, the image of Tolkien's Elves changed dramatically from their early conception to their later standard form, while a slightly different depiction of them still remained allowable when Tolkien dealt with a children's readership, or with the 'fairy-tale' genre. What strikes the connoisseur of Tolkien's works, though, is his early preference for fairies, very close to analogous creatures of contemporary folklore, a link that he tried hard to deny later. Indeed, Tolkien repeatedly stated that 'The Elves of the "mythology" of *The Lord of the Rings* are not actually equitable with the folklore traditions about "fairies"...' (*Guide*: 164). And this insistence might reflect not only an anxiety to disassociate his Elves from his readership's own actual experiences and preconceptions, but also an anxiety to denounce his own early work which involved such fairies, and which had found its way into published works – if only in obscure and hard-to-find publications. His reaction to a request to have his poem 'Goblin Feet' reprinted in an anthology in 1971 is characteristic of this anxiety: 'I wish the unhappy little thing, representing all that I came (so soon after) to fervently dislike, could be buried for ever' (*Lost Tales I*: 32).

However, the pre-eminence of fairies in Tolkien's early work, including 'The Book of Lost Tales' is undeniable, and it makes much more sense when contextualised in the historical period that Tolkien was writing in. Indeed, at the turn of the century, marking the end of the Victorian and the beginning of the Edwardian era, fairies were on the agenda for anybody who was aspiring to be a poet, and of anyone interested in folklore. Silver (1999) has underlined the importance of fairies

and fairy-lore in the development of folklore as an area of serious scholarship, while Bown (2001), has discussed the image of the fairies in Victorian literature as a means of enchantment against an increasingly industrialised and rationalised world. Indeed, Tolkien's early fairies seem to be coming straight from the imagery of Victorian fairy painting, as exemplified by such masters of the genre as George Cruikshank and Sir Edwin Landseer, they appear to be associated with the theme of the loss of childhood and enchantment, especially in relation to how these issues are treated in J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, and agree in such detail with popular conceptions of these creatures during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods that even 'flower-fairies' can be found in the 'Qenya Lexicon' (Fimi, forthcoming). Tolkien's early creation was sealed by three main strands, the one not necessarily being the consequence of the other, but certainly all three being interwoven and interconnected in Tolkien's imagination: his metaphysical pursuits, represented by his strong Christian faith, his desire for a 'mythology for England', and finally his passion for philological creation, culminating at the creation of his imaginary languages. Fairies could fit into all three of then: they could be part of God's work, viewed as parts of a mystic vision of the natural world, or as vehicles for reclaiming belief in the supernatural; they could be utilised as the link between the ancient lost mythology of England and contemporary folklore; and they could also be the speakers of Tolkien's imaginary languages.

3.2. Fairies, Faith and Magic

Tolkien's devotedness to his Catholic faith was an important part of his life, from childhood until his last years. In his school years at King Edward's School in Birmingham he and some friends had formed the 'Tea Club' and the 'Barrovian

Society', referred to as TCBS by its members. Although there were more people in the periphery of the group, after the post-school and pre-War years the TCBS's structure was crystallised as Tolkien, Christopher Wiseman, Robert Gilson and Geoffrey Smith, the 'immortal four' as Smith called them (Garth 2003: 118). Both Carpenter (1977) and – more recently – Garth (2003) have pursued the story of the four friends and the tragic death of two of them during the Great War, and both writers have found that at the outbreak of the War the TCBS was more than a remnant of a school club. On the contrary it was a strong fellowship of four young romantic men with a serious mission. In Smith's words this mission was:

> ...to drive from life, letters, the stage and society the dabbling in and hankering after the unpleasant sides and incidents in life and nature which have captured the larger and worser tastes in Oxford, London and the world...to re-establish sanity, cleanliness, and love of real and true beauty in everyone's breast. (Garth 2003: 105).

Gilson's reaction gives yet one more aspect of the mission when he says that: 'I suddenly saw the TCBS in a blaze of light as a great moral reformer...England purified of its loathsome insidious disease by the TCBS spirit. It is an enormous task and we shall not see it accomplished in our lifetime' (Garth 2003: 105). However naïve and springing from youth and inexperience of life such a mission might sound, it was a very serious matter for the TCBS, and indeed for Tolkien himself. His 'Qenya Lexicon' gives a revealing glimpse of how Tolkien associated the TCBS mission with the fairy creatures of his early poems. The entry for 'Eldamar', includes the statement that 'the fairies came to teach men song and holiness' (*QL*: 35). It seems, then that Tolkien understood his early fairies as having a moral obligation towards humanity, as being 'higher' creatures that could show Men the way of virtue. How exactly Tolkien envisioned the realisation of that 'mission' of the fairies, is not known. As referred to briefly above (§ 2.2., fn. 9) in *QL* there are some references to

unmistakeably Christian terminology, like 'crucifixion', and 'gospel', but we can only speculate on how Tolkien was planning to use these terms in 'The Book of Lost Tales'. It is characteristic, however, that in one of his latest works, which, in a way, served as an epilogue to what he had to say about fairies and Elves, Tolkien emphasised the role of the Elves as morally 'beneficent' to Men. In an essay he wrote on *Smith of Wootton Major*, which was discovered and recently edited by Verlyn Flieger (*SWM Essay*), while commenting upon the King of Faery's direct intervention to the world of Men, he wrote that the Elven Folk 'are not bound by any moral to assist Men', and then he adds, in a footnote:

> It is of course possible that they *have a* 'moral' obligation (the sanctions of which we do not know). It may be contained in the word 'kinship', and also be due to the fact that in the last resort the enemy (or enemies) of Faery are the same as those of Men... Men have not the power to assist the Elvenfolk in the ordering and defence of their realm; but the Elves have the power...to assist in the protection of our world, especially in the attempt to re-direct Men when their development tends to the defacing or destruction of their world. (*SWM Essay*: 93-4)

It seems, then, that even at that late stage Tolkien still sees his Elves in the same, or in a very similar, way as when he was thinking of using his early fairies, within the TCBS 'project': as moral guides, and teachers of virtue. As for the 'destruction' of Men's world, and how the Elves could assist Men against it, this might have to do with a more specific aspect of Elvish concern: that of the protection of the natural world as God's creation, which is discussed below.

Carole Silver has shown how the line 'and other sheep have I that are not of this fold' from John's gospel (10:16) was often interpreted by the Victorians as proof of the existence of fairies, being a separate creation of God (1999: 37). Indeed, popular belief had repeatedly linked the fairies with fallen angels while, at the same time, Spiritualists and Theosophists would see them as natural spirits, the 'elementals'

of Paracelsus (Silver 1999: 36-8). These 'religious views' on the origins of fairies were as popular as the 'scientific' ones in the late Victorian period, when Theosophy and Spiritualism were gaining more and more support from a disillusioned society. Although Tolkien's orthodoxy, mainly proved by his devotion to the church, which he referred to as 'Alma Mater Ecclesia' (*Letters*: 109), could not have allowed direct associations with spiritualist and occult sects,[23] he definitely experimented with such ideas.

Carpenter and Garth have discussed Tolkien's debt, as far as his early poetry is concerned, to the Catholic mystic poet Francis Thompson (1977: 48; 2003: 13-14, 36). Although Thompson was an orthodox Catholic as well, he showed an appreciation for nature which – in some poems – reached a mystic vision of it. In his poem 'The Kingdom of God' he argues that, though we may not be able to see it anymore, enchantment is till part of the world. He writes:

> O World invisible, we view thee,
> O World intangible, we touch thee,
> O World unknowable, we know thee,
> Inapprehensible, we clutch thee!

And he adds:

> The angels keep their ancient places; -
> Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
> 'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces,
> That miss the many-splendoured thing.
> (Thompson 1913: 226).

Indeed, it has been suggested that the visionary strength of Thompson's descriptions of nature lies in their fuzziness and mistiness rather than their details (Halladay 1993: 48-9), maybe exactly because the suggestion is that our 'estranged faces', distanced from God, cannot perceive what is really there in its true light. In another poem,

[23] Even though, somewhat later, Owen Barfield's adherence to Steiner's Anthroposophy did not prevent Tolkien from being directly influenced by Barfield's theories, as Flieger has shown (2002: 36).

which has been proposed as the one that influenced Tolkien's 'Wood-sunshine', entitled 'Sister Songs', Thompson's glorious description of nature in spring generates visions of fairies:

> Now at that music and that mirth
> Rose, as 'twere, veils from earth;
> And I spied
> How beside
> Bud, bell, bloom, an elf
> Stood, or was the flower itself
> 'Mid radiant air...
> (Thompson 1913: 29-30).

If nature is part of the spirit of God, then Thompson's elfin swarms could be a partial manifestation of that spirit. Tolkien's first few poems do contain little creatures that could be interpreted as nature spirits in that sense, but it is in 'Kortirion among the Trees' that there is a dramatic shift in their spiritual role. They are now 'the holy fairies and immortal elves' (*Lost Tales I*: 34). Apart from Thomson's vision of the invisible world, Chesterton's *Orthodoxy* also defined the enchantment of nature and associated it with fairies and 'magic'. Especially in the chapter 'The Ethics of Elfland', he argues that:

> ...the only words that ever satisfied me as describing Nature are the terms used in the fairy books, 'charm', 'spell,' 'enchantment.' They express the arbitrariness of the fact and its mystery. A tree grows fruit because it is a magic tree. Water runs downhill because it is bewitched. The sun shines because it is bewitched. (Chesterton 1908: 92).

Tolkien's own associations of fairies with the spirits of nature is obvious also from an instance of dispute within the TCBS. When Tolkien presented his friends with some of his 'fairy poems' in 1916, planning to submit them for publication as a volume under the title *The Trumpets of Faërie*, Wiseman called some of them 'freakish' (Garth 2003: 119). He wrote to Tolkien:

> You are fascinated by little, delicate beautiful creatures... But I feel more thrilled by enormous, slow moving, omnipotent things... And having been led by the hand of God into the borderland of the fringe of

> science that man has conquered... I feel no need to search after things that man has used before... (quoted by Garth 2003: 121).

Indeed, this is an argument for the majesty of the solar system against the enchantment of fairies, for science against folklore, folklore being what Wiseman calls 'the things that man has used before', meaning before modern science. Wiseman sees Tolkien's use of fairies and elves as anachronistic and unrealistic. Tolkien's answer was that his own work 'expressed his love of God's creation: the winds, trees and flowers'. His elvish creatures 'caught a mystical truth about the natural world that eluded science' (quoted by Garth 2003: 121). Indeed, two years previously, in an essay on Thompson presented to the Oxford Essay Club, Tolkien had claimed that: 'one must begin with the elfin and delicate and progress to the profound: listen first to the violin and the flute, and then learn to hearken to the organ of being's harmony' (quoted by Garth 2003: 36). Wiseman's answer was again in disagreement, but he was also anxious to close the conflict. However, Tolkien must have been affected by this exchange of ideas. His fairies did not disappear – on the contrary they became the main characters of 'The Book of Lost Tales' – but their association with natural spirits did not go on for very long after. There are 'elemental' spirits in 'The Book of Lost Tales'. But they are securely separated from the fairies.

As discussed in the first part, in 'The Book of Lost Tales' Tolkien used both the terms 'elves' and 'fairies' interchangeably to refer to the creatures we know in his mature works as Elves. However, there is a plethora of other creatures, referred to as spirits, sprites or fays, which are differentiated form the elves and fairies, and in some instances they are given more specific names, some of which derive from British folklore. In the story of 'The Coming of the Valar', we read that:

> About them fared a great host who are the sprites of trees and woods, of dale and forest and mountain-side, or those – that sing amid the grass at morning and chant among the standing corn at eve. These are

> the Nermir and the Tavari, Nandini and Orossi, brownies, fays, pixies, leprawns, and what else are they not called, for their number is very great: yet must they not be confused with the Eldar, for they were born before the world and are older than its oldest, and are not of it, but laugh at it much, for had they not somewhat to do with its making, so that it is for the most part a play for them; but the Eldar are of the world and love it with a great and burning love, and are wistful in all their happiness for that reason. (*Lost Tales I*: 66)

This is one of the few instances in Tolkien's work where local names of fairies out of British folklore appear. If one works patiently with the material of 'The Book of Lost Tales', comparing it with the two Lexica that Tolkien was creating at the same time, that of Qenya (*QL*) and that of the Gnomish tongue (*GL*), one will end up with a very interesting list of creatures: there are beings associated with earth, like the Nermir, rendered as 'fays of the meads', or 'brownies' (in *QL* Nermi is 'a field spirit' and in *GL* 'a fay that haunts meadows and river-banks'), the Tavari, also called 'fays of the woods' or just 'fays' (in *QL* the tavarni are 'dale-sprites' and in *GL* tavor is a 'wood-fay'), the Nandini, translated as 'fays of the valleys' or 'pixies' (in *QL* a nandin is a dryad while in *GL* 'a fay of the country'), and the Orossi, equated with 'leprawns'; there are also spirits of the air: the Manir and the Suruli, also called 'the sylphs of the airs and of the winds', being also described as 'winged spirits of the utmost purity and beauty... who fare about the halls of Manwe in Taniquetil or traverse all the airs that move upon the world'; there are, finally, spirits associated with water, like the Oarni, the Falmarini and the Wingildi, also called 'spirits of the waves', or 'spirits of the foam and the surf of the ocean' (in *QL* the stem wingild- is translated as 'a nymph' while in *GL* a gwingi is 'a foam maiden' or a 'mermaid').

These spirits bring to mind the 'elementals' of Paracelsus, namely the sylphs of air, the salamanders of fire, the undines or nymphs of water, and the gnomes of the earth (Silver 1999: 35). Tolkien only seems to be missing the elemental spirit of fire, however, there is one sole reference in the 'Gnomish Lexicon' to a creature called a

'Sacha' rendered as 'the fire-fay' (66). What Tolkien is probably doing, is disassociating his own elves and fairies from the fairies of contemporary folklore, by equating the latter with the 'elemental spirits', thus keeping in line with a popular explanation of the origin and nature of fairies shared by Theosophists, Spiritualists and other occultists in the late Victorian times (Silver 1999: 37-41). The use of classical names to refer to them, such as 'dryads' and 'nymphs' is a reinforcement of their elemental nature, since in Greek mythology these semi-divine creatures are securely associated with nature, being spirits linked to fields and springs respectively. This idea of 'elemental' spirits in Middle-earth persisted for a while, since in the 'Etymologies' the word **tawarŏ/ĕ* is rendered as 'dryad, spirit of the woods', while the meaning of *falmar* or *falmarin* is given as a 'sea-nymph' (*Lost Road*: 391, 381).

It seems, though, that later on they evolved into the Maiar, the 'lesser spirits' of the same order of the Valar present in *The Silmarillion*. Their function is the same as that of the 'fays', 'pixies', 'brownies' and 'leprawns' of 'The Book of Lost Tales', since they were mostly interested 'only in some subsidiary matter (such as trees or birds)' (*Letters*: 259), in contrast with the Valar who where responsible for the whole created world. Indeed, the 'fay' Tindriel, or Wendelin or Gwendeling, as she is called in different versions of texts in 'The Book of Lost Tales', who is the mother of Lúthien, develops into the Maia Melian in *The Silmarillion*. This idea of fairy creatures being equated with natural spirits, is repeated in a letter of C.S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves, where he reports the following:

> Tolkien once remarked to me that the feeling about home must have been quite different in the days when a family had fed on the produce of the same few miles of country for six generations, and that perhaps this was why they saw nymphs in the fountains and dryads in the wood – they were not mistaken for there was in a sense a *real* (not metaphorical) connection between them and the countryside. What had been earth and air & later corn, and later still bread, really was in them. We of course who live on a standardised international diet... are

> really artificial beings and have no connection (save in sentiment) with any place on earth. We are synthetic men, uprooted... (Hooper 2000: 909)

In this case Tolkien's reflections, as reported by Lewis, seem to point to a form of animism for the peasants of pre-modern life; again, one of the theories put forward to explain the fairies of folklore and their association with nature. Here Tolkien seems to support a more scientific than metaphysical view toward these nature spirits, but at the same time to express a melancholy for the lost naiveté, or, maybe, the lost faith. In a rejected version of his essay 'On Fairy-Stories' Tolkien ponders on the question of the 'Real (objective) existence of Fairies'. He says:

> They are not spirits of the dead, nor a branch of the human race, nor devils in fair shapes whose chief objects is our deception and ruin. These are either human ideas out of which the Elf-idea has been separated, or if Elves really exist mere human hypotheses (or confusions). There are a quite separate creation living in another mode... For lack of a better word they may be called spirits, daemons: inherent powers of the created world, deriving more directly and earlier (in terrestrial history) from the creating will of God, but nonetheless created, subject to Moral Law, capable of good and evil... They are in fact non-incarnate minds (or souls)... Thus a tree-fairy (or a dryad) is, or was, a minor spirit in the process of creation, who aided as agent in the making effective of the divine Tree-idea, or some part of it, or of even of some one particular example: some tree. He is therefore now bound by use and love to Trees (or a tree), immortal while the world (and trees) last – never to escape, until the End. This is a dreadful Doom (to human minds in any case) in exchange for a splendid power. What fate awaits him beyond the Confines of this World, we cannot know. It is likely that the Fairy does not know himself. It's possible that nothing awaits him – outside of the World and the cycle of Story and of Time. (Bodleian, *MS. Tolkien 6*, Fols. 1-16, p. γ´ 7)

Here Tolkien first rejects the 'human confusions' of fairies as being the spirits of the dead, or as a different branch of the human race. Both of these 'theories' had been proposed by Victorian folklorists, and especially the second linked belief in fairies with the existence of a pygmy race in Europe before the coming of the Indo-European peoples, an idea supported by such folklorists as Jacob Grimm, Benjamin Thorpe,

Dasent, and – perhaps more famously – MacRitchie (Silver 1999: 46-50). Tolkien refuted the pygmy theory also in the published text of 'On Fairy-Stories' where he stated that 'Pygmies are no nearer to fairies than are Patagonians' (*MC*: 115). After that, he goes on to discuss his own view of what the Fairies or Elves really are – surprisingly he seems to use the terms interchangeably in this extract, as he did in 'The Book of Lost Tales' – by defending the thesis of his own early mythology: the view that fairies are created spirits associated with nature. Although his Elves had already emerged by that time in their, more or less, standard illustration and depiction, Tolkien seems in this extracts to be referring to older ideas, or, maybe, to his real views about fairies in the 'primary' world, and not in his own 'sub-created' world, where they have quite a different role.

3.3. Folklore and the 'Mythology for England'

Tolkien referred many times to his work with the term 'mythology', either in quotation marks, or not, and his use is not always consistent. However, as it has been decidedly proved, he never used the exact words 'a mythology for England' as such:[24] this phrase was introduced as a term for Tolkien's project by his biographer Humphrey Carpenter (Stenström 1996), but it has been used since as a standard term to refer to his early nationalistic project. Although much quoted, Tolkien's outline of that project in a letter to Milton Waldman has to be given here:

> I was from early days grieved by the poverty of my own beloved country: it had no stories of its own (bound up with its tongue and soil), not of the quality that I sought, and found (as an ingredient) in legends of other lands. There was Greek, and Celtic, and Romance, Germanic, Scandinavian, and Finnish (which greatly affected me); but

[24] The only time Tolkien came very close to this phrase is when he wrote to a reader that he felt he had set himself a task 'to restore to the English an epic tradition and present them with *a mythology of their own*' (*Letters*: 230-1, my italics).

> nothing English, save impoverished chap-book stuff. Of course there was and is all the Arthurian world, but powerful as it is, it is imperfectly naturalised, associated with the soil of Britain but not with English; and does not replace what I felt to be missing. Do not laugh! But once upon a time (my crest has long since fallen) I had a mind to make a body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story-the larger founded on the lesser in contact with the earth, the lesser drawing splendour from the vast backcloths – which I could dedicate simply to: to England; to my country. It should possess the tone and quality that I desired, somewhat cool and clear, be redolent of our 'air' (the clime and soil of the North West, meaning Britain and the hither parts of Europe: not Italy or the Aegean, still less the East), and, while possessing (if I could achieve it) the fair elusive beauty that some call Celtic (though it is rarely found in genuine ancient Celtic things), it should be 'high', purged of the gross, and fit for the more adult mind of a land long now steeped in poetry. I would draw some of the great tales in fullness, and leave many only placed in the scheme, and sketched. The cycles should be linked to a majestic whole, and yet leave scope for other minds and hands, wielding paint and music and drama. Absurd. (*Letters*: 144-5)

I would suggest, that it is exactly in this sense that the term 'mythology' has been often used by Tolkien: exactly that of 'a body of more or less connected legend, ranging from the large and cosmogonic, to the level of romantic fairy-story'. However, in recent times folklorists prefer to refer to this 'body' as whole by the clearer and less confusing term 'folk-narrative', and sub-divide it into three main categories, namely 'myths, 'legends', and 'folktales'. As synthesised by Bascom, using analogues in folk narratives from all over the world, the definitions of these three genres could be expressed thus:

> Folktales are prose narratives which are regarded as fiction... Myths are prose narratives which, in the society in which they are told, are considered to be truthful accounts of what happened in the remote past... Legends are prose narratives which, like myths, are regarded as true by the narrator and his audience, but they are set in a period considerably less remote, when the world was much as it is today. (1965: 4)

Bascom's basic definitions have succeeded in explaining clearly how a story could be classified as 'myth', 'legend' or 'folktale' respectively, without mixing up in the

discourse such confusing and dubious terms as 'supernatural', 'sacred' or 'popular'. At the same time, he has consolidated into a single article years of research on folklore regarding such classifications, like the Brothers Grimm's distinction between 'Märchen', 'Sagen' and 'Mythen', or Frazer's equivalent definitions.

However, what strikes the modern reader in relation to Tolkien, is exactly the collective term for these three genres: 'folk-narrative'. All of these genres are not the result of an individual named author, but are created by the nameless 'folk', a 'people', or 'ethnic group', or even a 'nation'. Indeed, in the early stages of the development of folklore as an area of serious research, the German equivalent of 'folk', namely 'Volk', was a very important concept. It was Herder (1784) who first emphasised the importance of the formation of a 'Volk', through its shared habitat, its language which reflected its thought, and its pursuit of a collective cultural identity, and it was he who underlined the role of myths in the formation of this identity (Lincoln 1999: 53-4). The nationalistic impulse behind the rediscovery or 'reconstruction' of northern European mythologies has been explored by Shippey, who has also brilliantly discussed Tolkien's own project in this context (2001: x-xvi; 2002). Indeed, if one takes into account the Brothers Grimm's colossal work *Deutsche Mythologie* as well as their fairy-tale collections, Gruntvig's revival of the Danish ballads, as well as – perhaps more importantly – Lönnrot's *Kalevala*, then Tolkien's own effort does not seem so unique or strange. Since other individuals had been involved in collecting, re-structuring and presenting as a coherent whole folk-narratives, indeed 'mythologies' in that sense of the word, Tolkien could have also pursued such a noble cause. However, this is not exactly the case. Shippey again, in his seminal work *The Road to Middle-earth* (1982), has made a case for Tolkien's creation based on philology, through which he was able to 'recapture' lost traditions.

But Tolkien could not have 're-constructed' a 'mythology for England' in the same way that Lönnrot did it for Finland, and the reason for that was not his over-dependence on philology but his non-involvement with, and even his views on, folklore. Lönnrot had collected a huge body of folk poetry with which he could work in order to turn it into a mythological text,[25] and the Grimm Brothers relied heavily on folklore narratives too, but Tolkien never thought too much of folklore, considering it as a debased remnant of the grand ancient mythological texts (see below).

In his long letter of 1951 to Milton Waldman, where his famous statement about his mythological project is included, Tolkien talks about his attempt as one long abandoned, and even absurd (*Letters*: 144-5). However, it seems that he had not forsaken completely the idea even as late as 1945-1946, when he was writing 'The Notion Club Papers'. As Flieger has recently shown, the 'Eriol/ Aelfwine' narrative framework for the 'Silmarillion' was then challenged and for a while substituted by the 'Atlantis' one, but a framework that would link his mythology with England was still actively contemplated by Tolkien (2004). Still even this later 'framework' alternative was finally not realised, although the whole 'framework' problem might just be due to the fact that Tolkien died before finishing and publishing *The Silmarillion* himself. Christopher Tolkien has commented on the lack of a 'framework' in *The Silmarillion*, characterising it as 'an error'. He goes on to explain that his father most possibly had already provided the solution of the framework for the 'Silmarillion', by implying that it would be presented as Bilbo's 'Translations from the Elvish' preserved in the Red Book of Westmarch[26] (*Lost Tales I*: 5-6; *FR*: 1, 7, 14; *RK*: 987). However, this final solution would not guarantee the 'sense of

[25] The editing role of Lönnrot in transforming the folk poetry he collected into the 'high' mythology found in the *Kalevala*, is well accounted for. For a discussion see Honko 1985.
[26] This assumption was also made by Robert Foster, in *The Complete Guide to Middle-earth* (1993; *Lost Tales I*: 6).

belonging' that the earlier two 'frameworks' could have potentially achieved, as Flieger has shown (2004). The 'Silmarillion' would be the mythic and legendary history of the First and Second Ages of Middle-earth, an imagined fictional world,[27] not the long-lost tradition of England, as 'The Book of Lost Tales', or even the 'Notion Club Papers', had been envisaged.

This tantalising toing and froing of ideas and alternative versions finally shows not only Tolkien's own insecurity about the feasibility of his project, but different approaches to his own creation as well. I would suggest that this twofold vision of his own work, at times as a nationalistic pursuit to create an English counterpart that could stand alongside the Celtic, Romance, Norse, or Finnish mythology, and at other times an urge for 'sub-creation' – independent of nationality – according to his own religious and philosophical interpretations of the term, was always present in his mind as if put on imaginary scales; for a while one side would seem heavier and suddenly the other would overcome it. Only this view can explain the inconsistencies of Middle-earth, as well as its complex nature. Tolkien's legendarium cannot be claimed to have been consistently influenced by the 'mythology for England' aim, but neither can this element be discarded in favour for pure 'sub-creation'. The later would not have been possible anyway, since no creative work stands in a void. No form of art, be it literature, music, or the arts, starts from zero and no author, composer or artist is a *tabula rasa*. They are members of a specific society, operating within a specific historical period, and that cannot but be incorporated in one way or another in their art.

[27] Tolkien went to great pains to reject any identifications of the hobbits and the Rohirrim as actual representations of Edwardian and Anglo-Saxon England respectively, by creating the 'theory of translation' as discussed in Chapter 4 (part 2.7), but his whole treatment of the equation of Middle-earth with Europe was not consistent with this.

In the same way, Tolkien was a man of his era, the Edwardian period, the period which – as Flieger has also observed – was the last part of what was characterised by Dorson as 'the golden century' of British Folklorists (2003a; 1968). Fairies were an integral part of contemporary folklore studies, and Tolkien's choice of them as the focus of his early mythmaking might have also to do with the link that fairies could provide to the glorious lost mythological past of England. Indeed, one of the theories put forward to explain the origins of fairies and fairy belief, was that of equating them with '"survivals" of decayed pagan gods or local English deities' (Silver 1999: 41). Such early folklorists as Croker, Keightley and the Brothers Grimm had theorised about the fairies being the remnants of an ancient religious system of the Aryan peoples (Silver 1999: 41). Indeed, Tolkien's views on folklore as an instrument – if only a lesser one – of reaching past myths can be well established from his academic writings.

Although Tolkien denied his knowledge of folklore as an academic discipline in one of his letters (*Letters*: 365-6), he definitely knew enough to be able to comment on the methods of Comparative Folklore (*MC*: 14-15), he was definitely familiar with Müller's Solar mythology (*MC*: 15, 121-2), he proves to have heard of the 'myth and ritual theory' (*MC*: 158), and – as Flieger has discussed recently – he referred to the Müller-Lang debate on the origins of fairy-tales with in-depth knowledge and awareness of the theoretical frameworks contrasted (2003a). However, his reaction to folklore was the same old-fashioned view referred to above, where folk-tales are only a debased form of ancient myths. Talking about *Eärendil* in an Anglo-Saxon and Germanic context, he adds that: '*amid the confusions and debasements of late traditions* it at least seems certain that it belonged to *astronomical-myth*, and was the name of a star or star-group' (*Letters*: 385, my italics). In his essay on *Beowulf*, while

talking about folk-tales, he talks about 'the confusion between myth and folk-tale' and he goes on to explain that:

> The term 'folk-tale' is misleading; its very tone of depreciation begs the question. Folk-tales in being, as told *...do often contain elements that are thin and cheap*, with little even potential virtue; but they also contain much that is far more powerful, and that *cannot be sharply separated from myth, being derived from it*, or capable in poetic hands of turning into it.... (*MC*: 15, my italics)

Finally, in his essay 'On Fairy-Stories', he refers to myth and folktales as 'higher and lower mythologies' respectively (*MC*: 122, 123).

This line of reasoning is well represented in the way Tolkien treated the stature of fairies in 'The Book of Lost Tales', where it is explained that their diminutiveness was indeed true, but of later times of their history, and it is associated with the coming of Men and their domination. In the outlines for the end of the 'Lost Tales', we read that 'Men spread and thrive, and the Elves of the Great Lands fade. As Men's stature grows theirs diminishes' (*Lost Tales II*: 281), while in another instance we learn that 'ever as Men wax more powerful and numerous so the fairies fade and grow small and tenuous, filmy and transparent, but Men larger and more dense and gross. At last Men, or almost all, can no longer see the fairies' (*Lost Tales II*: 283). Christopher Tolkien also records a fragment of an Epilogue to 'The Book of Lost Tales', which he calls 'the clearest picture that survives of the Elves when they have "faded" altogether' (*Lost Tales II*: 326). The extract is the following:

> Like strands of wind, like mystic half-transparencies, Gilfanon Lord of Tavrobel rides out tonight amid his folk, and hunts the elfin deer beneath the paling sky. A music of forgotten feet, a gleam of leaves, a sudden bending of the grass, and wistful voices murmuring on the bridge, and they are gone. (*Lost Tales II*: 326)[28]

[28] The 'fading' Elves are only the ones that remain in the Great Lands, though, since those that returned to Tol Eressea are perceived as being 'unfaded' (*Lost Tales II*: 326).

It is seen here, then, that Tolkien invents an 'explanation' for the diminutiveness of the fairies in popular memory, something which represents the process from them being regarded as the high creatures of myth to their lower status as the later fairies of folklore.

What should also be underlined in the use of fairies for Tolkien's early project for a 'mythology for England', is exactly their Englishness. An aspect of fairy lore that became more and more important in Britain was the use of folklore by the Irish in their cause for independence, as Tolkien would have been aware of. What has been variably called by scholars the 'Irish Revival' or the 'Celtic Twilight', was a rise of interest in Irish folklore at the end of the nineteenth and the beginnings of the twentieth century, especially as opposed to the imposed English culture in Ireland and as a sign of the persistence of a distinct national identity against oppression. In this movement, there were such folklorists, authors and politicians involved as Lady Wilde, Æ (George William Russel), James Stephens, Fiona Macleod (William Sharp), and – perhaps most importantly – W. B. Yeats, Augusta Gregory and Douglas Hyde (Dorson 1966; 1968: 439; Purkiss 2000: 284, 294; Silver 1999: 34; Bown 2001: 166). Especially the interest in the Irish fairies – the *Sidhe* – was an important part of this movement. As Purkiss has shown, the Irish revivalists 'seized on Irish fairy lore as a distinctive, special feature of Irish culture that could be used to give Ireland a separate meaningful national identity... They succeeded to such an extend that fairies and folklore became an essential part of Irishness' (2000: 294). The Sidhe were seen as remnants of the pagan mythology of ancient Ireland, and many folklorists and writers were anxious to declare that fairy faith was still alive and well in Ireland, sometimes even proclaiming their own belief in them (Silver 1999: 34). Yeats defended the authenticity of the Irish fairies against the English ones, claiming that the former were

unaffected by literary treatments and romantic interpretations, something that Scott had done nearly a century before for the Scottish fairies, while Chesterton's defensive approach, rebuking Yeats, who 'reads into Elfland all the righteous insurrection of his own race' (Beddoe 1997: 31; Chesterton 1908: 98), shows the extent of the national conflict this situation could produce. Bown might not be exaggerating when she commented that at that period 'at its most extreme, the dialogue about Irish home rule could become an argument about who had the better fairies: England or Ireland' (2001: 4). At the same time, the Irish revival brought into the foreground similar causes for the other Celtic parts of Britain, where, however, the case of folklore revival was not so directly linked to demands for independence but mostly to those for a distinct cultural identity. Thus, a spirit of local patriotism flourished in Wales and Scotland as well, again using fairy-lore as one of its main assets (Dorson 1968: 392; 1966: xxii). Tolkien's reaction to that was to contrast his fairies and these of Celtic tradition sharply, and even to insist upon the authenticity of his own mythology against the Celtic fairy-lore. In the 'Book of Lost Tales' he claimed that – because of Eriol's trip to Tol Eressea, and his recording of the tales the fairies told him – 'the *Engle* (English) have the true tradition of the fairies, of whom the *Íras* (Irish) and the *Wéalas* (Welsh) tell garbled things' (*Lost Tales II*: 290). In this way, not only does he distinguish his elves and fairies from the equivalent creatures found in Celtic folklore, but he claims the true tradition as being exclusively English as well. This attitude of envy towards the Celtic fairies is also present in his later writings, especially in his essay 'On Fairy-Stories', where he discusses how the English fairy was heavily influenced by its Celtic and other analogues (*MC*: 111).

However, in the end Tolkien found out that the English folklore concerning fairies was not so authentic or so far-reaching as he would have liked it to be. His

essay 'On Fairy-Stories' discusses the fate of the English fairy, showing its dependence on Celtic and Scandinavian influences, as well as the etymology of the word, and its French origin (*MC*: 111). Also, he finally came to conclude that the fairy diminutiveness was a product of what he called 'literary fancy'. He wrote that:

> As for diminutive size: I do not deny that the notion is a leading one in modern use...The diminutive being, elf or fairy, is (I guess) in England largely *a sophisticated product of literary fancy*...Yet I suspect that this flower-and-butterfly minuteness was also a product of 'rationalization', which transformed the glamour of Elfland into mere finesse, and invisibility into a fragility that could hide in a cowslip or shrink behind a blade of grass...Shakespeare and Michael Drayton played a part... (*MC*: 110-111, my italics).

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream* is a work which has combined and transformed a great wealth of fairy material available at the time, but its more striking innovation is indeed the fairy smallness (Purkiss 2000: 158). Katherine Briggs has argued that the diminutive size of Shakespeare's fairies was not really a product of his 'literary fancy' but was mainly drawn from native folklore elements about these creatures, which had hardly appeared in literature before his time. She has claimed that the small stature of 'elves/fairies' was not strange to English folk stories and belief at the time, even before Shakespeare (Briggs 1959: 45). Keightley also acknowledges Shakespeare's acquaintance with rural folklore, noting that he was well aware of 'the notions of the peasantry respecting these beings' (1873: 325). However, it has recently been convincingly argued that Shakespeare's only contact with folklore had been the work of Reginald Scot, who himself has been suspected of mixing up classical elements and native ones and of introducing his own inventions (Purkiss 2000: 158-165). However, the tiny size of Shakespeare's fairies has still not reached the burlesque diminutiveness of those of Drayton's. It could be claimed, then, that Shakespeare did start this trend but that it was really Drayton's 'school' that can be accused of turning the 'elves/fairies' into products of 'literary fancy'. It is not until

considerably later, in Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714), that fairies are described as winged beings (Beddoe 1997: 25).

Tolkien's later anxiousness about establishing the high stature of his Elves can thus be explained as an attempt to disassociate them from the most inauthentic and literary aspect of the contemporary folklore fairies: that of their diminutiveness. I would argue that it is at this point, after 'The Book of Lost Tales' and during the period while the 'Lays' were written, that Tolkien started the process that Shippey has discussed, that of schooling himself:

> ...to drop forms like 'elfin', 'dwarfish', 'fairy', 'gnome', and eventually 'goblin', though he had used all of them in early works up to and including *The Hobbit*. More importantly he began to work out their replacements, and to ponder what concepts lay behind the words and uses which he recognised as linguistically authentic. (Shippey 1982: 44)

Indeed, Shippey has shown how the fragmentary and contradictory information preserved about the Anglo-Saxon elves informed Tolkien's creation of the Elves of Middle-earth (1982: 44-50),[29] and more recently how their better recorded Norse analogues, the *álfar*, were also instrumental in this creative process (2004).

4. Conclusions

This chapter has looked at Tolkien's awareness of folklore by concentrating on the case of his Elves and posing the question of the centrality of the Elves in the 'mythology' of Middle-earth as its main theme. The first step was a survey of the presence of fairy or elvish creatures in Tolkien's work, from his very early attempts to write poetry, up to his mature work, and the change in their visual conception, as well

[29] For a recent discussion of the meaning of Elf in a Medieval English context see Hall 2004.

as in their role and function in Tolkien's 'legendarium'. The second part has dealt with the historical period when Tolkien started writing, marked by the prominence and rising importance of folklore, and with Tolkien's own reactions to theories and suggestions that had been put forward then, concerning fairy lore.

It is hoped that this chapter has shown Tolkien's early reception of influence from contemporary folklore, something which explains the presence of fairies in his early work as well as their prominence and centrality in his mythological cycle. However, as Tolkien became more aware of his own creation, and less influenced by external fashions and trends, he came to favour authenticity in terms of ancient myths rather than contemporary beliefs. Today, scholars view folklore as something in a dynamic process of change and adaptation, in order to serve different historical periods and different social needs, but in Tolkien's time there would still linger an idealism which would expect folklore to preserve uncorrupted the mythical memory of the *Volk*, an essential part of its cultural, or in some cases even national, identity. As far as fairies are concerned it was not difficult for Tolkien to find out later that the refinement of 'literary fancy', much more than the rustic debasements and confusions, had obscured the 'authentic' traditions of fairies and elves of England. Thus, he started again, this time sticking to the Anglo-Saxon derived word Elf, and working backwards – as he was used to doing in philology – to 'reconstruct' the genuine English elves. What remained was the centrality of the Elves in his Saga, unparalleled in any other 'mythology' or tradition, and only present in the living fairy-lore of Britain in the Victorian and Edwardian times.

However much he came to reject folklore, though, it is intriguing to note here an instance of Tolkien being quite subconsciously subject to contemporary folklore – or should we say 'popular culture' – once more later on. This is the case of his *Father*

Christmas Letters referred to above, where he assigns to his traditional British Father Christmas – as opposed to the American Santa Claus – elf-helpers. Although the presence of Elves in Tolkien's children's writings was frequent, in the case of *Father Christmas Letters* the popular association of Santa Claus with elves should be taken seriously into consideration as an important influence. And this time, quite an untraditional and foreign influence as well, since it was the American Santa who was provided with elves first, by the illustrator Thomas Nast, who created Santa's workshop in 1866 (Restad 1995: 148-9). The Victorian fascination with fairies and elves helped in the popularization of Santa's helpers, and when Santa migrated from America to Britain towards the end of the nineteenth century (Pimlott 1978: 111-119) he did so with his whole household. The Elves of *Father Christmas Letters* are – of course – genuinely Tolkienian in most of their characteristics, but they also assume their traditional role in popular folklore of being Father Christmas's assistants in the preparation of the presents. This final example serves to show the all-pervasiveness and dynamics of folklore, even for someone like Tolkien, which is not perceived any more as strictly the lore of the peasants. As Alan Dundes has famously said: 'Who are the folk? Among others, we are!' (1980: 19).

Chapter 3: 'Races' in Middle-earth:

Tolkien and Contemporary Anthropology

1. Introduction

Tolkien's conception of Middle-earth, in terms of a relationship with our 'real world' is not very clear. On the one hand he seems to identify Middle-earth with a prehistoric period of Northern Europe (*Letters*: 272, 239, 376),[1] while on the other hand his theory of 'sub-creation', namely the creation of an imaginary Secondary World, which is very thoroughly described and defined as 'the highest function of man' (*MC*: 43-50), seems also to apply to his own work, although that is never explicitly claimed. However, whether Middle-earth is a mythical and purely imaginative world, portrayed as an alternative cosmos, or if, on the contrary, it is a special interpretation of European prehistory, it is inhabited by various classes of creatures, most of whom are clearly anthropomorphic. Elves, Dwarves and Hobbits may not seem as familiar and close to the Tolkien reader as Men do, but the characteristics they share with mankind are more than those that separate them. Tolkien himself seems to second this view, as in one of his letters, where he refers in particular to the differences of Elves and Men, he concludes that: 'Of course, in fact exterior to my story, Elves and Men are just different aspects of the Humane.' (*Letters*: 236).

Indeed, what seems to be particularly intriguing is exactly those factors that separate, rather than unify, the different classes of beings in Tolkien's works. Tolkien

[1] Tolkien's identification of Middle-earth with Europe is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 (§ 3.1).

himself is very inconsistent in the terminology he uses to express their distinct nature. Especially throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, he uses a variety of terms for this purpose, including 'race', 'people', 'folk', 'kin' or 'kindred' and 'kind'. So, for example, when Gandalf refers to Elves circulating in Moria in older times, he states that:

> 'Those were happier days, when there was still close friendship at times between folk of different *race*, even between Dwarves and Elves' (*FR*: 303, my italics),

while when Galadriel refers to the same two classes of beings and their present poor relationship, she expresses a hope that maybe 'friendship shall be renewed between our *peoples*.' (*FR*: 355, my italics). At the same time, however, the same range of terms is used to refer to subdivisions of the same class of beings. Legolas acknowledges the Elves that once used to live in Eregion as being of a 'race' strange to his own (*FR*: 283), while Gimli declares that Elves of any 'kind' are 'strange folk' (*TT*: 491). The contradictory terminology to refer to the same classes of creatures found in Middle-earth and to their subdivisions may initially seem unimportant. However, a more careful examination of the occurrence of all these different terms and their frequency, mainly in *The Lord of the Rings*, suggests that Tolkien's indecisiveness was not accidental. On the contrary, it may reflect a conflict in his changing views concerning the developments in the anthropological discourse of his time.

In the 'real world' of Tolkien's period it was still entirely legitimate and scientifically acceptable to divide humankind into races with fixed characteristics, something which was then for the first time vigorously challenged, especially during the period when *The Lord of the Rings* was being written and published. This chapter will attempt to address the question of how contemporary anthropology may have

affected the depiction of the different categories of beings found in Tolkien's work. It will focus mainly on Elves and Men, considering issues such as their comparative nature and status as well as their 'racial' characteristics in contrast to other anthropomorphic creatures of Middle-Earth. In particular, possible ideas underlying the nature of Elves and Men and their subdivisions that might have originated in the science of race will be explored and analysed. In order to proceed with the main part of this chapter, a brief overview of the anthropological ideas of Tolkien's time has to be provided, as well as a presentation of Tolkien's own views as these are expressed in his letters and works of scholarship. In addition, it should be made clear from the outset that the science of anthropology referred to in this chapter corresponds to the anthropology of the 'Western World', including northern Europe and the United States, the majority of the examples used being from British scientists.

2. Contemporary Anthropology and Tolkien's Views

Tolkien's major literary production took place between 1930 and 1955. The first date is when *The Hobbit* started being written, and the latter is the date of the publication of *The Return of the King*, being the third part of *The Lord of the Rings*. During this long period of time, the science of anthropology underwent considerable change. Traditional nineteenth-century physical anthropology had established the idea of the existence of different fixed human races that were part of a rigid hierarchical chain. The notion of race was taken for granted as corresponding to some sort of physical reality in nature and indeed it was one of the fundamental ideas with which the physical anthropologists worked (Montagu 1997: 99). Buffon (1791) was the first

to introduce the term 'race' in a scientific context, but it was not until Blumenbach's *De Generis Humani Varietate* (1775) that it had ever been used in a classificatory sense (Montagu 1997: 100). However, the document often considered as 'the seminal tract of modern racism' (Malik 1996: 83) is Gobineau's *The Inequality of Human Races* (1915). Especially during the second half of the nineteenth century the influence of social Darwinism had given a scientific sanctity to belief in the evaluative hierarchy of human races (Malik 1996: 90-1). In Britain, the example of Knox's famous quotation: 'With me, race, or hereditary descent, is everything; it stamps the man.' (1862: 13) together with Hunt's description of the European and Negro as two distinct types of man (1863-4: 52), and with Spencer's superior and inferior races (1874: 327-54), show this clearly. Augstein summarises the major characteristics of nineteenth-century racial anthropology in three basic points. First, the divisibility of humankind into a number of races with permanent and non-externally modified traits; second, the difference of intellectual and moral capacities between these races; and third, the belief in the association of certain physiognomical specificities with mental abilities and inward nature of the members of these 'races' (1996: x). By the end of the century, the dominant view was that racial purity was necessary for a race or a nation to maintain its strength and vitality, while the belief in the racial superiority of the whites was validated by science (Bernasconi 2000: xi; Stepan 1982: 111).

In Britain the first decade of the twentieth century saw the birth of the eugenic movement, which linked the idea of race with hereditarianism and the new science of genetics, leading to the assumption that the less fit races would be eliminated by nature itself, while the dominant, civilising white race had to be supported by encouraging the most fit and able individuals to reproduce at a faster rate than the

unfit (Stepan 1982: 128). Galton, the founder of the Eugenic movement, in his book *Hereditary Genius*, argued about the 'comparative worth of different races', which allowed the white race to progress morally and culturally (1892: 325-337). In an article in which he gave the definition and basic aims of the eugenics, he claimed that the eugenics' goal was one of the highest objects of humanity and it could even become a religious dogma (1892: 325-337).

Of course, critiques and protests against all the above-mentioned beliefs were made from time to time by various scientists, as for example in the writings of the American anthropologist Franz Boas, who challenged ideas of racial superiority (Bernasconi 2000: xii). For Boas, races did exist, but in a purely biological sense, proved by the differences in the bodily characteristics of different types of men. But in no case would he accept that this would affect their mental abilities or their cultural achievements (1911: 29, 1935: 25, 1966: 13-4). However, what finally catalysed the decline of scientific racism were the experiences of World War II and of the implementation of scientific racial theories in Nazi Germany (Malik 1996: 123-4; Stepan 1982: 140). Barkan describes the three phases, according to which the scientists' responses to the Nazi's were formed. In the first phase (1933-4) the issue of race was faced only in an indirect way; in the second (up to 1938) the scientists were still unable to counter racism but anti-racist publications became popular while from 1938 onwards the scientific community declared itself against racism (1992: 179). Malik observes that the responses of the scientists followed the mainstream political response in Britain and the USA to the Nazis very closely (1996: 123-4). Of course, the scientific idea of race itself had started to become very unstable at the same time. Stepan, without underestimating the effect of World War II, shows that the 1930s were preceded by three decades of doubt about the concept of 'race'. Scientists could

not agree on racial measurement, and neither was there any agreement over any single scheme of division of human beings into races. In short, they could agree on what race was not but they could not define the term itself (Stepan 1982: 161-2, 168). On the other hand, the attempts of Boas and others to restrict the notion of race to a purely biological sense had opened the road for Montagu and Appiah's arguments, which claimed that race was a fiction (Bernasconi 2000: xiv).

By the end of the Second World War, the idea of 'race' was in decline, while the 'new science of human diversity' was emerging, and scientists were continuously finding that the old idea of race did not correspond with the new ideas of genetics and evolution (Stepan 1982: 173). Stepan explains how the 'new' science came not exactly to replace the 'old' racial science, but to consider 'race' as useless and irrelevant:

> The fundamental unit of analysis in the old racial science was the human race or racial 'type'. Races were defined anatomically and morphologically, in terms of the phenotype – that is, by detailed measurement of the shape of the skull, the dimensions of the post-cranial skeleton, by stature, and by skin colour. The features measured were taken to be on the whole stable in character, and therefore a good indication of racial identity and affinity. The unit of analysis in the new biology was, by contrast, not the race but the 'population', defined not morphologically or behaviourally but genetically and statistically. (1982: 176)

Indeed, contemporary anthropology would consider stereotypical racial questions completely irrelevant, regarding the modern study of race as a branch of population biology (Odom 1967: 5).

During this period, when the whole world was in such turmoil because of World War II and its aftermath, Tolkien was to write and publish most of his literary works. He started writing *The Hobbit* in 1930, which he abandoned unfinished for a while, until Susan Dagnall of Allen & Unwin read the manuscript. Under her suggestion Tolkien finished the book in 1936 and it was accepted for publication. *The*

Hobbit was finally published in 1937, and, almost immediately, following the advice of Stanley Unwin, he began writing a sequel, which was to become *The Lord of the Rings*. Tolkien completed this in 1949, but the first two volumes were not published until 1954, while the third was finally released in 1955 (Carpenter 1977: 266). Throughout these twenty-five years, some glimpses of Tolkien's views on the major issue of race and racial science are provided by his letters and his works of scholarship. His thoughts and opinions fall into two broad categories: the response to the reality of Nazi Germany and World War II; and his feelings that developed as a result of his own area of scientific expertise, his extensive work on Old English.

Nazi Germany was an object of admiration, or a target for criticism, already before the outbreak of the war. It seems that in 1938 Tolkien had to take sides, and in a very direct way too. In July 1938, Allen & Unwin had a proposal for a German translation of *The Hobbit* from Rütten & Loening of Potsdam, and the German firm wrote to ask if Tolkien was of Aryan origin. In two letters, one to Allen & Unwin and one to the German firm, Tolkien strongly objected to any declaration of his origin appearing in print, and stated that:

> [I] should regret giving any colour to the notion that I subscribed to the wholly pernicious and unscientific race-doctrine. (*Letters*: 37)

In the letter to Allen & Unwin he refers to the Germans and their 'lunatic laws' that should demand '... "arisch" origin from all persons of all countries' (*Letters*: 37), while the letter to Rütten & Loening contains the following very bitter comment:

> ...the main part of my descent is therefore purely English... I have been accustomed nonetheless, to regard my German name with pride... I cannot, however, forbear to comment that if impertinent and irrelevant inquiries of this sort are to become the rule in matters of literature, then the time is not far distant when a German name will no longer be a source of pride. (*Letters*: 37-8)

The German translation did not appear in the end, although it is not clear if the reason was Tolkien's response to the German firm's demands about his origin (see *Letters*: 44).[2]

It is obvious from these two letters that Tolkien was fully aware of the developments in Germany and strongly objected to their Aryanism. Especially, his reference to their 'race-doctrine', which he characterises as 'unscientific', shows that he was conscious of scientific reaction in Britain to Nazi claims about race. Stepan refers to two very important documents that challenged the myth of race in the 1930s, one of which is likely to have been known to Tolkien, since one of its authors was Julian Huxley, a colleague of his in Oxford University.[3] This is the anti-Nazi propagandist book by Alfred C. Haddon and Julian Huxley, entitled *We Europeans: A Survey of 'Racial' Problems*, published in 1935 and aiming to show that claims about race in Germany were nothing but pseudoscience (1982: 167). The book was so successful that in 1939 parts of it were published separately by Huxley in a pamphlet in the series of 'Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs', entitled *'Race' in Europe*, aiming to popularise the scientific conviction that 'race' is a myth, and that the fallacy of the belief in an 'Aryan' or 'Nordic' race is dangerous and based on misunderstandings and totally unscientific or irrelevant arguments. The author used counter-arguments from a wide range of scientific sectors, such as linguistics, archaeology, anthropology, and more. At the same time Huxley argued in favour of the idea of a 'brotherhood of mankind' (1939: 5-6). To distinguish between the biological sense of the idea of race and the cultural characteristics associated with it

[2] The first translation of *The Hobbit* in German, rendered as *Kleiner Hobbit und der grosse Zauberer*, finally appeared in 1957, by Paulus Verlag editions (Anderson 2003: 390).

[3] Tolkien's relationship with Julian Huxley cannot be proved to be other than that of academic colleagues, and it is not known how well they knew each other apart from that. In a letter written in 1968 he refers to him by his name and surname (*Letters*: 396), but the whole of the phrase is very ambiguous and no more about their relationship can be inferred by that.

by many of his contemporaries, he refers to the fact that Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, uses almost entirely social and cultural elements to differentiate the Jews, rather than biological ones (1939: 19). Tolkien seems to be fully in agreement with Huxley as far as the issue of 'Aryan' or 'Nordic' superiority is concerned. Huxley explained clearly that the term 'Aryan' should only be associated with a specific linguistic group, the Indo-Persian sub-group of languages, and not with a 'race' of people (1939: 20). Tolkien very characteristically, in his reply to his potential German publishers, wrote:

> I am not *of Aryan* extraction: that is Indo-Iranian; as far as I am aware none of my ancestors spoke Hindustani, Persian, Gypsy, or any related dialects. (*Letters*: 37).

His loathing of the term 'Nordic' is also attested in one of his much later letters. When Charlotte and Dennis Plimmer interviewed Tolkien for the *Daily Telegraph Magazine*, they gave him a draft of their article to check it before being given for publication. Tolkien was dissatisfied with their claiming that Middle-earth could be identified with 'Nordic Europe', and wrote to them:

> Not *Nordic*, please! A word I personally dislike; it is associated, though of French origin, with racialist theories. (*Letters*: 375)

Still, Tolkien does not seem to have been immune to the Anglo-Saxon pride syndrome. The notion of a glorified Anglo-Saxon race, characterised by love of freedom and democratic institutions goes back to Tacitus and was first brought into use in the sixteenth century to justify the break with Rome and the creation of an English Church, as well as the defence of parliamentary power against royalist pretension (Horsman 1976: 387-8; Mac Dougall 1982: 89; Stocking 1987: 62). However, it was in the nineteenth century that Anglo-Saxonism began to take on a distinctive racial meaning. Anglo-Saxon racial superiority, being part of the more general Germanic or Teutonic or Scandinavian race, was supported by such historians, antiquarians and novelists such as Macaulay, Chambers, Carlyle, Arnold,

Disraeli, Knox, Kemble, Stubbs, Freeman and Acton (Horsman 1976: 389-410; Mac Dougall 1982: 91-2; Stocking 1987: 62). In many cases the Anglo-Saxon race was seen in contrast with the Celtic peoples, probably as a reaction to the idealisation of the Celtic heritage in the eighteenth century (Horsman 1976: 391; Stepan: 1982: 100; Stocking 1987: 62; Melman 1991: 584-5).

Indeed, Tolkien appeared to have considered the Anglo-Saxon heredity as part of a wider whole, including Germany and Scandinavia. Still he held a special favour for the 'northern spirit' as materialised in England, and referred to the Anglo-Saxon language as a 'noble idiom' (*Letters*: 56, 102) and elsewhere as 'a kind of 'touchstone' distinguishing 'the genuine linguists (the students and lovers of Language) from the utilitarians' (*Letters*: 340). So, it is not strange that he had a strong admiration for the 'Germanic' ideal, and in one of his letters he declares his hatred against Hitler for:

> Ruining, perverting, misapplying, and making for ever accursed, that noble northern spirit, a supreme contribution to Europe, which I have ever loved, and tried to present in its true light. (*Letters*: 55-6)

It is characteristic that he is anxious to establish himself as an Anglo-Saxon by descent, since in a letter to his son Christopher he writes:

> Still I hope one day you'll be able (if you wish) to delve into this intriguing story of the origins of our peculiar people. And indeed of us in particular. For barring the Tolkien (which must long ago have become a pretty thin strand) you are a Mercian and a Hwiccian (of Wychwood) on both sides. (*Letters*: 108)

His love-hate relationship with 'things Celtic' is also very interesting as far his self-identification as English is concerned. His reaction to a reader's description of *The Silmarillion* as 'Celtic' was pure anger (*Letters*: 25-6), and later on, referring to this incident, he talks about 'beauty...of a "Celtic" kind irritating to Anglo-Saxons'

(*Letters*: 113) or 'a kind of Celtic beauty intolerable to Anglo-Saxons in large doses' (*Letters*: 136).

Much later, in October 1955, Tolkien gave a lecture entitled 'English and Welsh', being the first of the O'Donnell Lectures, which were established in the Universities of Oxford, Edinburgh, and Wales to discuss 'the British and Celtic element in the English language' (Tolkien 1983: 3). In this lecture Tolkien chose to address in a very straightforward way the issue of the use of the term 'race' in a scholarly context. While referring to the English and Welsh languages and their speakers he claimed that:

> Language is the prime differentiation of peoples – not of 'races', whatever that much-misused word may mean in the long blended history of western Europe. (*MC*: 166)

And later on, when referring to the 'peoples speaking English and Welsh' he repeats emphatically 'Of peoples, not races' (*MC*: 167). Both these quotations demonstrate clearly that Tolkien was not unaffected by the debate of the post-war period, concerning the validity of 'race' itself as a scientific term. Indeed, he seems to reject the term as wrong. However, things are more complicated than this. Two pages further on in the same lecture, referring to Saxon and Celtic place names, he concludes that:

> ...from names alone without other evidence deductions concerning 'race' or indeed language are insecure. (*MC*: 169)

And a bit further down, referring to the successive waves of invaders in early British history he comments that:

> ...the inhabitants of Britain are made of the same 'racial' ingredients, though the mixing of these has not been uniform. (*MC*: 170)

He concludes this part of his discussion with the words:

> That is all that I have to say at this time about the confusion between language (and nomenclature) and 'race'. (*MC*: 173)

The first impression of these quotations is that the word is still too strong to be got rid off completely from his vocabulary, even if it is in quotation marks. A notion like that of race, which proved persistent in scientific discourse for such a long period, despite its ambiguity and vagueness, can be claimed to have been part of everyday diction and its social implications were there even if scientists rejected it. However, Tolkien's use of the term 'race' in these three cases can be explained in another way. The context where he insists on the substitution of 'race' by 'people' is very significant. In that part of the lecture he refers to Welshmen and Englishmen, people that lived in the present and formed part of his audience. However, his use of 'race' refers to Teutons, or Anglo-Saxons, and Celts, two peoples that had existed in the past, in a past where possibly races did exist, and when the term was not overweighed with negative connotations. Indeed, Stocking claims that post-Darwinian Victorian anthropology would tend to consider real race formation as a process that had been completed in the distant past, and that subsequent racial mixture, social selection, or environmental modifications had obscured the underlying racial categories, which the anthropologist would have to clarify (1968: 63). It is not impossible, then, that Tolkien might have thought of the past as being neater as far as pure races are concerned, something lost in the present world. Huxley seems to have the same ideas, as he claims that the existence of anything that can be called 'race' in the present world is 'mere fantasy' since 'nothing in the nature of "pure race" in the biological sense has had any real existence for many centuries or even millennia' (1939: 15, 18).

As shown above, the term 'race' is indeed used extensively in *The Lord of the Rings*, and the same is true for *The Silmarillion*. The frequency of the term is striking, but it is not only the terminology that proves that the concept of race is significantly applicable in Middle-earth. There is a series of racial issues that seem central to its

UNIVERSITY PRIFYSGOL CAERDYDD

history. For any Tolkien reader the supremacy of certain beings that inhabit it over others is taken for granted. Indeed, in *The Lord of the Rings*, one of the characters presents a classification of different Middle-earth beings in a clearly evaluative way, from higher to lower. This is the scene where Treebeard, the Ent, discovers Merry and Pippin in Fangorn forest, and initially mistakes them for Orcs. The two hobbits try to convince him that they are not, and Treebeard recites the following poem, which lists Middle-earth creatures as such:

> Learn now the lore of Living Creatures!
> First name the four, the free peoples:
> Eldest of all, the elf-children;
> Dwarf the delver, dark are his houses;
> Ent the earthborn, old as mountains;
> Man the mortal, master of horses:...
> Beaver the builder, buck the leaper,
> Bear bee-hunter, boar the fighter;
> Hound is hungry, hare is fearful...
> Eagle in eyrie, ox in pasture,
> Hart horn-crowned; hawk is swiftest
> Swan the whitest, serpent coldest...
> (*TT*: 464)

Treebeard's Poem is very reminiscent of the renaissance idea of 'The Great Chain of Being'. This was a powerful visual metaphor for a divinely inspired universal hierarchy ranking all forms of higher and lower life, having the inanimate stones and plants at the bottom, the animals in-between, the man on top, and higher than man the angels and God himself. However, the poem of Treebeard also corresponds to the nineteenth-century idea of the ranking of human races, since the anthropomorphic beings of Middle-earth are mentioned separately and in a strictly hierarchical order. In Treebeard's poem the Elves are the ones on top of the scale. Indeed, their supremacy over other anthropomorphic Middle-earth beings is taken for granted. Their awe-inspiring and even supernatural presence is constantly underlined. If one thought of the three main 'peoples' or 'kindreds' or indeed 'races' of Middle-earth – as Tolkien

himself has called them in different parts of his work[4] – the natural classification from 'higher' to 'lower' would be: Elves, Men and Dwarves.[5] However, it is Elves that stand out considerably in contrast to the other two classes. The only thing that makes Dwarves inferior to Men is their origin story, since Men are – together with Elves – made by God himself, Eru or Ilúvatar, while Dwarves were secretly fashioned by the Valar Aulë, out of his desire for creation, and were at the end accepted by God and given life by him (*S*: 43-4). For this reason, very seldom in Tolkien's Middle-earth literature is there any evaluative comparison of Dwarves and Elves, or of Dwarves and Men, while Elves and Men seem always to be weighed the one against the other. It is through comparing and contrasting Elves and Men, then, that the concept of the 'racial' superiority of the Elves can be even more clearly demonstrated, since both categories of beings seem to have sprung from the same source, Eru, the One, and yet are by their nature so different. The next part of this chapter will aim at demonstrating exactly this notion, by focusing on these two classes of beings.

[4] For example, Elrond says that, apart from the Hobbits, those that will complete the fellowship of the ring: 'shall represent the other Free Peoples of the World: Elves, Dwarves, and Men.' (*FR*: 275). On the other hand, when Aragorn decides that himself, Legolas and Gimli will chase the Orcs that took Merry and Pippin, he exclaims: 'We will make such a chase as shall be accounted a marvel among the Three Kindreds: Elves, Dwarves and Men. Forth the Three Hunters!' (*TT*: 420). Finally, in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, the same three classes of beings are called 'races' (*RK*: 1127-1133).

[5] Although it is never clearly explained in *The Lord of the Rings*, in one of his letters Tolkien states that Hobbits are 'really meant to be a branch of the specifically *human* race (not Elves or Dwarves)' (*Letters*: 158n.).

3. Races in Middle-earth

3.1. Elves: A Higher Race

According to the Middle-earth cosmogony both of the major quasi-human creatures inhabiting Arda, namely Elves and Men, are the Children of Ilúvatar (*S*: 41). Right from the beginning, however, the Elves are distinguished from Men on an evaluative basis, as they are called the 'Firstborn' in contrast to Men who are merely the 'Followers' (*S*: 18). In both *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, Men are clearly inferior to Elves, and this is also reflected in the several 'Tolkien encyclopaedias' that have been compiled. If one looks at three very basic ones, at the entry 'Elves', one will surely notice that:

> In the Beginning of Days...the first of the 'speaking peoples' awoke. These were the Elves, the Firstborn, the immortal Elder Race of Middle-earth, noblest of the Children of God. No subsequent race has ever has such a profound effect upon Middle-earth; for the Elves were, materially and spiritually, more closely bound to Middle-earth than Men; (Tyler 2002: 197)

> [Elves are] the fairest race that ever was made and the wisest...Their size would be the same as that of Men, who were still to be created, but Elves would be stronger in spirit and limb, and the Elves would not grow weak with age, only wiser and more fair. (Day 1979: 84)

> The Firstborn, the Elder Children of Ilúvatar...the eldest and noblest of the speaking races of Middle-earth...Elves were the fairest of all earthly creatures and resembled the Ainur in spirit. (Foster 1993: 116)

Tolkien himself talked about 'a race high and beautiful, the older Children of the world' (*RK*: 1137). It is characteristic that Men are always defined in terms of their relation with Elves. The only Men that come to be recorded in *The Silmarillion* are the 'three kindreds of the Elf-friends' (*S*: 143). They are separated from the rest of the Men who ever awoke and are the only ones treated as worthy of any mention in the

history of Middle-earth. The rest of the Men are mostly ignored in *The Silmarillion*, and those mentioned in *The Lord of the Rings* are characterised in one way or another as evil or uncivilised.[6] In one of his letters, Tolkien states explicitly that:

> ...the Elder Children, [were] doomed to fade before the Followers (Men), and to live ultimately only by the thin line of their blood that was mingled with that of Men, among whom it was the only real claim of 'nobility'. (*Letters*: 176)

It seems then that Elves are indeed a case of a naturally higher race, in the nineteenth-century sense of the term. Their superiority is taken for granted, and to challenge it would sound unnatural, if not blasphemous. They were created by God to be of a superior status than Men. Their being called 'Firstborn' is not so much a reflection of their historical anteriority as it is an honorary title, proving their pre-eminence.

The factors that define the Elvish 'race' can be divided into two broad categories: physical characteristic and mental abilities. As far as the former is concerned, Tolkien, in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, gives a description of their standard appearance:

> They were tall, fair of skin and grey-eyed, though their locks were dark, save in the golden house of Finarfin... (*RK*: 1137)

The Elves' stature is one trait that is constantly highlighted, especially in *The Lord of the Rings*. Glorfindel is described as tall, and the same is true of Celeborn and Galadriel (*FR*: 354, 361, 372). At the same time, their skin and hair colour is given emphasis. It seems then that the way that Elves are distinguished biologically from Men is very similar to the criteria for race classification in nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century anthropology. The analysis of the distribution of stature together with measuring the human skull was among the generally accepted scientific

[6] See, for example, the depiction of the Easterlings as allies of Sauron, as well as the clumsy statues of the Púkel-men, made by the uncivilised Woses (*RK*: 846, 794).

methods of racial definition, while the superiority of white races was part of mainstream scientific and social thinking already from the Victorian period (Stocking 1968: 63; Stepan 1982: 176; Malik 1996: 96). Especially the reference to the 'golden house of Finarfin', to which Galadriel also belonged, is even more significant, as fair hair is added to the fairness of the skin and the high stature. This description is suspiciously close to the so-called 'Nordic' type (Smedley 1999: 254) and it is notable that the house of Finarfin is the only one having any origins in the Vanyar, the highest of the three kindreds of Elves, also called the Fair Elves, referring to their 'golden hair' (*S*: 60, 64, 354).[7]

But apart from complexion and stature, Elves seem to have an enhanced bodily form as opposed to Men. *The Silmarillion* gives a detailed report of the Elves' bodies, which were indeed 'of the stuff of Earth, and could be destroyed'. Still, they were stronger than the 'more frail' bodies of Men, more easily healed, and not prone to sickness and illnesses (*S*: 104). Also, in *The Lord of the Rings*, the vision of the Elves appears to be sharper than that of Men. It is more than once that the eyesight of Legolas proves to be crucial for the members of the fellowship of the ring (*FR*: 387; *TT*: 426).

Beyond all of those features, the most important physical difference between Elves and Men is probably that the latter 'grew old and died' (*S*: 104), since Elves are biologically different than Men in one more aspect: their life span. Tolkien explains in one of his letters that:

> ...the point of view of this mythology is that 'mortality' or a short span, and 'immortality' or an indefinite span was part of what we may call the biological and spiritual *nature* of the Children of God, Men and Elves...respectively. (*Letters*: 204)

[7] The issue of sub-divisions according to rank between Elves is treated later on, pp. 102-106.

Elves, then, are described as immortal. This does not signify that they cannot be killed in battle, or 'waste in grief', but even in those cases they go to the halls of Mandos and do not 'die and leave the world' as Men do (*S*: 42, 104).

Alongside the Elves' superiority in respect of their physical characteristics, summarised as beauty, strength and immortality, they are also distinguished from Men through their mental abilities. Tolkien explains that:

> ...they represent really Men with greatly enhanced aesthetic and creative faculties (*Letters*: 176),

and elsewhere he repeats that:

> The Elves represent, as it were, the artistic, aesthetic, and purely scientific aspects of the Humane nature raised to a higher level that is actually seen in Men. (*Letters*: 236)

Indeed, in the early twentieth century, a common definition of 'race' would include, apart from bodily characteristics, mental ones (Boas 1966: 4, 10). Boas rejected this idea in *The Mind of the Primitive Man*, by explaining racial mental differences in terms of differing cultural traditions, but even his earlier work on cultural determinism had its limitations (Stocking 1966: 872). The association of race with mental abilities was one of the main characteristics of nineteenth-century race science and did not disappear easily. In Tolkien's world it is taken for granted that Elvish knowledge and wisdom is superior to Men's, and it is significant that it is the Elves who act as teachers to Men when the latter finally awake in Middle-earth (*S*: 140-1). In addition, it is not only the historical precedence of Elves that qualifies them to teach Men, but rather their advanced knowledge, as this was acquired in the Blessed Realm, by the god-like Valar. The artistic nature of the Elves is also of a higher status, and this is especially true in poetry. Elvish poetry is praised and imitated throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, and it is characteristic that when Pippin sings the poem about Gil-Galad, in the Common Speech, and explains that Bilbo wrote it, Aragorn is quick

to correct him, indicating that Bilbo *must* have translated the poem from Elvish (*FR*: 186). At the same time, in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*, many of the poems are attributed to hobbits imitating Elvish poetry, not in a completely satisfactory way, producing poems that might be entertaining but never of the same quality as the Elvish ones (*Bombadil*: 61-4).

The Elves, then, can be argued to be an example of a higher race, in accordance with nineteenth-century racial science, as they are considered to be superior to Men in biological, mental and even historical terms. Still, the Elves do not appear as one consistent type. They have their own graded hierarchy, which in some cases would even justify them being called different 'races'. The next part of the essay will look at these divisions of the Elvish race and the issues of superiority within them.

3.2. The Elvish Inner Hierarchy

In *The Lord of the Rings*, the reader has the definite impression that all the Elves that appear in the story are not of exactly the same kind. In the first encounter between the Hobbits and the Elves, Frodo identifies them as High Elves from the language they sing in, and they call themselves 'Exiles' (*FR*: 80). Legolas is of a different Elvish kind, described as a 'strange elf' and he also acknowledges a different 'race' of Elves when the company cross the land of what used to be Eregion (*FR*: 40, 283). Indeed, already from *The Hobbit*, the existence of different 'tribes' of Elves, as they are called there, is acknowledged and a brief account of their divisions and

history is given (*H*: 218-9).[8] Of course, this is but a simplified version of the history of the Elves account found in *The Silmarillion*. There, the origins of the different Elf-divisions are given in detail, since they are quite complicated. A brief summary is given by Tolkien in one of his letters:

> They [the Elves] are represented as having become early divided in to two, or three, varieties. 1. The Eldar who heard the summons of the Valar or Powers to pass from Middle-earth over the Sea to the West; and 2. the Lesser Elves who did not answer it. Most of the Eldar after a great march reached the Western Shores and passed over the Sea; these were the High Elves, who became immensely enhanced in powers and knowledge. But part of them in the event remained in the coast-lands of the North-west: these were the Sindar or Grey-elves. The lesser Elves hardly appear, except as part of the people of The Elf-realm; of Northern Mirkwood, and of Lórien, ruled by Eldar. (*Letters*: 176)

From this account the evaluative nature of the Elf-divisions can already be inferred. The non-Eldar Elves are not given their proper name as found in *The Silmarillion*, namely the Avari, but are called 'Lesser Elves', which immediately identifies them as inferior. Still, even before the summoning of the Elves to Valinor, the response to which created their first division, one more dichotomy of the Elvish 'race' occurred. The Elves were first encountered by the Vala Oromë, and when he appeared among them:

> ...some of the Quendi hid themselves, and some fled and were lost. But those that had courage, and stayed, perceived swiftly that the Great Rider was no shape out of darkness; for the light of Aman was in his face, and all the noblest of the Elves were drawn towards it. (*S*: 50)

Already from the first meeting of the Elves and the Valar then, before they were ever invited to Valinor, it was only one group of them that stood out and did meet Oromë. These were the most courageous and the 'noblest'. Both expressions reveal a lot about

[8] It is significant that, although *The Hobbit* was written for children, the story of the Elves is considered so central, that it is given in brief, in order to distinguish the Wood-Elves that Bilbo and the Dwarves encounter, from the rest. Still, the language is a bit more naïve and simplistic, as the divisions of the High-Elves are given as 'the Light-elves and the Deep-elves and the Sea-elves', using their translated names rather than the Elvish ones, and also the Wood-elves are described as 'more dangerous and less wise' than the High Elves (*H*: 218-9).

Tolkien's views on racial 'types'. Nobility is especially important, since in this case the Elves are too early in their history to have developed a system of social hierarchy that would have distinguished between noble and common members. It seems, then, that such characteristics are taken as natural. Some of the Elves were born to be valiant and noble while others were not. The ultimate implications of this way of thinking are very close to the idea of the superiority of some races as a natural phenomenon, exactly like the nineteenth-century concept of racial difference. It is also significant that some of the Elves that were afraid and hid themselves were taken by Morgoth and turned through torture and mutilation into Orcs (*S*: 50). However, the second major division that happened between the Elves, that between the Avari and the Eldar, is not so much based on determinative qualities, as on choice. The Avari, translated as the 'Unwilling', were summoned to Valinor, 'preferring the starlight and the wide spaces of Middle-earth to the rumour of the Trees' (*S*: 52). It is mostly in a Christian and theological sense that the Avari proved not to be worthy, and thus lesser Elves, and this is clearly explained by Tolkien, since elsewhere he repeats the above statement with a different, and significant, wording, saying that the rest of the Elves, apart from the High Elves: 'made their irrevocable choice, preferring Middle-earth to paradise' (*Letters*: 198).

However, even the High-Elves themselves, those of the Eldar that did go to Valinor, are divided into three 'kindreds', the Vanyar, or Fair Elves, the Noldor, or Deep Elves, and the Teleri, or Sea-Elves (*S*: 52-3). At first sight, these three divisions do not seem to bear any evaluative connotations, but only different mentalities and skills. However, the Fair Elves are soon separated from the other two divisions as the beloved ones of Manwë and Varda, the two highest Valar, while it is also plain that Ingwë, their leader, is 'the most high lord of all the Elvish race', and 'was ever held

the High King of all the Elves' (*S*: 52-3, 62). Despite the indisputably innate superiority of the Vanyar, the division of the Eldar whose story is mainly narrated in *The Silmarillion* is the Noldor, since it is they who leave Valinor and go to Middle-earth, while the Vanyar and the Teleri never again really appear in Middle-earth history. The Noldor may not have the nobility of the Vanyar but they are described as the most skilled group of elves, the one that displays a greater aptitude for learning and the most creative one. It is from these that the first form of writing came, through the invention of the first alphabet (*S*: 63). Fëanor, perhaps the archetypal figure of the Noldor Elf, is the one who fashions the precious Silmaril stones, and he is also the inventor of one of the Middle-earth alphabets (*S*: 64; *RK*: 1117). Indeed, Tolkien calls the Noldor 'the most gifted kindred of the Elves.' (*Letters*: 147). It is characteristic, that when Melkor is held captive in Valinor, and tries to influence the Elves against the Valar, he chooses to focus on the Noldor, since:

> The Vanyar indeed held him in suspicion, for they dwelt in the light of the Trees and were content; and to the Teleri he gave small heed, thinking them of little worth, tools too weak for his designs. But the Noldor took delight in the hidden knowledge that he could reveal to them; and some hearkened to words that it would have been better for them never to have heard. (*S*: 66)

It seems, then, that the Noldor were even the most interesting of the Elves for Tolkien to write about, since the Vanyar are invariably superior and good, the Teleri perhaps a little naïve. The hierarchy established in the Eldar, would have the Vanyar at the highest level and the Teleri at the lowest, with the former in this position for biological reasons, as they seem to possess innate morality and virtue, while the latter are the lowest because of their mental ability, since the Noldor seem to be mentally superior to them.

It seems, then, that the notion of a natural superiority of some of the Elf-divisions over others is a coherent viewpoint in the Middle-earth creation. All Elves

can be entered into a taxonomic scale and have a fixed and historically determined status, with the Vanyar at the top and the Avari, the Elves that never even started the voyage to the West, at the bottom.

3.3. Men

It has been shown above that Men are always considered as inferior to the nearly supernatural Elves. They seem to be just ordinary human beings, not different at all from humans in the 'real' world. However, throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, different types of Men seem to exist. Aragorn appears to be one of the 'race of the Kings from over the Sea...' (*FR*: 221), or of the 'race of Elendil' (*TT*: 436), or of the 'race of Gondor' (*TT*: 439), while Faramir is described as belonging to 'the race of Númenor' (*RK*: 965). Elsewhere, another kind of Men called 'the Easterlings' occur (*FR*: 245), and yet one more obviously different variety seems to be at hand, identified as the 'Wild Men' (*RK*: 831). It is, then, obvious that, as with the Elves, Men belong to different 'kinds' or 'races', which call for examination.

The Silmarillion is mostly concerned with the history of the Elves, but devotes a respectable amount of space to Men, notably those that became allies of the Elves. In the First Age of Middle-earth, these primeval Men are divided into three houses, each named after a great leader of each house. It is characteristic that in their first description, the three houses of Men are attributed very distinct racial traits, especially in terms of associating physical characteristics with mental abilities:

> The Men of the Three Houses throve and multiplied, but greatest among them was the house of Hador Goldenhead, peer of Elven-lords. His people were of great strength and stature, ready in mind, bold and steadfast, quick to anger and to laughter, mighty among the Children of Ilúvatar in the youth of Mankind. Yellow-haired they were for the most part, and blue-eyed; but not so was Túrin, whose mother was

> Morwen of the house of Bëor. The Men of that house were dark or brown of hair, with grey eyes; and of all Men they were most like to the Noldor and most loved by them; for they were eager of mind, cunning-handed, swift in understanding, long in memory, and they were moved sooner to pity than to laughter. Like to them were the woodland folk of Haleth, but they were of lesser stature, and less eager for lore. They used few words, and did not love great concourse of men; and many among them delighted in solitude, wandering free in the greenwoods while the wonder of the lands of the Eldar was new upon them. (*S*: 148)

Thus, stature, phenotype and character seem to be indissolubly linked, and are indeed close to racial anthropological stereotypes at the turn of the century. The House of Hador's great height and fair colours seems to coincide with their strength and boldness, as well as with their open-faced character, while, on the other side of the scale, the folk of Haleth's short stature and darker colours seems to dictate their lesser aptitude for learning and socialising.

However, apart from the three houses of the Elf-friends, another group of Men appears to come out of the East later on, the 'Swarthy Men', otherwise known as 'Easterlings'. They are described as such:

> These Men were short and broad, long and strong in the arm; their skins were swart or sallow, and their hair was dark as were their eyes. (*S*: 157)

These Men were already 'under the dominion of Morgoth' and although approached by the Elves and in some cases becoming their allies, they finally betrayed them (*S*: 157, 192-3). The description of the Easterlings could bring to mind racial stereotypes of black and coloured people and their visual representation in Britain. It seems that Tolkien's tripartite division of the fair-skinned 'races' of Men in Middle-earth who are invariably on the good side, and his grouping of the coloured peoples in one category which is hostile nearly *ab initio*, represents popular attitudes to race in Britain during the period before World War II. In contrast to a very keen awareness of the different 'racial' ingredients of Britain itself, namely Anglo-Saxons, Celts,

Normans, etc, the coloured people, who mostly lived in the colonies, did not have any specific identity and their physical characteristics were blurred (Barkan 1992: 23). This led to a more relativist approach of British scientists in terms of racial purity and national success, in contrast with Germany, but that was also limited to the varieties of the white race, while blacks were still viewed in a negative light and their intermixture with whites was regarded as disastrous, both biologically and socially (Barkan 1992: 23; Little 1948: 236).

It seems, then, that 'race' was central to the conception of Men from the first stages of Tolkien's mythology. However, later on in his work a new 'high' race of Men appeared, the Númenoreans, who became prominent during the Second Age of Middle-earth. The latter belong to the houses of Men that fought against Melkor in alliance with the Elves in the First Age, and as a reward they were given by the Valar an island close to Valinor to live in, along with a gift of longer life-span than ordinary Men (*RK*: 1128). It is the descendants of this specific 'race' that after the downfall of Númenor, came to Middle-earth and established the Kingdoms of Arnor and Gondor, the last descendant of their kings being Aragorn. In *The Lord of the Rings*, Aragorn's 'race' is always referred to as superior and ancient. Gandalf explains to Frodo that:

> '...there are few left in Middle-earth like Aragorn son of Arathorn. The race of the Kings from over the Sea is nearly at an end.' (*FR*: 221)

In fact, the 'race' of the Númenoreans seem to differ from common Men in biological and mental characteristics, in exactly the same way as Elves differ from Men. Thus, at the beginning of their existence, they are described as 'tall, taller than the tallest of the sons of Middle-earth' (*S*: 261), and in addition they are far-sighted (*S*: 262). Their 'increase in stature' was also followed by 'increase in mind' (*S*: 261-2), and their life-span is far greater than that of common Men (*RK*: 1128). Their appearance, their

biological characteristics and equally their mental abilities, then, appear to be very close to that of the Elves, but Tolkien is quick to emphasise their main difference:

> The Númenóreans...became thus in appearance, and even in powers of mind, hardly distinguishable from the Elves – but they remained mortal, even though rewarded by a triple, or more than a triple, span of years. (*Letters*: 154)

It is exactly this difference that brings about the downfall of the Númenoreans, as they envied the immortality of the Elves, they ignored the Ban of the Valar and as a result their island was destroyed by a great flood, a motif very close to the Atlantis myth (*Letters*: 197-8). Their life-span seems to have started to diminish from the moment they begin to long for immortality, as a sign of the withdrawal of the favour of the Valar towards them (*RK*: 1036, 1047). However, after their return to Middle-earth, one more reason is given for this decrease, even if it is not clearly identified as the principal one: the 'decay' of their 'blood' after been mingled with that of 'lesser men' (*FR*: 244; *RK*: 1047-8). The notion of the success of a race because of its 'pure blood', and its consequent decline in the case of it being mingled with that of inferior races, was quite popular in Victorian times, and taken for granted by anthropologists as late as Galton (1914). The result of the loss of 'pure' blood – with the exception of the line of the Kings – of the Númenoreans, causes their decadence and loss of power, mainly reflected by their lessening life span.

The result of Tolkien's literary production – his early mythology including the three Houses of Men as well as the 'swarthy' Easterlings of the First Age,[9] his later conception of the great civilization of Númenor and its 'high' race of Men,[10] as well as his children's tale, *The Hobbit*, which led to the writing of *The Lord of the Rings* as

[9] The development of the 'racial' characteristics of the Three Houses of Men, as well as of the 'Swarthy Men' can be traced in Tolkien's legendarium as published posthumously in the History of Middle-earth series, edited by Christopher Tolkien. See *Shaping*: 297, 300, 317, 320; *Lost Road*: 135, 267; *Jewels*: 50-1, 60, 224-5.

[10] For the first emergence of the Númenoreans and their development on Tolkien's legendarium, see *Lost Road*: 11-35; *Sauron*: 331-440.

a sequel – created quite a complex situation in terms of the races of Men living in Middle-earth during the Third Age. In *The Lord of the Rings*, there is a highly specific passage where Faramir talks to Frodo and Sam about the past history of Gondor, and gives them a very clear idea of what Virginia Luling has called 'the Gondorian theory of anthropology' (1996: 54). Having referred to Gondor's decline and the waning of its military power, as well as to the Rohirrim as a younger race of Men who became their worthy allies, Faramir gives a classification of Men:

> 'For so we reckon Men in our lore, calling them the High, or Men of the West, which were Númenoreans; and the Middle Peoples, Men of the Twilight, such as are the Rohirrim and their kin that dwell still far in the North; and the Wild, the Men of Darkness.' (*RK*: 678-9)

According to this classification, the Highest race are indisputably the Númenoreans, proved by their enhanced bodily and intellectual characteristics. They have won this pre-eminence by being the allies of the Elves, virtually by sticking to the good side. Although their empowerment was initially related to theological or moral factors, they evolved into a superior race that stood apart from all the others. On the contrary, the Swarthy Men who fought against the Elves and on the side of the evil forces, remain inferior. But things are not that simple. In Faramir's classification there is an in-between group, called the 'Middle Peoples' or the 'men of Twilight'. The Rohirrim are described as belonging to that order. It seems that what elevates the Rohirrim to the status of Middle Men, in contrast to the Easterlings and the Haradrim who would be classed as Men of Darkness in the Third Age, is their ancestral roots to the same three houses of Men that the Númenoreans also came from. Faramir talks with admiring words about them, describing them as:

> '...tall men and fair women, valiant both alike, golden-haired, bright-eyed, and strong; they remind us of the youth of Men, as they were in the Elder Days. Indeed it is said by our lore-masters that they have from of old this affinity with us that they are come from those same Three Houses of Men as were the Númenoreans in their beginning not

> from Hador the Goldenhaired, the Elf-friend, maybe, yet from such of his sons and people as went not over Sea into the West, refusing the call.' (*RK*: 678)

It is quite obvious that the modelling of this classification of Men in Gondor is parallel to the classification of the Elves into those that went to the West and became wise, those that started the voyage but remained in the Western shore of Middle-earth, and those that never desired the light of Valinor, the refusers. Indeed, in a rejected version of Faramir's words this is clearly stated:

> 'And so, as the Elves are divided into three: the High Elves, and the Middle Elves, [the Lingerers the Elves of the Woods >] their kindred that lingered on the shores, and the Wild Elves [the Refusers >] of the woods and mountains, so we divide Men, calling them the High or the Men of [Light >] the West, which are the Numenoreans, and the Middle or the Men of Shadow, such as the Rohiroth and other of their kindred in Dale and Mirkwood, and the Wild Men, or the Men of the Darkness.' (*War*: 157)

However, I would suggest that it was the 'invention' of the Rohirrim, and the need for a classification of the Men of Dale found in *The Hobbit*, that generated this division of Men in Middle-earth. Since both of these subdivisions cannot be Númenoreans, but are still on the good side, a pedigree was made for them, so that they become descendants of the same 'race' as the Númenoreans, who did not go to the West and did not 'evolve' in the same way. They become analogous, thus, to the Sindar Elves: not as elevated as the 'High Elves' but still revered, and superior to the wild Elves who never desired the light of Valinor. The case remains, then, that during the Third Age of Middle-earth, the subdivisions of Men allied to the good side are still fair-skinned and descendants of the same primordial races, while the evil Men are coloured, and pictured as coming from a completely different background.

There is, however, one exception, in a sub-division of Men that do not seem to 'fit' into this classification, especially in terms of their physical description and 'racial' characteristics. They are clearly not Númenoreans, neither can they claim the

same origin as the Rohirrim and the Men of Dale, but they are not hostile to the Elves and Men, neither allies of Sauron. These are the Woses, or Wild Men of the Woods (*RK*: 831). This 'race' of Men appears out of the blue to assist the Rohirrim to reach Gondor, bringing help against its siege. They are a primitive tribe of wild men, described as short-legged and fat-armed, exactly like their statues of the 'Púkel-Men' which the riders encounter before they meet with their leader, Ghân-buri-Ghân (*RK*: 831-2). The depiction of this 'uncivilised' tribe is very highly reminiscent of the eighteenth-century romantic idealisation of the 'noble savage', as a primitive man who is free and close to nature (Gillespie 2002: 89-90; Steeves 1973: 93). Ghân-buri-Ghân speaks in abrupt and grammatically liminal sentences,[11] and is dressed only with 'grass about his waist'. He refuses to send his men to war, as he claims that: 'we fight not', but he offers help to the Rohirrim, declaring himself and his people as foes of the Orcs (*RK*: 832-3). In this case, then, Tolkien seems to deviate from the racial hierarchy of Middle-earth, as discussed to this point. The Woses of the Woods would have to be indeed an uncivilised and, thus, an inferior race, but here Tolkien seems to be following the 'noble savage' ideal and romanticizing primitiveness rather than despising it.

The discussion hitherto has only touched upon the issue of race mixture, by referring to the 'mingled blood' of the Númenoreans. In the next part, the issue of mixtures between these different 'types' of the Elf 'race' are going to be examined, as well as the mixture of different 'races', as exemplified in the matter of the Half-elven.

[11] Verlyn Flieger has noted that 'his dialogue sounds like that of a Hollywood Tarzan' (2003: 100), another stereotypical representation of the noble savage.

3.4. Racial Mixture: The Problem of the Half-elven

The Elvish divisions are very strongly reminiscent of the nineteenth-century concept of different races, as they form a chain of hierarchically classified divisions, with mostly fixed and innate characteristics. Their power is proved in the cases of intermarriages between members of two different divisions. Shippey observes that in *The Silmarillion*, the characters are fixed and static, and he attributes this to Tolkien's adherence to a Norse convention, shared also by the *Beowulf* poet, that people are their heredity (1982: 185). He refers extensively to one example of mixed Elvish origin to prove this. This is the case of the original enmity of Fëanor towards his half-brothers, Fingolfin and Finarfin. Shippey explains that:

> The 'Elves of the Light' are divided into three groups, in order of seniority, or wisdom, or attachment to the Valar: the Vanyar, Noldor, Teleri. Fëanor is pure Noldor on both sides...After the death of his mother, though, his father marries again, so that Fëanor has two half-brothers...It is vital to remember that *their* mother is not of the Noldor, but of the 'senior' race of the Vanyar. While junior to Fëanor in birth and even in talent, therefore, his half-brothers are marked from the beginning as superior to him in restraint and generosity. (1982: 186)

Shippey goes on to explain more characters from *The Silmarillion* in the same way, and also cites examples of contempt between the different Elvish categories (1982: 186-9).[12] His aim is to prove the affinity of Tolkien's work with the mentality of the Norse sagas, but his observations are also important as far as an anthropological approach of Tolkien is concerned. In the early twentieth century, the science of race was developed as a result of the new science of heredity – especially Galton's ideas about inheritance of mental behaviour – which strongly affected the Eugenic movement in the 1930s (Stepan 1982: 112-14).

[12] The case of Maeglin should be mentioned here, as an example of intermarriage between Light and Dark Elves. Maeglin's mother is a Noldor while his father the Dark Elf Eöl. Tolkien very characteristically states that: 'As Maeglin grew full to stature he resembled in face and form rather his kindred of the Noldor, but in mood and mind he was the son of his father' (*Silmarillion*: 134).

A different problem is posed by the case of the Half-elven. In the Appendices to *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien narrates:

> There were three unions of the Eldar and the Edain: Lúthien and Beren; Idril and Tuor; Arwen and Aragorn. By the last the long-sundered branches of the Half-elven were reunited and their line was restored. (*RK*: 1034)

Well-known characters, like Elrond, are known to belong to the peculiar category of Half-Elven already from *The Hobbit* (48), so that the mating of Elf and Man seems to be completely natural in Middle-earth. Still, Tolkien found himself at great difficulty when a reader asked him 'What happens to the descendants of a human and an elf who marry?' (*Letters*: 188). His answering letter contains the following lines:

> I suppose that actually the chief difficulties I have involved myself in are scientific and biological – which worry me just as much as the theological and metaphysical...Elves and Men are evidently in biological terms one race, or they could not breed and produce fertile offspring – even as a rare event: there are 2 cases only in my legends of such unions... But since some have held that the rate of longevity is a biological characteristic, within limits of variation, you could not have Elves in a sense 'immortal' – not eternal but not dying by 'old age' – and Men mortal, more or less as they now seem to be in the Primary World – and yet sufficiently akin. I might answer that this 'biology' is only a theory, that modern 'gerontology', or whatever they call it, finds 'ageing' rather more mysterious, and less clearly inevitable in bodies of human structure. But I should actually answer: I do not care. This is a biological dictum in my imaginary world...Men are represented as biologically akin in this 'history', because Elves are certain aspects of Men and their talents and desires, incarnated in my little world. (*Letters*: 189)

In this letter, Tolkien seems to be contradicting himself, and at the same time appears to be aware of the issue of 'human hybridisation', which had concerned scientists as late as the 1930s. It has been shown above that Elves and Men were indeed conceived as being different races with different physical and mental attributes. Tolkien himself had called these two classes of beings 'races' many times. Still here he claims that Elves and Men are biologically of the same race.

What is significant in order to explain this quotation is the expression 'fertile offspring'. In post-Darwinian nineteenth-century racial science, Brocca, a polygenist scientist, distinguished between fertile offspring, produced by 'eugenesic' or closely allied races, with infertile offspring (if any) being the outcome of the intermarriage of 'non-eugenesic', or remotely allied races (1864: 45-60). Especially in Britain Spencer argued that hybridisation between widely separated races was disastrous and should be forbidden (1972: 165, 257), and the whole issue was still in debate at the end of the nineteenth century and as late as 1917, with Keith's arguments (1917: 121-31). The issue was also of great concern for the British Eugenics and articles about it in the *Eugenic Review* appeared as late as 1940 (Gates 1920; Mjoen 1922; Little 1940). Tolkien appears to have been conscious of this theory, as he uses exactly its terminology to refute different biological race for Elves and Men. It is their possibility of having fertile offspring that would naturally classify them as one 'race'. The other critical word in this quoted passage is the adjective 'biological'. Tolkien stresses that Elves and Men are one race 'in biological terms'. Still he maintains that biologically they have a different life span, which seems irrational. To solve the contradiction he just refers to his world's own 'biological dictum'. In conclusion, what can be inferred from this extract is that Tolkien, being a philologist and novelist rather than a biologist, had not created a coherent biological infrastructure to account for all possibilities in his imaginary world. He was puzzled and confused by the reader's comment, which helped point out the inconsistency of the Half-elven 'kind' and he tried to explain it as well as he could, but still incoherently. Still, this whole issue shows once more that he was aware of the anthropological debates and controversies of his time.

What remains to be examined, finally, is the Half-elven issue in terms of its social implications in Middle-earth context, which will reveal once more and very clearly that Men and Elves were thought of as belonging to different races, and the former to an inferior one to the latter. The two cases of Elf-Man unions that are treated more extensively by Tolkien are that of Aragorn and Arwen, and that of Beren and Lúthien. It is significant that, in both cases, the father of the Elf-female shows contempt for the male Man. In the first, although Aragorn's mother warns him that 'it is not fit that mortal should wed with the Elf-kin' (*RK*: 1059), he does converse with Elrond about their possible union, and Elrond answers that:

> '...Arwen the Fair...is of lineage greater than yours, and she has lived in the world already so long that to her you are but a yearling shoot beside a young birch of many summers. She is too far above you.' (*RK*: 1059)

Although Elrond clearly looks down on Aragorn and all the race of Man, his words are gentle compared to Thingol's response to Beren's demands of marrying his daughter Lúthien. Thingol calls Beren an 'unhappy mortal' and 'baseborn mortal' (*S*: 166-7). Two glimpses of his thoughts during his meeting with Beren show even more strongly his contempt for Men:

> Then the King [Thingol] was filled with anger, for Lúthien he loved above all things, setting her above all the princes of the Elves; whereas mortal Men he did not even take into his service. (*S*: 166)

> But Thingol looked in silence upon Lúthien; and he thought in his heart: 'Unhappy Men, children of little lords and brief kings, shall such as these lay hands on you, and yet live?' (*S*: 167)

Union with Men is considered by both fathers as a debasement of their daughters' superior Elvish race. It is highly significant that Elrond, when he realises that there is no way of avoiding the marriage of Aragorn and Arwen, demands at least that his daughter shall not be 'the bride of any Man less than the King of both Gondor and Arnor' (*RK*: 1061). Still, the two lines of the Half-elven that become reunited by the

marriage of Aragorn and Arwen are cases of racial mixture which produced wonderful offspring, such as Elrond himself. Tolkien's final conclusion about this special 'species' of Middle-earth is summarised in the following statement:

> And in the glory and beauty of the Elves, and in their fate, full share had the offspring of elf and mortal, Eärendil, and Elwing, and Elrond their child. (*S*: 105)

3.5. Orcs

The case of the Orcs is particularly interesting, as they represent the typical villains of Middle-earth, and still their origins lie in the highest 'race'. The *Silmarillion* account of their creation talks about some of the first Elves that were terribly afraid when Orome came to meet them and fled, and were subsequently ensnared by Melkor and 'by slow arts of cruelty were corrupted and enslaved' so that the race of Orcs were made 'in envy and mockery of the Elves' (*S*: 50). Tolkien seems to have emphasised the fact that the Orcs were not 'created' by Melkor, but rather he turned them into a 'counterfeit' of their original Elvish nature (*Letters*: 190). Orcs, then, seem to be the negative version of the Elves, and their visualisation by Tolkien is especially intriguing when viewed in such a context. In all his 'legendarium' the Orcs are hardly ever described, and only identified as evil. In *The Lord of the Rings*, however, there are a number of instances where we are given an insight into their physical appearance. One of the orc-chieftains in Moria is described as 'almost man-high' and we are also told that 'his broad flat face was swart, his eyes were like coals, and his tongue was red' (*FR*: 325). The 'goblin-soldiers' of Isengard are described as being 'of greater stature, swart, slant-eyed, with thick legs and large hands' and elsewhere as 'large, swart, slant-eyed' (*TT*: 415, 451). Finally, a glimpse of the

appearance of the Orcs is also given in *The Lord of the Rings* through the description of Saruman's half-goblin or half-orcish Men, the result of his having 'blended the races of Orcs and Men' (*TT*: 473). Already in Bree we meet a 'squint-eyed southerner', the companion of Bill Ferny, who is also described elsewhere as 'swarthy' and as having 'a sallow face with sly, slanting eyes' (*FR*: 160, 165, 180), and the same appearance is also attributed to some of Saruman's army as seen by Merry and Pippin before the destruction of Isengard, as well as to the ruffians that the hobbits have to face in 'The Scouring of the Shire' (*TT*: 566; *RK*: 1004, 1005, 1015).

This image of the Orcs become much clearer in one of Tolkien's letters, where he explains that:

> The Orcs are definitely stated to be corruptions of the 'human' form seen in Elves and Men. They are (or were) squat, broad, flat-nosed, sallow-skinned, with wide mouths and slant eyes: in fact degraded and repulsive versions of the (to Europeans) least lovely Mongol-types. (*Letters*: 274)

This statement is important from an anthropological point of view, as they seem to reflect popular ideas of the traditional hierarchy of the three extreme human types, often called races, namely the Caucasoid, the Mongoloid and the Negroid (Montagu 1997: 50; Metraux 1951: 153). In this case, Tolkien seems to identify himself with the 'European' race, usually associated with the Caucasoid, and chooses for his villains the physical characteristics, if only in extreme, of the so-called Mongoloid race, traditionally seen as inferior to the white one. At the same time, the identification of Orcs with the Mongoloid race, evokes popular ideas on racial degeneration and mental disability. For many years – officially until 1961 – the medical condition today known as 'Down's Syndrome' was referred to as 'Mongolian idiocy' or 'Mongolism'. The term originated in the writings of John Langdon Down, who was the first to describe and study the condition, and whose name was given to the modern term to

refer to it (Ward 1999: 22). Writing during the second half of the nineteenth century and influenced by racial anthropology, Down came to view mental disability as a form of regression to earlier, less developed races of humans. He categorised the patients of the asylum he was working in into different racial groups, and he observed that a great number of them were 'typical Mongols' (Ward 1999: 20; Wright 2001: 164). His description of the Mongolian idiots is alarmingly close to Tolkien's description of the Orcs:

> The face is flat and broad, and destitute of prominence. The cheeks are roundish, and extended laterally. The eyes are obliquely placed, and the internal canthi more than normally distant from one another... The lips are large and thick, with transverse fissures. The tongue is long, thick and is much roughened. The nose is small. (Down 1862: 122)

The supposed 'regression' of the Down's Syndrome patients was used as late as 1924, in Crookshank's *The Mongol in our Midst*, where he claimed that the syndrome represented regression to the characteristics of the Orang Utan (1924). The identification of the Orcs with Mongols and the evocation of mental disability associated with such a term, seems also to agree with a more general stereotype attitude towards disability in society, which is also valid today, which tends to view disabled people as sinister and evil (Barnes 1992: 22).

4. Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to treat certain issues concerning the Elves and Men in Tolkien's Middle-earth within the framework of the racial anthropology of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tolkien's awareness of the anthropological debates of his period has been examined, as well as their applications to the racial hierarchy that seems to exist in Middle-earth. What can be inferred from the

discussion above is that there seems to be a contradiction between Tolkien's beliefs concerning race, as these are expressed in his letters and works of scholarship, and the racial ideology found in the Middle-earth cosmos. Tolkien challenged the use of the term 'race', refused to declare 'aryan' origin, but nevertheless presented the Elves as an innately superior race to Men, both in terms of physical traits and of mental abilities, and constructed a world in which racial purity is the ideal. Still, ideology and literary production are not supposed to exist in a one-to-one correspondence. Tolkien's views in 'real life' do reflect the ideology of race of his very disturbed era: disgust at the Nazi crimes but also confusion and vagueness as far as the validity of the term 'race' was concerned. Medvedev and Bakhtin claim that ideology appears to define a literary text from without, but literature has also its own internal rules. It is the dialectic co-articulation of ideology and aesthetic form that finally produces the literary text (1978: 29). Eagleton seems to accept the same view and insists that the structure of a text cannot be seen as a microcosm of ideology. The 'ideology of the text' is not identical with the dominant ideology (1976: 98). It should not be forgotten that Tolkien was consciously creating a 'mythology', a literary form with its own conventions and norms, which must have affected his choices, even if only subconsciously, as in the case where the inter-marriage of elf and man is common in folklore but unacceptable in terms of the theory of human hybridisation and race mixture.

It should be noted here that contemporary anthropology is not the only means by which the conception of the races of Middle-earth can be understood. In a recent paper, for example, Margaret Sinex (2005) has argued for the construction of the 'other' in Tolkien's world being based on medieval racial stereotypes and prejudices, with which Tolkien would be very familiar, within the context of creating a pseudo-

historical, pseudo-medieval atmosphere for Middle-earth. However, this thesis's aim is to deconstruct Tolkien's work historically, showing how it relates to his own time, and, within that framework, developments in contemporary anthropology have proved to be illuminating. A point that has deliberately been left out from this chapter is the question of whether Tolkien can be charged with racism or if his works reflect racist attitudes. Pursuing such an issue would be irrelevant to the content of this chapter. Racism as a concept is a much later one and accusing Tolkien of racism would be to de-contextualise his writings from their historical period. Especially if one bears in mind that the fact that it was not until after World War II that a greater awareness of racial offensiveness was expressed in Britain, mainly by humanitarians and liberals, in contrast to the U.S.A. where racism became a political issue much earlier, due to the particular historical circumstances (Barkan 1992: 24), it is self-evident that such questions cannot be pursued in Tolkien's work, since they would only be treated within the framework of modern perspectives on racism and racial discrimination. Indeed, there has been a number of scholars that have attempted such a critique or defence of Tolkien, whose work, however, is not free from the mistake of judging older ideas and ideologies from a modern viewpoint (Rearick 2004; Perry 2003; Curry 1997; 2000).[13] The bulk of Tolkien's literary creation occurred within the period when race was still a valid scientific term, or while its associated ideas of the nature of Man and his place in the world were still very strong. It is only in his very late writings, and especially in one specific text, written around 1959-60 and entitled 'Quendi and Eldar' (*Jewels*: 359-424), that Tolkien starts thinking about the politics of race and the idea of offensive racial language. Referring to the terms that the Elves used to refer to themselves, he writes:

[13] Rearick has also made the useful distinction between scholars that treat Tolkien's 'racism' by focusing on his literary texts, and those that confuse Tolkien's own writings with the recent films of *The Lord of the Rings* by Peter Jackson, and its own representation of race.

> There also existed two old compounds containing **kwendī*: **kala-kwendī* and **mori-kwendī*, the Light-folk and the Dark-folk. These terms appear to go back to the period before the Separation, or rather to the time of the debate among the Quendi concerning the invitation of the Valar. *They were evidently made by the party favourable to Orome*, and referred originally to those who desired the Light of Valinor (where the ambassadors of the Elves reported that there was no darkness), and those who did not wish for a place in which there was no night. But already before the final separation **mori-kwendī* may have referred to the glooms and the clouds dimming the sun and the stars during the War of the Valar and Melkor, so that *the term from the beginning had a tinge of scorn, implying that such folk were not averse to the shadows of Melkor upon Middle-earth...*
> In the period of Exile *the Ñoldor modified their use of these terms, which was offensive to the Sindar. Kalaquendi* went out of use, except in written Ñoldorin lore. *Moriquendi* was now applied to all other Elves, except the Ñoldor and Sindar, that is to Avari or to any kind of Elves that at the time of the coming of the Ñoldor had not long dwelt in Beleriand and were not subjects of Elwë. It was never applied, however, to any but Elvish peoples. The old distinction, when made, was represented by the new terms *Amanyar* 'those of Aman', and *Úamanyar* or *Úmanyar* 'those not of Aman', beside the longer forms *Amaneldi* and *Úmaneldi*. (*Jewels*: 373)

It is, then, only at this late date that Tolkien might have started contemplating the idea of race in its modern sense. What this chapter has attempted to show is that Tolkien was indeed aware of the anthropological debate of his time, and influenced up to a point by the ideas discussed around him concerning race. This can go some way towards explaining why he used varying terminology to refer to the different human-like creatures of Middle-earth in *The Lord of the Rings*, and also provides a better understanding of the Middle-earth cosmos and its correspondence to Tolkien's own era.

Chapter 4: The Linguistic Inspirations of Middle-earth: Tolkien's Invented Languages

1. Introduction: The Impossibility of Tolkienian Linguistics

One of the main reasons for many readers' fascination with Tolkien's work, which has led to the formation of numerous societies dedicated to the study of his literature, is the inclusion in it of a number of 'invented languages', attributed to different speaking peoples of Middle-earth, or to their sub-divisions. The notion of an 'invented language' itself is a little problematic if one should try to explain it to someone who is encountering Tolkien for the first time. What does 'invented language' really signify? And how is such a language opposed or related to a 'natural language'? Does Tolkien's Quenya, for example, have the same right to be called a language as French, or Spanish, or even Esperanto, itself an 'invented language' but still used by living people as opposed to semi-mythological literary creatures?

Helge Fauskanger has discussed the complexity of the issue of Tolkien's languages, merely by trying to address the question: 'How many languages did J.R.R. Tolkien make?'. He unravels the thread of semi-sketched and fully-outlined languages (in terms of vocabulary and grammar), of older forms of Tolkien's languages and the stages they went through, and of languages merely hinted at or implied, and reaches the following conclusion:

> Tolkien developed 2 languages that are vaguely *"useable"* (in the sense that you can compose long texts by deliberately avoiding the gaps in our knowledge), named roughly 8-10 other languages that have *a minimum of actual substance* but are in no way useable, provided *mere fragments* of at least 4 other languages, and *alluded to* numerous

> other languages that are either entirely fictitious or have a known vocabulary of only one or a very few actual words. (Fauskanger 2005)

But how did this complex situation arise? *The Lord of the Rings* contains information on several languages of Middle-earth, but at least there the question of their actual number can easily be answered merely by counting. In order to give a clear account of how complex and confusing any venture to examine Tolkien's languages is, an account of previous research on Middle-earth linguistics is provided in this chapter.

When, after seventeen years, the 'new Hobbit', which appeared as *The Lord of the Rings*, was published, the *Hobbit*-readers, apart from a much more adult-oriented and serious book, also found both a much more innovative nomenclature together with fragments of different languages, variously described as High-Elven, Elvish, Rohirric, Black Speech, or Dwarvish. Indeed, one of the initially puzzling statements that Tolkien himself made at the foreword of *The Lord of the Rings* was that his work was 'primarily linguistic in inspiration and was begun in order to provide the necessary background of "history" for Elvish tongues' (*FR*: xxii). As an explanation of this, Tolkien said a little later in one of his letters, probably adding to the confusion rather than clarifying it, that *The Lord of the Rings* was to him: 'largely an essay in "linguistic aesthetic", as I sometimes say to people who ask me "what is it all about?"' (*Letters*: 220).[1]

But how are these two statements to be understood? The first clue was the difference on the emphasis on languages between *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Although in the former there were allusions to – and even a couple of names given in – 'the ancient tongue of Gondolin', or 'the dreadful language of the Wargs'

[1] The letter was written in June 1955 (*Letters*: 220), when the third volume of *The Lord of the Ring* was not yet published.

(*H*: 94, 147), and even an obscure statement about how 'Men changed the language that they learned of elves in the days when all the world was wonderful' (*H*: 271), at the same time there were also numerous references to languages of animals, like the ones that Beorn could speak, or like the thrush that spoke to the Dwarves (*H*: 165, 175, 284), something that seems to place the whole 'language' situation in *The Hobbit* in the fairy-tale, or folkloric, realm. However, in *The Lord of the Rings*, the languages are much more prominent, not only in references to them and in allusions to their histories, but also much more obviously in the nomenclature and in the numerous fragments of the several languages scattered throughout the three volumes of the work. The readers of *The Lord of the Rings* must have felt rather staggered, though, to find out that in some cases there were no translations of quite long fragments, such as the Elvish hymn to Elbereth in Rivendell, Gandalf's two invocations of fire when the fellowship climbs Caradhras and when it confronts the Wargs, Gandalf's 'opening spell' at the gates of Moria (*FR*: 238, 290, 299, 307), a phrase of orc-speech when Merry and Pippin are captives in the beginning of the second volume, the greetings of Éomer and Éowyn to Théoden, apparently in Rohirric, Gimli's Dwarvish war-cry, Frodo and Sam's Elvish cries in Shelob's lair (*TT*: 445, 518, 522, 534, 720, 729), and Treebeard's greeting to Celeborn and Galdriel (*RK*: 981). Of course, some other fragments were, conversely, translated, but why leave so many others in their original language, with only hints to what they might mean?

On the other hand, apart from the language fragments, as well as a multitude of new names that sounded totally strange and unfamiliar, at least in contrast to most of the *Hobbit* names, there was also to be found in *The Lord of the Rings* something

that had fascinated the *Hobbit*-readers so many years earlier: runes (*FR*: 319).[2] However, this time there was also present another script, which was found on the inscription on the Ring and on the sketch of the door of Moria (*FR*: 50, 305), which seemed to be totally new and alien, while at least the runes must clearly have had some connection to these 'attested' in Northern languages. What was that script, then, only described as 'Elvish' in the book?

The readers who asked these questions and were intrigued by the presence of so many language fragments, in various different languages as well, and also by the names of the scripts, must have been relieved to discover that the third volume of *The Lord of the Rings* contained Appendices, two of which discussed 'Writing and Spelling', and 'Languages' respectively (*RK*: 1113-1138). A substantial amount of information could be found there, rather more detailed as far as the writing systems and the pronunciation of the languages were concerned, rather than the translation, grammar and syntax of the languages, as well as an explanation that Tolkien was only a translator of the book, which he had found in an old manuscript, and that he only translated some of the languages, leaving most of them in their original form (*RK*: 1133-8).[3]

Interest in Tolkienian languages amongst readers after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* was not unexpected, judging by the fan mail that he received for *The Hobbit*, and also bearing in mind that code-breaking has always been a fascinating activity for both children and adults. On the other hand, Tolkien's reviewers were mostly puzzled or even rather irritated by all the linguistic material in his work, and even those who appreciated it did not venture to attempt an analysis of

[2] Tolkien, in a letter to Stanley Unwin written in 1937, says that: 'I have received several queries, on behalf of children and adults, concerning the *runes* and whether they are real and can be read. Some children have tried to puzzle them out' (*Letters*: 27).
[3] There is a reference to this also in the 'Prologue' of *The Lord of the Rings* (*FR*: 1), but the whole situation becomes much more clear in Appendix F. For the 'theory of translation', see § 2.7 below.

it (Hyde 1982: 25-6).[4] Some of Tolkien's letters, published posthumously by Carpenter, show some readers' interest in clarifying linguistic matters of Middle-earth, notably the letters addressed to Rhona Beare (*Letters*: 277-84, 307-8),[5] but it was not until 1965, when the Ace Books paperback case occurred in America, that an explosion of Tolkien fan-activity, and consequent wider interest in his invented languages, came about. The release of an unauthorised paperback of *The Lord of the Rings* and the legal dispute that followed, multiplied the interest in the book, and what Carpenter describes as a 'campus cult' began in America (1977: 226-30). A number of small 'Tolkien Societies' were formed around America, most of which were publishing their own 'fanzine', i.e. a small journal, usually typed, photocopied and distributed by the editors in a small circle around the 'society'. It would appear that the New York-based 'Tolkien Society of America', founded and managed by Dick Plotz, acted as an umbrella-group to which everyone belonged (Allan 1978: viii). Within these 'societies' there were a number of people especially interested in the linguistic material in Tolkien's works, not only the languages but the writing systems as well, articles on which appeared quite often in the fanzines. Meanwhile, *The Road Goes Ever On* was published, a book with some of Tolkien's Elvish poems from *The Lord of the Rings*, which Donald Swann set to music. The book included an extensive second part, entitled 'Notes and Translations', where Tolkien gave detailed notes as well as word-to-word translations of the Elvish poems, thus increasing the linguistic information available on Quenya and Sindarin (*Road*: 56-67). At the same time, within the 'Mythopoeic Society', which did not limit its scope to Tolkien, but extended it to C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams as well, the interest in Tolkien's

[4] A characteristic attitude was that of Reilly, who, despite being appreciative on *The Lord of the Rings*, as far as the languages were concerned claimed that 'no one ever exposed the nerves and fibres of his being in order to make up a language; it is not only insane but unnecessary' (1963: 96).
[5] See also the letters to Naomi Mitchinson, Richard Jeffery and Cotton Minchin (*Letters*: 173-81, 223-4, 247-8).

languages increased to the point that a desire for some form of publication arose. Thus, in 1971, the Mythopoeic Linguistic Fellowship was founded, and its journal, *Parma Eldalamberon*, was launched. In the first issue of the journal, the editorial included the following statement:

> One of the first goals of the Mythopoeic Linguistic Fellowship was and is the publication (or preparation for publication) of The Book, a composite dictionary, grammar, sourcebook and history of the Elven languages, with appendices covering the other tongues of Middle-earth, including glossaries of the Anglo-Saxon, Frankish, Norse and Celtic names found among the Rohirrim, Dwarves, Woodmen and Hobbits; Adûnaic, Westron, Old Mannish and Hobbitish and their relationships; the evolution of Elven grammar and the interconnections of those tongues with the other languages of Middle-earth, and so on to the point of Excedrin headache. This is obviously too great a work for one person alone, or for a small group of people, and our Dream expanded to a Grand Compendium of Tolkienian Trivia, with contributors scattered near and far, with conflicting theories necessitating sections of minority opinions, with mail flying from state to state and continent to continent to dispute a certain Quenya inflexional ending... We expect this work to take some time (I am personally hoping to complete it for Professor Tolkien's Centennial in 1992). In the meantime it seemed wise to publish a journal in which to carry on our arguments and air our theories, pass on bits of trivia (hey, you guys, the Rhovanion names are Gothic!!!) and chatter about various other imaginary tongues... (Marmor 1971: 2).

In the following year, Jim Allan privately published and circulated a booklet entitled 'A Glossary of the Eldarin Tongues', including notes on the other languages and the writing systems, the supplies of which were nearly totally exhausted by 1973. Thinking of a revised version, but also recognizing that comments and contributions of a number of other people had enriched his knowledge of Tolkien's languages, Allan offered to the editor of *Parma Eldalamberon* to undertake the task of editing 'The Book' himself, thus revising his own material and including contributions from other 'Tolkien linguists', notably by Bill Welden, who, according to Allan, had 'managed to crack the problem of Proto-Eldarin and [had] circulated his notes on the subject' (Allan 1978: ix-x). The whole project progressed slowly, as for most of the

people involved the edition of 'The Book' was an extra activity, on top of their everyday jobs or studies. As a result, when it was approaching completion, the publication of *The Silmarillion*, which had been anticipated for a long time by Tolkien fans, had already been scheduled. The dilemma of the compilers of 'The Book' was whether to wait for the publication of *The Silmarillion* and revise their material on the basis of the new linguistic information that was sure to be found in it, or to proceed with publishing the material they had, hoping that their theories would be proved right by the additional material *The Silmarillion* would provide. The decision leaned towards the latter choice, mainly because it had taken such a long time to gather and organise the linguistic data from *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Road Goes Ever On*, that it was feared that it would take around three years to incorporate *The Silmarillion* data, something that would leave the Tolkien languages fans without a comprehensive reference book for another long period of time (Allan 1978: x-xi). It seems that this was the wisest choice, since, as it will be shown below, up to now nothing further significant has been published of the same character.

The result was *An Introduction to Elvish*, a nearly three-hundred-page book, with the lengthy subtitle: *and to other tongues and proper names and writing systems of the third age of the Western Lands of Middle-Earth as set forth in the published writings of Professor John Ronald Reuel Tolkien* (Allan 1978). Jim Allan was indeed the author of the greatest number of the articles, but the book had contributions by a number of others, and Allan makes it clear in several points of the book that his own theories and ideas had been tested, validated, as well as disputed by a number of other people as well. The book was divided into four parts, in 'The Eldarin Tongues', 'Other Tongues', 'Personal Names' and 'Writing Systems' respectively, the first part comprising half of the book's contents. The tongues were analysed in terms of

phonology, grammar and syntax, and there were also sections with compilations of vocabulary, the largest being the Quenya and Sindarin Dictionaries. Tom Shippey, who reviewed the book in *Mallorn*, the fanzine of the British Tolkien Society, stated that:

> ...it tackles head-on the most daunting aspect of *The Lord of the Rings*... as also the most mysterious one: which is that according to Tolkien, he saw his trilogy not as myth nor as epic nor a fairy-story, as most critics have preferred to think, but as 'an exercise in linguistic aesthetic'. (1980: 7-8)

Shippey adds that Tolkien's languages had remained up to then 'outside the scope of reasoned argument', something that 'Jim Allan's book has shaken... quite a lot' (1980: 7-8). He goes on to pinpoint some mistakes found in the book but in general he seems to view it favourably, and definitely as a worthwhile way of studying Tolkien's work.

Jim Allan's book still serves as a main reference work for Tolkien's languages. However, in spite of the fact that many of its theories were proved to be true by later linguistic material from works by Tolkien subsequently published, some of its conclusions are too far-fetched, and it remains a work of Tolkien fan-activity rather than a serious work of academic quality. Especially the approach taken in some of the articles, the authors of which seem to accept at face value Tolkien's claim that he translated his story from an ancient manuscript and that the languages are real and very old, is problematic. Shippey criticises somewhat lightly this approach,

> ...partly because taking or pretending to take it seriously means you can't give proper weight to Tolkien's sense of fun, but mainly because I think that in one way and another Tolkien's work turns continually to the real world, and cutting off the sort of comparisons and allusions he made is an impoverishment. (1980: 10)

Claiming that the author has access to an obscure manuscript that he is just editing, or translating, is a well-known literary technique, designed to give a more layered depth

to the work. Pretending to believe in it cannot be lightly taken as a clever way of presenting research results, since it can lead to serious mistakes and far-fetched deductions. This approach is totally in line with many articles appearing in fanzines before the book was published, and the practice was to continue.

The fanzine activity went on after Jim Allan's book, especially after *The Silmarillion* was finally published in September 1977, which augmented the Elvish vocabulary as well as offering more fragments mainly of the Elvish languages, which could allow more deductions about grammar and syntax. Within the next few years, three more publications came to add to the Tolkienian linguistic material. In 1997 *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien* was published, which apart from drawings and sketches contained some more names from unpublished papers – included in Christopher Tolkien's comments on the pictures – as well as two crucial items for the Middle-earth writing systems: 'Leaves from the Book of Mazarbul' and 'Elvish Script' (*Pictures*: nos. 23, 48). The former, is supposed to be pages from the book that the fellowship found by Balin's tomb in the chamber of Mazarbul in Moria, written – as described in the book – in runes, with the final part in Elvish script (*FR*: 322-3).[6] The latter is just a transcription in Elvish script of the poem Errantry, found in *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (*Bombadil*). In 1980, Christopher Tolkien edited a number of other late, unpublished writings of his father,[7] under the title *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and of Middle-earth*, which included new fragments of Middle-earth languages, as well as a great number of new names belonging to a variety of these languages. Finally, in 1981, Humphrey Carpenter, Tolkien's biographer, with the aid of Christopher Tolkien, edited *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, some of which

[6] Tolkien had produced this text and had partially burnt it to make it look exactly like the description in the book. His original plan was for a facsimile of the three leaves to be included in *The Lord of the Rings*, but the cost of this was prohibitive, something that Tolkien greatly regretted as he had spent so much time to produce the half-burnt pages (Carpenter 1977: 217, *Letters*: 186, 248).

[7] All the texts found in *Unfinished Tales* are dated to the 1950s or later (*UT*: 5-14).

were answers to fan letters with specific questions on the languages, thus touching on phonology and vocabulary, as well as the development of Middle-earth languages.

Within four years of Allan's book, the material on Tolkien's languages had increased so much that *An Introduction to Elvish* began to look outdated.[8] In 1982, Paul Nolan Hyde was awarded a PhD by Purdue University, the title of his three-volume thesis being: 'Linguistic Techniques Used in Character Development in the Works of J.R.R. Tolkien'. Hyde's work is highly technical, and a large part of it, namely the appendices that take up both the second and the third volume of the thesis, were based on computer technology to build a 2,700-entry database of the vocabulary of Tolkien's languages. He put into the database every invented personal name, place-name, word or morpheme found in the published works of Tolkien and his literary estate, and, by conducting a number of searches based on morphological information on his languages that Tolkien had given in different parts of his work, he was able to deduce all the morphological items, which he then listed separately in another database (Hyde 1982: 258-60). The databases allowed him to discuss some of the languages' morphology and syntax and made it possible to work out translations of fragments. However, for the grammar of each language, he based his discussion on the fragments of languages present in Tolkien's works, through which he was able to define how different morphemes acted in the language. Hyde also dedicated a large part of his PhD thesis to the Writing systems of Middle-earth, transcribing and analyzing every fragment that Tolkien had given in runes or in the 'Elvish' script.

Hyde's thesis is very interesting as far as the methodology he used is concerned, as well as for the compilation of its vast appendices. He does use the material of Allen's book, mainly to validate his own results, or to cite a different

[8] In 1980, another small book on Tolkien's languages appeared, Ruth Noel's *The Languages of Tolkien's Middle-earth* (1980), but the deficiencies of this work, including errors and omissions, were soon discovered by students of Tolkien's languages.

interpretation, and he gives extensive accounts of the phonology, grammar and syntax of Quenya, Sindarin, as well as of any information he can deduce from the scanty data of Khuzdul (Dwarvish), and Black Speech. At the same time he discusses the real historical languages used mainly in Rohirric and Hobbitish in *The Lord of the Rings* and how they might have affected the geography of the Shire and of Middle-earth in general. He also explores the use of dialogue in Middle-earth as a mark of diversity between the different 'races'. His conclusions, however, seem to be secondary to the assemblage of hard-core data on Tolkien's languages (mainly on morphology) which seems to be the main concern of the thesis.

The data on Tolkien's languages, however, were to increase even more vastly later on, mainly through the enormous project that Christopher Tolkien undertook: namely the edition and publication of the great bulk of his father's literary papers so as to show how his ideas developed. This project began in 1983 with the publication of 'The Book of Lost Tales', the earliest version of what was to become the 'Silmarillion', and ended thirteen years later, when the twelfth volume of *The Histories of Middle-earth* was published. When the project started, the 'Tolkien linguists' rejoiced in the fact that more data were to be found in volumes I - V of *The Histories*, as well as in the essay 'A Secret Vice', published in 1983 in the collection of Tolkien's essays entitled *The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays*. Meanwhile, fanzine activity was still taking place, though not as it had been in the beginning, and *Parma Eldalamberon*, which had initiated the idea of 'The Book', was becoming somewhat idle or at least highly irregular as far as its publication was concerned. But things got a little more serious with the launching of a new Tolkien-language fanzine, *Vinyar Tengwar*, which was realised by some members of the Mythopoeic Society who met on the margins of its annual conference, and decided to

start this new fan-journal in order to attempt to rekindle interest in and publications on Tolkien's languages. In one of the articles of the first issue of the journal, one of its main goals is stated as such:

> To someday [perhaps by 1992?] revise and update Jim Allan's *Introduction to Elvish*, which has served as the primary treatise on the tongues of Middle-earth. (Quiñonez 1988a: 3)

Paul Nolan Hyde, who up to then had been actively publishing on Tolkien's languages, maintaining a Tolkien-linguistics column in *Mythlore* – the fanzine of the Mythopoeic society – was a member of the group and at their initial meeting reported that his databases were updated with all the new material and that his morphological entries now numbered 18,000 (Quiñonez 1988b: 4). Hyde had also edited and translated for the first time in *Mythlore* the poem 'Narqelion' (1988), part of which was published in Carpenter's *J.R.R. Tolkien: A Biography* (1977: 83). The poem had been found within Tolkien's manuscripts found in Marquette University.[9] Discussions about a revision of Allan's book, or, really, the compilation of a new one that would include all the new material, continued in the next few issues of *Vinyar Tengwar*, mainly concentrating on the form that 'The Book' should take, and how the work for it would keep up with the new Tolkien material in future publications. Meanwhile, Christopher Tolkien published the next three volumes of *The Histories*, mainly consisting of the history of *The Lord of the Rings*. By 1990, the editor of *Vinyar Tengwar* had changed, and the project about 'The Book', referred to in the journal as 'I Parma', seemed to be getting somewhere. According to an announcement in issue 10 of the journal, Paul Nolan Hyde had agreed to serve as the general editor of 'The Book', and a possible outline of it was also given. It was in this year that the first internet mailing list specializing on Tolkien's languages – 'Tolklang' – begun.

[9] The poem was later edited again in *Vinyar Tengwar* by Christopher Gilson (1999), publishing also a facsimile of Tolkien's manuscript containing the poem, and correcting some erroneous readings of the first edition.

From then on, references and plans about 'I Parma' begin to get difficult to trace. Volumes IX and X of the *Histories* were published in 1992 and 1993 respectively, and some editions of original manuscript fragments related to Tolkien's languages appeared in *Vinyar Tengwar* during the same period. In 1995 and 1998, *Parma Eldalamberon* published two very important documents from Tolkien's manuscripts, namely the whole text of the 'Gnomish' and 'Qenya Lexicon', the first lexicons that Tolkien made in the mid-1910s of the two languages that later became Sindarin and Quenya respectively, which had been partly presented as appendices in volumes I and II of *The Histories*. In between, the twelfth and last volume of the Histories had been published, thus concluding Christopher Tolkien's vast project.

From then on, up until now, both *Parma Eldalamberon* and *Vinyar Tengwar* have kept on publishing material from Tolkien's manuscripts related to linguistic matters. Both journals are mainly run by Christopher Gilson, Patrick Wynne, Arden R. Smith and Carl F. Hostetter, all of whom seem to belong to a group which has undertaken the task of publishing Tolkien's linguistic papers (Flieger and Hostetter 2000: 272-4). Although no more details are known about the amount of material they have access to and have planned to edit, it would seem reasonable to expect them to continue publishing them as articles in these two journals. Maybe this is the reason why the 'I Parma' project has not proceeded, since if more and more unpublished material will keep on appearing, there may be no point in a comprehensive book before all the data are accessible. Meanwhile, there are at the moment three internet mailing lists concerning Tolkien's languages – 'Elfling' and 'Lambengolmor', together with the older 'Tolklang' referred to above – where views and theories on specific words or morphemes in Tolkien's languages are being discussed and often disputed. As far as internet sites are concerned, two deserve to be mentioned here.

The first is one maintained by Carl Hostetter: the Elvish Linguistic Fellowship website (www1), where information can be found on current issues of *Vinyar Tengwar*, as well as a very extensive list of resources for the study of Tolkien's languages. Recently, the website also added *Tengwestië*, an on-line journal on Tolkienean linguistics. The second one, called 'Ardalambion', is maintained by Helge Fauskanger and contains the most comprehensive grammatical descriptions and vocabulary lists for almost all of Tolkien's languages, as well as a number of articles, based on the material published so far (www2). The page is updated every time new data are published. Finally, David Salo, a Tolkien linguist who has been actively publishing in Tolkien's fanzines, and was also involved in the scripts of Sindarin made for Peter Jackson's film trilogy of *The Lord of the Rings*, recently published *A Gateway To Sindarin* (2004), a book on the grammar of that language, while at the same time the first international conference on Tolkien's invented languages took place in August 2005, hosted by the University of Stockholm, in Sweden (www3).

What should be added here is that, although Tolkienian linguistic scholarship started in fanzines with an incoherent mishmash of scholarly and popular articles, over the years it has developed into two distinct approaches: the one aims at studying Tolkien's languages in a descriptive way, treating them as a linguist would treat historical languages and recognizing all the information that Tolkien provided on them as genuine and worth of study – even if that information is contradictory and incoherent many times; this attitude is mainly represented by the Elvish Linguistic Fellowship scholars, who are also responsible for the edition of Tolkien's unpublished linguistic manuscripts. The other approach is more interested in *using* Tolkien's languages and maintaining them as living organisms, without, however, avoiding such disputable issues as regularizing them, and choosing one form over another, some

times arbitrarily. This approach is represented by such linguists as David Salo. The first approach has led to academic articles on Tolkien's languages of high standards, included in serious publications (see, for example, Flieger and Hostetter 2000), while the second was crucial for the success of Peter Jackson's film trilogy in depicting as accurately as possible a very important aspect of Tolkien's world.

This lengthy presentation of how research of Tolkien's languages has evolved is essential, as it provides the rationale for the contents of the present chapter. As can be observed from the account above, the 'Tolkienian Linguistics' phenomenon has concentrated mainly on the languages for their own sake, rather than on their function in Tolkien's world, and mainly on their analysis: in terms of establishing the grammar, phonology, syntax, etc. of the several languages as well as gathering the vocabulary – a task that has been lengthy for the many that attempted it and which also appears to be never-ending, as more and more material appears every year. This, however, lies outside the scope of this chapter. Determining the phonology, grammatical and syntactic rules, as well as the main lexicons of Tolkien's languages can be very appealing, but still it is just like attempting to solve a huge crossword puzzle that might last one for the rest of one's life. No exhaustive tables of vocabulary, morphemes or grammatical inflexions can be constructed, since a new publication can add new words, cancel speculations on grammar, or just add different versions of already accepted interpretations, while, at the same time, the data already accessible are often contradictory. With such fluidity of data the attempt is doomed either to fail, or to take such a lengthy time to be completed as to be unsuitable now for the scope of a PhD thesis, let alone a chapter of one.

This chapter, then, will mainly rely on the sources available and the analyses of Tolkien's languages done up to now, but will not venture to try something similar

to the 'I Parma' project. Instead, it will examine Tolkien's languages and the uses of his scholarly knowledge in their creation, mainly in terms of the whole conception of an imaginary world where a linguistic situation must also be created from scratch. The first part of the chapter will focus on language creation, discussing the principles on which Tolkien invented his languages, contextualizing Tolkien's invention of imaginary languages with its past tradition, exploring the relationships of language-invention and myth-making, and going through the actual process by which Tolkien made the Middle-earth languages. The second part of the chapter will explore the role of the languages in the Middle-earth cosmos, seeking to establish links between the Middle-earth linguistic situation and contemporary ideas in the science of philology and linguistics, mainly nineteenth-century philology, as well as Tolkien's awareness of changes in his area of expertise.

2. Tolkien's Views on Language-Invention and Myth-Making

2.1. Invention of Languages: 'A Secret Vice'

The peculiar hobby of J.R.R. Tolkien, already practised from childhood, to 'invent' languages, is widely attested. Carpenter refers to young Tolkien spending hours on designing his languages, modelled upon real ones, and then writing enthusiastically in his diary 'Did a lot of private lang.' (1977: 37). Garth also follows young Tolkien's early glossopoeic career, from his attempt to 'complete' the scanty vocabulary of Gothic by inventing his own Gothic-style words, until the first stages of 'Qenya', the language that later became the High Elvish 'Quenya' of *The Lord of the*

Rings (2003: 16-17, 60-3). It seems that his 'mad hobby' from time to time made Tolkien feel embarrassed. In a letter to his wife Edith, written in 1916, he refers to it as his 'nonsense fairy language' (*Letters*: 8). This comment indicates that by then he had already decided that the languages he designed were actually spoken by the fairies, the – then – protagonists of his mythology who finally developed into his later Elves. But it also shows his uneasiness about his spending so much time on them.

In 1931,[10] Tolkien wrote a paper specifically upon the topic of the invention of languages. The lecture seems to have been written with a philological society as a target audience and was revised, 'apparently for a second delivery', about 20 years later, but whether it was ever delivered, or when, remains unknown. The title found on the manuscript is quite characteristically: 'A Hobby for the Home', with the later additional note: 'In other words: home-made or invented languages' (Tolkien 1983: 3-4). The final title that Christopher Tolkien chose when he edited the essay was 'A Secret Vice', a phrase that occurs in the text referring to the hobby, and one used by Tolkien himself in a letter to refer to that paper (Tolkien 1983: 3; *Letters*: 374). Both titles reveal the continuous self-mocking attitude of Tolkien towards his hobby, and there are hints of his embarrassment in writing a paper on such a topic throughout the essay. Still, the core of the essay is totally serious and attempts to explain the pleasure that such a hobby gives.

Tolkien in 'A Secret Vice', takes us back to his childhood and gives us an account of how he passed through the stage of 'nursery-languages', which he describes as just codes for children to communicate with each other, serving the practical function of allowing them to feel members of a group quite distinct from the grown-ups, to the refined art of 'linguistic invention', defined as 'the construction of

[10] The dating of the paper is Christopher Tolkien's, and is quite securely based on a date mentioned in the paper itself. See Tolkien 1983: 3.

imaginary languages in full or outline for amusement' (*MC*: 200-6). We learn of *Animalic*, a code-language that Tolkien learned from other children,[11] made up almost entirely out of English animal names; of *Nevbosh*, the next step, which – despite being a mishmash of slightly changed English, French and Latin words – did contain specimens like 'lint', meaning 'quick, clever, nimble', which was chosen because the sound of the word seemed to 'fit' the notion it expressed; and of the final stage, *Naffarin*, a product of Tolkien's invention alone (as opposed to a language created in collaboration with other children), in the making of which – freed from the limitations of the communicative aspect of language – he attempted to aim at 'pleasure in articulate sound, and in the symbolic use of it, independent of communication' (*MC*: 208).

That 'amusement', or 'pleasure', seems to be the primary rationale for the creation of languages. Tolkien goes a bit further to explain the nature of pleasure that one is given by creating languages, arguing that it fulfils 'the instinct for "linguistic invention" – the fitting of notion to oral symbol, and *pleasure in contemplating the new relation established...*' (*MC*: 206). It seems then that Tolkien believes in a kind of 'phonetic fitness'[12] of a word to its semantic connotations, and it is this relationship of sound and meaning that gives pleasure while creating an imaginary language. Indeed, he maintains that this 'fitness' is also valid for natural languages, but it is eventually lost for the native speaker, since word-forms become familiar, and, even when new words are created, their form is always influenced by the range of sounds permissible within a given language; at the same time, phonetic fitness can be restricted by the fact the main purpose of natural languages is communication, rather than beauty (*MC*: 204, 208).

[11] *Animalic* was 'invented' by Tolkien's young cousins, Mary and Marjorie Incledon, and the later *Nevbosh* was a collaboration of Tolkien and Marjorie (Carpenter 1977: 35-6).
[12] He uses himself the term a bit later in the essay, p. 211.

If 'pleasure' is the main purpose of invented languages, then, according to 'A Secret Vice', beauty is an absolute end. Tolkien seems to be viewing language-creation as an art, up to the point that he considers the refinement of a word as giving pleasure on its own, even without the 'fitting' semantic notion (*MC*: 207). Invented languages, then, have to be aesthetically pleasing. The only danger is that a language can become 'over-pretty', so that when one writes, for instance, poetry in an invented language, the word forms are too beautiful, while their bare meaning might be quite trivial (*MC*: 213).

What is beautiful though? Is not beauty quite subjective, not least where a taste for sound patterns is concerned? Tolkien does not seem to bother very much in 'A Secret Vice' about that. To explain the beauty of word-form, unrelated to semantics, he refers to a series of real languages which 'have a very characteristic and in their different ways beautiful word-form, readily seizable by the sensitive at first sight' (*MC*: 207). Although he claims that the languages are listed 'at random', the catalogue he gives is very predictable for anyone familiar with Tolkien: Greek, Finnish, Welsh and Gothic. These are the languages identified as *his* favourite ones, sometimes he seems to admit, since he adds that he has evidence of other people besides himself showing an admiration for Welsh, the implication being that for all the other languages listed it is really his own preference that identifies them as 'beautiful'.

Tolkien's admiration for certain languages is well known to students of his work, as he refers to them in numerous instances. His phrase describing his reaction when he first came across the Finnish language is much quoted: 'It was like discovering a complete wine-cellar filled with bottles of an amazing wine of a kind

and flavour never tasted before. It quite intoxicated me' (*Letters*: 214).[13] At the same time, Welsh also seems to have been regarded as specially attractive and beautiful by Tolkien, being particularly appealing to him since his very early youth, when, during a trip to Wales, he saw Welsh names on coal trucks (*MC*: 162, 189-94; *Letters*: 213, 218-9, 289; *BBC Interview*: 5). Gothic and Greek too were claimed by Tolkien to have given him pleasure (*MC*: 206; *Letters*: 176, 213).

It is much later, in his O'Donnell Lecture delivered in 1955, and published with the title 'English and Welsh', that Tolkien attempts to explain why one of his favourite languages, Welsh, is beautiful. He speaks again about the 'basic pleasure' being found:

> ...in the phonetic elements of a language and in the style of their patterns, and then in a higher dimension, *pleasure in the association of these word-forms with meanings*. (*MC*: 190, my italics)

These are the same two basic sources of pleasure for invented languages as well. However, in the case of Welsh Tolkien gives us some more specific information on the exact sound-patterns he finds attractive in this language, namely:

> ...the fondness for nasal consonants, especially the much favoured *n*, and the frequency with which word-patterns are made with the soft and less sonorous *w* and the voice spirants *f* and *dd* contrasted with the nasals. (*MC*: 193-4)

Still, in this essay, Tolkien is more fair with his own arguments. He does specifically declare that his views on the beauty of the Welsh language are subjective and that they may not be valid for everyone. He speaks of a 'personal and if you will subjective perception of strong aesthetic pleasure in contact with Welsh' (*MC*: 190).

It seems, then, that the principle of 'linguistic aesthetic' (*Letters*: 213, 380) or 'phonaesthetic pleasure', as he has called it elsewhere (*Letters*: 176), is the most

[13] For more declarations of Tolkien's appreciation of Finnish, see *MC*: 192, *Letters*: 87, *BBC Interview*: 5.

important factor in distinguishing a language as beautiful, as well as the main impulse for venturing to create an 'invented language'. Still, in all his later writings Tolkien recognises that what he is really talking about is his personal 'linguistic taste' (*Letters*: 143, 214, 375). At the same time, though, he maintains that each person has his or her own 'native language', or 'native linguistic potential'. This has nothing to do with the mother tongue of the individuals, but rather with their preferences, reflecting 'an individual's innate linguistic taste' (*Letters*: 375). This idea first developed in 'A Secret Vice', where he classifies the preference for word-forms into the 'personal' and the 'traditional' (i.e. imposed by the native language), and then even further to 'individual' and 'universal' categories. He seems to conclude that every person has his or her own 'individual linguistic character' (*MC*: 211). The idea is further developed in 'English and Welsh', where Tolkien talks about each individual's 'inherent linguistic predilections' (*MC*: 190), each one's personal linguistic taste, which is part of the reason why anyone can find pleasure in learning a new language, or in inventing one.

2.2. Language Attitudes

In both 'A Secret Vice' and 'English and Welsh', Tolkien seems to be expressing views within the borders of two much studied areas in linguistics: language attitudes and sound symbolism. These two areas of linguistic research are totally unrelated, but in Tolkien's mind they were closely associated, at least when it came to his own 'private lang.' hobby. The former seems to be related to his idea of the objective beauty of some languages, while the latter has to do with his term 'phonetic fitness'.

One of the most characteristic articles on language attitudes is the contribution of Howard Giles and Nancy Niedzielski in a recent book on 'Language Myths', entitled: 'Italian is Beautiful, German is Ugly'. The authors address the 'commonly held view, at least among many English-speakers, that some languages are more aesthetically pleasing than others' (1998: 85). Their discussion extends also to the aesthetic evaluation of different varieties within one language, otherwise referred to as dialects. It seems that there are two competing views as far as the evaluation and rating of languages is concerned: the 'inherent value' hypothesis, according to which some languages, and even specific varieties among them, are inherently beautiful and aesthetically pleasing, and this is the reason why specific varieties of languages have dominated as the standard forms; and the 'imposed norm' or 'social connotations' hypothesis, which supports the view that the evaluation of a language is not based on objective criteria of beauty, but is rather socially constructed, depending on the connotations of status, or group solidarity, that it conveys (Giles, Bourhis and Davies 1979: 591; Giles and Coupland 1991: 37-8; Giles and Niedzielski 1998: 86-9). The validity of both hypotheses has been tested in a series of studies, most of which have concentrated on evaluation of language varieties, rather than different languages, which have involved non-native speakers of a language rating different varieties of a specific language they had no previous knowledge of in terms of pleasantness. The results were then compared to ratings of the same varieties by native speakers of the languages, who, of course, have some perception of the social status of each variety. The conclusions, as might be expected, favoured the 'imposed norm' or 'social connotations' hypothesis. The listeners who were unfamiliar with the languages they were evaluating rated as equally pleasing language varieties that were socially privileged and others that were not, proving that the evaluations were not based on

intrinsic aesthetic qualities but on status and prestige that is conventionally associated with certain language varieties (Giles, Bourhis and Davies 1979: 591-4; Edwards 1982: 30; Giles and Niedzielski 1998: 91-2). For example, English speakers judged equally favourably the Parisian French dialect in comparison with the Canadian French one, while the Canadians tended to favour the former, due to its prestigious connotations (Giles and Niedzielski 1998: 91-2).

The declaration of the 'Italian is Beautiful, German is Ugly' statement as a language myth, rather than a scientifically proven fact, and its attribution to social connotations or popular ideas about the speakers of a language, rather than the intrinsic aesthetic value of the language itself, may offer some explanation of Tolkien's ideas about a number of languages characterised by him as objectively 'beautiful'. As it has been noted above, Tolkien's preference for Greek, Gothic, Finnish and Welsh is described as being due to the intrinsic beauty of these languages, but at least in the case of Welsh he seems to be admitting that this is really a matter of his own personal taste. Still, his own personal preferences appear to be quite idiosyncratic, since there might be a commonly held view among English speakers on the value of the Greek language, but in the case of Welsh reactions have been very inconsistent,[14] and as for Gothic and Finnish, languages really known only to people having a professional or academic interest in them in Britain, no commonly held view can be claimed to exist. It is Tolkien's own associations of these languages with certain values that can throw light on his preference of them.

[14] Tolkien himself refers in 'English and Welsh' to the legend of Welsh being the 'language of heaven' (*MC*: 164), something which Morgan has associated with the Welsh invention of tradition during the eighteenth century and has contrasted it to the earlier view of Welsh being the 'gibberish of Taphydom' (1983: 69-74). The twentieth century has seen a rise of Welsh nationalism, at least as far as preserving the language is concerned, which was already manifested in the first half of the century by the Welsh Language Movement, as described by Marion Löffler (2000).

Tolkien came across Gothic really by mistake, as a school friend sold him a copy of Joseph Wright's *Primer of the Gothic Language*. Carpenter has noted that Anglo-Saxon had an initial appeal for Tolkien not in terms of aesthetic pleasure but because it was about studying the history of his own language (1977: 34-5). At the same time Tolkien's fascination for half-recorded stories and legends or even those lost for ever that have left only a faint trail in names and fragments is well attested (Shippey 1982: 10-15; 2001: 233-36).[15] Gothic, then, seemed to combine both elements: being part of the history of his beloved Anglo-Saxon language, and having the additional attraction of being even further removed in the past than Anglo-Saxon; and also having survived only in limited fragments, since the language had disappeared together with the decline of the Gothic people. Tolkien himself notes that:

> I was fascinated by Gothic in itself: a beautiful language, which reached the eminence of liturgical use, but failed owing to the tragic history of the Goths to become one of the liturgical languages of the West... (*Letters*: 357)

It is quite characteristic that one of the first projects of 'invented languages' that Tolkien started was the construction of 'extra' Gothic words to fill the gaps of the language in vocabulary (Carpenter 1977: 37; Garth 2003: 16). Gothic, then, had far more important implications for Tolkien than just 'beauty', the attribution of which to that language might have originated exactly in these elements.

The same can be claimed about Finnish, though in this case the basis of Tolkien's appreciation was different. Tolkien discovered the *Kalevala* during the period just before going to Oxford, and was fascinated by it. Reading it in Kirby's translation, and getting an idea of the Finnish language from the names of the heroes

[15] The case of Eärendil is a characteristic example: the line in the Old English poem *Crist* pointed at a lost myth that Tolkien tried to 'explain' by inventing his own story of Eärendil.

as well as the place names cited in the epic, he looked for an edition of the original text, and later on his contact with Finnish thrilled him (Carpenter 1977: 59, 69). However, the *Kalevala* had already influenced him in terms of contents rather than in terms of language, and held an additional appeal for Tolkien as his desire for mythological texts, and especially those of his own country which he felt were very few, was immense. The role of the *Kalevala* in Finland's establishment as a nation and subsequent demand for independence is well documented. The Finnish intelligentsia, which spoke Swedish and was in the process of assimilation into Swedish culture, found itself in the midst of an identity crisis when in 1809 Finland came under the jurisdiction of Russia, with which they had no cultural affinity. The solution was the identification with the Finnish-speaking 'common-people', which would also provide the material for the creation of a Finnish culture. It was within that framework that Lönnrot collected the folk-poetry of the peasants and transformed it into the main text of 'Finnish mythology' (Honko 1985: 17). A hundred years after its publication the *Kalevala* was an obligatory part of school curriculum and had been elevated into a national symbol. A whole artistic movement evolved around it, mainly represented by painting and music, the most well-known expression of which is the music of Jean Sibelius. Even today, after its authenticity has been questioned, its status in Europe has not fallen, and there is still a national celebration of the *Kalevala* day in Finland (Branch 1985: 7-8; Bosley 1989: xiii-xiv). Finnish, then, was not just another European language, but had proved to be the instrument of cultural self-realization of a people. At the same time, the *Kalevala* could also prove how an earlier mythology of a nation could be 're-constructed' and be recognised as genuine. Tolkien's admiration for Finnish in view of all of these ideological implications, would seem to have been meant to be.

As for Welsh, indeed reactions to the language had been rather conflicting. In 'English and Welsh', Tolkien seems to be claiming that his appreciation of the language is based purely on aesthetic value; however, towards the end of the lecture, a passage exists which could explain this admiration in different terms. That part of the essay refers to *The Lord of the Rings* and how Welsh was used in the construction of its nomenclature. Tolkien notes that:

> For many of us it [i.e. Welsh] rings a bell, or rather it stirs deep harp-strings in our linguistic nature. In other words: for satisfaction and therefore for delight – and not for imperial policy – we are still 'British' at heart. It is the native language to which in unexplored desire we would still go home. (*MC*: 194)

This passage shows that Tolkien's appreciation for the Welsh language might have arisen also because it is associated with the soil of his country, with the land that the English finally found a home in, even if it is not related linguistically to their own language.

It seems then that, although Tolkien might have favoured the 'inherent value hypothesis' as a decisive factor for language attitude, he himself was not really immune to the general tendency to judge languages according to 'social connotations' or 'imposed norms'. On the other hand, though, Tolkien has claimed that – at least in the case of Welsh – 'phonetic fitness' has also been a basis for appreciating languages. This brings us to the second linguistic phenomenon that Tolkien might be alluding to, namely sound symbolism.

2.3. Sound Symbolism

Sound symbolism is a much disputed area in linguistics, and could be defined as the phenomenon present when a speech sound seems to correlate with an object in

the real world. The structuralist approach to language, which has greatly influenced modern linguistics and is mainly represented by the theory of Saussure, holds the view that language is arbitrary and there is no one-to-one correspondence of the signifier (the word) and the signified (the notion) (Saussure 1916). However, the phenomenon of sound symbolism is still marginally discussed and has been an object of dispute since antiquity. It seems that the first reference to the issue is found in Plato's *Cratylus*,[16] and it has been touched upon by many philosophers and writers throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period (Magnus 2001: 12-18). In the twentieth century, Otto Jespersen, in his *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin*, dedicated a whole chapter to sound symbolism (1922: 396-411), and a little later Sapir coined the term 'phonetic symbolism', to describe the fact that some words 'sound bigger' than others, based on the results of an experiment he carried out (Sapir 1929: 225-39; Reay 1994: 4066). A series of studies based on experiments followed, most of them supporting the existence of certain facets of the phenomenon, but there has been no conclusive proof as yet of its universality, or of its presence in aspects of vocabulary of a language (Reay 1994; Allot 1995; Hinton and Bolinger 2003). The different manifestations of sound symbolism have been classified in different ways but there seems to be an agreement on categorizing them in terms of onomatopoeia (mimesis of actual sounds in the real world), phonasthemes (association of certain phonemes or clusters with specific meanings), and synesthesia (certain vowels, consonants or suprasegmentals are consistently chosen to represent visual, tactile or proprioceptive properties of objects, such as size or shape) (Reay 1994; Hinton, Nichols and Ohala 1994; Hinton and Bolinger 2003).

[16] 'ονόματος ορθότητα ειναι εκάστω των όντων πεφυκυιαν' ('everything has a right name of its own, which comes by nature'), *Cratylus, st. 1, 383A* (Fowler 1926: 6-7).

Sound symbolism seems to include Tolkien's idea of 'phonetic fitness'. Indeed it is even more intriguing that he also used another term for it, much closer to the early twentieth-century idea of the phenomenon. Between his manuscripts of 'A Secret Vice' held in the Bodleian Library, a very small notebook can be found, which, at least according to the Library's catalogue, belongs to his notes towards the essay and so could be tentatively dated a bit before the actual writing of it. The notebook begins in fair handwriting but quickly degenerates into hasty unreadable jottings. In this notebook Tolkien reflects on the notion of 'Phonetic symbolism', which is notably the term that Sapir coined in 1929 to refer to the aspect of sound symbolism he studied. Tolkien refers to onomatopoeia as the first, unrefined stage of phonetic symbolism, and interestingly enough refers to the restrictions to phonetic symbolism that might exist in any given language because of its development in time and the loss of its original words, as well as because of the phonetic structure of each language, which might favour high frequency of a selection of specific vowels and consonants. This idea is repeated in 'A Secret Vice' (see above). He also refers to painstaking experiments comparing the same notions in many different languages, which is a step that must be taken if phonetic symbolism is to be proven (Bodleian, *MS. Tolkien 24*, Fols. 2-9).

The use of the term 'phonetic symbolism' by Tolkien show that he was most possibly aware of Sapir's research and theories, and he must have also known Jespersen's book. Tolkien's interest in the phenomenon was not isolated but shared by other linguists of his time. It also shows that he was trying to provide a theoretical background to explain why the association of sound and notion in his invented languages 'sounded right' for him, as well as why his languages could not be arbitrarily sound-symbolic but had to respect certain phonological restrictions,

according to the real language he was basing them on. It is also characteristic that Tolkien seems to recognise that the notion of 'phonetic fitness' is not widely and indisputably acceptable by linguists, as when he refers to this whole issue he says:

> In traditional languages [i.e. real languages] invention is more often seen undeveloped... and finds outlet chiefly in the modification of existing sounds to 'fit' the sense (*'fit' begs a large question, but never mind*), or even modification of sense to 'fit' the sound. (*MC*: 204, my italics).

'A Secret Vice' and 'English and Welsh' seem to epitomise Tolkien's attempts to explain – perhaps even to himself – the appeal of inventing languages, and in both essays his knowledge as a philologist, and maybe his readings of contemporary theory of linguistics, was called upon to justify his 'mad hobby'. However, one more strand has to be added here: that of contextualizing Tolkien's language invention with similar efforts and projects.

2.4. Language as Art and the Myth of a Universal Language

Tolkien's 'mad hobby' of inventing languages, even when incorporated into his fiction, has usually been viewed as a peculiarity of the author, and his languages have only been marginally treated by scholars of his work. However, the invention of imaginary languages is not a uniquely Tolkienian phenomenon. Although he might be one of few authors-cum-language-inventors who became so popular, he is not *sui generis*. On the contrary, his 'secret vice' can be demonstrated to belong to a very old tradition, related to the myth of a universal language, and its more modern counterpart, the creation of international auxiliary languages.

The myth of the universal language in the Western world starts with the Bible, and specifically with the *Lingua Adamica* and the *Confusio Linguorum* (Yaguello

1991: 10-14; Eco 1997: 7-24). According to the Scripture, God gave language to Adam, the perfect language for all mankind, but the disastrous consequences of the Tower of Babel led to its division into a multitude of mutually unintelligible tongues. The possibility of recapturing, or re-creating, that initial perfect language, either as a conscious project or not, became the underlying motive for the creation of imaginary languages, either as parts of works of fiction, illustrations of utopias where ideal creatures spoke ideal languages, or as projects for philosophical languages that would facilitate human communication by succeeding in directly expressing verbally human thought (see Yaguello 1991; Eco 1997; Pombo 1987). By the seventeenth century, such projects were represented by the fictional musical languages of Bishop Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1638) and Cyrano de Bergerac's *L'Autre Monde* (1656), spoken by creatures in the outer space, by the Australian language as imagined by Foigny (1676), and by the philosophical languages proposed by Dalgarno (1661). At this stage, the philosophical languages were conceived as *a priori*, which means that they were to be independent of actual spoken languages and would rely on classifying concepts in a logical and structured way and then inventing signs for them (Pombo 1987: 31). This idea was also associated with a sense of language expressing the 'nature of thoughts' (Yaguello 1991: 37), not far from the concept of sound symbolism discussed above. By the eighteenth century, the pursuit of a universal language was switching to *a posteriori* languages, which were to be built up from linguistic elements common to all languages, thus forming a universal semantic code, but still adhering to the concept of perfecting the cognitive goal of language (Yaguello 1991: 44; Pombo 1987: 31). An example of such a philosophical language is the *lingua generalis* of Leibniz, based on numbers and letters (Eco 1997: 269).

The twentieth-century revolution in transport and communications was responsible for a shift from universal languages to international languages (Eco 1997: 317; Yaguello 1991: 52), which emphasised the facilitation of communication between people who spoke different languages, were most usually *a posteriori*, consciously using elements of existing languages, and were driven by humanistic objectives of 'progress', their creators often believing that they were fulfilling a social need (Pombo 1987: 31). *Esperanto* is the most well known example of such auxiliary languages, but it was by no means the only one. Its predecessor, *Volapük*, was extremely popular during the late nineteenth century, and it was also followed by many other attempts, most notably Otto Jespersen's *Novial* (Smith and Wynne 2000: 28, 37-8).

Tolkien referred to Esperanto in *A Secret Vice*, where, as an introduction to the essay, he refers to an Esperanto Congress in Oxford 'a year or more ago' (*MC*: 198), which can be identified with the Universal Esperanto Congress, held in Oxford in July 1930, and thus can establish the dating of the essay[17] (Tolkien 1983: 3; Smith and Wynne 2000: 34). In the essay, Tolkien notes his approval of Esperanto, not only for practical reasons, referring to it as 'the one thing antecedently necessary for uniting Europe, before it is swallowed by non-Europe' (*MC*: 198), but also because:

> ...it is the creation ultimately of one man, not a philologist, and is therefore something like a 'human language bereft of the inconveniences due to too many successive cooks' – which is as good a description of the *ideal artificial language* (in a particular sense) as I can give... (*MC*: 198, my italics).

Tolkien's relation to and knowledge of Esperanto has been treated in detail in a recent article by Smith and Wynne (2000). They have analysed a page, photographically reproduced in the Bodleian Library exhibition catalogue *J.R.R. Tolkien: Life and*

[17] At least its first writing or delivery, since the essay was later revised in that point to read: 'more than 20 years ago', and later on changed again to 'almost 40 years' (Tolkien 1983: 3).

Legend (Priestman 1992), as well as two more short extracts, from the 'Book of Foxrook', a small notebook in which Tolkien outlined a secret code composed in 1909, the main text of which is written in straightforward Esperanto (Smith and Wynne 2000: 29-34). This proves Tolkien's knowledge of Esperanto at the age of seventeen, something that can also be verified by another document that Smith and Wynne uncovered and reproduced in their article. This is 'A Philologist on Esperanto', a letter that Tolkien wrote in 1932 to the secretary of the British Esperantist Association (BEA), and was published in the May 1932 issue of its magazine, *The British Esperantist*. It was in the same year, around the same time as the implied first composition and delivery of *A Secret Vice*, that Tolkien also became a member of the Board of Honorary Advisers of the Educational Committee of the BEA (Smith and Wynne 2000: 35).

In the letter Tolkien claims that he had learned Esperanto twenty-five years ago, but is not a current 'practical Esperantist' since he has 'forgotten its grammar and structure'. He also expresses his support to Esperanto not only for its simplicity and internationality, but also for its 'individuality and euphony'. Although he seems to claim that 'universal propagation' should be the ultimate criterion for an international language, he, at the same time, accuses Otto Jespersen's *Novial* of being 'hideous', despite it being easier than Esperanto, since:

> ... it has no gleam of the individuality, coherence, and beauty, which appear in the great natural idioms, and which do appear to a considerable degree...in Esperanto – a proof of the genius of the original author... (quoted by Smith and Wynne 2000: 36).

The link between Tolkien's invented languages and such international auxiliary language movements as the Esperanto one makes perfect sense within the context of the pursuit of the ideal language. When Tolkien started composing his own languages, Esperanto was flourishing, and he could not have been unaffected by it. In

the first chapter, the beginnings of Tolkien's project for 'a mythology for England' and its moral objective were examined and discussed, and this was the period when his first proper invented language, 'Qenya', started evolving as well. Seen against the background of the tradition of a search for the perfect language, together with Tolkien's youthful jottings of Esperanto and his other attempts to create languages, whether on his own, or with other children, 'Qenya' can be interpreted as an attempt to produce such an ideal language, which would observe the principle of sound symbolism, would be aesthetically pleasing, and would be spoken by utopian creatures in a utopian space, thus enhancing the project of the TCBS for a moral cleansing of Britain, and the re-establishment of beauty and holiness in the world (see Chapter 2: § 3.2).

What is important about Tolkien's quotation above, on the 'hideousness' of *Novial*, and his support for Esperanto, is the principle of aesthetic value, one he himself was observing in the process of creating his own imaginary languages, and one he could see in Esperanto, which was heavily influenced by Spanish, one of the languages he considered as beautiful. And, going back to language attitudes, this admiration of Spanish may be associated with the fact that his guardian after his mother's death, and the only father figure he knew, was Father Francis Morgan, a Catholic priest of Spanish origins and a speaker of Spanish, from whose books he first encountered and attempted to learn that language (Carpenter 1977: 37; *Letters*: 213-4, 288, 376). But, apart from the Spanish influence as such, Esperanto also demonstrated a coherency in terms of the features it borrowed, thus creating a uniform phonetic style, in contrast with *Novial*, which had '...“factory product”...written all over it, or rather “made of spare parts”...' (quoted by Smith and Wynne 2000: 36). It is, again, aesthetics, then, the idea of a language 'sounding beautiful', that prevails in Tolkien's

judgment, at least at a basic level. His own languages, seen more as ideal languages than as auxiliary ones, had elevated beauty to their highest aim. An article by Sapir, published in 1931, with the catchy title 'Wanted: A World Language', might have also been known to Tolkien, in which Sapir refers to the ideal international language being 'superior to any accepted language', and '[not] expected to have the perfection of mathematical symbolism, but it must be felt as progressively moving in that direction' (Sapir 1931). This goes back to the philosophical languages of two centuries before, which were attempting to create an idiom that would directly reflect symbolically human thought.

What seems central to Tolkien's conception of his invented languages is the idea of language as art, albeit a private art. This is pinpointed repeatedly in *A Secret Vice*, where he also seems to claim that natural languages could potentially be viewed in this way. He writes that the experience of an individual creating a language is:

> ...the same creative experience as that of those *many unnamed geniuses who have invented the skilful bits of machinery in our traditional languages*, for the use (and too often the misunderstanding and abuse) of their less skilful fellows. (*MC*: 212)

Indeed, this seems to agree with Sapir's earlier stated idea of language as a 'collective art of expression', with its 'particular set of aesthetic factors – phonetic, rhythmic, symbolic, morphological' (1921: 240). Tolkien, in his mythology, makes the Elves, and especially the Noldor, the ultimate linguists, the creators of ideal languages, capable of aesthetic beauty and sound symbolism. We are told that:

> ...the tongue of the Noldor had changed for the most part only in the making of new words (for things new and old), and in *the wilful altering* of the ancient tongue of the Quendi *to forms and patterns that seemed to the Eldar more beautiful*. (*Jewels*: 20, my italics)

While in another instance it is claimed that:

> They [the Noldor] were changeful in speech, for they had great love of words, and sought ever *to find names more fit* for all things that they knew or imagined... (*Lost Road*: 223, my italics)

Having discussed Tolkien's language invention in the context of contemporary invented language and their long tradition, often betraying metaphysical influences, his 'secret vice' does not seem that isolated and peculiar any more. Influential linguists like Sapir and Jepsersen were involved in such projects, Esperanto was popular and had attracted Tolkien's interest, while the pursuit of the ideal universal language would have appealed immensely to someone like Tolkien. What remains to be examined is the role of languages in the invention of the Middle-earth cosmos.

2.5. Language Creation vs. Myth Making

Tolkien seems to have considered the hobby of 'language-inventing' especially attractive and fulfilling, even if he felt a bit embarrassed at spending so much of his precious free time on it. Still, for the readers of his literature, Tolkien's invented languages do not exist in a void, but are indissolubly associated with his mythology. In *The Lord of the Rings* Quenya and Sindarin are spoken by the Elves, the Rohirrim have their own language, and the same is true for the evil powers in Middle-earth, who use the Black Speech. Indeed, it has very often been argued, even by Tolkien himself, that the languages were the initial cause for the creation of the mythology itself. Already in 'A Secret Vice', Tolkien argues that the development of an invented language will inevitably lead to composing a mythology, even merely in outline. He characteristically explains to his hypothetical imitator that: 'your language construction will *breed* a mythology' (*MC*: 211).

This view, the creation of the mythology in order to give a home to his much earlier invented languages, has been taken for granted by many Tolkien students (see, for example, Carpenter 1977: 75-6; Chance Nitzsche 1979: 20; Meyers 1980: 148). Of course, this can be justified, since Tolkien has confirmed that in numerous occasions (*Letters*: 214, 264-5, 380; *FR*: xxii). He has claimed that:

> ...a primary 'fact' about my work, that it is all of a piece, and *fundamentally linguistic* in inspiration... The invention of languages is the foundation. The 'stones' were made rather to provide a world for the languages than the reverse. (*Letters*: 219)

And elsewhere he has again noted that:

> I eventually made the discovery that language can't exist in a void and if you invent a language yourself you can't cut it in half. It has to come alive – so really the languages came first and the country after. (*Niekas Interview*: 5)

It is characteristic that when Charlotte and Dennis Plimmer wrote an article about his literature and referred both to his invented language and his mythology, he felt that there was a 'missing link' between the two and gave them the following brief paragraph to complete that part of the article, which runs as follows:

> The imaginary histories grew out of Tolkien's predilection for inventing languages. He discovered, as others have who carry out such inventions to any degree of completion, that a language requires a suitable habitation, and a history in which it can develop. (*Letters*: 375)

Perhaps the most extreme way that Tolkien tried to emphasise the fact that his literature was antecedent to the languages and directly dependent on them was the two answers he gave in letters to readers on what *The Lord of the Rings* is all about. He has called the book 'an essay on "linguistic aesthetic"' (*Letters*: 220) and elsewhere described it as:

> ...an attempt to create a world in which a form of language agreeable to my personal aesthetic might seem real... an effort to create a situation in which a common greeting would be *elen síla lúmenn'*

omentielmo,[18] and that the phase long antedated the book. (*Letters*: 264-5)

Tolkien's determination to attach his literature to his pre-existing linguistic inventions is very interesting. He seems to be very eager to convince his readers that this is so. What seems clear from the discussion to this point is that the creation of languages for Tolkien did start as an independent activity from myth making. But is it equally true that the writing of the mythology derived from the need to provide a cosmos where the languages would exist? In my opinion, there is enough proof that myth making for Tolkien started also independently, and not as a direct consequence of the language invention.

Trying to trace the beginning of myth making in Tolkien's career, one finds his early poems as the first samples. Among the poems with a general 'fairy' subject matter, written between 1910-1915, there were some whose themes and ideas were later incorporated in his mythology, being actually the beginnings of it. Perhaps the most important was 'The Voyage of Earendel the Evening Star', written in 1914, and inspired by a line in the Old English poem *Crist*[19] (Carpenter 1977: 71; Garth 2003: 44-5). There, the first germ of the idea of the star-mariner, which became a major motif in his later mythology, emerged. A bit earlier, he had tried to imitate William Morris's style of verse-and-prose-romance by adapting the story of Kullervo from the Finnish *Kalevala*, a story he was still working on in 1914, but never finished (Carpenter 1977: 73; Garth 2003: 25-6). The 'Council of London', the emergency TCBS meeting in December 1914, the function and ambitions of which have been discussed in detail in Chapter 2 (§ 3.2), was instrumental in Tolkien's decision to create a mythology for his country (Garth 2003: 57-9). It was after this meeting that,

[18] 'A star shines on the hour of our meeting', Frodo's Quenya greeting to the passing company of the Elves (*FR*: 81).
[19] *Eala Earendel engla beorhtast!* (Carpenter 1977: 71)

early in 1915, the first sketches of 'Qenya', the language influenced by Finnish, and which soon afterwards came to be attributed to the fairies of his newly devised mythology, started coming into existence (Garth 2003: 60). In the immediately following period Tolkien wrote a series of other poems which were, loosely or more closely, related to his later mythology (*Lost Tales I*: 27-43, 108-9, 138-9; Garth 2003: 71-88). In these poems he starts using place-names derived from his invented languages.[20] The first draft of his mythology, 'The Book of Lost Tales', was produced a little later, and the first story to be put on paper, early in 1917, was 'The Fall of Gondolin', where the connection with Earendel of his earlier poems was established, and the second, a bit later on in the same year, was 'The Children of Húrin', influenced by the story of Kullervo in *The Kalevala* (Carpenter 1977: 92, 96).

Carpenter, Tolkien's biographer, seems to accept the derivation of the mythology from Tolkien's invented languages from as early as 'The Lay of Earendel' (1977: 75-6, 89), in my opinion mainly based on Tolkien's own assertions of this dependency in his letters and later interviews. In contrast, Garth's latest book on Tolkien's early life (2003), shows clearly how Qenya was posterior to Tolkien's decision to create a 'mythology for England'. Even the process that led to the writing of 'The Book of Lost Tales', which was the first completed version of the mythology,[21] as described in the previous paragraph, shows that this is not exactly true. The story of Earendel did not arise from the invented languages, but from the line in *Crist*, which inspired Tolkien to create the theme of the star-mariner and write a poem on it (see also Hostetter 1991). It is characteristic that in the first story he ever wrote, 'The Fall of Gondolin', Earendel figures as an important character. Earendel is

[20] For example: Alalminórë, Kortirion, Aryador etc. (*Lost Tales I*: 33, 139)

[21] The Book of Lost Tales is not strictly speaking completed, as there are some parts of them for which we only have outlines of stories that were never written, as well as different versions of the same story. Still a coherent conception of the mythology is in that book already reached by Tolkien (see *Lost Tales I*: 1, 8).

significant for one more reason, since his name was incorporated into the languages through the process of myth making, and not the other way round (*Letters*: 385, 387). At the same time, even the second story, 'The Children of Húrin', was influenced by the Kullervo episode in *The Kalevala*, which Tolkien had tried to adapt earlier, and does not seem to have sprung straight out of his invented languages. Finally, his grandiose project to create a 'mythology for England', whatever its conclusion was, was clearly a distinct motive for myth making, as opposed to just providing his invented languages with a world where they could exist.

Even Tolkien's own comments, from later years, on this whole issue are sometimes unclear about whether myth making was really a consequence of the invented languages. In a letter to Milton Waldman, after referring to his language-inventing obsession, he adds:

> But an equally basic passion of mine ab initio was for myth (not allegory!) and for fairy-story, and above all for heroic legend on the brink of fairy-tale and history, of which there is far too little in the world (accessible to me) for my appetite. I was an undergraduate before thought and experience revealed to me that these were not divergent interests – opposite poles of science and romance – but integrally related. (*Letters*: 144)

Elsewhere, he makes it even clearer that language invention and myth making started individually, but 'began to flow together when I was an undergraduate' (*Letters*: 345).

The conclusion that can be, in my opinion, quite safely reached is that language invention and myth making did indeed begin independently. They became interconnected very early in Tolkien's career as a writer, but did not spring the one from the other. It seems to me that it was myth-making that gave Tolkien's languages whatever inner meaning and significance they had. Tolkien's embarrassment and uneasiness about his time-consuming 'mad hobby', which seemed to have no practical

or even moral objectives, apart from pleasure, was finally relieved. His 'nonsense fairy language' was gradually turned into an integral part of his creative writing.

Indeed, the defensiveness of Tolkien towards potential mockery of his language inventing hobby is significant in itself, not only as the reason why he tried to create the myth that if it was not for his languages Middle-earth would not have existed at all, but also within the context discussed in the previous part, that of the tradition of language invention in pursuit of the perfect language. Yaguello has brilliantly examined numerous such examples and has theorised the personal drive behind such projects in terms of what she calls 'the profile of the "lunatic" in love with language' (1991: xvi). She talks about the language-creator's attempt 'to gain control over language', and she also offers an ingenious insight into his mind:

> Just take a look at the lunatic in love with language, the logophile, the inventor of languages. Sitting in his book-lined study, he collects great piles of information, he collates and classifies it, he makes lists and fills cards and indexes. He is in the clutches of a denominatory delirium, of a taxonomic madness. He has to name everything, but before being able to name, he has to recognise and classify concepts, to enclose the whole Universe in a system of notation... A lunatic ambition; yet there is something grandiose in it which you can't help admiring. So much energy spent for so little result... Now let's suppose our inventor brings his project to the light of day. The demon of logophilia will drive him to start another and then another again. A good many authors of artificial languages have thought up numerous languages, either successively or simultaneously... (Yaguello 1991: 17)

Although Tolkien is not referred to anywhere in her book, this passage seems to fit his language invention aspect alarmingly well: his indexes and grammar oulines, covered with layer upon layer of alterations and corrections, and his embarking on several different projects of language invention during the course of his life. Maybe the most important, though, is his self-mockery and embarrassment about them. Yaguello stresses that one of the traits that would give away a 'lunatic lover of language' is his defensive attitude (1991: 26).

2.6. The Process of Language Invention

Having explored how Tolkien viewed language invention, and what its relationship with his creation of the Middle-earth Saga has been, another natural question seems to arise: how did Tolkien invent languages? It has been established by now that he had a special admiration for a number of real languages, that he was reflecting on the notion of phonetic symbolism, and that the invention of language and myth started separately but became closely associated very early in his writings. What has not been drawn to attention yet is his claims that some of his languages are modeled on real languages or a combination of them, notably the ones that he found beautiful and aesthetically pleasing, but interestingly enough also some on real languages he found cacophonous and harsh. These statements have been made mainly on some of the languages found in *The Lord of the Rings*, and especially about the two Elvish languages, Quenya and Sindarin.

In a letter written in 1954, Tolkien wrote:

> The archaic language of lore is meant to be a kind of 'Elvenlatin', and by transcribing it into a spelling closely resembling that of Latin (except that *y* is only used as a consonant, as *y* in E. *Yes*) the similarity to Latin has been increased ocularly. Actually it might be said to be composed on a Latin basis with two other (main) ingredients that happen to give me 'phonaesthetic' pleasure: Finnish and Greek. It is however less consonantal than any of the three. This language is High-elven or in its own terms *Quenya* (Elvish).
> The living language of the Western Elves (*Sindarin* or Grey-elven) is the one usually met, especially in names. This is derived from an origin common to it and *Quenya*; but the changes have been deliberately devised to give it a linguistic character very like (though not identical with) British-Welsh... (*Letters*: 176)

Especially about the association of Sindarin and Welsh, Tolkien gave more specific clues, stating that the former was designed to resemble the latter 'phonologically' (*Letters*: 219), and that:

> The lenitions or 'mutations' of S.[indarin] were deliberately devised to resemble those of W[elsh] in phonetic origin and grammatical use; but are not the *same* in either p[honetic] o[rigin] or g[rammatical] u[se]. (*Letters*: 426)

It seems then that Latin, Finnish and Greek were the ingredients of Quenya, while Welsh is the main basis of Sindarin. Tolkien also stated in a BBC interview, referring to Dwarves, that: 'their words are Semitic obviously, constructed to be Semitic' (*BBC Interview*: 4), which is interesting if we note also that he described the Dwarvish tongue as 'cacophonous' (*Letters*: 31). The question of how the languages that Tolkien lists as his 'sources', were actually used to construct his Middle-earth linguistic inventory, has partially been answered by himself. As noted above Tolkien has claimed to have based Sindarin on Welsh in terms of phonology and also in terms of grammar, when this is associated again with phonology, as is the case with the 'mutations' of the Welsh language. It seems then that in principle Tolkien claimed that he used actual languages as sources in terms of their 'sound-systems', and sometimes for aspects of morphology and syntax. Jim Allan's book on Middle-earth's languages, although based only on linguistic information given in *The Lord of the Rings*, and on *The Road Goes Ever On*, makes a clear analysis of how the Finnish sound-system is very similar to the Quenya one, and also pinpoints the highly inflexional nature of Quenya as being influenced by the numerous grammatical noun-cases in the same source language (Allan 1978: 3-22). His analysis of the associations of Sindarin with Welsh is much more extended – given the fact that in the sources that were available when the book was written the amount of data on Sindarin was much more than on Quenya – and he notes resemblances of the two languages again in the

sound system, in the 'mutation' system and in the formation of the plural via vowel affection in both languages; he also gives a list of lexical items in Welsh which resemble Sindarin words very closely (Allan 1978: 47-70). Allan's book was based on much research published initially in Tolkien Fanzines. More recently Helena Rautala attempted a more detailed comparison of Quenya and its stated sources, concluding that more than half the phonological features of Quenya come from sources other than Finnish, and that the morphology of the two languages is even more dissimilar (1992: 29). Her verdict is that the relationship of the Finnish language to Quenya is that of 'substratum', rather than of origin, in the sense that Quenya sounds like a hypothetical language that arose as a result of migration into an area where Finnish was spoken before and some of its elements were incorporated in the new language (1992: 30).

Still, establishing that actual languages were used by Tolkien mainly as far as their phonological system and their grammar is concerned, does not yet answer how he created the languages, in the sense that his languages really consist of great numbers of lexical items. These actual words might respect the chosen phonological restrictions of each invented language, and might also inflect in terms of its chosen grammatical rules, but how was each word created? Was there a specific process for the association of specific sounds with a specific notion, apart from the general sense of 'phonetic fitness'? In other words, was there any raw material which was used – or rather transformed – to create the vast lists of words, especially found in Quenya and Sindarin?

The first answer that comes to mind would be the case of direct borrowings from other languages, especially in terms of nomenclature. At least this seemed to be a common reaction of many fans of Tolkien books who wrote to him to ask if a

specific name was taken from the source they had identified. Tolkien was quite annoyed with such guesses, as his answering letters reveal:

> I remain puzzled, and indeed sometimes irritated, by many of the guesses at the 'sources' of the nomenclature, and theories or fancies concerning hidden meanings. These seem to me no more than private amusements, and as such I have no right or power to object to them, though they are, I think, valueless for the elucidation or interpretation of my fiction. If published, I do object to them, when (as they usually do) they appear to be unauthentic embroideries on my work, throwing light only on the state of mind of their contrivers, not on me or on my actual intention and procedure. Many of them seem to show ignorance or disregard of the clues and information which are provided in notes, renderings, and in the Appendices. Also since linguistic invention is, as an art (or pastime) comparatively rare, it is perhaps not surprising that they show little understanding of the process of how a philologist would go about it. (*Letters*: 379-80)

But how would a philologist go about it? The 'clues' that Tolkien refers to in this letter are not really that revealing about it. The only slight piece of information that would allow us to unravel the mystery is the statement that Sindarin was 'in origin akin to Quenya' (*RK*: 1128), which on its own does not help very much. However, in one of his letters Tolkien clarifies this a little:

> But to those creatures which in English I call misleadingly Elves are assigned *two related languages* more nearly completed, whose history is written, and *whose forms* (representing two different sides of my own linguistic taste) *are deduced scientifically from a common origin.* (*Letters*: 143, my italics)

However it is again in one of the unpublished drafts of the lecture 'English and Welsh' that we may discover how that 'scientific deduction' was made. Referring to how he constructed one of his languages appearing in *The Lord of the Rings*, obviously having in mind the Sindarin language, he noted:

> To construct this I took a simple hypothetical basis and altered it (during a supposed period of change) [the parenthesis has been crossed out] by the application of sound changes, very similar in character and in chronological succession to those that have operated to produce early Modern Welsh. (Bodleian, *MSS. Tolkien 7-8*, Fols. 142-66, pp. 150-1)

Tolkien as a philologist was very familiar with the process of working back through attested European languages to find the Indo-European original (Shippey 1982: 15-18). It seems that what he tried to do in his own languages was to reverse that process, or rather to re-construct the 'real' one: to establish first the common Proto-Elvish root, and then modify it to fit its development in Quenya and Sindarin. This seems to be attested already from the first years of his invention of languages, during the period 1915-18, roughly corresponding to the period when the first 'Silmarillion' version – 'The Book of Lost Tales' – was written. Christopher Tolkien refers to two little notebooks that his father was using at the time as working papers of lists of words for his invented languages. The first one was concerned with the language called then 'Qenya' – the later Quenya – and the second with the language called then 'Goldogrin' or 'the Gnomish language', which was to become the later Sindarin. The first booklet, which Christopher refers to as the 'Qenya Lexicon', is not organised as a conventional dictionary, but according to roots. Tolkien himself noted down in the notebook that:

> Roots are in capitals, and are not words in use at all, but serve as an elucidation of the words grouped together and a connection between them. (*Lost Tales I*: 246)

The second booklet, referred to by Christopher as the 'Goldogrin, or Gnomish Lexicon', is not organised in terms of roots, but rather alphabetically, as a typical dictionary, although roots are occasionally given (*Lost Tales I*: 247).

The same organization of material in terms of roots is to be found in the next attempt of Tolkien to create a comprehensive dictionary of his Elvish languages, and the only other one published up to now. This is the text entitled 'The Etymologies', which was published in the fifth volume of *The Histories of Middle-Earth*, entitled *The Lost Road and Other Writings*. This document is a much later one, dated to the

later 1930s, with the last major revisions made c. 1938, but it was still compiled in the period prior to *The Lord of The Rings* (*Lost Road*: 344-5). In this text the two main languages in question are now called Quenya and Noldorin, but the correspondence is the same. Tolkien gives a long alphabetical list of roots, or stems, and what actual words were derived from them, in some cases not only in the two main Elvish languages, but also in other variations and dialects. It seems that by this time Tolkien had developed a whole theory of how the Elvish languages were derived from a common Primitive-Elvish source, since Christopher Tolkien refers to the theory of *sundokarme*, or 'base-structure', but he does not, anywhere in the published volumes, reveal what his father had written on it (*Lost Road*: 343).

However, 'inventing' the root and then deciding on the form of the actual word in each language, was not invariably the procedure. As Christopher Tolkien notes, already from the period of the 'Lost Tales', in some cases the word was 'already there' and its etymology was worked out backwards (*Lost Tales I*: 246). In the same early documents of the 'Qenya' and the 'Gnomish Lexica', it seems that some sort of 'historical punning' was present, as Christopher Tolkien notes on his introduction, as, for example, the root SAHA, meaning 'be hot' produces, apart from *saiwa*, 'hot' or *sara* 'fiery', the word *Sahora*, 'the South'. At the same time Christopher observes that some entries are too close to Old English to be accidental, like *hôr* 'old', or *rûm* 'secret (whisper)' (*Lost Tales I*: 248). If, then, the question of how Tolkien created the vocabulary can be answered by the elaboration of the roots, then how he created roots could possibly be answered through a combination of totally arbitrary sound sequences which sounded 'right' to fit the chosen notion, by 'historical punning', or even in some cases by actual borrowings from real languages.

And this brings us back to the initial speculation about Tolkien's method of language invention: borrowings. In answering the irritating fan-letters that claimed direct borrowings of his nomenclature, Tolkien gave at the same time valuable information on the real nature of borrowing that took place in the process of creating his 'invented languages'. In one such very long letter to a certain Mr. Rang, Tolkien dedicated a lot of time and effort, using a multitude of examples, to make his reader realise that:

> ...the bulk of the nomenclature is constructed from these pre-existing languages, and where the resulting names have analysable meanings (as is usual) these are relevant solely to the fiction with which they are integrated. The 'source', if any, provided solely the sound-sequence (or suggestions for its stimulus) and its purport in the source is totally irrelevant. (*Letters*: 380)

In the conclusion of the letter he adds once more:

> ...looking around for more or less similar words or names is not in fact very useful even as a source of sounds, and not at all as an explanation of inner meanings and significances. The borrowing, when it occurs (not often) is simply of sounds that are then integrated in a new construction. (*Letters*: 387)

What Tolkien seems to claim here is that there might have been some specific names that possibly acted as his sources, but what they provided was only the 'sound-sequence' of the new word he created. In other words, the combination of specific vowels and consonants which made the word aesthetically pleasing for him were re-used in the construction of the new word in a totally different meaning, or at least having no direct relation to the source. The result might be a word that sounds as a real one in a historical language, but this is just accidental and has nothing to do with the meaning of the 'source', and even in some cases it might end up in a totally originally-sounded word. To make this statement clear, Tolkien gives in the same letter a number of examples that he claims that he can still recall of this process:

> *Rohan* is a famous name, from Brittany, borne by an ancient proud and powerful family. I was aware of this, and liked its shape; but I had also (long before) invented the Elvish horse word, and saw how Rohan could be accommodated to the linguistic situation as a late Sindarin name of the Mark... after its occupation by horsemen. Nothing in the history of Brittany will throw any light on the Eorlingas. Incidentally the ending *-and* (*an*), *-end* (*en*) in land-names no doubt owes something to such (romantic and other) names as *Broceliand(e)*, but is perfectly in keeping with an already devised structure of primitive (common) Elvish (C.E.), or it would not have been used. The element *(n)dor* 'land', probably owes something to say such names as *Labrador* (a name that might as far as style and structure goes be Sindarin). But *not* to Scriptural *Endor*. This is a case in reverse, showing how 'investigation' without knowledge of the real events might go astray. *Endor* S. *Ennor* (cf. the collective pl. *ennorath* I 250) was invented as the Elvish equivalent of Middle-earth by combining the already devised *en(ed)* 'middle' and *(n)dor* 'land (mass)', producing a supposedly ancient compound Q. *Endor*, S. *Ennor*. When made I of course observed its accidental likeness to *En-dor* (I Sam. xxviii), but the congruence is in fact accidental, and therefore the necromantic witch consulted by Saul has no connexion or significance for *The L.R.* As is the case with *Moria*. In fact this first appeared in *The Hobbit* chap. 1. It was there, as I remember, a casual 'echo' of *Soria Moria Castle* in one of the Scandinavian tales translated by Dasent. (The tale had no interest for me: I had already forgotten it and have never since looked at it. It was thus merely the source of the sound-sequence *moria*, which might have been found or composed elsewhere.) I liked the sound-sequence; it alliterated with 'mines', and it connected itself with the MOR element in my linguistic construction. (*Letters*: 383-4)

The only case that Tolkien admits that is an exception, and can be attributed to direct borrowing both in terms of the form of the word as well as its connotations, is the case of *Eärendil*. It has been shown above that the line *Éala Éarendel engla beorhtast* from the Old English poem *Crist* inspired one of the initial stories in Tolkien's mythology, as well as the homonymous character, who survived into the later versions of *The Silmarillion* (Carpenter 1977: 64, 71; *Letters*: 385-6). However Tolkien still explains that:

> ...the name could not be adopted just like that: it had to be accommodated to the Elvish linguistic situation, at the same time as a place for this person was made in legend. From this, far back in the history of 'Elvish', which was beginning, after many tentative starts in boyhood, to take definite shape at the time of the name's adoption,

> arose eventually (a) the C.E. stem *AYAR 'Sea', primarily applied to the Great Sea of the West, lying between Middle-earth, and *Aman* the Blessed Realm of the Valar; and (b) the element, or verbal base (N)DIL, 'to love, be devoted to'... (*Letters*: 385-6)

Tolkien's uneasiness about the direct borrowing of the name can also be seen by one of his first attempts to 'explain' such an inconsistency in 'The Book of Lost Tales', where he states that: 'it was a name wrought of some secret tongue among the Gondothlim [i.e. the elves of Gondolin] and that has perished with them from the dwellings of the Earth' (*Lost Tales II*: 165).

There are also a few other exceptions that Tolkien admits to in his letters, not calling them 'borrowings' but rather 'echoes', but still the principle is the same: the name of the ancient Mesopotamian city *Erech*, used in *The Lord of the Rings* as a Sindarin name for one of Gondor's towers; the Gaelic word for ring, 'nasc', used in the Black Speech – rendered as 'nazg' – with the same meaning; or the element *-ond* meaning 'stone', used in Sindarin 'Gondor' (meaning 'stoneland'), which according to a book that Tolkien had read as a boy was the only item remaining from the language of the primitive peoples of Britain, before the Celts and the Germanic invaders (*Letters*: 384-5, 409-10).

One further strand of Tolkien's process of language invention which should be noted is the influence of euphony. There were cases where a word was constructed from a combination of already known elements, but the final outcome was cacophonous, so that the word had to be changed a little to maintain the euphonic effect of the whole language. Such a case was that of the Sindarin place-name Arnor, which was changed from the original Ardor, as Tolkien considered that the latter name did not sound nice. Still, he had to work out a whole theory of why this changed happened, deciding to attribute it to blending with the equivalent Quenya version of the name (*Letters*: 428).

To summarise, it could be argued that the process of language invention for Tolkien was not coherent but could be affected by different principles. The basis was clearly the early system of creating a root, and then modifying it to create actual words in a language, the phonological restrictions of which were already outlined. The root-creation itself might have been influenced by actual words in real languages, or just a sense that a sequence of sounds 'fitted' phonetically a specific meaning. At the same time, borrowing in terms of sound-sequences, or of actual words continued to occur and some times the reverse procedure – 'finding out' the root from an already decided word' – had to be followed. Finally, euphony played an important role, since the two Elvish languages at least were designed to be aesthetically pleasing.

Tolkien's languages were developing for a long period of time, since he started devising them at a very early age and did not stop re-working them until his death. It is thus natural that a further layer of complication is added by the fact that his views changed many times, not only on the meaning of certain words, but also on their etymology, and even on the relationship within his nexus of languages between them. However, it is hoped that in this first part of this chapter a general outline of Tolkien's language-invention has been given in as clear a form as possible, and that some light has been thrown on the usually neglected issue of how this was done.

2.7. An Unexpected Difficulty: The Theory of Translation

Tolkien has successfully managed to create in Middle-earth a complex linguistic structure, consisting of a number of languages which are interrelated, according to the history of the peoples, or 'races' that speak them. Still, if one follows very carefully what Tolkien is trying to do with the languages of Middle-earth, one

will find a very obvious problem: how come that Old English and Gothic, two languages unmistakeably recognizable in the names, language as well as place names of the Rohirrim, have found their way into the imaginary world of Middle-earth? And, in this case, not even Tolkien's claim of Middle-earth and Europe being conceived as the same place in different historical moments can resolve the problem, since both Old English and Gothic are attested European languages, which were in use in a specific historical period and not in an imaginary European past. Tolkien attempts to resolve this problem in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, by the theory of translation.

The Rohirrim have been shown by a number of Tolkien researchers to be dependent upon Anglo-Saxon not only as far as their nomenclature and their language are concerned, but also in terms of their material culture, and general spirit, excluding their love and respect for horses, which were never part of the Anglo-Saxon way of fighting and culture in any comparable way (Shippey 1983: 93-100; Shippey 2001: 90-97; Tinkler 1968: 164-9). Their language as found mainly in names, and in the very few extracts of conversation, is evidently close to Old English, certainly a non-invented language, and things become even more complicated when the Rohirrim and the hobbits discover that their languages are related, the latter being a newer form of the former. When King Théoden first meets Merry and Pippin, the following dialogue takes place between them:

> 'Are not these the Halflings, that some among us call the Holbytlan?'
> 'Hobbits, if you please, lord,' said Pippin.
> 'Hobbits?' said Théoden. '*Your tongue is strangely changed*; but the name sounds not unfitting so. Hobbits! No report that I have heard does justice to the truth' (*TT*: 557, my italics).

While Théoden finds the language of the hobbits 'strangely changed', the opposite reaction is created to the hobbits by the language of the Rohirrim:

> But most of the time, especially on this last day, Merry had ridden by himself just behind the king, saying nothing, and trying to understand the slow sonorous speech of Rohan that he heard the men behind him using. It was a language in which there seemed to be many words that he knew, though spoken more richly and strongly than in the Shire, yet he could not piece the words together. (*RK*: 792)

The interest of hobbits in the relationships between their language and that of Rohan is further confirmed in the Prologue of the *Fellowship of the Rings*, where we are told that after the end of the whole adventure, Merry wrote:

> ...a short treatise on *Old Words and Names in the Shire*, having special interest in discovering the kinship with the language of the Rohirrim of such 'shire-words' as *mathom* and old elements in place names. (*FR*: 15)

Maybe the reader will have not realised the problem that the language of the Rohirrim causes to the Middle-earth, but by the time its relationship to the language of the hobbits is established, it becomes much more obvious: was modern English the language of the hobbits in the Third Age in Middle-earth?

Tolkien realised that this issue should be given a reasonable explanation, and so, in the second part of Appendix F of *The Lord of the Rings*, he developed the argument that modern English, as well as Old English, had been used to translate the real languages of the hobbits and the Rohirrim respectively (*RK*: 1133, 1136). In a letter written a little after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings* he repeats this theory in summary:

> Anyway 'language' is the most important, for the story has to be told, and the dialogue conducted in a language; but English cannot have been the language of any people at that time. What I have, in fact done, is to equate the Westron or wide-spread Common Speech of the Third Age with English; and translate everything, including names such as *The Shire*, that was in the Westron into English terms... Languages quite alien to the C.S. have been left alone... Languages, however, that were related to the Westron presented a special problem. I turned them into forms of speech related to English. Since the *Rohirrim* are represented as recent comers out of the North, and users of an archaic Mannish language relatively untouched by the influence

> of *Eldarin*, I have turned their names into forms like (but not identical with) Old English. (*Letters*: 175)

To make the 'theory' more believable, Tolkien provided a few samples of the 'real' language of the hobbits and the Rohirrim in Appendix F, and he claimed that he could 'provide or invent' more (*RK*: 1136; *Letters*: 299).

The theory appears to work well, except for one mistake, which according to Robert Foster is the only one found in *The Lord of the Rings*, arising – not surprisingly – from Tolkien's overindulgence in philological games (1971: 9). In *The Two Towers* we are told that 'Orthanc', the name of Saruman's citadel, had 'by design or chance' a twofold meaning: in Elvish it meant 'Mount Fang', and in the language of Rohan 'Cunning Mind' (*TT*: 555). Foster explains why that is the 'only error' found in the book:

> ...the problem is this: Tolkien claims Sindarin and Rohirric homonyms, and this of course implies 'genuine Rohirric', but the actual homonymity is between Sindarin and Old English, or 'translated Rohirric'. In other words, in this example Rohirric and Old English are one and the same, and the careful distinction between the 'genuine' and 'translated' Mannish forms does not occur. Since three-language, two-world homonymity is unlikely, especially since two of the words would also be synonymous, we have to label this as an inconsistency, pleasing but nonetheless an error. (1971: 9)

This mistake, indeed very cleverly pointed out by Foster, shows, I think, that the whole 'theory of translation' was almost certainly devised after the creation of the Rohirrim and their language and culture, rather than when Tolkien started modelling it upon Old English. It seems that the Rohirrim where already there when Tolkien discovered the inconsistency in his perfectly constructed linguistic world, and as a consequence created the 'translation theory' to account for it. Still, once more, the fact that he did account for it, including a whole section in the Appendices for this problem, shows once more his awareness of Middle-earth as a consistent imaginary world, even in issues of linguistic history.

3. The Languages of Middle-earth and Contemporary Linguistics/ Philology

J.R.R. Tolkien had been trained as a philologist, and published regularly on philological and linguistic issues in the course of his academic career in Leeds and Oxford. The term 'philology' is not widely used today as it seems to have been superseded by 'historical' or 'diachronic linguistics', but it had been an important stage in the history of linguistics which was at its zenith in the nineteenth century in Germany, rooted in the comparative study of Indo-European languages (Shippey 1982: 4-10; Robins 1997: 197). For a philologist, then, the creation of a new imaginary world would also mean the creation of a realistic and recognisable *historical* linguistic situation. Especially when we remember that Tolkien claimed that for him Middle-earth is Europe in a very remote past, back in human prehistory, it is only natural that a network of languages, as interrelated as the Indo-European family of languages, would be appropriate, if not essential.

This part of the chapter will explore the complex linguistic reality of Middle-earth, and how it is represented in *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion.* However, a few more texts, not included in any of these books, and only published posthumously in the *History of Middle-earth* series, are included, since their subject-matter is directly relevant to Middle-earth linguistics, and casts greater insight on how Tolkien was influenced by nineteenth-century ideas on language.

3.1. The Indo-European Languages and the Stammbaumtheorie

Tolkien once argued in favour of the cohesion, consistency and 'illusion of historicity' created in *The Lord of the Rings* by citing the fact that the nomenclature is almost exclusively derived from 'a nexus of languages (mostly only structurally sketched)' that he created (*Letters*: 143-4). Indeed, the existence of many different languages in the Middle-earth cosmos does create the impression of a fully developed and multi-dimensional world, since it brings to mind the same situation in our 'primary' world. Still, the critical word in this claim is 'nexus'. The languages of Middle-earth do not appear as independent from one another but are interconnected and interrelated.

To anyone who has read the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, and especially Appendix F, 'The Peoples and Languages of the Third Age', it should be clear that Tolkien was interested not only in assigning different languages to different 'peoples' or 'races' in Middle-earth, but was equally eager to establish the relationship between them, and how some one derives from another, as well as which is older and which is relatively later (*RK*: 1127-33). This preoccupation was by no means new to the period when *The Lord of the Rings* was written, but seems always to have been very important for Tolkien, from as early as the period of 'The Book of Lost Tales'. There is already there an account of the 'many speeches of the Eldar' and how they became 'sundered' and changed (*Lost Tales I*: 48, 49-52), and there are similar references in later texts as well (cf. *Shaping*: 87; *Lost Road*: 222). However, perhaps the most important document of Tolkien on this subject, which is also highly significant as far as the philological theories of his time are concerned, is the essay

called *The Lhammas*, or 'Account of Tongues', and the associated tables with *The Tree of Tongues*, written around 1937-8 (*Lost Road*: 1).

The Lhammas exists in two manuscripts, together with a separate shorter version called *Lammasathen*, all of which have been edited by Christopher Tolkien (*Lost Road*: 167).[22] It is really an account of the languages found in Middle-earth, at least in the way they were conceived back then, starting from the language of the Valar (the Gods) and explaining how that developed and branched into different dialects, a process which ended up in the numerous languages of Middle-earth (*Lost Road*: 168-180). The account is accompanied by a 'tree of tongues', which is found in two versions, giving in a schematic way the 'branching' of languages as this is refereed to in the main text. For reasons of convenience both versions of the 'tree' are reproduced in Appendices 1.1 and 1.2. What is reasonably obvious from the description above is that the whole concept of one ancient language giving birth to a number of later ones, as well as the 'genealogical tree' model employed to show this more clearly, correspond to the concept of the Indo-European language and the *Stammbaumtheorie*, both developed in the nineteenth century.

The historical study of the Indo-European language was dominant in the field of linguistics and philology in the nineteenth century, a period largely dominated in the field of linguistics by German scholarship (Robins 1997: 197; Sampson 1980: 14). A key feature was the *Stammbaumtheorie*, or genealogical tree model, first used by Schleicher in order to describe the relationships of the Indo-European languages. The concept behind this, is that a proto-language, an *Ursprache*, splits into a number of *Grundsprachen*, and these, in their turn, split into language families, and finally into

[22] The text given by Christopher in *The Lost Road*, is the second version of *The Lhammas*, but he also provides different readings from the first in points he considers important. In this essay, when *The Lhammas* is quoted, the second version is meant, unless it is specified that the extract comes from the first.

actual languages and dialects (Robins 1997: 202; Morpurgo Davies 1992: 170). It followed from this concept that the common ancestor of the Indo-European languages could be reconstructed from known later forms, these reconstructed forms being distinguished by Schleicher by a pre-fixed asterisk (Robins 1997: 202).

The concept of the *Stammbaumtheorie* clearly underlies Tolkien's *Tree of Tongues*, which accompanied the text of *The Lhammas*. Starting with Valarin, or Valian, the tongue of the Valar, which was at that time conceived as being the common ancestor of all Middle-earth languages, he derives Eldarin, the common tongue of the Elves, and the process of 'sundering' of the Elvish tongues begins, first by a great number of them moving to Valinor, so that their language develops in a different way to that of the ones that stayed behind, and then by the further division of the Elves who went to Valinor into three kindreds, the languages of each of whom slowly grew apart (*Lost Road*: 168-174). The further development of the Elvish languages and their division into different 'dialects' follows the history of the Elves closely, and when Men appear in Middle-earth, again their speech derives from the Valarin, and, being influenced by the Elvish one, keeps on changing and generating different Mannish languages (*Lost Road*: 174-9).

The main objection to the *Stammbaumtheorie*, which still does not subvert its importance in historical linguistics, has been the fact that it gives a static picture of the development of languages. The tree-diagram shows a very neat and linear way for the development of language, but languages do not split at a given point, corresponding to a new branch in the tree. In contrast this process is lengthy and complex, having to do with dialects and their gradual divergence, until they become two separate languages (Robins 1997: 202). On this basis, in 1872 J. Schmidt proposed the *Wellentheorie* (wave theory), based on the supposition that changes in

language spread outwards from centres of influence to the outer areas. This model soon came to be regarded as supplementary to Schleicher's *Stammbaumtheorie* (Robins 1997: 203; Hudson 1996: 40; Sampson 1980: 19-20).

Tolkien seems to take the *Wellentheorie* into account as well. The languages he describes in *The Lhammas* do not simply split at a given moment, but respect the natural process by which human languages change. The languages of the Eldar and the Lembi become 'sundered' gradually, and only after many ages do their tongues become 'wholly estranged', to be represented in the *Tree of Tongues* as *Eldarin* and *Lemberin* (*Lost Road*: 169-70, 171). The same happens with the division of Eldarin into Lindarin, Telerin and Noldorin, and also with the changes of the languages of the Elves that remained in Middle-earth, through influence from each other's tongues (*Lost Road*: 171-179). At the same time he has attempted to represent this vertical influence between languages of the same era in his second *Tree of Tongues*. Christopher Tolkien, in his editorial notes, explains that the dotted lines that appear to connect languages of more or less the same vertical position in the tree are used exactly in order to show this influence. He gives Tolkien's own note in a later *Tree of Tongues*, according to which:

> ...the dotted lines 'indicate lines of strong influence of one language upon another' [e.g. that of French upon English], while the unbroken lines 'denote inheritance and direct descent' [e.g. from Latin to French]. (*Lost Road*: 186)

Tolkien's adherence to the 'tree of tongues' model for the languages of Middle-earth, even though there are no other sketches of such a tree in his published work, can be seen in later texts as well, notably in a rejected part of the chapter 'The Window on the West' in *The Lord of the Rings*, where Faramir talks about the languages of Gondor and the Common Speech (*War*: 144, 154-9). Indeed, in both *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarillion*, Tolkien is equally interested in establishing

the inter-relationship of the Middle-earth languages, especially in the Appendices of the former, and the account of how all languages in Middle-earth are interrelated is so detailed, that, with patience, such a 'tree of tongues' can be created, something that has been done in Appendix 3. However, there was another objection raised against the *Stammbaumtheorie*: the fact that dialects appear to be only a recent phenomenon of linguistic theory, since dialects appear in the diagram at the end points of the tree. It is recognised today that there must have been dialectal isoglosses even within the *Ursprache*, although in the tree-diagram it appears as unified (Robins 1997: 203). This interpretation of the tree-diagram of Indo-European languages seems to be related to the concept of linguistic change as a process of decay, from a perfect proto-language to later corrupted dialects. And this is another point where Tolkien seems to follow nineteenth-century ideas rather than what is scientifically accepted today.

3.2. Language Change: The Concept of Language Decay and Sound Laws

The idea of language change as a process of decay goes back to the Alexandrian philologists in Hellenistic times, and it is associated with the notion of the divine origin of language. According to this view, language was perfect in the beginning, since it originated with God, but is constantly in danger of corruption and decline unless it is meticulously maintained by the wise, by writing dictionaries and grammars, aiming to preserve it and save it from decay (Pyles 1964: 213). In the nineteenth century, the idea of the decline of language was mainly associated with the development of the study of the Indo-European languages. The emphasis on the reconstruction of Indo-European forms was for some linguists an attempt to get back to the original grammatical structure of the language, the gradual disintegration of which had produced the attested languages of the same family (Robins 1997: 200). An

aspect of the decline of the later Indo-European languages was considered to be the loss of 'original' inflexional forms (Aitchinson 1991: 6). Apart from Max Müller's much quoted assertion that, 'The history of all the Aryan languages is nothing but a gradual process of decay', Jacob Grimm seemed also to have referred nostalgically to the older perfection of the earlier periods of language (Aitchinson 1991: 6, 8; Jespersen: 62; Mortpurgo Davies: 178). In addition, Humboldt, Schleicher, Bopp and Schlegel, all prominent scientists in the field of linguistics during the nineteenth century, seem to have favoured the idea of the decline of language as an inevitable process of its history (Jespersen 1922: 55; Mortpurgo Davies: 134, 178).

In *The Lhammas*, this principle of language decadence along with its development in time seems to be maintained. Firstly, it seems that the older and closer to its root a language is, the more it is praised and admired in the text of *The Lhammas*. In the summary of the speeches of Valinor, we are told that: 'overall was the *Valya* or *Valarin*, the ancient speech of the Gods, that changed not from age to age' (*Lost Road*: 174). At the same time, we learn that the Elves:

> ...much altered the tongue of the Valar, and each of their kindreds after their own fashion. The *most beautiful* and the *least changeful* of these speeches was that of the Lindar, and especially the tongue of the house and folk of Ingwë. (*Lost Road*: 172, my italics)

In a footnote added after the writing of the main text, Tolkien adds that the Lindar did change initially the Elvish speech significantly 'by the softening and smoothing of its sounds, especially the consonants', but:

> ...yet in words [*struck out*: and forms] they were, as is said, less changeful, and their grammar and vocabulary remained more ancient than those of any other Elvish folk. (*Lost Road*: 172, note)

It seems, then, that 'least changeful' language is identified as 'beautiful' and the underlying connotation is that of a pure form of the language, in this case the

language of the Valar, the Gods,[23] which is adopted and changed as little as possible by the first kindred of the Elves, who incidentally are also the ones who 'were closest to the Valar and most in their company' and later developed into the Vanyar, the Elves that did not take part in the rebellion and never left Valinor (*Lost Road*: 185). It is also characteristic that the Lindar are claimed to have changed the language of the Valar in terms of phonetics and phonology, but not in diction, and, more pertinently, not as far as grammar is concerned, grammar in the sense of inflexional morphology and syntax. As explained above, during the nineteenth century, it was the loss of inflexions of the later Indo-European languages, which pertain to the change of their grammatical rules, that was seen as decay, and not the change in sounds, which were widely studied and classified as various 'sound laws'.

At the same time, language change is directly linked in *The Lhammas* to mortality and death. It is specifically stated that: 'The speech of the Valar changes little, for the Valar do not die; and before the Sun and Moon it altered not from age to age in Valinor' (*Lost Road*: 168). The same is told of the Elves, as:

> Their tongues therefore changed in the slow rolling of the years, even in Valinor, for the Elves are not as the Gods, but are children of the Earth. Yet they changed less than might be thought in so great a space of time; *for the Elves in Valinor did not die*, and in those days the Tees still flowered, and the changeful Moon was not yet made, and there was peace and bliss. (*Lost Road*: 171-2, my italics)

Especially the references to the period of 'the Sun and the Moon', as opposed to the period of 'the Two Trees', is deeply significant, since, according to Tolkien's mythology, it was the golden and the silver trees that provided Valinor with light, and when these were destroyed by the evil Vala Melko, the Gods made the Sun and the Moon, which gave light to the whole of Middle-earth as substitutes. Still, it is that

[23] In the first version of *The Lhammas* it is called specifically: 'the pure speech of the Gods' (*Lost Road*: 185).

later development that is accounted as the beginning of the counting of years, since with the Sun and the Moon people started to measure time in terms of days and nights, while the period of the Trees is described as a timeless era, where everything was changing very slowly and time was not really passing in terms of the later historical concept of time. Thus mortality and death are also linked to the counting of years. It is significant that, together with everything else, the languages of the Elves came to change much more quickly after that period:

> And after the rising of the Sun and Moon and the coming into the Hither Lands of measured time, which had before lain under the moveless stars without night or day, growth and change were swift for all living things, more swift outside Valinor, and most swift of all in the first years of the Sun. The daily tongue of the Noldor changed therefore much in Beleriand, for there was death and destruction, woe and confusion and mingling of peoples. (*Lhammas*: 177)

According to the first version of *The Lhammas*, even the language of the Valar changed, and 'swifter after the death of the Trees, for the Valar are not of the earth, yet they are in the world' (*Lost Road*: 185).

Apart from language decay as a general concept in nineteenth-century linguistics, Humboldt and Schleicher developed a more elaborate concept of the phases of language. The former talked about two stages of language development. During the first, the creative power of language is still at work and there is an aesthetic pleasure of developing the language form, independent of its meanings or its practical uses. The second stage is that of decay, as a seeming stagnation begins, and the creative instinct gradually declines. In this stage language serves only the practical need of life (Jespersen 1922: 59-60). Schleicher, affected by Hegel's ideas, seems to agree with this two-stage division of language development, and adds that the critical point between the two is when literature appears. Then language stops developing and

becomes fixed. It is no longer the aim of intellectual activity, but the means of it. Consequently, after that stage, the language can only decline (Jespersen 1922: 77).

Taking into account the ideas he expressed in *A Secret Vice*, discussed in the first part of this essay, it is quite obvious why these theories might have appealed to Tolkien. The development of language as an artistic activity *per se*, which stopped when it became only a means for writing literature, seems to be very close to his principle of 'linguistic aesthetic' in language creation, and to his notion of beauty in real languages' word forms, even independent of their semantics. Traces of these theories can indeed be found in *The Lhammas*. It is explained that when the Elves learned the language of the Valar:

> ...they changed it... and softened its sounds, and they added many words to it of their own liking and devices even from the beginning. For the Elves love the making of words, and this has ever been the chief cause of the change and variety of their tongues. (*Lost Road*: 168)

It is important that this factor of language change, namely the creative nature of the Elves, only occurs when they are in Valinor, under the influence of the Gods, in bliss and happiness, in the timeless era of the Two Trees, before time measurement begins.

The idea of language change as decay is also seen in other linguistic documents of Tolkien, like the 'Excursus on the languages of Beleriand' (*Jewels*: 19-28), as well as in later texts like 'Of Dwarves and Men' (*Peoples*: 305), and repeated in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* (*RK*: 1128). However, another point about language change, and how traditional philology perceived it, should be made here, since it is again reflected in the Middle-earth cosmos. As noted briefly above, the idea of language change in terms of 'sound laws' was of great importance to philology. Indeed, in the mid-nineteenth century, when the study of language had started to emerge as a science in its own right, if the idea of the 'tree of tongues' was influenced

by the biological theory of evolution by natural selection, then the second most successful scientific paradigm of that period, namely that of mechanistic physics, with its simple and deterministic laws, was also bound to affect philology (Sampson 1980: 15-16). The idea of 'sound laws', introduced by Franz Bopp and developed by eminent philologists after him, became central to the explanation of language change, albeit in a mechanistic way, not taking the speakers of a language into consideration. The following extract from Tolkien's essay 'English and Welsh', referring to the language change of the 'Celts' when they migrated to Britain, is characteristic in this respect:

> Changes in a language are largely conditioned *by its own patterns of sound and function*. Even after loosening or loss of former contacts, it may continue to change according to trends already in evidence before migration. So 'Celts' in their new situations in Britain, no doubt, *continued for some time to change their language along the same lines as their kinsmen on the Continent*. But separation from them, even if not complete, would tend to halt some changes already initiated, and to hasten others... Celtic dialects in this island, as compared with their nearest kin overseas, would slowly become British and peculiar. (*MC*: 177)

Tolkien seems here to be favouring the typical view of the time, the division of the history of a language into 'internal' and 'external', the former being totally dependent upon deterministic sound laws, while the latter is related to the circumstances of the speakers. In a remarkable late linguistic document, edited by Christopher Tolkien in *The Histories of Middle-earth*, entitled 'Quendi and Eldar', where Tolkien mainly discusses 'the origins of the Elvish names for Elves and their varieties' (*Jewels*: 359), we read about 'the early change in Q[uenya] of initial *d* > *l*', we learn that 'final *-nd* eventually became *-n* in Sindarin', and there is also a reference to 'the Common Telerin change of *kw* > *p*' (*Jewels*: 362, 363, 375). At the same time, there is in this essay a particularly interesting case of a word and the explanation of why it disappeared from the Sindarin tongue. We are told that the Primitive Quendian

and the Common Eldarin word **kwende*, pl. **kwendī*, which meant 'people, the people as a whole' to refer to all the Elves, while its derivatives were used to refer to the languages of the Elves, did not survive into Sindarin, the reason being:

> ...partly the linguistic changes already cited [i.e. the 'sound law' on Sindarin cited above]; and partly the circumstances in which the Sindar lived, until the return of the Ñoldor, and the coming of Men. *The linguistic changes made the words unsuitable for survival; the circumstances removed all practical need for the term.* The old unity of the Elves had been broken at the Separation. The Elves of Beleriand were isolated, without contact with any other people, Elvish or of other kind; and they were all of one clan and language... Their own language was the only one that they ever heard; and they needed no word to distinguish it, nor to distinguish themselves. (*Jewels*: 376, my italics)

This is as clear a case of the dichotomous view of language change into 'internal' and 'external', as one could get in Tolkien's work. It should also be remembered that 'sound laws' are found in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, and especially in Appendix E, where the Sindarin is treated in some detail and one finds out how 'the combinations *ng*, *nd*, *mb*, which were specially favoured in the Eldarin languages at an earlier stage' changed in the evolution of the language (*RK*: 1115).

The focus on language change remained strong whenever Tolkien discussed the linguistic situation of Middle-earth. In the 'Excursus on the languages of Beleriand' (*Jewels*: 19-28), apart from reasons inherent to the language, he also examines politics as a main reason for language change, notably the ban on the tongue of the Noldor in Doriath because of King Thingol's wrath at the kin slaying they committed in Valinor. This is repeated in *The Silmarillion*, together with one more political banishing of the language, this time later, by King Adunakhôr (*S*: 129, 267-8). However, language change in terms of 'sound laws' also remained a primary concern of Tolkien. In his late writings we read an extraordinary story of how a simple 'sound-law', the Quenya change þ > s, played a significant role in the conflict

of the Noldorin princes in Valinor, while in the text 'Dangweth Pengoloð' ('The Teachings of Pengoloð'), the uniform change of languages in terms of 'sound laws' is attributed to the art of the Elves (*Peoples*: 331-366, 395-402).[24]

3.3. From Philology to Modern Linguistics

Both Yaguello (1991) and Meyers (1980) have discussed how imaginary languages in fictional works 'mirror' the history and development of linguistics. The former has explored four twentieth-century novels in such terms, and has tried to link the inferences about language in these works with the Sapir-Whorf school and American structuralism as well as with Chomsky's generative grammar (Yaguello 1991: 56-62). The novels include Orwell's *1984* (1949) and Jack Vance's *Languages of Pao* (1958), works by two authors that can be regarded as contemporaries of Tolkien. However, the discussion of Tolkien's use of his linguistic knowledge in the construction of the languages of Middle-earth has hitherto concentrated on philology, an area of linguistic study that was already declining in the first half of the twentieth century, in effect to be replaced by the modern science of linguistics. As explained above, the change of emphasis was mainly one from the study of historical languages to that of living languages and their use. But Tolkien had been trained as a philologist, and he remained a philologist in the traditional sense of the term, despite the great revolution in linguistics, starting with Saussure's structuralism in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and continuing with even more dramatic developments in the form of Chomsky's new theories on syntax in the late 1950s. However, he could not have been totally unaffected by what was happening in linguistics. Oxford was late to

[24] Relevant to this part of the chapter is also Verlyn Flieger's work on the influence of Owen Barfield's ideas on language and myth on Tolkien. See Flieger 1981 and 2002.

switch from philology to 'synchronic linguistics', but Tolkien would still find himself in the midst of debates and academic arguments about the new developments, and he would have a general idea of new theories in his area of expertise.

It is interesting, in this context, to discuss two short extracts from his very late Middle-earth related linguistic documents, namely 'Dangweth Pengoloð' ('The Teachings of Pengoloð'), and 'Quendi and Eldar'. The first essay was written in the late 1950s (*Peoples*: 395). In it, Pengoloð, the Wise of Gondolin, is instructing Ælfwine the Mariner on linguistic matters, and especially on language change and the memory of the Elves. In one point, he talks about the *coirëa quenya*, the living speech, and makes the following remarks:

> We may know indeed how children not yet accomplished in speech, and how the 'fullspoken', as we say, spake at times long ago, but that is a thing apart from the images of life-memory, and is *a matter of lore*. For *we have much lore concerning the languages of old*, whether stored in the mind or in writings; but we hear not ourselves speak again in the past save with the language that clothes our thought in the present... It is true indeed that the Eldar readily learn to use other tongues skilfully, and are slow to forget any that they have learned, but these remain as they were learned, as were they written in the unchanging pages of a book; whereas the *coirëa quenya,* the language of thought, *grows and lives within, and each new stage overlies those that went before, as the acorn and the sapling are hidden in the tree...* (*Peoples*: 399-40, my italics)

In this revealing passage, we see a reflection in Middle-earth of the changing science of the study of language. The acceptance of the fact that language is a living organism that changes, without attaching any evaluative connotations to this fact as the concept of language decay did, is characteristic of modern linguistics, and Tolkien here seems to be re-thinking ideas that had been taken for granted in his earlier texts. It is as if we are given an old philologist's second thoughts on the emergence of linguistics and the weaknesses of his own old science.

The second instance is found in 'Quendi and Eldar', a linguistic essay referred to above, where – apart from proof of Tolkien's use of 'sound-laws in the Middle-earth context – one can also find an intriguing reference to language as a system of signs. Tolkien first talks about the Elvish word for 'language', being '**lambē*, Q[uenya] and T[elerin] *lambe*, S[indarin] *lam*', but then he goes on to explain that this term primarily meant '..."a way of talking", within a common generally intelligible system, and was nearer to our "dialect" than to "language"...' (*Jewels*: 394). Therefore:

> The Loremasters... did not use *lambe* as a term for language or speech in general. Their terms were derived from the stem *TEÑ 'indicate, signify', from which was formed the already well-known word **tenwe* > Q *tengwe* 'indication, sign, token'. From this they made the word *tengwesta* 'a system or code of signs'. Every 'language' was one such system. A *lambe* was a *tengwesta* built of sounds... For the sense Language, as a whole, the peculiar art of the Incarnates of which each *tengwesta* was a particular product, they used the abstract formation *tengwestie*. (*Jewels*: 394)

This short passage seems to reveal Tolkien's awareness of the emergence of structuralist linguistics, and especially the theory of Saussure, who was the first to see language as a system of signs, each sign being the union of a *signifiant* with a *signifié* (the 'signifier' or sound, with the 'signified', the meaning) (Sampson 1980: 39; Anderson 1985: 26). It is even more tempting to see the contrast between the terms *lambe* and *tengwestie* as an allusion to Saussure's distinction of language into *langue* and *parole*, the former being the particular system that structures one language as opposed to other languages, while the latter may be defined as the use made of that system by the speakers of the language in specific instances (Anderson 1985: 23-24).

It can be argued, then, that Tolkien was indeed aware of more recent developments in what we would today define as 'modern linguistics'. Although philology provided his basic model for the linguistic reality of Middle-earth, his latest

writings had started to question older ideas, and even to contemplate the introduction of new ones.

3.4. Middle-earth Sociolinguistics: 'High' vs. 'Low' languages and the Issue of Dialects

Another concept that figures very distinctively in *The Lord of the Rings*, and should be of special interest to a much later developed branch of modern linguistics, namely sociolinguistics, is the existence of 'high' and 'low' languages in Middle-earth, something that the reader of the book realises in many instances. The most prominent example is how the Elvish languages are used by Men as a mark of prestige and higher status. When Frodo and Sam meet with Faramir and his group of soldiers, they watch them speak between them first using the Common Speech, and then:

> ...changing to another language of their own. To his amazement, as he listened Frodo became aware that it was the Elven-tongue that they spoke, or one but little different; and he looked at them with wonder, for he knew then that they must be Dúnedain of the South, men of the line of the Lords of Westernesse. (*RK*: 659)

Elsewhere, we are told that the Númenóreans are the only men to speak the Elvish tongue, which was taught to them since the days of their alliance with the Elves, and that in the Third Age it was only used by members of the nobility or of 'pure Numenórean descent', for reasons of politeness, and for honorific reasons (*Letters*: 154, 425; *S*: 262; *RK*: 1128).

At the same time, within the Elvish languages themselves, there is a distinction between Sindarin, the language that the Elves used in everyday interaction, and the 'Elven-latin', Quenya, the 'high tongue of old', the 'ancient tongue of the

Elves beyond the Sea', which was brought by the Exiles from Valinor. This tongue was used for lore and ceremony, and was also used by Men, as seen above, for the names of the kings (*RK*: 1128). It is in this tongue that Galadriel sings her lament, it is in this tongue that Arangorn is given his kingly name, and it is in the same tongue that Frodo greets the passing company of the Elves and thus gains their admiration and respect (*FR*: 81, 377-8; *RK*: 967).

Apart from 'high' and 'low' languages, the reader of *The Lord of the Rings*, will notice many references to dialects, or issues of accent and tone in the languages of the characters. Tolkien, in one of his letters, claims that the term 'dialect' formerly meant only the linguistic differentiations in a language related to the region where an individual came from, but admits that today it also has the connotation of 'difference in social standing,... rank, or function' (*Letters*: 187). It is mainly in that sense that dialects are used in *The Lord of the Rings*. The only exception where the concept of dialect is used with strictly regional connotations is found in the languages of the Elves, and especially in that variation called *Silvan,* spoken in Lórien during the Third Age. The scene where the Fellowship reaches Lothlórien is characteristic:

> Frodo could understand little of what was said, for the speech that the Silvan folk east of the mountains used among themselves was unlike that of the West. (*FR*: 342)

And Tolkien is quick to add in the Appendices that in Lórien:

> Sindarin was spoken, though with an 'accent', since most of its folk were of Silvan origin. This 'accent' and his own limited acquaintance with Sindarin mislead Frodo. (*RK*: 1128)

Still, in the case of the Common Tongue, its variations implied social difference rather than regional. Once more the scene of the first meeting of Frodo and Sam with Faramir and his company is illuminating on this respect:

> They spoke together in soft voices, at first using the Common Speech, but after the manner of older days. (*TT*: 659)

In a letter to a reader Tolkien explained that the Common Speech in Gondor:

> ...remains spoken in nobler and rather more antique style (a style also usually adopted by the Elves when they use this language). (*Letters*: 175)

It seems that this 'Gondorian' variation of the Common Speech is indeed associated to the noble blood of the men of Gondor. The same variation seems also to be used by the men of Rohan, their honoured allies. When Éomer first appears, he is described as speaking using the Common Speech 'in manner and tone like to the speech of Boromir, Man of Gondor', and later on, in the Appendices, it is made clear that the Common speech was spoken 'nobly' by the lords of the Rohirrim 'after the manner of the allies of Gondor' (*TT*: 432; *RK*: 1129).

Still, there is one more variation of the Common Speech, which, notably, is noticed only in Gondor. When Pippin offers Denethor his sword, the latter replies:

> I accept your service. For you are not daunted by words; and you have courteous speech, *strange though the sound of it may be to us in the South*. And we shall have need of all folk of courtesy, be they great or small, in the days to come. (*RK*: 756, my italics)

Later on, one of the guards of Gondor asks Pippin of the word 'hobbit' and the dialogue below follows:

> 'Hobbit?' said Beregond.
> 'That is what we call ourselves,' said Pippin.'
> 'I am glad to learn it,' said Beregond, 'for now I may say that strange accents do not mar fair speech, and hobbits are a fair-spoken folk'. (*RK*: 761-2)

The 'hobbit dialect' of the Common Speech, then, seems to be less grand and 'noble' than the 'Gondorian' one, reflecting the position of the hobbits, which are always described as rustic and simple in the social hierarchy of Men.

What is especially interesting is what happens with the way of speech of the evil creatures of Middle-earth. The primary language of the 'evil' is the Black Speech,

which appears on the inscription on the one ring, and was devised by Sauron in order to be used by everyone that served him. The remarkable point is, though, that Sauron failed to teach the Orcs the Black Speech, since they could not master it and used their own debased dialects (*RK*: 1131). It seems that a different language was finally developed among them, Orkish, but even that was not very successful, according to the following passage:

> It is said that they [i.e. the Orcs] had no language of their own, but took what they could from other tongues and perverted it to their own liking; yet they made only brutal jargons, scarcely sufficient even for their own needs, unless it were for curses and abuse. And these creatures, being filled with malice, hating even their own kind, quickly developed as many barbarous dialects as there were groups or settlements of their race, so that their Orkish speech was of little use to them in intercourse between different tribes. (*RK*: 1131)

The notion of language ability and morality seems to be underlying this extract. The Orcs are evil, and their only use of language is for causing harm, something that seems to create a situation very similar to the Biblical tower of Babel: their languages are changing so quickly that they cannot understand each other. This situation is further described when Merry and Pippin, being captives, hear the Orcs speaking in the Common Speech, apparently because they belong to different tribes and cannot communicate in any other way (*TT*: 445).

The whole 'sociolinguistic situation' of Middle-earth, especially as far as the social evaluation of different dialects is concerned, is reminiscent of popular ideas on the supposed aesthetic beauty of certain language variations over others, as described in § 2.2 of this chapter. As discussed there, beauty is attributed to certain language variations on the basis of their connotations in terms of social status, rather than their 'inherent value'. The same seems to happen in Middle-earth. The simple and rustic hobbit language is considered as a 'lesser' one in comparison with the 'higher' Rohirric one, or that of Gondor. The same, though, seems to be true of different

languages and their evaluation. Tolkien insists on the 'inherent value' of the languages of Middle-earth, in the same way he appears to believe in the objective beauty of certain real languages. However, again he does not avoid the 'social connotations' of the evaluation of his own invented languages. The following part of this chapter will discuss Middle-earth languages in the context of racial linguistics.

3.5. Racial Linguistics

The issue of the presence of races in Middle-earth, and their association with nineteenth-century racial anthropology was discussed in Chapter 3. Tolkien's strong reaction to the 'Aryanism' of the Nazi era did not prevent him from adopting quite a strict racial hierarchy with his Middle-earth creatures, with the Elves at the top and the Orcs at the bottom, strongly reminiscent of the classification of the human-kind into fixed races, the 'scientific' aura of which persisted far beyond the end of the nineteenth century. The issue of race did not leave the science of language unaffected. The concept of language decay was examined in section 3.2 of this chapter. This likewise implied an evaluation of languages into 'perfect' and 'debased' types. The classification of contemporary languages became a preoccupation when the science of linguistic typology developed in the course of the nineteenth century, and it appears that there was a common assumption that languages could be arranged somehow on an ascending scale, in a parallel way to the older idea of the 'chain of beings' or to the more recent views on the increasing complexity of natural organisms (Morpurgo Davies 1992: 218). For some linguists such a rating of languages would have to be closely associated to their classification as 'isolating', 'agglutinating' and

'inflexional' languages respectively, the latter type often being favoured as being the highest (Morpurgo Davies 1992: 218; Koerner 2000: 8).

Even with this evaluative characterization of languages, though, many influential linguists, like Humboldt and Saussure, would speak against the direct association of language and race, often, though, without necessarily dismissing the notion of race in itself (Morpurgo Davies 1992: 158, Joseph 2000: 47; Young 2002: 65). However, at the same time there were a number of linguists who did not accept the independence of language and race. Renan's study of the Semitic languages (1887) in particular formed a basis for an association of language and race, since, according to him, the mental dimension of a particular language could be seen to be analogous to the moral and cultural dimension of a race (Ashcroft 2001: 319). A bit later than Renan, two more linguists, associated with the well-known name of Ferdinand de Saussure, would pronounce similar theories on the association of language and race: Pictet, the man who has often been described as his mentor, and his own brother, Leopold de Saussure. Adolphe Pictet, in his *Les Origines indo-européennes* (1877), commented on the aesthetic capacities of the Aryan and the Semitic peoples as these are reflected in their respective languages (Joseph 2004: 12). Leopold de Saussure, writing mainly on the issue of the French 'civilising' the colonised Indochinese (1899), claimed that teaching them the French language would not result in their amelioration, since every language reflects the mental character of each specific race, with the result that teaching a superior language to an inferior race would not change their character (Joseph 2000: 33, 34-9).

However, these ideas were rather extreme. The issue of language and race immediately before and during Tolkien's time was associated with the idea of language as a tool for researching the history of the 'human races' more than with

such extreme and aggressive evaluative judgments. Indeed, the former idea was much older, originating in the romantic notion of the unity of language and nation, thus using the term 'race' in a looser sense. Such pioneering ethnologists as Prichard and Latham, writing in the early nineteenth century, used extensive linguistic evidence in their classification of peoples according to blood and descent, while Darwin himself, backed by such influential philologists like Franz Bopp, had claimed that an accurate genealogical classification of the races of man would allow the best categorization of the languages they spoke (Alter 1999: 30-32).

Tolkien himself seems indirectly to be *referring* to the issue of association of race and language in his O'Donnell lecture 'English and Welsh', where he favours the mainstream view that race and language cannot be considered as interlinked. Speaking of the Welsh and their language against the effort of various governments to impose English on them, he claims that:

> For though cultural and other transitions may accompany a difference of language, they are chiefly maintained and preserved by language. Language is the prime differentiator of peoples – not of 'races', whatever that much-misused word may mean in the long-blended history of western Europe. (*MC*: 166)

Later on, speaking of 'the peoples speaking English and Welsh' he adds:

> Of peoples, not races. We are dealing with events that are *primarily a struggle between languages*. Here I will put in an aside, not unconnected with my main theme. If one keeps one's eye on language as such, then one must regard certain kinds of research with caution, or at least not misapply their results. (*MC*: 167, my italics)

It appears, then, that when it comes to languages, the people that speak different ones belong to different 'peoples' rather than 'races'. Tolkien's distinction follows the romantic identification of a nation with its uniform language and culture, but later on in his lecture he speaks again of 'races' and their 'languages' (*MC*: 169-70). The same confusion of whether the term 'race' is to be used or not can thus be found in respect

of the question of whether 'race' and 'language' are to be equated, or at least were equated in a remote past (see Chapter 3: § 2).

The identification of 'races' in Middle-earth according to their language, as well as their tracing in terms of language, is indeed valid. A good and clear example is found in the essay 'Of Dwarves and Men', included in the later writings of Tolkien, in a part of which the pedigree of the three 'houses' of Men that came to Middle-earth and were befriended by the Elves, namely the Folk of Hador, the Folk of Bëor and the Folk of Haleth, is discussed. We read that:

> The Folk of Hador... for the most part... were tall people, with flaxen or golden hair and blue-grey eyes... [and] they were akin to the Folk of Bëor, *as was shown by their speech.* It needed no lore of tongues to perceive that their languages were closely related, for although they could understand one another only with difficulty they had very many words in common. The Elvish loremasters were of opinion that both languages were descended from one that had diverged...the language of Hador was apparently less changed and more uniform in style, whereas the language of Bëor contained many elements that were alien in character. *This contrast in speech was probably connected with the observable physical differences between the two peoples.* There were fair-haired men and women among the Folk of Bëor, but most of them had brown hair... and many were less fair in skin, some indeed being swarthy. Men as tall as the Folk of Hador were rare among them, and most were broader and more heavy in build... The Folk of Haleth were strangers to the other Atani, *speaking an alien language.* (*Peoples*: 307-8, my italics)

We see here not only the language differences associated with physical characteristics and the concept of race, but also the use of language as proof of racial classification. At the same time, stereotyped ideas about the fair-haired race having the least changeful (and hence better) language than their darker and swarthier relatives are reproduced.

In general in the Middle-earth cosmos, the languages of the different 'races' or their sub-divisions are portrayed as directly linked to the mental abilities of their speakers. Thus, the Elves are attributed languages that are not just characterised as

'high' in terms of social status, but even more in terms of their intrinsic value. Many times in *The Lord of the Rings* the Elvish tongues are reported to be able to express thoughts and notions that the 'Common Tongue' cannot. Quenya, the 'Elven-latin', was not any more a native tongue in the third age but was 'still used for *ceremony*, and for *high matters of lore and song*' (*RK*: 1128, my italics). Sindarin, which was originally the language of the Grey-elves, the ones that did not go to Valinor, is still looked upon by the hobbits and used by Gandalf in his spells to invoke fire, and to open the doors of Moria (*FR*: 290, 299, 307). The poetic value of Sindarin is also stressed since Strider translates for the hobbits the 'tale of Tinúviel', but as he claims: 'it is hard to render in our Common Speech, and this is but a rough echo of it' (*FR*: 193).

Especially as far as the Dwarves are concerned, Tolkien further compared them to the Semitic peoples. In an interview he gave for the BBC in 1970, he commented that:

> The dwarves of course are quite obviously – wouldn't you say that in many ways they remind you of the Jews? Their words are Semitic obviously, constructed to be Semitic. (*BBC Interview*: 4)

This idea has been repeated in one of his letters, where a bit more information is given on the rationale of the association of Dwarves with the Jews:

> I do think of the 'Dwarves' like Jews: at once native and alien in their habitations, speaking the languages of the country, but with an accent due to their own private tongue... (*Letters*: 176)

Tolkien's attitude to Jews has been anything but unfavourable or racist, since in a letter to the potential editors of a German translation of *The Hobbit*, when asked if he is of 'arisch' origin, he wrote:

> But if I am to understand that you are enquiring whether I am *of Jewish* origin, I can only reply that I regret that I appear to have no ancestors of that gifted people. (*Letters*: 37)

Writing to his own editors about the whole issue he explained that:

> I do not regard the (probable) absence of all Jewish blood as necessarily honourable; and I have many Jewish friends, and should regret giving any colour to the notion that I subscribed to the wholly pernicious and unscientific race-doctrine. (*Letters*: 37)

Apart from the World War II atrocities against the Jews, Tolkien's Roman Catholic background, which included the veneration of the Bible, might also have something to do with his admiration for the Semitic peoples. When it comes to their languages, Tolkien was frustrated to find them hard, in fact, as he says, 'so difficult that it makes Latin (or even Greek) seem footling' and having a 'foolish alphabet', but at the same time offering 'glimpses into the past that makes Homer seem recent' (British Library, *Add. 71657*, item 18). It could, then, be argued that it was mainly due to popular ideas of Jews being conservative with their language and traditions that made Tolkien ascribe some of their characteristics to the Dwarves. The Dwarves are pictured as having a 'private tongue', and the reason for it being kept secret is variously described as their own tendency to be secretive and guard their language 'as a treasure of the past' (*RK*: 1132) or alternatively the fact that:

> Dwarvish was both complicated and cacophonous. Even early elvish philologists avoided it, and the dwarves were obliged to use other languages, except for entirely private conversations. (*Letters*: 31)

Elsewhere in *The Lord of the Rings* this idea is enhanced by references to the 'strange dwarf tongue' and to Sam's characteristically naïve remark: 'A fair jaw-cracker dwarf-language must be!' (*TT*: 503; *FR*: 285).

A last point related to the association of language and race in Middle-earth, has to do with Quenya's capacity to convey layered meanings. Paul Nolan Hyde, in his thesis on Tolkien's languages, has concluded that the 'high' elvish tongue, especially when used in poetry, has a tendency to convey a multiplicity of meanings at the same time, which support and give insight to the interpretation of the poem

(1982: 296). His argument is mainly based on the translation of Galadriel's lament in *The Lord of the Rings*, as given supposedly by Frodo, and in the word-to-word translation of the same poem by Tolkien himself in *The Road Goes Ever On* (*FR*: 378; *Road*: 59-9). In those two translations different words are translated in different ways, without, though, contradicting the overall meaning of a passage, but rather giving more insight to it. According to Hyde:

> The significance of all this is that an elf, immortal and wise, having a command of Quenya that is continually increased to him as the centuries pass, would also continually increase in his appreciation for a poem written by a master Elven poet. Tolkien tells us that Frodo's translation was 'sufficiently accurate' and undoubtedly it was on a single level of interpretation. (Hyde 1982: 297)

In this way, then, Quenya is for Tolkien the ideal language. It is grammatically highly developed, being extensively inflectional; it is phonologically pleasing, according to his own 'aesthetic' principles; and at the same time it is capable of conveying layered meanings, making it the perfect language for poetry. Its attribution to the High-elves is a reflection of their enhanced mental abilities and their skills in artistic creation.

The creation of the linguistic reality of Middle-earth, then, seems to have been affected, at least partially, by ideas on a direct link between race and language. Although no absolute 'sources' can be established for racial linguistic ideas found in Tolkien's literature, he seems to have been aware of such discussions, his views possibly being split between the rejection of racial anthropology just before the course of World War II, and ideas on the nature and function of language as expressed by nineteenth-century linguistics and philology.

4. Conclusions

J.R.R. Tolkien's invented languages are an integral part of his literary production. They are repeatedly found in all of his published works, not only in the nomenclature, which is constructed in a consistent way via the languages, but also in a great number of extracts of the actual languages found in his work, either in the form of utterances, whole passages, or poetry. At the same time, in numerous cases in his writings Tolkien dedicates a lot of space in narrating the histories, inter-relations and development of these languages, which are indissolubly associated with the actual history of the 'race' that speaks them.

What this chapter has attempted to do is to discuss linguistic invention in Tolkien's fiction within the framework of contemporary developments in philology and the – then – newly emerging science of modern linguistics. Tolkien's interest in linguistics was not limited to his own area of expertise, namely philology, but extended to ideas such as sound symbolism and the creation of international auxiliary languages. His knowledge and deep understanding of language, always in the spirit of his period, is clearly reflected in the linguistic reality of Middle-earth, and shows once more how fiction, even if belonging to the genre of fantasy, is indissolubly bound with the author's historical circumstances.

One final point that should be made here is the fact that, in the period 1944-1948, Tolkien was planning to write a book on language, in collaboration with C.S. Lewis. In a letter to his son Christopher, written in 1944, Tolkien states that the book would be 'on "Language" (Nature, Origins, Functions)' (*Letters*: 105). Lewis referred to the book in the summer of 1948, while talking to Chad Walsh, claiming that it would be entitled 'Language and Human Nature', and that it would be published the

following year by the Student Christian Movement Press. However, the book did not appear. In a 1950 letter to a friend, C.S. Lewis referred to the whole project in a dispirited way, saying that: 'My book with Tolkien – any book in collaboration with that great, but dilatory and unmethodical man – is dated I fear to appear on the Greek Calends' (Lewis 1966: 222), and that seems to be the last clue available on the book. Unfortunately, research on the Inklings and in the archives of the Student Christian Movement Press failed to bring into light any more information on the book, its contents, or its final title. It would not be unreasonable to speculate, though, that the book could be the result of discussions between Tolkien and Lewis on the nature of language, and – given the background of the Inklings – that it would touch upon philosophical issues on the origin of language and its function. It could be expected that Tolkien would have shared with Lewis his thoughts on linguistic aesthetics and sound symbolism, and it would not be difficult to guess that the metaphysical aspects of such issues could have fascinated Lewis in the same way that captivated Tolkien's imagination. It is unfortunate that nothing more specific can be told about that book project, but it is sufficient to emphasise that Tolkien's interest in such issues as the nature and the origin of language were so important for him that he considered such a publication.

Addendum to Chapter 4:

The Writing Systems of Middle-earth

1. Introduction

As briefly mentioned in the introductory part of Chapter 4 (§ 1), something that had contributed to the appeal of *The Hobbit* was the use of runic writing. Tolkien reported this to his publisher, and also made a suggestion, presumably regarding a future reprint of the book:

> I have received several queries, on behalf of children and adults, concerning the *runes* and whether they are real and can be read. Some children have tried to puzzle them out. Would it be a good thing to provide a runic alphabet? I have had to write one out for several people. (*Letters*: 27)

When *The Lord of the Rings* was published, Tolkien's readers were not only given much more information on the runes, including a chart of how to decipher them, but were also introduced to a new writing system. The writing on the West Gate of Moria and the inscription on the One Ring were written in a wholly alien and bizarre alphabet, which, in contrast to runes, was all curves and rounded shapes. To some of the most observant readers of *The Hobbit* this script was already, at least visually, recognisable, in the drawing of Bilbo's 'Conversation with Smaug',[1] in the left-hand corner of which there is a big container, looking like a vase or a vast pot, holding some of the dwarves' gold, and having an inscription in such lettering on it. Tolkien referred to this as 'a pot of gold' in a letter to *The Observer*, published in 1938 and

[1] The drawing is Tolkien's and in most editions of *The Hobbit* it is incorporated within the text as an unnumbered plate, together with other four such drawings. It has been reproduced in *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien*, published in 1979, where it figures as item 17.

concerning several questions on *The Hobbit*, where he also stated that this was a sample of the 'Feanorian alphabet, generally used at that time', which happened to be 'of Elvish origin' (*Letters*: 32).

But full explanation of that elusive identification of the script, as well as more information on it and on the runes found throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, were given with the publication of the latter. Tolkien dedicated a whole section of the 'Appendices' to 'Writing', integrating both of the scripts with his main mythology and giving details on how they were used (*RK*: 1113-26). In the years after the publication of *The Lord of the Rings*, extending into the period after Tolkien's death, more specimens of the scripts appeared in print, such as the poems 'Namárië' and 'A Elbereth Gilthoniel', published in *The Road Goes Ever On* (*Road*: 57-9, 62-4), the 'Leaves from the Book of Mazarbul' and three examples of 'Elvish Script', both of which can be found in *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien* (as items 23 and 48), and samples of the use of Middle-earth scripts in Tolkien's collection of letters (see *Letters*: 132). The publication of the *History of Middle-earth* series considerably augmented the corpus of specimens written in Tolkien's scripts, including some graceful examples like the 'King's Letter' (*Sauron*: 130-1). Finally, the journals *Parma Eldalamberon* and *Vinyar Tengwar*, apart from very important documents pertaining to Tolkien's invented languages, have also made accessible previously unpublished samples and notes by Tolkien on the scripts of Middle-earth, notably the pre-Fëanorian script known as 'The Alphabet of Rúmil' (Smith 1995; 2001), the 'Valmaric Script', again a tengwar-formed writing system that Tolkien was working on during the 1920s (Smith 2003), and the 'Early Runic Documents', dated from the period 1918-1925 (Smith 2004).

Bearing in mind the fact that these specimens of Tolkien's use of alternative scripts are very early, as are most of the documents on his languages that have been published in these two journals, it can be inferred that the editors are following a chronological order when publishing Tolkien manuscripts they have access to. Of course, since Tolkien was working on his invented languages all through his life, constantly making emendations and changing them, it could safely be inferred that the same happened with the writing systems of Middle-earth. Apart from their internal history, which is their justification and incorporation into the fictional history of Middle-earth, they must have also had an external history, an account of their development from Tolkien's youth to his old age. However, this also implies that there is still much more material that might yet come to light, and no conclusive study of Tolkien's writing systems can be undertaken before all the material is available to the researchers. This addendum to Chapter 4, will, then, attempt a study of the writing systems of Middle-earth in terms of Tolkien's scholarly background, and as a parallel and closely related activity to his invention of the Middle-earth languages, using the sources outlined above, but in full recognition that any conclusions might be subject to revision and even correction in the light of future publications of more of Tolkien's original material.

2. Creation of Languages – Creation of Alphabets

For a man interested from a very young age in languages, and indeed in language-invention, writing systems, i.e. the way in which languages can be written down and recorded, were sure to be intriguing as well. Indeed, in a letter, Tolkien

described himself as 'one interested in antiquity and notably in the history of languages and "writing"...' (*Letters*: 384). Calligraphy was a family talent, since Tolkien's Suffield grandfather was a descendant of engravers and plate-makers,[2] and Tolkien's mother inherited his skill of penmanship and had adopted an elaborate handwriting style (Carpenter 1977: 18, 21; Garth 2003: 13).[3] It also seems that Tolkien later learned calligraphy from Edward Johnston's classic *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering* (1906), and he was influenced by his 'foundational hand' (Hammond and Scull 1995: 210). Edward Johnston was the main figure behind the twentieth-century revival of western calligraphy, which was itself influenced by a nostalgia for the past triggered as a reaction to the Industrial Revolution and by the Arts and Crafts Movement of the 1880s (Gaur 1994: 183-7). Johnston's 'foundational hand' was based upon the English Caroline minuscule of the tenth-century Anglo-Saxon manuscript of the Ramsey Psalter (Brown 1998: 87). Taking this into account, experimentation with different hands and even in devising new alphabets could be expected from young Tolkien. It is reputed that when he was young, he seemed to have different styles of handwriting for writing letters to each of his friends then (Garth 2003: 13). He also seemed to give considerable attention to the description of the handwriting of his characters as an expression of their personality. In Gandalf's case, for example, he experimented a lot before deciding what his handwriting would look like. He initially described it as 'trailing', he then changed that to a 'thin long-legged script', and he finally decided on a 'strong but graceful script' (*Treason*: 49, 63; *FR*: 169). Tolkien's own hand was by no means always elegant and graceful. Many of his manuscripts are written in a largely illegible script. John Garth has commented on this antithesis of his elegant scripts versus his normal, indecipherable

[2] Carpenter reports that John Suffield could write in fine copperplate the whole Lord's prayer in a circle which he would draw around a sixpence, using an extra fine nib (1977: 18).
[3] For a specimen of her ornamental handwriting see Priestman 1992: 8-10.

handwriting, describing the latter, as 'a scrawl resembling nothing so much as an electro-cardiograph image of a frenzied pulse', the degeneration of which was due to Tolkien's drafting at speed (2003: 13).

Tolkien himself reports that he started inventing alphabets when he was at Leeds University during the period 1920-25 (*Letters*: 345-6). However, Carpenter places the beginnings of alphabet-invention in Tolkien's schooldays at King Edward's School, and its first association with his mythology to 1919-20, immediately after World War I, when he was working for the Oxford English Dictionary (1977: 37, 100). Johnston's 'foundational hand' was not, of course, the limit of Tolkien's knowledge of medieval scripts and palaeography. Apart from his family tradition and his own artistic skills, Tolkien must have been attracted to the activity of trying different writing systems by his own area of expertise as a Professor of Anglo-Saxon in Oxford, since his academic work often involved the study of original manuscripts. He had worked extensively with 'The Cædmon manuscript', formally known as MS Junius 11 and held at the Bodleian Library, since he had prepared a series of lectures on the Old English *Exodus*, a text included in that manuscript (*Exodus*). The lectures were based on his own edition of the text, where he also commented in great length on the practices of previous editors of the manuscript (Turville-Petre 1981: v).[4] He was certainly familiar with the some of the manuscripts of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and in an article co-written with his student S. R. T. O. D' Ardenne they both claimed that the manuscript of the *Katherine Group* held in the Bodleian Library 'has become almost as familiar [to us] as it was to those for whose use it was originally made' (*Chaucer*: 11; *Katherine Group*: 72). Finally he has shown admiration for the script used in *The Book of Kells*, characterising it as 'an example of the perfect

[4] Tolkien's edition, translation and commentary on the text were edited posthumously by Joan Turville-Petre. See *Exodus*.

writing' (British Library, *Add. 71657*, item 15). It seems that Tolkien taught a course on Old English Palaeography, as his lecture notes on it, held in the Bodleian Library, show (Bodleian, *Tolkien A27/1*, Fols. 33-71). Within this manuscript one can find definitions of useful terms relating to scripts found in Old English manuscripts, like 'Capitals', 'Uncials', 'Half-uncials', 'Insular' and 'cursive insular', as well as beautiful calligraphic examples of many of them made by Tolkien himself, obviously to show to his students (Bodleian, *Tolkien A27/1*, Fols. 62-71).

This familiarity with original manuscripts and the terminology associated with their study is reflected in Middle-earth not only by the scripts, but also by the creation of a whole manuscript tradition, involving scribes, compilers and handwritten books, which was associated with a 'framework' of his legendarium.[5] Already from 'The Book of Lost Tales', the legends of the Elves are passed to the modern reader by Aelfwine, the Anglo-Saxon who visited the Elves in Tol Erëssea, his own accounts being found in 'The Golden Book of Heorrenda' (*Lost Tales II*: 290). This device was extended and developed in later forms of 'The Silmarillion', establishing Rúmil, the elfsage of Valinor, as the first scribe (or in some other versions an elf by the name of Quennar Onótimo), Pengolod (or Pengoloð), or Eressëa as the maker of a subsequent manuscript compilation, including Rúmil's works as well as his own material, and Ælfwine as the translator of the final 'Book' into Old English (Tolkien even wrote parts of Ælfwine's supposed 'translations' into Old English) from which presumably Tolkien as a modern translator would present his legends as originating (*Shaping*: 263, 271, 292; *Lost Road*: 156, 167, 201, 203; *Morgoth*: 8, 17, 48-9, 56-7, 143, 200; *Jewels*: 342-3). With *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, a new textual history of manuscripts emerged. Both works are described as selections from the Red Book of

[5] For a discussion of the 'frameworks' proposed for 'The Silmarillion' see Chapter 2: § 3.3

Westmarch (*FR*: 1), the poems of the *Tom Bombadil* collection being described as found 'on loose leaves' or 'written carelessly in margins and blank spaces' of the same compilation (*Bombadil*: 61-2). Here Tolkien evokes in a delightful pseudo-scientific way his familiar images of manuscripts' having added 'marginalia' or comments by later copiers or commentators. At the same time, in his later writings Gondor and Rivendell become two important repositories of manuscripts containing the legends of the Elder Days, which are now attributed an origin in Mannish tradition (*Morgoth*: 373; *UT*: 165; *Peoples*: 163, 357). The manuscripts preserved in Gondor prove to be crucial for the history of the Third Age of Middle-earth, since it is within the 'hoarded scrolls and books' preserved there that Gandalf finds 'a scroll that Isildur made himself', which described the Ring of Power, and the inscription on it (*FR*: 252), thus allowing him to identify Bilbo's ring. Gandalf talks about the 'hoards' of Gondor, where 'many records that few now can read, even of the lore-masters, for their scripts and tongues have become dark to later men' can be found (*FR*: 252). It is tempting to imagine Tolkien here making the case for the value of palaeography: the value of preserving and studying ancient manuscripts.

In addition to a manuscript tradition, Tolkien also created some 'facsimiles' of what would be original manuscripts found in such collections as that in Gondor. For example, he spent a considerable amount of time creating the three pages from 'The Book of Mazarbul' that the Fellowship of the Ring found in Moria, and he was very disappointed that, for reasons of cost, the facsimiles could not be included in *The Lord of the Rings* (Carpenter 1977: 217; *Letters*: 186, 248). He also created three versions of 'The King's Letter', being the 'facsimile' of the letter that Sam Gamgee received from Aragorn in the unpublished 'Epilogue' of *The Lord of the Rings* (*Sauron*: 130-

1). A page from each of these two 'feigned' manuscripts is reproduced below as Figures 1 and 2.



Figure 1: Third leaf from the Book of Mazarbul (*FR*: plate opposite p. 320)

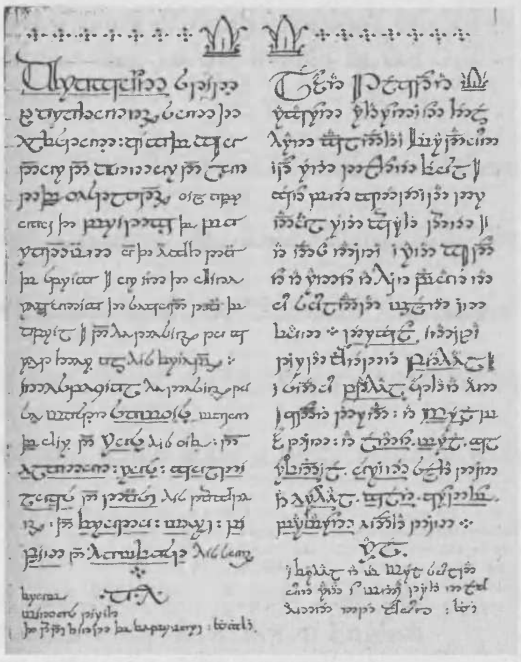


Figure 2: Third copy of King's letter (*Sauron*: 131)

In the case of the 'Book of Mazarbul', however, Tolkien realised much later that there was a fundamental mistake, which had to do with his 'theory of translation' (see Chapter 4: § 2.7). He realised that the text of the feigned manuscript, written in runes and elvish script, was actually a transcription into these alphabets of a modern English text, which could not have been the language that Gandalf would read the manuscript in. In a remarkable late document, in which Tolkien seems to be talking to himself, he writes:

> In preparing an example of the Book of Mazarbul, and making three torn and partly illegible pages, I followed the general principle followed throughout: the Common Speech was to be represented as English of today... Consequently the text was cast into English... This is all very well, and perhaps gives some idea of the kind of text Gandalf was trying to read in great haste in the Chamber of Mazarbul. It also accords with the general treatment of the languages in *The Lord of the Rings*: only the actual words and names of the period that are in Elvish languages are preserved in what is supposed to have been their real form... But it is of course in fact an erroneous extension of the

> general linguistic treatment. It is one thing to represent all the dialogue of the story in varying forms of English: this must be supposed to be done by 'translation' - from memory of unrecorded sounds, or from documents lost or not printed, whether this is stated or not... But it is quite another thing to provide *visible* facsimiles or representations of writings or carvings supposed to be of the date of the events in the narrative. (*Peoples*: 298-9).

In a footnote to this passage, again to himself, Tolkien talks about another book where a visible facsimile of a 'feigned' manuscript appeared: H. Rider Haggard's *She* (1887). In that book, 'an exact transcript' of a treasure map, the 'Sherd of Amenartas' is given. Tolkien seems to know the history of that part of the book quite well and he notes to himself, as if scolding himself for having made such a huge mistake with 'The Book of Mazarbul', that:

> The sherd of Amenartas was in Greek (provided by Andrew Lang) *of the period from which it was supposed to have survived*, not in English spelt as well as might be in Greek letters. (*Peoples*: 320, my italics)

It is intriguing that Tolkien's excitement to produce such a wonderful example of feigned palaeography lead him to such an obvious mistake, but it is also a proof of his 'theory of translation' having been invented after he had written an important part of *The Lord of the Rings*, as claimed in Chapter 4.

3. Printing and Carving: The Tengwar and the Cirth

In the 'Appendices' of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien gives an outline of his two main writing systems, providing charts of correspondence between the signs and the sounds they represent, and rules on using them. It seems that the writing systems of Middle-earth are divided into two main kinds: the Tengwar, or 'Letters', and the Cirth or 'Runes', both of Elvish origin, the main difference being that the former were

mainly used for writing with brush or pen, while the latter were mostly employed for scratched or incised inscriptions (*RK*: 1117). This main division seems to parallel the two known ways of recording in a written form the Anglo-Saxon and other Germanic languages: runes were used for carving or engraving on metal, wood, bone, or stone, which made them particularly handy for short messages and inscriptions. This is exactly why they have angular forms. Letters were employed in writing on parchment, which would justify a more convenient, curved shape (Brown 1998: 49; Page 1987: 6-8). Apart from this application of Tolkien's awareness of the influence of medieval script-history on his Middle-earth writing systems, the latter also present different variations as the former do, such as the 'pointed style' and the 'decorated verse-hand' of the Tengwar, found in 'Elvish Script' in *Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien* (item: 48), as well as their 'squared forms', which are derivative forms of the regular Tengwar, used for inscriptions (*RK*: 1117).

Two more aspects of Tolkien's scripts that may have sprung from his scholarly knowledge are the reference to an individual creator for them, as well as the names of each of the 'letters' of the Tengwar. As far as the first is concerned, both the Tengwar and the Cirth are attributed to the genius of individual creators. The Tengwar in their original form are ascribed to Rúmil, and in their revised form to Fëanor. According to the *Silmarillion*:

> Rúmil of Tirion was the name of the loremaster who first achieved fitting signs for the recording of speech and song. (*S*: 63)

but later on:

> ...[Fëanor] in his youth, bettering the work of Rúmil, he devised those letters which bear his name, and which the Eldar used ever after... (*S*: 64)

In the same way, the Cirth, according to Elvish tradition, were devised by Daeron, the minstrel and loremaster of King Thingol of Doriath (*RK*: 1118). The attribution of the

scripts of Middle-earth to individual creators could be paralleled to the attribution of the Cyrillic alphabet to St. Cyril, and of the Armenian and Georgian alphabets to St. Mesrob (Brown 1998: 39). As far as the naming of the Tengwar letters is concerned, the 'full Quenya names' for the letters recall the naming of the characters of the first full vowel-and-consonant alphabet, the Phoenician one, from where the word 'alphabet' itself comes: using as a name an actual word starting with the sound of the letter to be named, like 'aleph' for A, 'beth' for B, etc (Brown 1998: 35).[6] In the same way Tolkien explains that:

> Each 'full name' was an actual word in Quenya that contained the letter in question. Where possible it was the first sound of the word; but where the sound or the combination expressed did not occur initially it followed immediately after an initial vowel. (*RK*: 1122)

What would strike anybody familiar with languages right from the beginning is that both the Tengwar and the Cirth are not alphabets strictly assigned to one language, but they can accommodate a number of different languages, by ascribing different sound-values to different letters. This is not so peculiar, since the same happened with the Roman alphabet, where the same letters or clusters of letters could accommodate different sounds in Celtic, Romance and Germanic languages, for example. However, the Tengwar is not even exactly an alphabet, at least in the usual sense of the word: it is a consonantal alphabet, just like the Semitic ones, where the consonants of a word are written down, and the vowels are inferred by the consonant combinations. In the case of the Tengwar, the vowels are indeed noted down, but in the way that many Semitic alphabets, like the Arabic and the Masoretic Hebrew one, have solved the problem of noting the vowels: via smaller signs, usually consisting of dots and short dashes, above or under the main consonantal letters (Brown 1998: 31; Campbell 1997: 1-3, 70-1). In the same way for the Tengwar there are a series of

[6] It should also be noticed that the characters of the runic *futhark* also have names of the same kind.

smaller signs, the 'tehtar', which are written above them, thus recording the vowels (*RK*: 1121). According to their history, the Tengwar were first devised as a consonantal alphabet but by the Third Age 'they had reached the stage of full alphabetic development', while the older mode was still in use (*RK*: 1117). Examples of the Tengwar used as a full vowel-and-consonant alphabet are the inscription on the West Gate of Moria, as well as the Elvish part of the Book of Mazarbul (*RK*: 1122; *Pictures*: item 23).

What is interesting about the obvious resemblance of the Tengwar and the Semitic alphabets, is a statement of Tolkien's on Hebrew, in a letter he wrote in 1952, where he claimed that the language was 'so difficult that it makes Latin (or even Greek) seem footling' and that it had a 'foolish alphabet' (British Library, *Add. 71657*, item 18). By that time, though, his own Tengwar script was fully developed and very much similar to the 'foolish' alphabet of Hebrew. What might justify Tolkien's derogatory comment on the Hebrew alphabet, though, might have to do with another main element of his own Tengwar alphabet: order and systematic organization, something that neither the Hebrew, nor any other Semitic alphabet, seemed to be concerned with.

4. The Tengwar, Universal Alphabets, and the Spelling Reform of English

Tolkien seems to have been experimenting with his own writing systems from a very early age, inventing scripts both independent from and in relation to his mythology. Carpenter's first reference to Tolkien's invention of scripts is to a notebook from his schooldays which 'contains a system of code-symbols for each

letter of the English alphabet' (1977: 37). Smith and Wynne, in a recent article on Tolkien and Esperanto, have convincingly hypothesised that the code-symbol alphabet that Carpenter refers to is the one found in a notebook called the 'Book of Foxrook', which is also the earliest known example of an invented script created by Tolkien (2000: 29-30). This script, devised by Tolkien at the age of seventeen, is described as a 'rune-like phonetic alphabet' which was envisioned to be used in conjuncture with a number of ideographic symbols, termed 'monographs' by Tolkien, each one representing an entire word. The 'monographs' were in fact the basis of the alphabet, with the code symbols only used to spell personal names for which an ideographic symbol was not available. At the same time, its 'runic' form was mainly due to the mechanics of its writing since young Tolkien makes it clear that it was devised 'for inscribing on trees or making with sticks and straws' (quoted by Smith and Wynne 2000: 30), being part of a 'Private Scout Code' and so being accommodated to writing in a forest environment. There is no evidence at all of Tolkien having been involved with the Boy Scout organization, which had been founded by Baden Powell in 1907 and was very popular by the time that Tolkien was writing the 'Book of Foxrook'. But he could not have been unaware of it, maybe from a school friend, maybe from a Scout's Handbook that he might have access to, and it is not difficult to see the attraction that the Scouts' codes of communication in the forest would exercise on a personality like Tolkien's. Indeed, the earliest Scout's Handbook existent, written by Baden Powell himself and published just a year before Tolkien's 'Book of Foxrook', contains such 'signs', designed to be written 'with chalk on floor or walls, or with a stick on the sand or mud'. Alternatively, at night, 'sticks with a wisp of grass round them should be laid on the road in similar forms so that they can be felt by the hand' (1908: 47). However, Tolkien's ideographic script is

far more developed than the simple signs that Scouts use in the forest. He also seems to have solved the problem of writing proper names in such a 'symbolic' alphabet in the same way that early modern inventors of 'ideal writings' have.

The invention of ideal languages during the early modern period as outlined in Chapter 4 (§ 2.4), was often accompanied by corresponding 'ideal' alphabets, which aspired to be designed so that they would be intelligible to speakers of different languages (see Eco 1995: 194-208). As 'ideal' philosophical languages were later replaced by attempts at international auxiliary languages, the latter having a much more practical and applicable goal, in the same way ideal writing systems gave way to phonetic alphabets, which in Britain were often associated with attempts at a spelling reform of the English language. Perhaps the most extreme, but also most well-known, protest against the absurd spelling of the English language was Bernard Shaw's much quoted claim that the word 'fish' could be spelled as 'ghoti', using *gh* for the /f/ sound from the word 'enough', *o* for the /i/ sound from the word 'women', and *ti* for the sound /ʃ/ from the word 'nation'.[7] Already in the nineteenth century. Sir Isaac Pitman, the inventor of the homonymous shorthand system, devoted much of his energy and life to promoting a spelling reform for English based on phonetic spelling, while in 1908 the British Simplified Spelling Society was formed, publishing its first proposal for a spelling reform in 1910 (Dewey 1971: 19-20, 26). Bernard Shaw's famous will, which left all his income from his play *Pygmalion* (including the royalties he received from its musical adaptation, *My Fair Lady*) to whoever would invent a new alphabet for the English language, was already made publicly known by Shaw himself in 1944. It was opened in 1951 and created a serious legal problem and a national sensation. It

[7] The attribution of the 'ghoti' anecdote to Bernard Shaw has been taken for granted and quoted repeatedly in many books on linguistics. However, his most recent biographer, Michael Holroyd, has indicated that it might have come from 'an enthusiastic convert' of Shaw's suggestions for a spelling reform (1991: 501).

eventually inspired the 'Shavian' alphabet, devised by Kingsley Reed (Tawber 1965: 263-4; MacCarthy 1969: 107-111).

Tolkien, being a philologist by profession, could not have been unaware of such projects for a spelling reform of English, the earliest examples of which go back as far as the sixteenth-century. Within his writings there are, however, no views expressed on this issue, apart from two very small references. The first one is a straightforward objection to a specific spelling of a place name. This is included in *Farmer Giles of Ham*, one of Tolkien's shorter fairy-tales, first published in 1949, and partly concerned with 'explaining' place-names in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, with which the 'Little Kingdom', where the story takes place, is clearly identified (Carpenter 1977: 165). In order to 'explain' Thames, one of the place names found in the story, Tolkien writes:

> Now those who live still in the lands of the Little Kingdom will observe in this history the true explanation of the names that some of its towns and villages bear in our time. For the learned in such matters inform us that Ham, being made the chief town of the new realm, by a natural confusion between the Lord of Ham and the Lord of Tame became known by the latter name, which it retains to this day; *for Thame with an h is a folly without warrant.* (*Farmer Giles*: 56, my italics).

Indeed, spelling with a 'th' the sound /t/ is one of the inconsistencies of English orthography, that make the spelling of language so challenging to teach to foreign and native speakers alike. However, the playful tone of the story does not allow any room for claiming that here Tolkien is voicing a genuine criticism, or is just being humorous. The second instance where Tolkien seems to be judgmental towards English orthography, can be found within the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*. While giving an outline of the sounds of the Elvish languages, Tolkien notes when he comes to the pronunciation of the letter L that it:

> ...represents more or less the sound of English initial *l*, as in *let*. It was, however, to some degree "palatalised" between *e*, *i* and a consonant, or finally after *e*, *i*. (The Eldar would probably have transcribed English *bell, fill* as *beol fiol*.) (*RK*: 1114)

Here Tolkien seems to be claiming that the Elves, if they heard English as a modern language and attempted to 'transcribe' it, would have spelt 'bell' as 'beol' and 'fill' as 'fiol', thus adding an 'o' before the 'l' and so demonstrating the palatalised form of 'l' in these two, and, consequently, other respective words. Is Tolkien expressing another 'covered' criticism of the spelling of the English language? If one takes into account that he regarded his Elves as ideal linguists (see Chapter 4: § 2.4) then through them he is presenting an alternative spelling of these words, which is more faithful to the pronunciation of the sounds and thus 'better': the Elvish spelling of these English words seems to allow even for the representation of allophones, rather than only of phonemes, thus respecting in greater detail the phonetics of the language. On the other hand, Tolkien might be only trying to show the 'palatalisation' of L in the Elvish languages, by choosing a familiar example from English where the same sound is palatalised in the same way.

Tolkien not only knew the project that Bernard Shaw had described in his will, but also referred to it in relation to yet another alphabet, independent of his mythology. Carpenter reports that soon after Lewis's death, that is not much later than November 1963, Tolkien started keeping a diary in which he used what he called his 'New English Alphabet'. Tolkien noted that this alphabet was made as an improvement on 'the ridiculous alphabet propounded by persons competing for the money of that absurd man Shaw' and it included some conventional letters, to which, however, he attributed different sound values, a number of international phonetic signs, and some tengwar from his own Fëanorian script of Middle-earth (Carpenter 1977: 241-2). Two very small samples of this 'New English Alphabet' have been

published and 'deciphered' in *Tolkien: Artist and Illustrator* (Hammond and Scull 1995: 189-90) and have been reproduced below. The first one (fig. 3) is a rendering in the 'New English Alphabet' of the name 'Sauron', while the second (fig. 4) reads 'poor Queen'.[8]



Figure 3: Detail from Item 185 in Hammond and Scull 1995 (189)



Figure 4: Detail from Item 186 in Hammond and Scull 1995 (190)

It is significant that Tolkien's attempt, if only a private one, for a 'New English Alphabet' is an expansion of the Roman alphabet, in contrast to the alphabet that won the competition which was a totally 'new' alphabet, designed to be a 'radical departure from tradition' (MacCarthy 1969: 106). Indeed, it has been claimed that the expansion of the Roman alphabet is a more practical way of solving the problem of a new English spelling, since most of the drastically 'new' alphabets that have been proposed in the past suffer from the same failing: their 'letters' look too much alike and it is not easy to distinguish words as wholes, however beautiful and elegant they might appear on first sight (Abercrombie 1981: 207-8). However, in another diary Tolkien kept almost forty-five years before, he used such an original scripts to write in English. This is one of the first writing systems that Tolkien devised, which was eventually attached to his mythology. Carpenter reports how Tolkien started keeping a diary on New Year's Day 1919. He explained that:

[8] This last phrase appears on an old envelope sent to Tolkien, full of doodles, inscriptions in Latin and drawings, where even the stamps, bearing the image of Queen Elizabeth, have been covered with doodles. It is written underneath the stamps, 'as an act of contrition' (Hammond and Scull 1995: 190).

> After starting it in ordinary handwriting he began instead to use a remarkable alphabet that he had just invented, which looked like a mixture of Hebrew, Greek, and Pitman's shorthand. He soon decided to involve it with his mythology, and named it 'The Alphabet of Rúmil', after an elvish sage in his stories. (Carpenter 1977: 100).

The 'Alphabet of Rúmil' was the first form of what was later to become the elvish Tengwar, the alphabet that Fëanor devised which replaced Rúmil's version. The 'Alphabet of Rúmil' is not as systematic in its presentation as the Tengwar are (see below), but one can easily see its relationship with the latter. What is especially intriguing about the Tengwar is that they are not language-specific. In contrast, they can be used to record the sounds of any given language. Tolkien characteristically states that:

> This script was not in origin an 'alphabet', that is, a haphazard series of letters, each with an independent value of its own, recited in a traditional order that has no reference either to their shapes or to their functions. It was, rather, a system of consonantal signs, of similar shapes and style, which could be adapted at choice or convenience to represent the consonants of languages observed (or devised) by the Eldar. None of the letters had in itself a fixed value; but certain relations between them were gradually recognised. (*RK*: 1118)

The alphabet of Rúmil also developed as an alphabet that could accommodate any given Elvish tongue, but the Rúmilian letters were more closely associated to specific sounds than the Fëanorian tengwar. However it also merited the title of 'the universal Eldarin alphabet system' (Smith 2001). But the Tengwar are organised and presented in a way that only a linguist could have thought of. As Hyde explains, the vertical 'series' of the Tengwar in the chart (reproduced as fig. 5) represent the features of articulation, so that the Tengwar are divided into dentals, labials, palatals and velars, while the horizontal 'grades' are reserved for the modes of aspiration, like the stops, the aspirants and the nasals. The 'grades' are paired in two where the first of the pair is voiceless and the second voiced (Hyde 1982: 68-70).

Bearing in mind this organization of the Tengwar, Allan (1978: 276-9), in his *Introduction to Elvish*, has pointed out the resemblance of the Tengwar with the 'Universal Alphabet' of Francis Lodwick. Francis Lodwick is familiar to students of linguistics as a universal linguist, and as an author of a phonetic alphabet (Poole 2003: 290). Printed in 1647 in his work *A Common Writing*, his 'universal character' proposed a system of notation to be shared by all languages, and which would break down barriers imposed by language. In his next work, *The Ground-work*, published in 1652, not only did he develop a spoken version of a 'universal language' but also claimed that it would be an superior form of communication, in addition to being a lingua franca (Poole 2002: 10). The resemblance of the Tengwar to Lodwick's Universal Alphabet is remarkable. Lodwick's characters were designed in such a way that similarities in articulation of the sound that each sign represented, produced analogous modifications of the sign, and his alphabet shows a profound knowledge of phonology. The way the chart of his characters is organised (reproduced as fig. 6) makes the similarity between it and the Tengwar table (fig. 5) even more apparent.

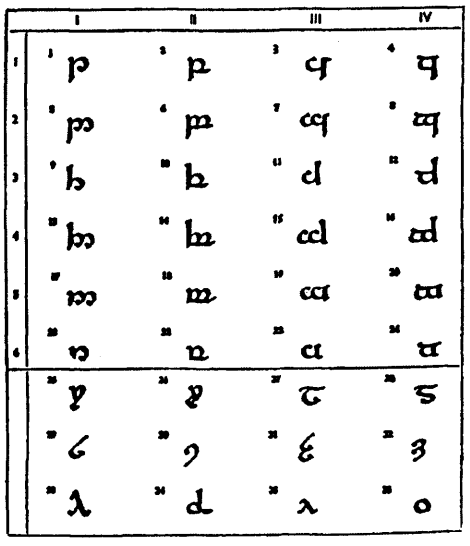


Figure 5: The Tengwar Chart (*RK*: 1119)

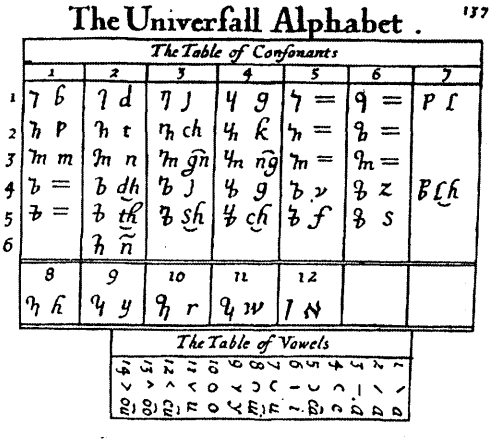


Figure 6: Francis Lodwick's Universal Alphabet (reproduced in Abercrombie 1965: 51)

Abercrombie explains how the consonants are arranged in horizontal 'ranks' and vertical 'files', which corresponds to their classification by place and manner. The first rank is occupied by what Lodwick calls the 'primitives', these being the voiced plosives, while the others are the 'derivatives', being the voiceless plosives, the nasals, the voiced fricatives and the voiceless fricatives. The 'files' represent the bilabials, dentals, palatals, velars, labiodentals and alveolars (1965: 52-3). Allan was the first to observe the striking similarity of the two systems, explaining how both systems work in the same way, by using a phonological category as a base (voiced stops in the case of Lodwick, and voiceless ones in the case of Tolkien) and then expressing variations like nasality, aspiration or voice by adding or modifying bows and stems on a basic initial symbol (1978: 275-8). Also, the aim of both alphabets seems to have been flexibility and applicability to many different languages.

How Tolkien could have known about the writings of Lodwick cannot be explained with certainty. Lodwick's work had not attracted any research or study until David Abercrombie included him in his paper entitled 'Forgotten Phoneticians', read to the Philological Society on 5 June 1948 at Cambridge, and published in the Society's *Transactions* for 1948 (Abercrombie 1949; 1965: 45). According to Christopher Tolkien's dating, the text that finally became the Appendix E of *The Lord of the Rings* (Writing and Spelling), was still not extant in that form in 1950 (*Peoples*: 28) and in outlining the history of that appendix in the twelfth volume of *The History of Middle-earth* series, he gives no chart of Tengwar, and the Elvish script is not even referred to anywhere by that name at all. It would not be, then, impossible for Tolkien to have been aware of Abercrombie's paper in 1948, or its published form in 1949, and to have been intrigued by Lodwick's early Universal Alphabet. Lodwick was the first pioneer linguist in Britain to propose such an alphabet, and he was also a member

of the Royal Society, one of the early interests of which was the construction of an exact notation for the English language (Abercrombie 1981: 207). The work of Lodwick could have impressed Tolkien for both reasons and it might have affected, not the fact that his Tengwar was a universal phonetic alphabet, but the way it was systematised and presented in the chart given in Appendix E of *The Lord of the Rings*.

5. The Cirth and the Problem of the Germanic Runes

Having up to now concentrated mainly on the Tengwar, we can finally turn to the Cirth, the runes, the script that appeared first in print in Tolkien's books. The runes seem so closely associated with the Dwarves in *The Hobbit* that few people notice that already from that book their origin is attributed to the Elves, the Dwarves being only those who adopted and modified the runes for their purposes, like the moon-letters found in Thorin's map (*H*: 95). In the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* the full story of the Cirth is given, their origin in the Sindar Elves, and their subsequent borrowing and by Men and Dwarves and even Orcs, who 'altered them to suit their purposes and according to their skill or lack of it' (*RK*: 1118).

A question that arises on Tolkien's runes is their relationship with the real Germanic runes, since the runes of Middle-earth are visually very close to the latter. In the 'Appendices' of *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien does not mention the real Germanic runes at all, but goes on to describe the usage of the runes of Middle-earth, which tend to be much more systematic in their presentation and order, since they are consistently organised in terms of their point of articulation (*RK*: 1123-6; Hyde 1982: 168-70). Both Hyde and Smith, who have studied the Cirth in a serious way, explain

that the runes used in *The Lord of the Rings* are not the Germanic runes in terms of values, although in terms of the symbols they are very close, with many of them being identical, in contrast with *The Hobbit*, where essentially the Anglo-Saxon runes are used (1982:169, 201; 2000: 106). Tolkien had contradicted himself on the issue of a supposed historical link between the Cirth of Middle-earth and the runes of Western Europe. In the same letter referred to above, published in *The Observer* in 1938, he wrote:

> There is the matter of the Runes. Those used by Thorin and Co., for special purposes, were comprised in an alphabet of thirty-two letters (full list on application), similar to, but not identical, with the runes of Anglo-Saxon inscriptions. There is doubtless an historical connection between the two. (*Letters*: 31-2)

This 'historical connection' between the Elvish Cirth and the Anglo-Saxon runes is not mentioned anywhere else in Tolkien's legendarium, apart from only one text from around the same period as the *Observer* letter. According to that, the Cirth originated within the Danian elves and from them 'spread to Men... becoming the foundation of the Taliskan *skirditaila* or "runic series"...' (*Treason*: 454-5). Christopher Tolkien has noted that the word *skirditaila*, being a feigned Germanic word,[9] implies that there is a historical relationship between the two scripts, and Smith has regarded the *skirditaila* as an ancestor of the Germanic *fuþark* (2000: 108). However, as usual with Tolkien, things are more complicated than that. In a letter to Rhona Beare, written in 1963, he claimed that:

> The 'cirth' or runes in the 'L.R.' were invented for that story and, within it, have no supposed historical connexion with the Germanic Runic alphabet, to which the English gave its most elaborate development. There is thus nothing to be surprised at if similar signs have different values. The similarity of shapes is inevitable in

[9] He explains that: 'the second element of Taliskan *skirditaila* 'runic series' is to be understood as an ancestral cognate of the word seen in Old English *tæl* (with a sense 'number, reckoning, series'; Old Norse *tal*, etc., and cf. Modern English *tale*, *tell*); the first element may perhaps be connected with the Germanic stem *sker-*, seen in Old Norse *skera* 'cut, carve', Old English *sceran* (Modern English *shear*, cf. ultimately related *shard*, *potsherd*).' (*Treason*: 455)

> alphabets devised primarily for cut[ting] or scratching on wood and so made of lines directly or diagonally across the grain. (*Letters*: 324)

Apart from 'explaining' the discrepancy of the cirth and the Anglo-Saxon runes, both found in Middle-earth, by feigning a historical relationship between them, Tolkien also employed his 'theory of translation'. In a 1937 letter to Allen and Unwin he claimed that:

> ...the runes (Anglo-Saxon) and the dwarf-names (Icelandic)... [were] both *regretfully substituted* to avoid abstruseness for *the genuine alphabets* and names of the mythology into which Mr Baggins intrudes... (*Letters*: 21, my italics)

It is here quite clear that Tolkien had already started thinking on what would develop into his 'theory of translation', according to which the Common Tongue in *The Lord of the Rings* was substituted with English, so, consequently, the runes that the Dwarves use in *The Hobbit* to transcribe that language would be substituted by the Anglo-Saxon runes. Smith has drawn attention to the fact that the foreword to the third edition of *The Hobbit* (1966) clearly states that: 'their [i.e. the Dwarves'] runes are in this book represented by English runes' (2000: 106; *Hobbit*: 27).

On the other hand, in other instances, Tolkien has only declared the inconsistency of his own work. In a letter to Jane Sibley in 1964, he writes:

> The Runes I used for *The Hobbit* were genuine and historical; those in *The Lord of the Rings* I myself invented. *The resultant discrepancy* must be answered by saying that both kinds were used in Middle-earth. (Sibley 1989: 8, my italics)

In another letter he refers again to this 'discrepancy' but this time in more derogatory terms. He says:

> I don't much approve of *The Hobbit* myself, preferring my own mythology (which is just touched on) with its consistent nomenclature...and organised history, to this rabble of Eddaic-named dwarves out of Völuspá, newfangled hobbits and gollums (invented in an idle hour) and Anglo-Saxon runes. (C. Tolkien 2002: 7)

It seems, then, that the whole inconsistency lies once more on the fact that *The Hobbit* was not initially conceived as part of the Middle-earth legendarium. As Christopher Tolkien has pointed out: '*The Hobbit* was *drawn* into Middle-earth – and transformed it; but as it stood in 1937 it was not a part of it...' (Tolkien 2002: 7). When Tolkien started writing *The Lord of the Rings* he must have realised that the Anglo-Saxon runes could not have been the alphabet used by the peoples of the Third Age, or the previous historical times of Middle-earth, so he tried to accommodate for this discrepancy both by employing his 'theory of translation' which had served him well with having the Rohirrim speaking in Old English, and by implying a historical relationship between the Cirth and the Germanic runes, something which – however – did not appear in the published corpus of the legendarium until posthumously.

6. Writing Systems and the Issue of Race

Exactly as the invented languages of Tolkien seem not to have been unaffected by racial considerations, the same is true about the two main writing systems of Middle-earth, the Tengwar and the Cirth. In the 'Appendix' on Writing of *The Lord of the Rings* there is from the beginning a very clear evaluative approach towards the two scripts, rating them into 'higher' and 'lower', predictably the former attributed to the Eldar, the High-Elves, and the latter to the Sindar, the Grey-elves that never saw the light of Valinor. It is even more intriguing that all writing is an Elvish invention, only borrowed or adopted by Dwarves and Men (*RK*: 1117-8). Hyde notes that the Tengwar is a beautiful, flowing script, while the value of the Cirth is mainly practical rather than aesthetic (Hyde 1982: 387), and it could be for this reason that the

Dwarves, whose racial stereotype would picture them as practical, stubborn and materialistic, stick to the usage of the runes, while the artistic nature of the Elves is firmly associated with the letters, which even the Sindar elves, the inventors of the runes, finally adopt (*RK*: 1118). It is also characteristic that such races that are considered 'underdeveloped', such as the Silvan Elves and the Drúedain, both being the 'lowest' sub-divisions of Elves and Men respectively, are described as having no forms of writing at all, thus borrowing existing ones from other Elves and Men (*UT*).

These racial stereotypes associated with scripts are also used in a work of Tolkien which does not belong to his 'Middle-earth cycle', but which could be used to illuminate some of his thoughts and ideas. This is *The Father Christmas Letters*, a collection of decorated letters, usually with pictures attached to them, which the Tolkien children have been allegedly receiving from Father Christmas every Christmas Eve. In that collection, a number of characters figure as the companions or enemies of Father Christmas, including an elf called Ilbereth, who once uses an 'Elvish script', a version of the Tengwar as identified by Hyde (1982: 154-8), while the evil and pretty idiotic goblins use a script of ideograms – a form of writing regarded by many as a more primitive one in contrast to modern alphabets – to represent individual letters (*FCL*: 1937, Appendix).

Finally, as far as the runes, and their attribution to less 'developed' races of Middle-earth, are concerned, Tolkien might have also been thinking in terms of a hierarchy of writing systems in the 'real' world. In Tolkien's time, the three main theories of the origin of the runes was their being a derivative of the Greek, the 'Etruscan' (or 'North Italic') or the Roman alphabet (Odenstedt 1990: 145).[10] At the same time, the actual necessity for the runes as a writing system in the Germanic

[10] Most modern runologists agree that the theory of the Latin alphabet origin of the runes is the most possible (Odenstedt 1990: 152; Quak 1996, Williams 1996).

world has been disputed: there have been no major texts written in that script, the use of which seems to be limited to short inscriptions. In contrast with the Gothic alphabet, devised by Ulfilas in the fourth century to translate the Bible, and using the Greek uncial alphabet as a basis (Wright 1910: 4, 195-7), the runes preserve no ecclesiastical and hardly any literary texts. This has lead runologists to hypothesise that the runes were 'a playful, not really needed imitation of the Roman script' (Bæksted 1952: 137, quoted and translated by Odenstedt 1990: 171), something which could have agreed with racial stereotypes of the Germanic peoples as barbarians, in contrast with the great Classical civilization, thus making associations of the runes with the Dark elves more plausible.

7. Conclusion

Tolkien's scripts are one more reflection of his using his scholarly knowledge, in combination with his artistic nature and calligraphical skills, in the creation of the Middle-earth cosmos. His world is full of manuscript compilations and facsimiles, and his understanding of his own invented writing systems is mainly in terms of what he knew of medieval palaeography, especially as the 'mechanics' of the writing of each script is concerned. At the same time, the Cirth show one more link of Tolkien's linguistic invention with the tradition of ideal languages and alphabets already strong from the early modern period. It is very possible that he knew about the work of Francis Lodwick and he was concerned with contemporary proposals for the spelling reform of the English language and with Bernard Shaw's project for a new English alphabet. At the same time, the Middle-earth peoples are provided with writing

systems to accommodate their languages, and, according to their skills and character, short inscriptions, elaborate manuscripts, and plain or decorated hands of writing are attributed to them. The High-Elves, who are portrayed as perfect and of an artistic nature, possess the most beautiful and sophisticated script, so advanced that it can be used to accommodate the sounds of any language. The Grey-Elves, and from them the Dwarves and Men, are responsible for a more practical script, not designed to keep long records or to write down poetry and song, but fit for short messages and inscriptions. It could be inferred then, that, apart from Tolkien's expert knowledge of scripts and manuscripts, his anthropological ideas and questions have also been incorporated into the writing systems of Middle-earth.

Chapter 5: Material Culture and Materiality in Middle-earth: Tolkien and Contemporary Archaeology

1. Introduction

In an article on Anglo-Saxon archaeology, Leslie Webster writes the following, concerning popular reactions to the topic she is treating:

> Unlike those of the Roman or medieval periods, the visible remains of the Anglo-Saxons do not present a high profile... The majority of Anglo-Saxon monuments must be sought out patiently; they do not in general impose themselves dramatically upon the traveller's eye. This seeming reticence is further compounded in the popular historical imagination by such factors as the use of the term 'Dark Ages', and the success of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and its many sword-and-sorcery imitations. Thus is nourished the romantic notion of a murky void between the civilised grandeur of Rome and the complex fabric of the Middle-Ages – a Germanic twilight of heroic exploits, chiefly memorable for battles and characters with comically obscure names, straight out of *1066 and All That*... (Webster 1986: 119-20)

It is at least intriguing that an archaeologist writing on Anglo-Saxon material associates it with Tolkien and *The Lord of the Rings*, if only when she describes – in a rather derogatory way – the popular 'image' of her area of expertise. Tolkien's own area of academic scholarship being Anglo-Saxon philology may have led many of his students to think about the possible links of his work with contemporary Anglo-Saxon archaeology. However, apart from the general atmosphere of a romanticised Dark Ages, as Webster describes briefly – and rather unfairly – Tolkien's illustration of the material culture of Middle-earth, Tolkien's awareness of archaeology is not very obvious in his work, at

least not as far as one-to-one correspondence with specific archaeological finds and sites is concerned.

However, Middle-earth is full of what in the 'real' world would be termed as 'archaeological sites', mainly through references to ruins, burial sites and landscape marks of previous cultures found in Middle-earth. At the same time, Tolkien's academic work does show an awareness of archaeology, at least as far as links with his philological works are concerned. In this chapter, then, Tolkien's uses of whatever knowledge of archaeology he possessed in his creative writing will be pursued. The first part will concentrate on his academic work and the sporadic references to archaeology in it; the second part will look at actual cases of his use of specific archaeological knowledge in his literature in terms of his conception of the different 'cultures' of Middle-earth; the third part will focus on the relatively new discipline of landscape archaeology, and how Tolkien might have been aware of its early development as well as being ahead of his time in the illustration of the landscape of Middle-earth.

2. Tolkien and the Archaeology of his time

2.1. Anglo-Saxon Archaeology and the 'Migration Theory'

It would not be an exaggeration to claim that the main concern of Anglo-Saxon archaeology during the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century

was the question of the English settlement in Britain. Hamerow has summarised the different opinions on the so-called *adventus Saxonum* by referring to the debate between:

> ...'Germanists' who envisage large scale migration and in extreme cases population replacement, and those who argue for a model in which a largely British population was dominated, politically and culturally, by a small Germanic warrior elite. (1994: 164)

Before the mid-nineteenth century, the whole discussion had drawn extensively on textual sources, such as the works of Gildas and Bede, as well as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which were regarded as unquestionably historical, until the work of such historians as Kemble (Higham 1992: 2; Hines 1998:155-6). The idea of the English migration to Britain was perceived as a mass movement of Germanic populations, who drove the Britons in front of them 'like land crabs before an incoming sea-tide' (Higham 1992: 4).

The issue at some point also acquired racial connotations. It was noted in Chapter 3 how Anglo-Saxonism was re-invented first in the sixteenth century and became racially charged during the nineteenth century, supported by many historians, antiquarians and novelists such as Macaulay, Chambers, Carlyle, Arnold, Disraeli, Knox, Kemble, Stubbs, Freeman and Acton (see Chapter 3: § 2). By the end of the nineteenth century English identity had been firmly associated with Germanic origins, the Germanic peoples being romanticised as pure and dynamic 'noble savages', with securely established institutions of democracy and freedom – a view far from previous contrasts of their barbarian character against the civilised Roman past of Britain (Lucy 1998: 9; Higham 1992: 2).

During the first half of the twentieth century various scholars began to challenge the idea of a mass population movement of Anglo-Saxons and the consequent massacre of the 'Celts', providing arguments for substantial survival of the native population who

were dominated culturally but not totally exterminated. One of the main advocates of this theory was Hector Munro Chadwick, seconded by Lennard, as well as Collingwood and Myres, maybe as a reflection of an anti-German reaction produced by World War I (Lucy 1998: 13-14; Higham 1992: 4). However, the view of the 'Germanists' prevailed overall, supported also, apart from archaeology, by the developing discipline of place-name studies (Higham 1992: 4-5; Trafford 2000: 23-4). In Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England*, first published in 1943 and the most complete study of Anglo-Saxon history of the time, the 'Germanist' version of the *adventus Saxonum* was supported (Higham 1992: 7; Lucy 1998: 15), while Stenton's belief in the Germanic origin of the 'egalitarian' English institutions was underlined.

It is not strange, then, that archaeology was called upon to support the idea of a majestic and massive Anglo-Saxon settlement. Up until the middle of the twentieth century, Anglo-Saxon archaeology was dominated by the study of grave goods found in numerous cemetery excavations, and as a subject it was mainly concerned with chronology and typology (Webster 1986: 120, 123; Lucy 1998: 12). Given the beliefs and views outlined above, it was clear that it had a task to accomplish. It was:

> ...directed towards classifying these funerary remains, and their accompanying objects, into chronological and typological schemes, and then relating these to the pertinent issues outlined above: the nature and progress of the invasions, the distinction of the different tribal areas and the fate of the native population. (Lucy 1998: 12-13)

Leeds was one of the most important contributors to this aim of archaeological research, being actually one of the first archaeologists to express more faith in material finds revealed by excavation rather than the revered literary sources, following the traditions of Kemble and Wright (Lucy 1998: 13; Hines 1998: 156-7). In particular his work *The*

Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements is explicitly concerned with 'the question of the origins of the Anglo-Saxon race' (1913: 3). Leeds insisted on the importance of artefact typology, believing that if the distribution of an artefact type could be attributed to a particular group of people, then it could indicate the course of the invasion and settlement of continental settlers in England (Arnold 1997: 8-9).

Tolkien's reaction to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Anglo-Saxonism has been discussed in Chapter 3, where it is explained that his sense of identity was associated with England's Anglo-Saxon past, as belonging to a more general 'Germanic' whole, including Scandinavia (Chapter 3: § 2). Bearing this in mind, as well as the fact that his area of academic expertise was Anglo-Saxon philology, it would not seem surprising for him at least to be interested in the debate on the English settlement that was actively taking place during the first half of the twentieth century and was to go on and become far more heated in the second half of the century.[1] Indeed, this interest can be demonstrated by referring to some of his academic publications. In 1923 as well as in the following two years, Tolkien was asked to contribute the 'Philology: General Works' section of the annual *Year's Work of English Studies*. In these three articles he presented and reviewed contemporary academic works pertaining to philology, in a narrower or wider sense, among which were several publications concerning place-name studies. It is initially through writing on these works that Tolkien first expressed publicly his views on the *adventus Saxonum* debate. In the 1924 issue, referring to *Introduction to the Survey of English Place-names*, being the first volume of the English Place-name Society, he writes:

[1] For an overview of the later debate see Hines 1990 and Hamerow 1994.

> The fundamental problem for English history as for English philology is the coming of the English to Britain. In place-name study we may hope to find the cure not only for the 'pure Saxon' delusion, but also for the more recent and madder delusions in reaction. (*YWES* 1924: 59)

Judging by this extract, Tolkien seems not only to have an interest and knowledge of the prevailing views on the English settlement, but also to be aware of the challenges to the pure 'Germanist' argument from scholars claiming that there was a considerable survival of the Celtic element. His own view seems to be lying somewhere in-between. He considers the eradication of the British population and its replacement by a pure Germanic one as a 'delusion' but he equally describes the extreme opposite views as 'madder delusions'. It seems that this latter characterization does not refer to opinions expressed in the same book, where the part on the Celtic place-names was written by Eilert Ekwall. Commenting on the author and the part he is responsible for in that volume, Tolkien writes:

> Probably the imagination of most peoples reacts quickest to the glimpses that are gained of England before the English-speakers, and to the dark years of the new settlement. Professor Ekwall deals well with this naturally attractive section in his chapter on the Celtic element... (*YWES* 1924: 58)

In his 1923 contribution to the *Years Work of English Studies*, Tolkien refers to another work by the same author on place-names, where he comments:

> It is a difficult question, what allowance, if any, should be made for the possibility of some of these early strata of names being older than the English settlement, whether as names transferred from the continent or as new names given for some sentimental or traditional reason now long lost. Still it is difficult to resist the suspicion that this is sometimes the case. (*YWES* 1923: 32)

It appears, then, that Tolkien considered Ekwall's work regarding the Celtic elements in the place-names of England as valid and praiseworthy,[2] so that the reference to 'madder delusions' regarding the pro-Celtic argument for the English settlement cannot refer to him.

Tolkien was indeed interested in the debate over the English settlement that was going on during the early twentieth century, and a bit later, in the 1930s and 1940s, he can also be proved to have had an awareness of the archaeological arguments used in the debate, especially those for the 'Germanists's' view. In 1982 Alan Bliss published the edition of a series of Tolkien's lecture notes on the Finnesburg fragment and the Finn episode in *Beowulf*, under the title *Finn and Hengest: The Fragment and the Episode.* According to the editor's introduction the material presented in this book was mainly composed by Tolkien in two phases: during his lectures on this specific topic between 1928 and 1937, and a bit later, in the World War II period, when preparing for his more general *Beowulf* lectures (Bliss 1982: vi-vii). In these lecture notes Tolkien refers a number of times to archaeology as a proof of the English settlement. When he discusses the name 'Hengest' in the Finn episode, he adds:

> It is not necessary for our present purpose to deal with the vexed question of the whole of the process of the "English" invasion, and of the relation of the tradition in the Chronicle to other evidence (e.g. archæological)... (*Finn and Hengest*: 70)

Later on, he concentrates on the specific issue of the settlement of the Jutes in England, claiming that 'the Jutish expedition... on archæological grounds has been thought to proceed from the mouth of the Rhine' (*Finn and Hengest*: 72) and adding a bit later that:

---

[2] In his 1923 contribution to the *Years Work of English Studies* Tolkien writes of Ekwall that 'Recommendation on the grounds of able marshaling and arrangement of material and skill in treatment is unnecessary for the author of the *Place-names of Lancashire*...' (*YWES* 1923: 30).

> ...trouble in Jutland and migration of Jutes has on archæological evidence been supposed to begin far back, even as early as the second century. (*Finn and Hengest*: 74)

In the notes that accompany these two statements, Tolkien cites the book of E. T. Leeds, *The Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (1913), as well as Chambers's *England before the Norman Conquest* (1926). The former is a book by an archaeologist, while in the latter, Chambers cites an article by a pioneering German archaeologist, Alfred Plettke (Bliss 1982: 74).[3]

In all of these references Tolkien seems to be treating archaeology in a conventional way, as proof for literary evidence and a support to history-writing, especially on the crucial topic of the settlement of the Anglo-Saxon peoples in Britain. There is, however, one more instance in his academic career, a bit later this time, where he refers again to settlements of peoples in Britain supported by archaeology, but this time of its 'Celtic' population, who, as he is quick to point out, were invaders as well. This was in his O'Donnell lecture, delivered in 1955, entitled 'English and Welsh'. In that essay, he mentions the 'P and Q' debate, which he explains as:

> ...the difficult and absorbing problems that are presented by the linguistic and archaeological evidence concerning the immigrations from the European mainland, connected or supposed to be connected with the coming of different varieties of Celtic speech to Britain and Ireland. (*MC*: 173)

The extract shows, as one would expect, Tolkien's awareness of the division of the Celtic languages into 'P' Celtic, which is also called Brythonic, and the 'Q' Celtic, also known

[3] Leeds's book is also mentioned in a bibliographical list for Tolkien's 'Old English Philology' lectures, under the section 'History', together with the *Introduction to the Survey of English Place-names* referred to above, as well as Chambers's *Widsith* (1912), Chadwick's *The Origin of the English Nation* (1907), and a book by Oman, which bears the same title as Chambers's 1926 book. Tolkien justifies such a section in the bibliography of his Philology lectures, by adding that: 'An essential concomitant of O.E. is the early History of England, and the English.' (Bodleian, *Tolkien A14/1*, Fols. 26-38, p. 35)

as Goidelic, and the associated problems for his contemporary linguists and historians to determine whether the 'Celts' who were finally settled in Ireland were an immigration population who passed through Britain first. This debate was also briefly discussed in Ekwall's part on the Celtic element in English place-names (Ekwall 1924: 32), which was known to Tolkien and reviewed by him (see above).

Nowadays, the concept of a homogeneous 'Celtic' people that formed the main population of Britain before the Anglo-Saxon 'invasion' or 'migration' has been vigorously challenged. Indeed, the validity of the terms 'Celt' and 'Celtic' itself has been called into question, triggering a heated debate which started in the 1980s and is still going on today. As Hale and Payton have shown, Hobsbawm's notion of the 'invention of tradition' (1983) 'shook the foundation upon which the Celts were constructed' (2000: 5). The volume by Hobsbawm and Ranger itself (1983) contained two articles on 'invented' Welsh and Scottish traditions, which were proved not to be earlier than the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries respectively (Morgan 1983; Trevor-Roper 1983). The first all-encompassing critique of the notion of 'the Celts' was Chapman's *The Celts: the Construction of a Myth* (1992). The response of archaeology to this criticism has been mainly supportive. Many archaeologists like Champion (1996), James (1999), and Collis (1984; 2003) have questioned the use of the term 'Celtic' for the La Tène and Hallstatt 'cultures'. Indeed, as Collis has shown, the equation of the La Tène/Hallstatt cultures with the 'Celtic' peoples originated in the mid nineteenth-century, and was mainly based on a simplistic ethnic interpretation of burial rites, as well as on an urge to provide the archaeological evidence for historical sources which were taken for granted (1997: 196-8; see also Champion 1996 and Cunliffe 1997). In terms of the culture and population of the

British Isles, Simon James has even proposed the elimination of the term 'Celtic', in favour of the more faithful 'Iron Age peoples of Britain and Ireland' (1999). However, in Tolkien's time, archaeology was still supportive of the idea of 'Celtic' migrations from the continent to Britain and Ireland, bringing with them their material culture.

Tolkien seems also to know of the archaeological evidence that his contemporaries used as a confirmation for the 'Celtic' settlement in Britain, and to value its contribution as much as the linguistic one. Indeed, later on in the same essay he seems to find archaeology an indispensable tool to support these 'historical facts', as he adds that:

> The English adventure was interrupted and modified, after hardly more than 300 years, by the intrusion of a new element, a different though related variety of Germanic coming from Scandinavia. This is a complication which occurred in historically documented times, and we know a good deal about it. But similar things, *historically and linguistically undocumented, though conjectured by archaeology*, must have occurred in the course of the celticizing of Britain. (*MC*: 174, my italics)

Tolkien might be referring here to such works as those by Dechelette (1913; 1914), who was the first to use archaeological data as a supplement to historical and linguistic evidence in order to define the 'Celts' and their origin, who was himself following the historical model of d'Arbois de Jubainville about the Celtic migrations to Britain from their original homeland in the continent (Collis 1997: 3). Tolkien certainly knew de Jubainville's book *Les Celtes* (1904), where his theories on the Celtic migrations were clearly stated, since he had referenced it in a small piece he wrote on a Celtic deity in 1932 (*Nodens*: 133; see below § 2.3).

From the discussion in this part, it is obvious that Tolkien was indeed familiar with the lively debate of his times over the settlement of Britain by the Anglo-Saxons, as

well as with the less ideologically charged invasion and settlement of the 'Celtic' peoples. His own views cannot be simply classified as either pro-Germanic or pro-Celtic, as the two extremes of the *adventus Saxonum* debate were outlined above. He seems to allow enough room for Celtic survival in his own conception of the English settlement, but at the same time he attributes central importance to the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain, as in his mind they are connected with his own sense of self-identity. At the same time, he appears to be well-read in the archaeology associated with the whole debate. He cites Leeds's seminal book, he refers to proof that archaeology can give to many of his arguments, and he seems to value archaeological research and its results, even if it is only when linguistics cannot help very much.

Apart from the 'migration theory' debate, though, Tolkien's academic discipline should have made him aware of another area where archaeology was amply used: the Old English poem *Beowulf*. This will be discussed in the next section.

2.2. Beowulf *and Archaeology*

On 25 November 1936 Tolkien delivered the Sir Israel Gollancz Lecture on the Old English poem *Beowulf*, which was published later that year as '*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics'. Although more than half a century has passed since then, Tolkien's essay is still studied and revered by Anglo-Saxonists as one of the most important critical works ever written on *Beowulf*, and as a turning point in *Beowulf* criticism (Drout 2002: 1-3). The discussion of this work of Tolkien's in a chapter concerning archaeology might seem strange initially, since one of the most central

arguments of the essay was the study of the poem as poetry, and not as a source for history, myth or archaeology. Tolkien, with his characteristic use of metaphoric language expresses this view very vividly as follows:

> As it set out upon its adventures among the modern scholars, *Beowulf* was christened by Wanley Poesis—*Poeseos Anglo-Saxonicæ egregium exemplum.* But the fairy godmother later invited to superintend its fortunes was Historia. And she brought with her Philologia, Mythologia, Archaeologia, and Laographia. Excellent ladies. But where was the child's name-sake? Poesis was usually forgotten; occasionally admitted by a side-door; sometimes dismissed upon the door-step. (*MC*: 6)

Nonetheless, *Beowulf*'s association with archaeology has such a long history that it could not have been ignored even by Tolkien.

Today, when one thinks of *Beowulf* and archaeology, one's mind would go most probably to Sutton Hoo (see Hines 2004: 29). However, there was a large literature well before 1939 that linked *Beowulf* with archaeology, which had already set up a tradition that became only stronger after the Sutton Hoo discoveries. Already from 1849, after Kemble's first scholarly edition of the poem (1833; 1837) and its English translation that accompanied it and made it accessible to a larger public, such antiquarians and archaeologists as Thoms (1849), Roach Smith (1852), and Baldwin Brown (1915), associated specific artifacts found in excavations with objects described in the poem, with special mention of the helmet found at Benty Grange in Derbyshire in 1861 – surmounted with a figure of a boar – as equivalent to the boar helmets described in *Beowulf* (Hills 1997: 291-3; Frank 1992: 49-50). Bearing in mind these works, it was a natural consequence that when the Sutton Hoo burials were excavated, what Roberta Frank has termed the 'marriage' between *Beowulf* and Sutton Hoo occurred. Such archaeologists as the Swede Sune Lindqvist (1948), as well as Phillips (1940) and Chadwick (1940) wrote

on how the finds at Sutton Hoo and the Old English poem could be seen as parallels, and Wrenn (1959) wrote an enthusiastic addendum to Chambers's older book on *Beowulf* (1932), celebrating the way that the Sutton Hoo discovery was proving *Beowulf* right (Frank 1992: 51). It is only relatively recently, that a new generation of archaeologists, trained initially in fieldwork, has refused to include *Beowulf* in their discussions of Anglo-Saxon archaeology, mainly represented by Arnold's rejection of the '*Beowulf* and brooches' approach (Hills 1997: 295; Arnold 1997: 16).

Tolkien's only references to archaeology in his lecture on the poem are negative, being primarily interested in influencing people to regard *Beowulf* as poetry and not as a source for history. However, at one point in the lecture he adds:

> The historian's search is, of course, perfectly legitimate, even if it does not assist criticism in general at all (for that is not its object), so long as it is not mistaken for criticism. To Professor Birger Nerman as an historian of Swedish origins *Beowulf* is doubtless an important document, but he is not writing a history of English poetry. (*MC*: 7)

This reference to Nerman is indeed intriguing, since his name is associated with writings on *Beowulf* and archaeology. It would be legitimate then to ask the question of how much Tolkien knew about his writings and which other archaeologists working on *Beowulf* he was aware of.

The whole question would probably remain in the realm of speculation, if it were not for the recent book by Michael Drout, where he edited two previous and substantially longer versions of Tolkien's *Beowulf* lecture, found within his manuscripts held in the Bodleian Library, entitled: 'Beowulf and the Critics' (2002). Drout notes in his introduction that the texts he has edited illustrate more fully 'Tolkien's complex, nuanced, and difficult argument' that can be found in the 1936 version of the lecture, and

it also 'provides detailed background evidence for quotation' used in it (2002: 3). Indeed, Drout's edition is illuminating in terms of Tolkien's awareness of the literature on *Beowulf* and archaeology. In the first version of the longer lecture, Tolkien quotes a long extract from Chambers's book *Beowulf: an Introduction to the Study of the Poem with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn* (1932) which gives a short summary of *Beowulf* literature. In his quotation, there is a reference to Knut Stjerna, Birger Nerman and Sune Lindqvist, when discussing the archaeologists who placed their experience 'to the service of Beowulf students' (*B&C*: 57; Chambers 1932: 391-2). In the second version of the text, Tolkien no longer quotes from Chambers, but writes that:

> At the same time modern archaeology began to be important for Beowulf study also – especially in the many essays of Knut Stjerna, and in further studies by Swedish historians and archaeologists (such as Professor Nerman). (*B&C*: 104)

A look at Chambers' book can show that, apart from the long quotation that Tolkien used verbatim in one version of the lecture, there are extensive parts of the book concerned with *Beowulf*'s association with archaeology, most notably Appendix F, entitled '*Beowulf* and the Archaeologists' (1932: 345-64). In that Appendix, Chambers occupies himself with a critique of the 'Scandinavian colouring' of *Beowulf* proposed by Clark Hall, on the basis of Stjerna's studies, a number of which he had translated into English (Hall 1912). Chambers summarises Stjerna's comparisons of *Beowulf* with specific Scandinavian archaeological finds, and gives details of equivalent Anglo-Saxon finds that can be used for such a comparison instead, although at some points it is evident that he really struggles to prove his point, comparing scanty findings of Anglo-Saxon archaeology to the much more abundant and rich Scandinavian ones (1932: 346-52). At the same time, in the same section of the book, as well as elsewhere, Chambers refers to Nerman's work on

Beowulf and his use of the poem to identify the buried kings in the mounds of Old Uppsala (1932: 356-7).

Tolkien knew Chambers's book very well, and he also thought of him as one of the greatest *Beowulf* critics (Drout 2002: 6). However, it is doubtful that – apart from the information on *Beowulf* and archaeology found on that book – he had a wider knowledge on the topic or was well read on it. In the '*Beowulf*: The Monsters and the Critics' lectures he only makes reference to Nerman's work, while by following the development of the lecture backwards we find him mentioning also Stjerna in the second version of the '*Beowulf* and the Critics' text, while before that he just quotes directly from Chambers. It is probable that the books or articles that Chambers used as his sources were available to Tolkien but there is no proof of his having read them, and if he had they did not seem to concern him enough to merit some mention in his academic work.

Tolkien, then, seems to have been vaguely aware of studies on *Beowulf* and archaeology. Indeed, a complete ignorance on the matter would be both unexpected and suspicious, since Anglo-Saxon studies at the first half of the twentieth century seemed to be an amalgam of history, philology, literature and the then just emerging archaeology, with many scholars being well read in more than one of the above disciplines and writing on them as a whole as well. However, there can be no proof of any further and detailed knowledge apart from a general idea of arguments and archaeological finds that scholars of the time used to associate with *Beowulf*. Tolkien's thesis on the poem remained constantly that of a poetic and literary appreciation, which he attempted to prove to his contemporaries, by mostly dismissing any other associations for it.

2.3. Philology and Archaeology

One idea that might have made Tolkien think better of archaeology and even acquire some more specific knowledge of it, is what he called 'the alliance of Philologia and Archaeologia' (*YWES* 1924: 64). In his contribution to the 1924 volume of the *Year's Work in English Studies*, referring yet once more to the first volume of the English Place-name Society, he includes a review of chapter VIII of the book, entitled 'Place-names and Archaeology' (Crawford 1924: 143-64). Tolkien seems delighted and quite excited as well by the services that archaeology can offer to his very own discipline, philology and he cites an example of the book to prove his point:

> The expression *on fāgan flōre* occurs in *Beowulf* 725, and might be guessed to mean paved or even tessellated floor. Fawler in Oxfordshire claims as earliest form *Fauflor* (1205). *'Æt þam fāgan flōre'* says the philologist; 'was there a Roman tessellated pavement?' The archaeologist replies: 'at the south end of the village a Roman villa with tessellated pavement was discovered in 1865'. (*YWES* 1924: 64)

This idea, of archaeology confirming the outcomes of philological research, seems to have had an appeal for Tolkien for a long time after this article. This is quite evident in a work he started in the 1930s and revisited during the 1940s, concerning a time-travel story, ultimately connected with the material of Númenor and the Second Age of Middle-earth. This work was never finished and never acquired a standard form. It was published in its two different versions, under the two different titles it was given each time, in the series of the *History of Middle-earth* edited by Christopher Tolkien. The first version was called 'The Lost Road' and it appears in the fifth volume of the series (*Lost Road*), while the second version is 'The Notion Club Papers', published in volume nine

(*Sauron*). In both of these stories, there are statements made on philology and archaeology and how they can work together to the profit of both.

In the 'Lost Road', when Oswin Errol and his son Alboin are discussing about time-travelling in the past, as well as young Alboin's future career, the father says the following to the son:

> 'Anyway you can't go back,' said his father; 'except within the limits prescribed to us mortals. You can go back in a sense by honest study, long and patient work. *You had better go in for archaeology as well as philology: they ought to go well enough together, though they aren't joined very often.*'
> 'Good idea,' said Alboin. 'But you remember, long ago, you said I was not all-bone. Well, I want some mythology, as well. I want myths, not only bones and stones'... (*Lost Road*: 40, my italics)

In the 'Notion Club Papers' the same idea is expressed, though not so clearly, but this time through Alwin Arundel Lowdham, a lecturer of English and a philologist, who talks to his friends about his father's pastimes and interests:

> My father was an odd sort of man, as far as I remember. Large, tall, powerful, dark. Don't stare at me! I'm a reduced copy. He was wealthy, and combined a passion for the sea with learning of a sort, *linguistic and archaeological*. He must have studied Anglo-Saxon and other North-western tongues; for I inherited his library and some of his tastes. (*Sauron*: 233-4, my italics)

Finally, in Tolkien's letters, there can be found one more expression of the dependence of philology on archaeology for the validation of its conclusions. While answering a query by Robert Murray on the Indo-European words for 'holy', Tolkien used an example to explain the difficulties posed to such pursuits by homophones and semantic change:

> The formal equivalent (the only known one) of our *harp* is Latin *corbis*. (The Romance *arpa* etc. are borrowed from Germanic.) But *the poor philologist will have to call on some archaeological expert before he can decide whether any relationship between 'harps' and 'baskets' is possible*

– supposing Gmc. *harpō* always meant 'harp' or *corbi-s* always meant 'wicker basket'! (*Letters*: 270, my italics)

From all these quotations it can be inferred that Tolkien was naturally more interested in archaeology when it proved valuable for his own academic, philological research. At the same time he seemed to value its results and outcomes, since he implies that it can complement the linguistic evidence. Still, this attitude does not show Tolkien's appreciation for archaeology per se, but only as a tool for a different cause, as was the case with its employment in proving the time-scale and exact way of the English settlement in Britain discussed above.

Still, on at least two occasions, Tolkien offered his own expertise as a philologist to the aid of archaeology and specifically to the interpretation of inscriptions found by excavations. The first instance is an appendix he wrote in the *Report on the Excavation of the Prehistoric, Roman, and Post-Roman Site in Lydney Park, Gloucestershire* (Wheeler 1932). The appendix concerned the name 'Nodens', found in inscriptions at the site, and revealed the cult of a Celtic god in the post-Roman and pre-Anglo-Saxon period. Tolkien analysed the name in detail in terms of its philological, mythological and literary connotations, and attempted to reconstruct the 'image' of the god (*Nodens*). The second case is the book *Roman Britain and the English Settlements*, by Collingwood and Myres (1936), where the name of the Celto-Roman goddess Sulis, the deity of the hot springs at Bath, as found in the inscriptions, is confirmed philologically as correct by Tolkien (Collingwood and Myres 1936: 264, n. 1).

Tolkien's awareness of archaeology and the way he used it in his academic work, seems, then, to be quite typical for a philologist of his time. The following part of this

chapter will concentrate on how his views and knowledge of archaeology might have affected the way he depicted the material culture of the peoples of Middle-earth.

3. Exploring Materiality and Culture in Middle-earth

3.1. The Idea of European Prehistory and Historical 'Cultures'

Tolkien's identification of Middle-earth with the north of Europe, in a very remote past back in human prehistory, has briefly been referred to already (see Chapter 2: §2.4, fn 21 and Chapter 3: § 1). However, since this part of the thesis will discuss Tolkien's exploration of materiality and 'culture', his idea of equating Middle-earth with European prehistory ought to be more fully presented and analysed, and its implications taken into consideration. Tolkien wrote in 1956:

> I am historically minded. Middle-earth is not an imaginary world... The theatre of my tale is this earth, the one in which we now live, but the historical period is imaginary. The essentials of that abiding place are all there (at any rate for inhabitants of N.W. Europe), so naturally it feels familiar, even if a little glorified by the enchantment of distance in time. (*Letters*: 239)

A while later, he became even more specific about this identification, giving precise places in Europe that would correspond geographically with those in Middle-earth:

> The action of the story takes place in the North-west of 'Middle-earth', equivalent in latitude to the coastlands of Europe and the north shores of the Mediterranean. But this is not a purely 'Nordic' area in any sense. If Hobbiton and Rivendell are taken (as intended) to be about the latitude of Oxford, then Minas Tirith, 600 miles south, is at about the latitude of Florence. The mouths of Anduin and the ancient city of Pelargir are at about the latitude of ancient Troy... (*Letters*: 376)

However, it should be noted that this latter description arose mainly as a reaction of an article about him which identified Middle-earth with 'Nordic Europe', a racially charged term with not very pleasant connotations for Tolkien's work (see Chapter 3: § 2).

From both of these quotations it can be inferred that Tolkien would equate in his mind the setting of *The Lord of the Rings* with northern Europe, some times more vaguely, some times more specifically, but always in a remote past, lost in the mist of myth and legend. It should be remembered that it was mainly the want of myth that Tolkien sought to remedy by writing his first works, as his much-quoted project for a 'mythology for England' would suggest (see Chapter 2: § 3.3). Already from these first writings, from 'The Book of Lost Tales', geography was a major issue, and so was historical context too. Both the land of England (either, on one version, as the place where the Elves originally lived or, in the other version, as the place where Ælfwine travelled from to discover the island of the Elves) and Anglo-Saxon history (either as the period before the Anglo-Saxons had migrated to Britain, or as the era of the Norman Yoke respectively) were very important concepts for the development of the original myths of Middle-earth (*Lost Tales II*: 278-94, 300-10).[4]

However, Tolkien's original orientation towards a clear geographical and historical identification of his mythology with equivalent actual places and historical periods did not continue for long after 'The Book of Lost Tales'. As explained in the Introduction of this thesis, his project to create a 'mythology for England' was finally abandoned. Tolkien continued to develop his mythology but there was no clear one-to-

[4] The 'either...or' refers to the two main versions of the concluding part of 'The Book of Lost Tales', where the association of the myths with the land of England, and their inclusion in a historical context, is described. Tolkien's early mythological project, as well as its ideological connotations, is discussed in detail in the Introduction of the thesis.

one correspondence with historical times and geographical places, nor did he ever attempt to present his work as a 're-constructed' English mythology. However, his references to Middle-earth, at least as presented in *The Lord of the Rings*, being roughly equated to northern Europe show that he was indeed 'historically minded', albeit in a more vague way. There are elements in the material cultures of the peoples of Middle-earth, discussed later on in this section, that would certainly allow such an identification to be made.

In terms of Tolkien's conscious awareness of such an identification, I would argue that it was not until later, when he was towards the end of writing *The Lord of the Rings*, that he realised it existed and could have been enhanced even more. In a letter to Rhona Beare, written in 1958, he seem to make the bitter realisation that in the way that cultural elements crept unconsciously, or more deliberately, in the Middle-earth cosmos, they did not seem to 'fit':

> As far as I know it [i.e. the whole 'mythology'] is merely an imaginative invention, to express, in the only way I can, some of my (dim) apprehensions of the world. All I can say is that, if it were 'history', it would be difficult to fit the lands and events (or 'cultures') into such evidence as we possess, archaeological or geological, concerning the nearer or remoter part of what is now called Europe; though the Shire, for instance, is expressly stated to have been in this region (I p. 12).[5] I could have fitted things in with greater verisimilitude, if the story had not become too far developed, before the question ever occurred to me. I doubt if there would have been much gain; and I hope the, evidently long but undefined, gap in time between the Fall of Barad-dûr and our Days is sufficient for 'literary credibility', even for readers acquainted with what is known or surmised of 'pre-history'... (*Letters*: 283)

[5] This is a reference to the following extract from the 'Prologue' of *The Lord of the Rings*, and specifically from section 1, entitled 'Concerning Hobbits':

> Those days, the Third Age of Middle-earth, are now long past, and the shape of all lands has been changed; but the regions in which Hobbits then lived were doubtless the same as those in which they still linger: the North-West of the Old World, east of the Sea. (*FR*: 2)

Before proceeding to analyse Tolkien's claim of a late realisation that his mythology did not 'fit' historical and archaeological facts, it is important to discuss two key terms included in the quotation above: 'culture' and 'pre-history'.

The way the term 'culture' is used by Tolkien above, mainly its plural form, its inclusion in quotation marks, and its reference to the different peoples of Middle-earth, points to the stricter sense in which the word is used by archaeologists. 'Culture', apart from referring in a broad way to human behaviour that is learned rather than genetically pre-determined, has also been used in archaeology to denote an assemblage of artefacts and other traits, like burial customs for example, that regularly occur together within a restricted area and are considered to represent the physical remains of a particular group of people (Whitehouse 1983: 129). This narrower sense of the term has been attributed to the German archaeologist Gustaf Kossina and its popularisation in Britain to Gordon Childe, and this narrower sense has been responsible for the idea of prehistory and history being regarded as long sequences of spatial and temporal 'mosaics of cultures' (Shaw 1999: 185; Trigger 1989: 163; Whitehouse 1983: 129). Tolkien again used the term 'culture' in this sense when referring to the Rohirrim (*Letters*: 254, 276, 324; *RK*: 1136), and he also seems to have been aware of a debate of his time that was closely associated with the idea of specific archaeological cultures, namely diffusionism. In his Andrew Lang Lecture delivered in 1939, and published later under the title 'On Fairy-Stories', while commenting on the origins of fairy stories, he writes:

> We are...confronted with a variant of the problem that the archaeologist encounters, or the comparative philologist: with the debate between *independent evolution* (or rather *invention)* of the similar; *inheritance* from a common ancestry; and *diffusion* at various times from one or more centres. Most debates depend on an attempt (by one or both sides) at over-

> simplification; and I do not suppose that this debate is an exception. (*MC*: 121)

Diffusionism as a trend in explaining similar archaeological finds was popular by the end of the nineteenth century, and was still used in the first half of the twentieth century, sometimes in extreme forms, like the 'hyper-diffusionists' Grafton Elliot Smith (1923; 1933) and W.J. Perry (1923; 1924), who claimed that ancient Egypt was the ultimate source of human civilisation (Trigger 1989: 150-5; Jameson 1999: 200; Daniel 1962: 82-92). The idea of diffusion was still used by more influential archaeologists like Childe, but in a more moderate way, which would allow room for independent evolution (Daniel 1962: 93-4). Tolkien seems to have supported that latter, more lenient notion of diffusion, which would not impose itself as the only way to explain similarities across time and space.

The term 'prehistory' as used in Tolkien's quotation above, is again within quotation marks, just like the term 'culture', maybe because he refers again to the more scientific archaeological or historical sense of the word, rather than the more general one. Indeed, exactly at the point where he refers to the 'gap' between the end of the third age and 'our Days', a note is introduced in that letter, which reads:

> I imagine the gap to be about 6000 years: that is we are now at the end of the Fifth Age, if the Ages were of about the same length as S.[econd] A.[ge] and T.[hird] A.[ge]. But they have, I think, quickened; and I imagine we are actually at the end of the Sixth Age, or in the Seventh. (*Letters*: 283)

So, Tolkien seems to regard the time when his mythology was supposedly taking place as the period of time that ends around 6,000 years before the date he was writing. The number he 'imagines' is significant, at least as far as the development of the 'idea of prehistory' in history and archaeology is concerned. It seems that an initial view of

human history was that it literally was six thousand years old, since in the eighteenth century the traditional literal interpretation of the Bible, which was still supported by many scholars, cited 4004 BC as the year of the creation of the world (Daniel 1962: 43; Renfrew 1973: 3). It was not until later, in the first half of the nineteenth century, that the traditional Three Age system of prehistory was introduced, i.e. the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, which made the length of human prehistory considerably bigger, and not until the 1960s that radiocarbon dating made absolute dating a possibility (Trigger 1989: 76; Renfrew 1973: 3-11, 20-1).

Tolkien appears to argue that his own stories supposedly took place so long ago in human history that they were even antecedent to 'prehistoric' times. This claim is not only interesting in terms of his counting of human history as 6,000 years old, which is definitely an older view and surpassed by scientists in his time, but also because he seems to be referring to a 'proto-prehistory': a time which has left no material finds that would contradict his own descriptions. Of course he might also be implying that he refers to a mythical period of human history, which does not have to be true at all. In both cases, though, Tolkien does not avoid using elements of historical 'cultures', and at the same time being anachronistic about the contemporary existence of some of them. This can be seen by examining the 'cultures' of Gondor and of the Rohirrim, as well as that of the Shire.

Tolkien's exploration of materiality in the Middle-earth cosmos is pretty vague and hazy. In a letter to Naomi Mitchinson, written in 1954, he seems to admit that:

> I am more conscious of my sketchiness in the archaeology and *realien* [sic] than in the economics: clothes, agricultural implements, metal-working, pottery, architecture and the like... (*Letters*: 196)

Indeed, he seemed to be at a loss when his readers wrote to him with specific questions on the armament and dressing of some of the characters in *The Lord of the Rings*. This is especially true as far as the 'culture of Gondor' is concerned, and a little less so when it comes to the Rohirrim, as will be seen below.

It is it is interesting to see through which Middle-earth 'cultures' Tolkien chose to explore the materiality of his invented world. It is indeed mainly in *The Lord of the Rings* that material culture seems to be explored in any detail in Tolkien's mythology, possibly following from the tradition of *The Hobbit*, where the luxury of the hobbit-hole is instrumental to the story, especially as it is constantly contrasted to the rough regions of 'The Wild', where Bilbo Baggins has his adventures. In the earlier works of Tolkien associated with Middle-earth, namely his various re-workings of his main mythology, first written down in 'The Book of Lost Tales', the materiality of the Elves and Men, who are the main heroes, is much more hazy and vague than the elaborate descriptions of *The Lord of the Rings*. Indeed, even in the latter, it is certain 'cultures' that are favoured, as far as the description of the material culture is concerned, while others are only partially represented. The dwellings, dressing and armament of the Elves, for example, are not any way near the detailed descriptions of the architecture and weaponry of Rohan and Gondor, not even that of the Shire. It is as if Tolkien – consciously or not – plays on the idea that the Elves are more spiritual creatures, above materiality. The dwarves, on the other hand, are not as instrumental to the book as they were in *The Hobbit*, and the culture of Moria is more conveyed as that of a lost homeland, rather than a consistently depicted ruin of an actual material culture. In contrast with Elves and Dwarves, what seem to prevail in *The Lord of the Rings* are the cultures of Men, and the highly

anthropomorphic lifestyle of the hobbits and the Shire. It seems then that Tolkien is, in a way, classifying his 'peoples' in terms of archaeology and their material cultures. The next part of this chapter, then, will discuss Tolkien's ideas of the material cultures of the 'human' peoples of Middle-earth.

3.2. The 'Cultures' of Men in Middle-earth: Gondor and Rohan

In *The Lord of the Rings* the two 'human' cultures of Gondor and Rohan seem to prevail, and to be constantly compared and weighed against each other. Both the Riders of Rohan and the people of Gondor are dominant in the second and third volumes of the book, and they seem to be the main populations concerned with the fate of Middle-earth, since the Elves are in the last phase of their presence there, and they leave by the end of the Third Age, the Dwarves seem to be marginal to the story, with only Gimli to represent them, and the Hobbits, at least the majority of them, are not affected by the war of the ring except for a very short time towards the end, and their peace and quiet is soon restored. Shippey has argued that Rohan and Gondor are compared and contrasted in *The Lord of the Rings* as different kinds of society (2001: 98-104). However, it can also be argued that they are compared in terms of their material culture as well. Both 'cultures' have been compared by Tolkien, directly or by implication, to actual historical 'cultures' of the past. The Rohirrim are not only assigned Anglo-Saxon as their language and source for their nomenclature (Shippey 1982, 93-100; Shippey 2001, 90-97; Tinkler 1968, 164-9), but they also seem to be pictured as Anglo-Saxons in terms of their social values, their institutions, and their society. This is particularly evident in the contrast of

the two scenes where Pippin and Merry offer their services to Denethor and Théoden respectively: the former's highly ceremonial nature and the latter's simplicity is striking (Shippey 2001: 98-102). Gondor, on the other hand, has been compared with Byzantium in its decline period, with Rome and the Roman Empire, as well as with ancient Egypt (*Letters*: 157, 376, 281). It would be worthwhile, then, to examine in detail Tolkien's statements concerning the material culture of both of these two kingdoms of Men, as well as his original descriptions in *The Lord of the Rings*.

The kingdom of Gondor, according to the fictional history of Middle-earth, is only a remnant of the greater and much more majestic lost civilisation of Númenor. Tolkien did not create this distinct human 'culture' until the 1930s, when he transformed his 'atlantis complex' – a recurring dream throughout his life of a great wave, flooding and engulfing everything around him – into a new version of the Atlantis myth, and thus created the island of Númenor, a place of bliss and an advanced human civilisation, that was finally drowned by the Gods as the Númenoréans longed for immortality and defied the 'ban of the Valar'(Carpenter 1977: 23, 170).[6] The first emergence of the story was between 1936 and 1937, in two related and mostly unfinished works, published posthumously as 'The Fall of Númenor' and 'The Lost Road' (*Lost Road*: 11-35, 36-108). The story was further developed and elaborated in another unfinished work that Tolkien started writing between late 1945 and 1946, during the period in which he had stopped working on *The Lord of the Rings* for a while. This work was to be called 'The Notion Club Papers' and has also been published posthumously in the *Histories of Middle-earth* series (*Sauron*: 145-327) (for both works see also part 2.3 of this chapter).

[6] The story of Númenor is given in outline in Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings* (*RK*: 1033-1044), as well as in more detail in *The Silmarillion* (*S*: 259-82).

It is interesting that an original idea about the Númenorean civilisation was its advanced technology in terms of ships and ship-building. They seem to be pictured as renowned mariners, realising long voyages by ship to conquer and explore. I would suggest that an original 'source' for the Númenoreans could have been the Norse, the renowned Scandinavian raiders and mariners. This can also be supported by the first writings of Tolkien on Númenor. In the first sketch of the story, he writes that:

> ...above all their arts the people of Numenor nourished shipbuilding and sea-craft, and became mariners whose like shall never be again, since the world was diminished... (*Lost Road*: 14)

Still, what can securely link the Númenoreans with the Viking period Scandinavia and earlier is their practice of ship-burial. In the 'original outline' of the story Tolkien refers to 'their ship burials, and their great tombs...' (*Lost Road*: 12), and later on, in the first version of 'The Fall of Númenor', he elaborates on this concept and adds:

> And they built mightier houses for their dead than for their living, and endowed their buried kings with unavailing treasure. For their wise men hoped ever to discover the secret of prolonging life and maybe the recalling of it. But it is said that the span of their lives...dwindled slowly and they achieved only the art of preserving uncorrupt for many ages the dead flesh of men. Wherefore the kingdoms upon the west shores of the Old World became a place of tombs, and filled with ghosts. And in the fantasy of their hearts, and the confusion of legends half-forgotten concerning that which had been, they made for their thought a land of shades...And many deemed this land was in the West, and ruled by the Gods, and in shadow the dead, bearing the shadows of their possessions, should come there...For which reason in after days many of their descendants, or men taught by them, buried their dead in ships and set them in pomp upon the sea by the west coasts of the Old World... (*Lost Road*: 16-17)

The same ideas about the 'mortuary culture of the Númenoreans', as Christopher Tolkien has called it (*Lost Road*: 13), are repeated in other versions of 'The Fall of Númenor'

(*Lost Road*: 25, 28). In the later story of 'The Lost Road', Tolkien makes a note of adding a chapter of 'a Norse story of ship-burial (Vinland)' (*Lost Road*: 77).

It seems, then, that the original conception of Númenor was very close to the Viking world, not only as illustrated in the Eddas and the sagas, but also in terms of Scandinavian archaeology. It is not clear if Tolkien refers to the Númenoreans practising ship-burial only as found in *Beowulf*, where the body of the dead king is set upon a ship and sent to sail to the sea, or if he also had in mind the ship-burials excavated in Scandinavia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. It might be relevant that at the time that Tolkien was writing the first Númenorean material, his old colleague in the University of Leeds, and a very close friend, E.V. Gordon, was just publishing his translation of Shetelligs' and Falk's *Scandinavian Archaeology* (1937). Tolkien at the time was already in Oxford, and Gordon had moved to the University of Manchester, but they still kept a very close relationship, seeing each other in Oxford where they both marked essays from time to time (Carpenter 1978: 55; Anderson 2003: 18), and also still planning to collaborate in scholarly work (Anderson 2003: 20). The book that Gordon translated, and to which he also added some notes (Olsen 1937: vii), discusses the archaeology of the Scandinavian countries extensively, from prehistoric times up to the Viking age, containing also numerous pictures from excavations and archaeological finds, including the Oseberg ship, and giving detailed accounts of the boat-graves at Vendel, and of the Oseberg and the Gokstad ships (Shetelig and Falk 1937: 257, 282).

After 1936-1937 Tolkien seems to have stopped being so interested in ship-funerals and burials. His later Númenorean story, the 'Notion Club Papers', does not contain any references to such issues. This is particularly striking since it was only two

years after 'The Lost Road' that the Sutton Hoo ship-burial was excavated with wide publicity. However, there is an instance of a boat-funeral in *The Lord of the Rings*. When Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli decide against building a 'cairn' over the dead Boromir, the former says:

> Then let us lay him in a boat with his weapons, and the weapons of his vanquished foes...We will send him to the Falls of Rauros and give him to Anduin. The River of Gondor will take care at least that no evil creature dishonours his bones. (*TT*: 415)

The arrayal of Boromir in the boat for his last trip is described in detail:

> Now they laid Boromir in *the* middle of the boat that was to bear him away. The grey hood and elven-cloak they folded and placed beneath his head. They combed his long dark hair and arrayed it upon his shoulders. The golden belt of Lórien gleamed about his waist. His helm they set beside him, and across his lap they laid the cloven horn and the hilts and shards of his sword; beneath his feet they put the swords of his enemies. Then fastening the prow to the stern of the other boat, they drew him out into the water... (*TT*: 416-7)

Although the decision for a boat-funeral, rather than the building of a cairn for Boromir, depends really upon practical issues, since the three members of the fellowship left are in need of haste, and such a burial would demand both time and labour (*TT*: 415), it is at least significant that Boromir is a man of Gondor, the kingdom of Men on Middle-earth that descended from the faithful Númenoreans, who were saved from the great flood. It seems that there is one last proof of Tolkien's continuing interest in ship-burials and Viking ships, since among his manuscripts held in the Bodleian Library three newspaper clippings can be found, two of which concern the 'pseudo-ship-burials' excavated in Norfolk in 1954 (Bodleian, *Tolkien A23*, Fols. 56-7), while the third clipping concerns the acquisition by the British Museum of a Viking zoomorphic ship ornament (Bodleian, *Tolkien A23*, Fol. 274).

In addition to the ship-burials, Tolkien compared the material culture of Gondor with Scandinavian archaeology in one more instance. In the *Fellowship of the Ring*, Elrond describes Fornost, a city of Arnor, the North Kingdom of the Númenoreans in Middle-earth, which for a while was the seat of its Kings, by saying that:

> In the North after the war and the slaughter of the Gladden Fields the Men of Westernesse were diminished, and their city of Annúminas beside Lake Evendim fell into ruin; and the heirs of Valandil removed and dwelt at Fornost on the high North Downs, and that now too is desolate. Men call it Deadmen's Dike, and they fear to tread there. For the folk of Arnor dwindled, and their foes devoured them, and their lordship passed, leaving only green mounds in the grassy hills. (*FR*: 244)

In the Swedish translation of the book, released in 1961, the translator, Åke Ohlmark, also wrote an introduction on Tolkien, in which he claimed in a humorous way that Tolkien's move from Leeds back to Oxford was for him 'like coming home again from a trial expedition up to the distant "Fornost"...' (*Letters*: 305). Tolkien was quite angry about this as well as about other claims of Olmark's, and wrote to Allen and Unwin:

> I was devoted to the University of Leeds, which was very good to me, and to the students, whom I left with regret...If O[lmark]'s nonsense was to come to the notice of the University it would give offence, and I would have to publicly apologise. As for 'Fornost', a glance at the book would show that it is comparable rather to the Kings' mounds at Old Uppsala than to the city of Leeds! (*Letters*: 305-6)

The mounds of the Kings in Old Uppsala as the 'source' for Fornost, seems rather too exact and detailed an identification for a place in Middle-earth of which the reader is not given much description apart from the vague 'green mounds on the grassy hills'. However, it is significant that Tolkien thinks of a place in the old kingdom of Gondor in terms of a well-known Scandinavian monument, which he could have known again from Gordon's translation of the Shetelig's and Falk's book. Indeed, the book refers to the graves of the Kings at Old Uppsala as being 'among the largest monuments in Europe',

containing 'three massive barrows', and goes on to describe in detail the boat-burials and the finds from excavations there (Shetelig and Falk 1937: 257-8). In the case of Fornost, then, Tolkien does not refer to ship-burial, but he identifies the place with a Scandinavian one that does contain such burials and is regarded as one of the most important sites of the Norse world.[7]

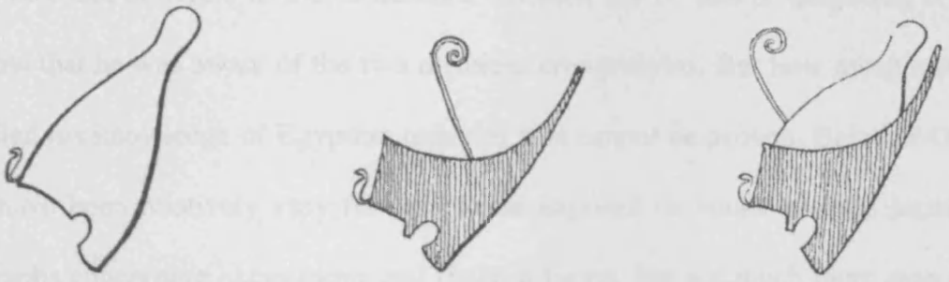
Up to now, only the links between Númenor and Gondor and Scandinavian archaeology have been discussed. However, it has been noted briefly above, that Tolkien has also compared Gondor with Byzantium, Rome and Egypt. The first two comparisons, though, are rather in terms of the state of decline that Gondor is pictured as being in during the Third Age of Middle-earth. In contrast, the links with ancient Egypt are more specific. When Rhona Beare wrote to Tolkien asking for details on how the 'winged crown' of Gondor looked, comparing it with 'that of a Valkyrie, or as depicted on a Gauloise cigarette packet', Tolkien answered:

> The Númenóreans of Gondor were proud, peculiar, and archaic, and I think are best pictured in (say) Egyptian terms. In many ways they resembled 'Egyptians' – the love of, and power to construct, the gigantic and massive. And in their great interest in ancestry and in tombs...I think the crown of Gondor (the S. Kingdom) was very tall, like that of Egypt, but with wings attached, not set straight back but at an angle. The N. Kingdom had only a *diadem* (III 323). Cf. the difference between the N. and S. kingdoms of Egypt... (*Letters*: 281)

Tolkien seems to refer here to the two crowns of Egypt, the *deshret*, or the Red Crown (Fig. 7, middle), which was the characteristic headgear of the Pharaoh as King of Lower Egypt (North Kingdom), and the White Crown, the *hedjet* (Fig. 7, left), which was to become the emblematic headgear of the Pharaoh as King of Upper Egypt (South

[7] It should also be noted, though, that Tolkien's comparison of Fornost with the Kings' mounds at Uppsala might also have been partially inspired by the fact that the mounds at Uppsala are a Swedish monument that would be familiar to the Swedish translator.

Kingdom) (Aldred 1965: 43-45). Later on, the two crowns were combined to the Double Crown (Fig. 7, right), which symbolised kingship over the entire country (Redford 2001: 323).



CROWNS. (left) *The White Crown of Upper Egypt;* (middle) *The Red Crown of Lower Egypt;* (right) *The Double Crown.*

Figure 7: The Crowns of Egypt, in Redford 2001: 323

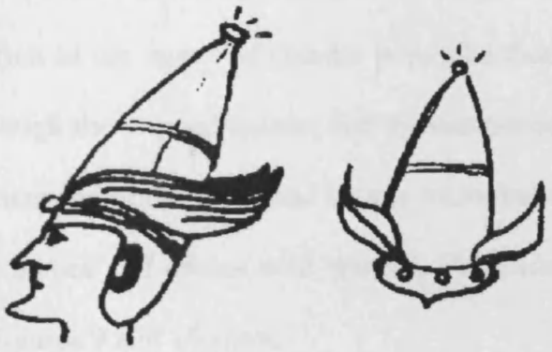


Figure 8: The Crown of Gondor, in *Letters*: 281

Tolkien's own drawing which accompanied the letter above is that seen in Figure 8. What is immediately obvious to the reader, then, is that Tolkien assigns to the *North* Kingdom of Gondor a crown that resembles the Crown of the *South* Kingdom of Egypt (Fig. 7, left). Actually the two crowns look identical, save for the wings that the crown of Gondor has as an additional feature. The questions of whether he meant to have such an association, or if his superficial knowledge of Egyptian archaeology is the reason for not identifying the crown of the South Kingdom of Egypt with the crown of the South

Kingdom of Gondor, and that of the North Kingdom of Egypt with the crown of the North Kingdom of Gondor, are not easy to answer. The great resemblance of the crowns pictured in Figures 7 and 8 do show that Tolkien had an idea of how the latter looked, and the fact that he refers to the 'difference between the N. and S. kingdoms of Egypt' also show that he was aware of the two different crown styles. But how much more wide or detailed his knowledge of Egyptian material was cannot be proven. Being in Oxford it would have been relatively easy for him to be exposed to books or even lectures and photographs concerning excavations and finds in Egypt, but not much more than this can be said.

However, this rejection of the idea of the crown of Gondor resembling anything Norse is suspicious. For somebody with the academic background of Tolkien, the most straightforward association of the crown of Gondor would be that of the Valkyrie, as his reader pointed out, although the winged helmet and its association with the Vikings was the product of romanticism and not really based on any historical or archaeological data.[8] The depiction of Norse heroes and deities with winged, alongside with horned, helmets, was commonplace, as Figures 9 and 10 show.

[8] The winged and the horned helmet of the romanticised Vikings seem to have been established by the tradition of the costumers used in Wagner's operas, while their prototypes most possibly originated in a confusion of Viking and Celtic helmets, the latter's winged forms themselves having sprung from the classical image of Hermes. See Langer 2002.



Figure 9: The Chosen Slain

(artist: K. Dielitz), in Guerber 1908: 18

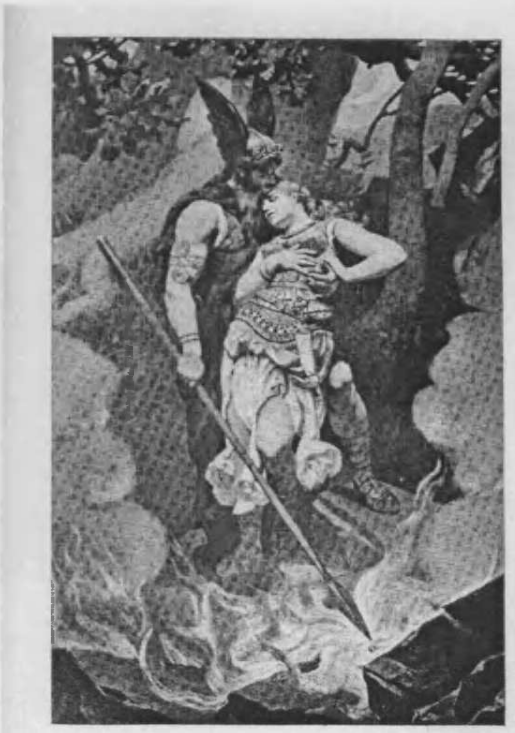


Figure 10: Odin and Brunhild

(artist: K. Dielitz), in Guerber 1908: 280

Tolkien's fullest description of Gondor's crown is during Aragorn's coronation:

> Then the guards stepped forward, and Faramir opened the casket, and he held up an ancient crown. It was shaped like the helms of the Guards of the Citadel, save that it was loftier, and it was all white, and the wings at either side were wrought of pearl and silver in the likeness of the wings of a sea-bird, for it was the emblem of kings who came over the Sea; and seven gems of adamant were set in the circlet, and upon its summit was set a single jewel the light of which went up like a flame... (*RK*: 967)

Indeed, in an other instance where Tolkien made a drawing of the crown, its depiction certainly brings to mind the romantic Valkyrie helmet, rather than the White and Red Crown of Egypt. This was in one of the dust-jacket designs that Tolkien drew for the third volume of *The Lord of the Rings*, but which was too expensive to reproduce (Hammond and Scull 1995: 183). The winged crown is found in the middle of the drawing, and has been reproduced as Figure 11.



Figure 11: The Winged Crown of Gondor

(detail from Item 182, Hammond and Scull 1995: 183)

Finally, in his early work 'The Book of Lost Tales', Tolkien had referred to a people he calls the 'Winged Helms', their other name being the 'Forodwaith', in association with the story of Aelfwine of England (*Lost Tales II*: 330, 334). Christopher Tolkien has pointed out that 'the Forodwaith are of course Viking invaders from Norway or Denmark' (*Lost Tales II*: 323). It seems, then, that, at least in his early writings, Tolkien himself would associate winged helmets or winged crowns with the Norse culture, and not with the crowns of Egypt.

A possible explanation of this is Tolkien's reaction to World War II and the dubious position of some Scandinavian countries in it. As shown before, until then Tolkien's tendency had been to compare the Númenorean culture with Scandinavian examples, but in this letter of 1958 he insists that Egypt is a better example for comparison. At the same time, though, he might also be playing on the contrast between classical archaeology, including Egypt and classical Greece, an archaeology with

majestic and imposing remains, denoting a 'highly civilised' culture, with that of northern Europe, which does not have as striking remains to display, something that leads to it being associated with a more 'primitive' culture, which for Tolkien would also mean a 'purer' and 'nobler' one.

It might be also possible that Tolkien had unconsciously used another feature of the ancient Egyptian civilisation – or at least one that resembled it quite a lot – in his later conception of the Númenoreans but well before the letter quoted above. Later on this might have made him realise that a connection could be established between that culture and Egypt, thus making it easier to refute the 'Nordic' link. Re-working the story of the Númenoreans during 1945-48, Tolkien repeated their obsession with death, quoted above, and their habit of constructing grand tombs for their dead, but he also added that:

> ...their wise men hoped still to discover the secret of prolonging life, and maybe of recalling it...and they achieved only the art of preserving incorrupt the flesh of men... (*Sauron*: 337)

This idea of a Númenorean tradition for embalming the dead kings, just as the Egyptians mummified theirs, is also repeated in *The Lord of the Rings*, where Denethor, just before preparing a pyre for himself and his son Faramir, asks the men that accompany him not to send for the embalmers (*RK*: 826), and he laments his fate by saying:

> I will go now to my pyre. To my pyre! No tomb for Deethor and Faramir! No tomb! Now long slow of death embalmed... (*RK*: 825)

This later link of the Númenorean material culture to that of ancient Egypt made the association of the crown of Gondor with the Egyptian ones look less of an afterthought and more like an actual conscious loan.

Coming now to the 'culture' of Rohan, it would probably be wise to start with the development of the idea of the Riders of Rohan in itself, since their 'Anglo-Saxon'

atmosphere does not seem to have been present from their initial conception. If something has been shown clearly by volumes six, seven, eight and nine of the *History of Middle-earth* series, is that *The Lord of the Rings* was not a work that was conceived as we know it from the beginning. Tolkien re-started it a number of times, experimented with different ideas, and only towards the end was he sure he was linking it to his main mythology, turning the era that the book takes place into the Third Age of Middle-earth. In the first occurrences of what finally become the Rohirrim, they are only called 'the Horse-Kings' or 'Horselords', and they are in Sauron's service, something which is quickly changed to doubtful remarks about 'which side' they are on (*Shadow*: 422, 434-5). It is significant that in another instance of that first phase, the following note of Tolkien's for this people occurs: 'Rohan. Horsekings land Hippanaletians... Anaxippians Rohiroth Rochiroth' (*Shadow*: 440). Their names, then, are given in Elvish (Rohan, Rohiroth, Rochiroth) but their 'real' names are Greek, both synthetics of 'ίππος' (horse), and 'άναξ', (king, lord). It might have been the case then that Tolkien just for an instant imagined the Rohirrim as Greek cavalry men. However, these Hellenised names do not appear again. The next name Tolkien uses for Rohan is the 'Riddermark' (*Treason*: 135, 148, 151), which is already a name derived from Anglo-Saxon (Shippey 1982: 93-4), and slowly the role of the Riders develops from just marginal people that are just referred to in the book to very important agents for the plot.

Tolkien's association of the Rohirrim with the Anglo-Saxons has both been implied and denied by him, a contradiction that is typical in many other instances when Tolkien refers to his own 'sources'. In Appendix F of *The Lord of the Rings*, when he

talks about the equation of the language of the Rohirrim with Anglo-Saxon, he adds the following note:

> This linguistic procedure does not imply that the Rohirrim closely resembled the ancient English otherwise, *in culture or art, in weapons or modes of warfare*, except in a general way due to their circumstances: a simpler and more primitive people living in contact with a higher and more venerable culture, and occupying lands that had once been part of its domain. (*RK*: 1136, my italics)

Judging by this note, the student of Tolkien should not try to find links between the Anglo-Saxon and the Rohirrim material culture. However, in a letter written a bit later, he comments:

> The Rohirrim no doubt (*as our ancient English ancestors in a similar state of culture and society*) spoke, at least their own tongue, with a slower tempo and more sonorous articulation, than modern 'urbans'... (*Letters*: 254, my italics)

It has been shown that Tolkien's description of the Rohirrim, as well as of the Golden Hall of Edoras and the entrance of Gandalf, Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas in it, is very 'Beowulfian': this is exemplified by the meeting of the coming party by the gate guards and then by the door guards, the request to leave their weapons aside before entering the hall, and the challenge of the king's counsellor (*Treason*: 442; Shippey 1982: 94-5; Shippey 2001: 94-6). However, it would be worth exploring further how Tolkien perceived the material culture of the Rohan, without assuming that everything was taken from *Beowulf*. One of the instances that Tolkien himself referred to it was when Morton Grady Zimmerman made a script of *The Lord of the Rings*, intending to make a film of it. The original script which was sent to Tolkien is now kept in Marquette University in the Tolkien MSS collection, and Tolkien's corrections and comments are recorded on it (Marquette, *JRRT 8/1/1*). Tolkien was generally displeased with the script, and he wrote a

letter to Allen and Unwin, outlining his main points of disagreement, many of which were on the material culture of the Rohirrim. He wrote:

> We pass now to a dwelling of Men in an 'heroic age'. Z[immerman] does not seem to appreciate this. *I hope the artists do.* But he and they have really only to follow what is said, and not alter it to suit their fancy (out of place). (*Letters*: 275-6)

The exact points he raised concerning this, are the following:

1. When it comes to the visit of Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas and Gimli to Edoras, Zimmerman's script refers to Théoden's 'chamber', and later on, when the Rohirrim prepare to leave for Helm's Deep, Zimmerman writes that 'The chamber-room is turned into a beehive of bustling activity'. In the first instance Tolkien has corrected the word 'chamber' to 'hall' and on the second he has underlined the word 'chamber-room' and has marked an 'x' on the right margin of the page, indicating his disagreement (Marquette, *JRRT 8/1/1*, p. 31-2).[9]

   In the letter to his publishers he writes:

   > In such a time private 'chambers' played no part. Théoden probably had none, unless he had a sleeping 'bower' in a separate small 'outhouse'. He received guests or emissaries, seated on the dais in his royal hall. This is quite clear in the book; and the scene should be much more effective to illustrate...Even if the king of such a people had a 'bower', it could not become 'a beehive of bustling activity'!! The bustle takes place outside and in the town. What is showable of it should occur on the wide pavement before the great doors. (*Letters*: 276)

2. In the scene when Gandalf and Théoden speak, Zimmerman writes that 'Théoden orders the windows thrown open and his sword to be brought to him'. Tolkien has underlined the phrase 'the windows to throw open' and he has marked again an

[9] It is worth mentioning that just under the latter correction Zimmerman describes Éowyn as Théoden's daughter, but Tolkien has not reacted to it, paying more attention to the mistake of calling Theoden's 'hall' a 'chamber' (Marquette, *JRRT 8/1/1*, p. 32).

'x' on the right margin of the page (Marquette, *JRRT 8/1/1*, p. 32). In the letter Tolkien exclaims:

> Why do not Théoden and Gandalf go into the open before the doors, as I have told? Though I have somewhat enriched the culture of the 'heroic' Rohirrim, it did *not* run to glass windows that could be thrown open!! We might be in a hotel. (The 'east windows' of the hall, II 116, 119, were slits under the eaves, unglazed.). (*Letters*: 276)

3. A last point, which is not mentioned in the letter, is when the slayer of the Nazgul is revealed as Éowyn, who has followed the Riders of Rohan secretly, dressed as a man. Zimmerman writes: 'The knight throws back his visor and it is Éowyn, Théoden's daughter'. Tolkien has underlined the word 'visor' and he has written on the right margin of the page 'it had none' (Marquette, *JRRT 8/1/1*, p. 44).

Of these points raised by Tolkien, both directly on the script, as well as in the letter sent to Allen and Unwin, at least one, the first, could be initially claimed to be rather linguistic in nature than revealing Tolkien's exploration of Middle-earth materiality. The word 'chamber' is French in origin, denoting a private room (OED: sv. *chamber*), and it would probably have for Tolkien medieval Romance connotations rather than having anything to do with Anglo-Saxon. However, it should have been the sense of the word as well, as far as the material culture of the Rohirrim is concerned, that might have displeased him, and the same is true when it comes to the 'windows' of Theoden's hall, and Éowyn's 'visor'. He refers to 'the culture of the "heroic" Rohirrim', associating their material culture with the Anglo-Saxons rather with popular medieval Romance culture, which would contain private 'chambers' and glass windows as well as visors in their armour. This contrast of Anglo-Saxon and Romance materiality, as well as the social values and atmosphere it denotes, is illustrated once more in a letter, where Tolkien

defends Éowyn and Faramir's love, which – according to one of his readers – was too quickly developed:

> In my experience feelings and decisions ripen very quickly...in periods of great stress, and especially under the expectation of imminent death. And I do *not* think that persons of high estate and breeding need all the petty fencing and approaches in matters of 'love'. *This tale does not deal with a period of 'Courtly Love' and its pretences; but with a culture more primitive (sc. less corrupt) and nobler.* (*Letters*: 324, my italics)

One last point about the materiality of the Rohirrim can be raised, where their dressing and armour are compared to a specific artefact, the Bayeux Tapestry. Tolkien answers Rhona Beare's question about the clothes of the peoples of Middle-earth with a vague reference of 'diversified dress' according to 'climate' and 'inherited custom', but in the case of the Rohirrim he offers this specific information:

> The Rohirrim were not 'mediaeval', in our sense. The styles of the Bayeux Tapestry (made in England) fit them well enough, if one remembers that the kind of tennis-nets [the] soldiers seem to have on are only a clumsy conventional sign for chain-mail of small rings. (*Letters*: 280-1)

The Bayeux Tapestry was initially assumed to have been produced in Normandy, but in the beginnings of the nineteenth century the argument for its English origin was put forward and has been maintained ever since, with most scholars agreeing on it, on the basis of the stitching techniques used in the tapestry, the Latin spellings and letter forms in the inscriptions on it, as well as well as the use of Anglo-Saxon manuscript sources for the tapestry's illustrations (Brown 1988: 33). It is significant, then, that Tolkien uses the depictions of the tapestry to describe the dress and armoury of the Rohirrim, since he relies on images that are considered to be true to the material culture of the English at the time the tapestry was made. However, his use of this specific artefact, rather than actual finds of archaeology related to dress and weaponry for the culture of the Rohirrim, might

also show that his awareness of such finds was not as clear in pictorial terms for him to imagine and use.

This part of the chapter, concerning the 'cultures' of Middle-earth and concentrating on Gondor and Rohan, has attempted to show that Tolkien might have been thinking of these two peoples in terms of actual 'archaeological cultures' of Northern Europe. In the next part, another area of archaeology that might have affected the creation of Middle-earth will be explored: that of landscape studies.

3.3. Victorian Countryside and Relics of the Industrial Revolution: The Material Culture of the Shire

In the midst of the 'heroic' cultures of Gondor and Rohan, The Shire and the hobbits seem as a terrible misfit. How can Middle-earth accommodate such creatures and their particular culture? However, it is not so much the peaceful and unadventurous nature of the hobbits, combined with their short stature and funny furry feet, that makes them the odd ones out in the Middle-earth cosmos, but most specifically their material culture. As discussed above, the main cultures of Men, namely those of Gondor and Rohan, seem to be based – if only vaguely – on actual ancient cultures, so even Tolkien himself was forced to admit once that '*hobbits*...are an historical accident' (*Letters*: 197). Indeed, Tolkien had placed the hobbits quite specifically in historical terms, having more than once referred to the Shire as 'more or less a Warwickshire village of about the period of the Diamond Jubilee' (*Letters*: 230, 235). Still, even if Tolkien had not been so

specific, the material culture of the English countryside of the turn of the century is quite recognizable in the description of the Shire.

The Shire was a late addition to the world of Middle-earth, or rather one that entered it by mistake and stubbornly persisted as one of its main features. The process through which this was done, which is really a part of the process through which *The Hobbit* became interconnected with the greater mythology that Tolkien was developing since his youth, has been briefly referred to before in this thesis (see Chapter 2: § 2.3 and Addendum to Chapter 4: § 5). Christopher Tolkien, in his editorial notes in the series of publications of his father's manuscripts known as *The History of Middle-earth*, has summarised this by giving a quotation from one of Tolkien's unpublished letters which reads as such:

> I don't much approve of *The Hobbit* myself, preferring my own mythology (which is just touched on) with its consistent nomenclature...and organised history, to this rabble of Eddaic-named dwarves out of Völuspá, newfangled hobbits and gollums (invented in an idle hour) and Anglo-Saxon runes. (C. Tolkien 2002: 7)

Christopher Tolkien, referring to the period of the letter, goes on to explain that:

> ...the importance of *The Hobbit* in the *history of the evolution of* Middle-earth lies then, at this time, in the fact that it was published and a sequel to it was demanded. As a result, from the nature of *The Lord of the Rings* as it evolved, *The Hobbit* was *drawn* into Middle-earth – and transformed it; but as it stood in 1937 it was not a part of it. (Tolkien 2002: 7)

The Shire is not very well described in *The Hobbit*. The reader only finds out about the hobbit holes on The Hill and 'the great Mill, across The Water', and is given a vague impression of hobbit-lands, described as 'a wild respectable country inhabited by decent folk, with good roads, an inn or two' (*H*: 64, 65). However, Tolkien made a number of sketches and drawings of 'The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the Water', the final

version of which was finally included in *The Hobbit* as one of its five coloured illustrations (Hammond and Scull 1995: 100-7), reproduced below as Figure 12.



Figure 12: The Hill: Hobbiton-across-the-Water

(Item 98 in Hammond and Scull: 106)

It is this picture that allowed Tolkien to visualise the Shire and it has been correctly pointed out that it directly influenced the description of the Shire in *The Lord of the Rings* (Hammond and Scull 1995: 104), where, apart from the Hobbit-holes and the watermill, low one-floor thatched houses, those preferred by 'millers, smiths, ropers, and cartwrights' also appear (*FR*: 6, 7).

Perhaps the most important feature of the Shire is the Old Mill, which is present as an important landmark already from *The Hobbit*, there having the function of marking the borders of Hobbiton, and so the borders of the known and safe world for Bilbo. The mill is not described in detail anywhere, but Tolkien's drawing above, as well as more

sketches and drawings, included it at the foreground of Hobbiton. It is pictured as a watermill made of stone, and in some of the other sketches it also has a weathervane, and in one instance only two little chimneys as well (Hammond and Scull 1995: 100, 102-3, 105). The associations of Hobbiton, and especially of the Old Mill with Tolkien's childhood landscape, have been long recognised. His biographer describes the hamlet of Sarehole, where young Tolkien, his brother Hillary and his mother lived from 1896 to 1900, and notes the special importance of the Sarehole Mill, 'an old brick building with a tall chimney', and the surrounding meadows in Tolkien's imagination (Carpenter 1978: 20). Tolkien himself once remarked that the Sarehole Mill 'dominated my childhood' (*Letters*: 390) and Carpenter also describes Tolkien's feelings of anger for the destruction of the countryside and the intrusion of a 'sea of new red-brick' around the mill, when he ended up there by mistake during a family trip to Birmingham in 1933 (Carpenter 1978: 124-5). In 1966, in an interview given for the Oxford Mail, Tolkien described the area as 'a lost paradise'. He continued:

> There was an old mill that really did grind corn with two millers, a great big pond with swans on it, a sandpit, a wonderful dell with flowers, a few old-fashioned village houses and, further away, another mill. I always knew it would go – and it did... (Ezard 1991)

This issue of the lost Arcadia and the invasion of modernism became itself a theme in *The Lord of the Rings*, expressed as a threat to the material culture of the hobbits. At the end of the book, when the four hobbits that go through all the adventures and influence the fate of the wide world outside the Shire return to their quiet little village, they find it marred by what seems to be the invasion of industry. The Old Mill is the first thing to be affected, as shown in the extract below:

> It was one of the saddest hours in their lives. The great chimney rose up before them; and as they drew near the old village across the Water, through rows of new mean houses along each side of the road, they saw the new mill in all its frowning and dirty ugliness: a great brick building straddling the stream, which it fouled with a steaming and stinking overflow. All along the Bywater Road every tree had been felled... (*RK*: 1016)

This appalling view has already been foreseen by Sam when he looks in the Mirror of Galadriel much earlier in the story, where it is described in quite similar terms:

> But now Sam noticed that the Old Mill had vanished, and a large red-brick building was being put up where it had stood. Lots of folk were busily at work. There was a tall red chimney nearby. Black smoke seemed to cloud the surface of the Mirror... (*FR*: 362-3)

However, if one accepts that the Sarehole Mill is indeed the model for the Old Mill of the Shire, then one cannot but recognise as well that the mill had been idealised in Tolkien's imagination. The Sarehole Mill, was indeed described by Carpenter – as quoted above – as a brick building with a tall chimney, and its photograph in Tolkien's biography confirms that clearly (the photograph reproduced below as Figure 13 is much more recent). Indeed, the history of the mill, most possibly unknown to Tolkien, marks the old building as an important monument of the Industrial Revolution.



Figure 13: Sarehole Mill (in www4)

The Sarehole Mill was probably built in 1542 as a corn-grinding mill, and it was known as 'Biddle's Mill' or 'Bedell's Mill' during the sixteenth century; there are records of its existence in the early eighteenth century, this time called 'High Wheel Mill' (Anon. 1965: 186; Mason 2002: 1). The mill gained pre-eminence due to its association with Mathew Boulton, a partner of James Watt, and an important figure in the development of steam power. It appears that Boulton rented the mill during 1756-1761, and he appears to have converted the machinery of the mill for metal rolling. The Sarehole Mill became the focus of his activities and experiments until 1761, when he finally moved to Handsworth, and set up his famous Soho factory. The mill was subsequently enlarged, and a supplementary steam engine was added to it, but by the early twentieth century it had been outrun by factories and had reverted to corn-milling, until it finally stopped working in 1919 (Anon. 1965: 186; Ezard 1991; Mason 2002: 1-3). In 1964 the Mill was bequeathed to Birmingham City Council (Mason 2002: 3), while in 1965, a short note appeared in *The Journal of Industrial Archaeology*, announcing the

formation of a Trust for the reconstruction of the Mill which launched an appeal for fundraising in order 'to restore the mill for the City for the benefit of the public' (Anon. 1965: 186). The mill is today fully restored and it is run as a branch of the Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, attracting thousands of visitors every year (Ezard 1991; Mason 2002: 3; www4).

The discipline of Industrial Archaeology itself may have been something that Tolkien was not aware of at all. Indeed, he might have agreed more with the views voiced by some of its early critics who described it as 'the impossible offspring of two parents who should never have been allowed to breed' (quoted by Hudson 1996: 351). Industrial archaeology first appeared as a subject in Britain in the 1950's, when historians who specialised in economics, sociology and technology realised that many of the buildings and machinery of the Industrial Revolution were in danger of disappearing in the great wave of post-war re-development (Grant 1987: 109). The discipline's focus is indeed the study of the surviving monuments – buildings or machinery – of the Industrial Revolution, but the term has also been extended to cover the study of the physical remains of the industries of the past, regardless of period (Burton 1977: 7; Hudson 1996: 351-2). The Midlands, where the Sarehole Mill is found, lay at the heart of the Industrial Revolution, and during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries Birmingham had more than fifty watermills working on its rivers, which were vital as a source of power for its growing metal industries (Burton 1977: 55; Anon. 1965: 186). Sarehole Mill has a special position in Industrial Archaeology as it did not just fall into disuse with the introduction of steam and electricity power, but became the focus of Boulton's experimentations with steam, as outlined above, before it reverted to pastoral corn-

grinding again. What about Tolkien's idealised image of it then, despite its chimney and red bricks?

Part of the explanation of this has to do with the idealised image of the 'watermills in decay'. In 1933, in a book on the rise, decline and fall of watermills, Finch devoted a whole section of one of his chapters on the abandoned watermills, focusing on the beauty of their rural setting, which is described in a lyrical and somewhat exaggerated way. Finch talks about:

> ...the fascination of the mill-ponds so frequently found near the old watermills, where the methodical rumbling of the mill and the roaring of the waters escaping over the weir are a fitting accompaniment to nature's adornment. Bird-life on the waters and in the tree-clad margin offer further delight, as we watch the martin and swallow ski the glittering surface if these little lakes in search of insect food.
> It is in these picturesque isolated spots that are to be found our ancient watermills, the survivors of the original Domesday mills so numerous on every available stream in the country – the providers of flour through the centuries. Here and there may be found a specimen still performing the old-time task, grinding only coarse grain for cattle or poultry, working perhaps but occasionally as the limited supply demands. Here and there, too, are mills were the reliable engine has supplanted the falling water, or is working in conjunction with it, as, similarly, auxiliary power has aided the windmill... (1976: 35)

This description seems very close to Tolkien's recollections of Sarehole Mill in his interview in 1966 quoted above, with its dell with flowers, its pond with swans and with no mention at all of its tall red brick chimney. It might be that in 1966, as well as when writing *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien mainly recalled the mill as a watermill, a form of industry that utilised a more natural source of power than steam, which would bring immediately to mind the association of the Industrial Revolution. The red brick and chimney recollections were securely attributed to the invasion of modernity into the

Shire, which was in the book finally turned back, the initial rural materiality of the hobbits restored to them, something that could not happen in real life.

Tolkien would not have thought of the material culture of the Shire as being the subject of archaeology at all, since for him this was part of the memories of his childhood, which was not in the remote past, still less in antiquity. The modern notion of archaeology as the study of the material culture of the past, which does not necessarily have to be that of the ancient civilisations, was but being born at his time.[10] However, it is indeed the material culture of the hobbits that dictates their character, and thus their behaviour and ethos, since they are identified by readers – even only vaguely – as belonging to a specific historical era – that of the English countryside of the turn of the century – which imposes certain restrictions on their totally imaginary development. And as for Sarehole Mill, it has been restored and is being visited today as relic of the Industrial Revolution and as a part of Birmingham's civic history, but its connection with Tolkien is advertised on the tourist material available on it, adding to it a value of an important site associated with modern British literary history.

3.4. Romancing Archaeology

Having discussed hitherto Tolkien's construction of the main human 'cultures' of Middle-earth – including the material culture of the hobbits[11] – the quotation above on

[10] For a good introduction to how archaeology is viewed today in terms of its range and scope see Hines 2004: 9-18.

[11] Tolkien explicitly states in the 'Prologue' of *The Lord of the Rings* that: 'It is plain indeed that in spite of later estrangement Hobbits are relatives of ours: far nearer to us than Elves, or even than Dwarves...' (*FR*: 2), and in one of his letters he adds that hobbits are 'really meant to be a branch of the specifically *human* race (not Elves or Dwarves)...' (*Letters*: 158n.).

Tolkien's realisation that the cultures of Middle-earth 'do not fit' (see above, § 3.1), seems to come to place much more clearly. The most evident proof of that is the hobbits, whose late Victorian rural culture is anachronistic in a very striking way, when viewed within the framework of the other heroic human cultures. However, Gondor and Rohan are themselves not consistent with real history and archaeology, since they make the Egyptians, the Vikings and the Anglo-Saxons to appear as contemporary. Tolkien said that when he realised the existence of this inconsistency it was too late to change it. But what is more important is his immediately following comment:

> *I doubt if there would have been much gain*; and I hope the, evidently long but undefined, gap in time between the Fall of Barad-dûr and our Days is sufficient for '*literary credibility*', even for readers acquainted with what is known or surmised of 'pre-history'... (*Letters*: 283, my italics)

What should be remembered at all times with Tolkien is that he really writes literature, and not a historical novel in a remote ancient period, in which case the results of his specific archaeological research should have been obvious. Tolkien is inventing a world, and though he is being meticulous with its legends and its languages, this is only because his own interests are myth and philology. Archaeology was only peripheral to his studies, and his knowledge could not have been more than sketchy and general. His specialization in Anglo-Saxon literature may have led him to read a bit more on the relevant archaeology, as discussed in the first part of this chapter, but there is no proof of in-depth knowledge. Being a colleague and friend of E.V. Gordon and being interested in Scandinavian languages and culture may have made him flick the pages of Gordon's translated book on Scandinavian Archaeology, but again it cannot be known if he read it thoroughly, just had a look at it, or only spent some time on the illustrations and pictures. I would be inclined to suggest the latter, bearing in mind that his interests, which he

stated many times, did not include archaeology. His response to archaeology could have been totally emotive, and that is what gets through in his creative writing.

In the conclusion to a book on British antiquity and its representation in romantic imagination – often totally imaginary or far-fetched – Smiles wonders how much the average twentieth-century person – in contrast to the specialist – is free of the assumptions of romantic imagination:

> How far have we really travelled from the sublime encounters of the antiquarian enthusiasm? We read the information made available to us at the sites, we buy guide-books and popular archaeology books, but how much of this activity changes that deeper, romantic approach to dolmens, stone circles and the like elaborated in the eighteenth century? (Smiles 1994: 221)

The answer is possibly 'not much', though our own emotive responses to archaeology might be a little different from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century ones, but not much more informed. On leaving a museum, how much does really the average visitor remember about facts, dates and excavations, and how much is going to be distorted into their imagination and associated with the romantic appeal of archaeology as the discipline that can offer glimpses to past and now lost civilisations? Tolkien's use of what archaeology he knew of in his literature may have been a little more informed, but not enough to make a difference to the way he constructed his invented world. It is mainly the romantic envisioning of a remote heroic past in Middle-earth that appeals to the reader, rather than any accuracy in the depiction of the material cultures of the peoples of Middle-earth.

4. Creating Middle-earth: The Construction of a Landscape

Tom Shippey, in his much-quoted book *The Road to Middle-earth*, has described *The Lord of the Rings* as having a 'cartographic plot', explaining how much more important maps and place-names are in it in contrast with *The Hobbit* (1982: 73-79). Indeed, to most readers of *The Lord of the Rings* the map printed at the end of the book is a necessary tool to its reading if one does not want to lose all sense of direction in the vast region of Middle-earth and prefers to be able to follow the separate routes of all the different characters, which really comprise the biggest part of the book. Middle-earth, either if it is conceived as a totally imaginary place or as pre-prehistoric Europe,[12] is a constructed landscape, a place created by Tolkien himself, and the use of maps to represent it did not start with *The Lord of the Rings*, but much earlier. This section, then, will explore the landscape of Middle-earth, attempting to incorporate it into recent scholarship on landscape archaeology and studies, tracing back the history of the discipline and Tolkien's possible connection with its beginnings, and discussing the changing landscape of Middle-earth in time, the different conceptions of monuments and monumentality in it, as well as the growing importance for Tolkien of providing 'explanations' and historical evidence for Middle-earth landscape features.

[12] This contrast in Tolkien's conception of Middle-earth is discussed in Chapter 1, as well as in part 2 of this chapter.

4.1. Tolkien and the Beginnings of Landscape Studies

Landscape archaeology, which looks at the importance of landscape as a context for individual sites, was not established as a discipline or as a useful approach to fieldwork archaeology until the second half of the twentieth century. It was initially during the 1920s and 1930s that landscape was brought into the forefront by means of aerial photography which had been used extensively in World War I and World War II (Bahn 1996: 202; Barker and Darvill 1997: 2). This first phase of landscape studies is represented by the work of O. G. S. Crawford (1929) and his use of aerial photography to plot the correlations between archaeological sites and features of the natural environment, as well as by Cyril Fox's *Personality of Britain*, a work that sought to discuss the effect of Britain's environment upon its inhabitants in prehistoric and early historic ages (1932: 9). The most seminal work on landscape, though, that 'broke new ground' and had a profound impact on the development of its study, was not to appear until 1955, when W. G. Hoskins published *The Making of the English Landscape* (Barker and Darvill 1997: 2; Roberts 1987: 79). Hoskins was the first to concentrate in the 'historical evolution of the landscape as we know it'. As he adds, in his introduction:

> I am concerned in this book...with the ways in which men have cleared the natural woodlands; reclaimed marshland, fen, and moor; created fields out of a wilderness; made lanes, roads and footpaths; laid out towns, built villages, hamlets, farmhouses and cottages; created country houses and their parks; dug mines and made canals and railways; in short with *everything that has altered the natural landscape.* (1955: 13, my italics)

Tolkien's awareness of the slow rise of landscape archaeology in Britain cannot have been extensive, since it is really after Hoskins's book that it started attracting more interest by scholars; however there is some proof that he was indeed exposed to the work

of one of the pioneers on this field: the early work of Crawford. It has been shown above that Tolkien reviewed in 1924 the first volume of the English Place-name Society, one part of which – that concerned with place-names and archaeology – was written by Crawford (see above, § 2.3). Tolkien showed an enthusiastic interest in the 'alliance of Philologia and Archaeologia' that the essay was promoting, but he also refers to what Crawford was then thinking as the main aim of his research. Tolkien writes:

> Professor Crawford concludes with the pertinent query: 'apart from obvious philological uses, what is the unifying aim underlying all this research?' and answers: 'we are gradually collecting facts in order to *construct a series of maps of England, or parts of England, as it appeared in past ages*'... (*YWES* 1924: 65, my italics)

This phrase, describing the potential ability of archaeologists to create a map of England as it appeared in the past, is something that could have easily fascinated Tolkien. It might be an exaggeration to claim that this specific work of Crawford inspired him, but it cannot be completely coincidental that in 1926 he started drawing the first map of Middle-earth (*Shaping*: 219).

The map, which has been published in volume four of the *History of Middle-earth* series (*Shaping*: plates facing pp. 168-9; see also description of the map pp. 219-34), was made to accompany the 'Earliest Silmarillion', which Tolkien often referred to as the 'Sketch of the Mythology' (*Shaping*: 11). It pictures Middle-earth during the First Age, which is the only period of time of this land conceived then. The map was emended heavily later, since, according to Christopher Tolkien 'it was his [Tolkien's] working map for years' (*Shaping*: 219). Even this re-use and continuous updating of the map according to the texts, or vice versa, is significant, since it shows that from 1926 onwards Tolkien was consciously constructing a landscape of his world with a clear cartographic

representation. The map was redrawn in the early 1930s and later underwent many more alterations, this second map having been published in the fifth volume of the *History of Middle-earth* series (*Lost Road*: 408-11). In *The Hobbit* no detailed maps figured, apart from Thorin's minimalistic map to the Lonely Mountain and the gold that Smaug was guarding, but in *The Lord of the Rings* Tolkien regarded a map, or actually maps, necessary and even indispensable (*Letters*: 168, 171). Tolkien had been making rough sketch-maps since the beginning of his work on the book, but it was really through the help of his son Christopher that the final map that appeared in the book was finally produced (Carpenter 1977: 194-5, 222).

Middle-earth, then, was conceived from very early on as an actual landscape that could be drawn in maps. These maps would not only show places and names, but also important landmarks, such as burial sites, and locations where particular characters did actions significant to the stories. Even before the first map was created, though, Tolkien was already describing a land with clear geographical orientation and important places and place-names. The next part of this chapter will look at the creation of the landscape of Middle-earth, concentrating mainly on the landscape of the First and The Third Age, and discussing how it evolved in time.

4.2. The First Age: The Era of the Great Monuments

The landscape of the First Age of Middle-earth is the one that was mostly altered and emended, since it was developing from the first versions of Tolkien's mythology, presented in 'The Book of Lost Tales', and it did not stop evolving until the texts

published in *Unfinished Tales*, written in the 1950s. Place-names, primeval woods and rivers and lakes figure in the geography of the First Age, but what is really striking is the 'cultural' or 'man-made landscape' as opposed to the 'physical/natural' one (Roberts 1987: 77). The landscape of the First Age is invested with monuments, man-made memorials that commemorate great battles or the death of a significant historical or legendary figure, most of which are big constructions, described to resemble prehistoric mounds. Indeed, the terms that Tolkien uses to refer to these memorials are mostly 'mound', 'cairn' and 'barrow'. This may show some superficial knowledge of the equivalent terms used in archaeology, but in no way does he seem to have any specific knowledge of how the terms are supposed to be used, and what specific cases of monuments they cover, since he sometimes uses them interchangeably to refer to the same monument, although it must be noted that he differentiates 'cairns' usually by referring to their being built of stones. It must be noted as well that in the Elvish languages Tolkien invented, the word 'mound' meaning specifically 'burial-mound' is differentiated from the same word meaning just 'hill' by creating two different words to distinguish between the two separate senses (*Lost Tales I*: 250; *Lost Road*: 363, 395).

There are a number of monuments that belong to the First Age of Middle-earth, that were conceived from the very first works of Tolkien, and continued to reappear and to be slightly modified in his later works. Monuments are a very important part of any landscape, because they are a dramatic way of 'altering the earth': they create a new sense of place, thus enhancing the significance of particular locations, they are long-lasting, thus shaping the conception of time, and they can adapt to accommodate changing ideas without necessarily changing their forms (Bradley 1993: 5). The

monuments of the First Age of Middle-earth that will be discussed below encompass all of these functions, and they also give rise to issues of memory and ideology.

One of the main recurring monuments in the First Age, is the memorial of the 'Battle of Unnumbered Tears', one of the first Battles that the Elves fought against the evil Valar Morgoth, when they abandoned Valinor and returned to Middle-earth. The memorial first appears in the 'Book of Lost Tales', written c. 1916-18, where it is named 'the Hill of Death' and it is described as the 'greatest cairn in the world', and it is made by the sons of Feanor, who arrive late and find their kin slaughtered (*Lost Tales I*: 241). The monument reappears in 'The Lay of the Children of Húrin', composed c. 1920-25, where it is now described as a 'mighty mound', but this time Túrin passes by after some time has passed since the construction of the mound, so that it evokes past memories and it acquires a sacred aura, being covered with 'fadeless green', since it becomes an ἄβατον (abaton), a place not to be trodden or violated, for both friends and foes (*Lays*: 58-9). In c. 1930, the same ideas are repeated in the 'Quenta', an early prose version of the later *Silmarillion*, but now the memorial is called again a 'cairn', it is made by the Orcs – since it implies that none of the Elves or Men survived the battle – and it is emphasised that though after the battle all the place around was desolate and burnt, on that mound only 'the grass grew green', while its inviolability is repeated (*Shaping*: 119). In the same text the memorial becomes the place where Rian, the wife of one of the leaders of Men that died in the Battle of Unnumbered Tears and the mother of the Tuor, lies to die (*Shaping*: 141). Much later, in the 'Grey Annals', written c. 1950-51, one more element is added to the mound, since now it is explicitly related that the Orcs buried the dead Elves and Men with 'all their harness and weapons' (*Jewels*: 78-9). Finally, around the same period,

when Tolkien rewrote once more the story of Túrin Turambar, one of the characters of the story refers to 'the Great Mound', as an ominous sign of the defeat of good and the dominance of evil in Middle-earth, as he claims that 'happier are those in the Great Mound' (*UT*: 106). This memorial then, commemorating a great defeat, made by foes as a repository of dead bodies but having acquired a sacred status by being a restricted space and appearing evergreen against the rules of nature, is an important landmark in Middle-earth. At the same time, as a typical monument would do, it has created a new relationship between people, landscape and history (Bradley 1993: 24). Turin curses the name of Morgoth – 'the maker of the mourning' – thrice when he passes by it, and Rian chooses this place to die. The bitter memory of defeat is invested in it, but it is also a place of sanctity.

Another set of memorials that keep reappearing in the Middle-earth landscape are those associated with the life of Túrin. The tragic story of Túrin Turambar who unknowingly married his sister, was one of the main themes that Tolkien went on developing and making slight changes to throughout his life. One of the most important monuments is Túrin's own grave and his wife's and sister's cenotaph, since she committed suicide by drowning and her body was never found. The grave appears first in 'The Book of Lost Tales', described as a 'mound', but it also contains an anachronism, since the woodmen who bury Túrin place on it a 'great rock' with a 'smooth face' where both Túrin's and Niniel's names are written, and the former's most important feat – the slaying of the dragon Glaurung – is also commemorated (*Lost Tales II*: 112, *SM*: 130-1). The rock becomes later a 'great grey stone' and in another version a 'Standing Stone' is erected over the mound to their memory (*Jewels*: 102-3, 257). The grave of Túrin,

functioning also as a cenotaph for Niniel, seems to be the tragic conclusion of the story of the two siblings, but it also commemorates the place where the terrible dragon Glaurung was exterminated, a heroic act of resistance against the all-encompassing evil that Morgoth has unleashed to Middle-earth and a feat that is to be sung by Elves and Men for ages to come. The monument figures also as a focal point for the lives of the parents of the unhappy siblings, since their mother Morwen and their father Hurin meet there after years and the former dies and is buried close to her children (*Lost Tales II*: 112-13 ; *WJ*: 258). Especially for Hurin, the visit to the grave and the anger springing from seeing his children's fate makes him unfairly attack Thingol, which leads to the destruction of the Elvish kingdom of Doriath, or in later versions to accidentally reveal the secret place of the hidden Elvish city of Gondolin, which causes its ruin. The monument, then, becomes a starting point for new plots and events, mostly with disastrous results. However, in the later stages of the evolution of the story of Túrin, one more burial is added: that of Finduilas, the elf-maiden who loved Túrin and whom he failed to save from the Orcs. The 'mound' of Finduilas appears first in the early 1950s version of the story (*Jewels*: 92), and it becomes a focal point for many parts of the plot. Túrin protects the area where the mound lies since 'he would not suffer the Orcs to use the Crossings of Teiglin or draw near the mound where Finduilas was laid' (*UT*: 112), he finds Nienor, who he does not recognise as his sister, lying on the mound (*Jewels*: 95; *UT*: 122), and it seems that Tolkien was even thinking of having Túrin slay himself on the mound (*Jewels*: 160), although he decided against the idea finally. The monument of Finduilas in the story of Túrin is especially significant as it is a later addition to the landscape of the First Age of Middle-earth, and it has from the beginning ominous connotations for the main

characters. It becomes a place of fate, reminding Túrin of his failure to save the elf-maiden, but also leading to his destruction since it is there that he finds Nienor. In the last version of the story it is even implied that Túrin sees Nienor as destined to be his wife as he considers it a good sign that he found her on the mound of Finduilas, which multiplies the ironic function of the mound in the plot (*UT*: 124).

There are more monuments of the First Age that play a role like those discussed in detail above. Beleg's burial seems to act as a protection to friends and a terror to foes, since no Orc dares to pass near it (*Lays*: 64-5), Fingolfin's cairn, which is built by the eagles that rescue his body, acts as a form of protection for the city of Gondolin until treachery leads to its ruin (*Lays*: 286-7; *Shaping*: 107; *Lost Road*: 133; *Jewels*: 55), and the 'Mound of Avarice' acts as a warning against greed for material wealth, that can lead to destruction (*Lost Tales II*: 223). In all of these cases the monuments do actively alter, and have significance within, the landscape of Middle-earth, both actually and conceptually, consistently generating new meanings (Gramsch 1996, 25). As Darvill has shown, the landscape is literally the medium through which social life is conducted (Darvill 1997: 78). Since all human activity takes place in the landscape, it is not simply a backdrop to this, but is directly involved in how people undertake their everyday activities (Cummings and Whittle 2004: 12). The monuments of Middle-earth described above are not just a proof of Men's and Elves' intervention in the landscape, but they also show the interaction between people's lives and features of the landscape, and how the latter shapes their social life. What is most striking, though, about the monuments of the First Age of Middle-earth is their presence itself in the landscape, where they impose themselves with their immense size. If one bears in mind that Tolkien did indeed

conceive Middle-earth as being Europe in an era of remote prehistory, and one combines this with the knowledge that the building of formal monuments is an innovation of the peoples of the Neolithic (Bradley 1993: 4, 24), then it is very significant that this early phase of the history of Middle-earth is dominated by immense memorials, 'mounds', 'cairns' and 'barrows', commemorating special historical events, or important people. In contrast, the landscape of the Second Age, is only described in terms of the remains of the Númenorean culture, with their ship-burials and great tombs (*Lost Road*: 12; *Sauron*: 348), which – as discussed above – point to Scandinavian archaeological sources, as well as to Bronze-age Egypt and tend to be compared mainly with the Egyptians or with the much later Vikings. Their memorials are not used in the same way as the First Age ones, since the Númenorean culture is a later one, and it is criticised for its concentration on building tombs, which is associated with their longing for immortality. However, Tolkien came to create once a more a much more detailed and multidimensional landscape when he was writing *The Lord of the Rings*, the landscape of the Third Age of Middle-earth.

4.3. The Third Age: Personal Landscapes and 'Explanations'

It is a common point of agreement between scholars who study the landscape, that the experience of landscape is subjective, since it is different for every individual person (Darvill 1997: 75; Tilley 1994: 11). It has been argued that the way people engage with the world depends on the specific time and place of encounter with it, as well as on the individual's own age, sex, and social, economic and political position (Bender 1993). While *The Lord of the Rings* was in the process of being written, especially during its

first phase, when Tolkien was still experimenting with different plot-lines and different ideas, one of the landscapes that he himself had experienced in his own individual way found its way into the book: the landscape of the Berkshire Downs. Carpenter gives 1912 as the first date of Tolkien's encounter with Berkshire, while on summer holidays, where he went on a walking holiday 'sketching the villages and climbing the downs' (1977: 58). Much later, when he was already married and had his children, Tolkien used to take the family on long drives, visiting the villages of East Oxfordshire, 'or west into Berkshire and up White Horse Hill to see the ancient long-barrow known as Wayland's Smithy' (Carpenter 1977: 160). Tolkien's encounters with landscapes before had been idiosyncratic and had triggered many times artistic expressions, either drawings, or stories, like the poems of 'Kortirion' which were associated with Warwick (*Lost Tales II*: 24-25, 33-43), or the small wood near Roos which had led to the story of Beren and Lúthien (Carpenter 1977: 97). The landscape of the Berkshire Downs, though, which was not just a natural scenery but also included remains of ancient people, gave rise to some of the strangest figures of *The Lord of the Rings*: Tom Bombadil and the Barrow-wights. In 1934, a poem by Tolkien was published in the *Oxford Magazine*, entitled: 'The Adventures of Tom Bombadil' (*TB*). The poem – which was reprinted with very few alterations in a book that bore the same title (1962) – tells of Tom's encounters with Goldberry, the River-woman's daughter, with a family of badgers, with Old-Man Willow who tries to trap him and with a Barrow-wight, 'a ghost from a prehistoric grave of the type found on the Berkshire Downs not far from Oxford' (Carpenter 1977: 162). Carpenter explains that Tom Bombadil was already a familiar figure in the Tolkien family since he was based on a Dutch doll that belonged to Tolkien's son Michael.

However he claims that the poem 'seemed like a sketch for something longer' and so when Tolkien was discussing with Allen and Unwin the possibility of another book after the success of *The Hobbit*, he suggested that he could expand the poem to a more substantial tale, and he also mentioned that Tom Bombadil was to represent: 'the spirit of the (vanishing) Oxford and Berkshire countryside' (Carpenter 1977: 162; *Letters*: 26).

Later on, after having incorporated Tom and most of the other characters in the poem in *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien wrote:

> Tom Bombadil is not an important person – to the narrative. I suppose he has some importance as a 'comment'. I mean, I do not really write like that: he is just an invention (who first appeared in the *Oxford Magazine* about 1933), and *he represents something that I feel important, though I would not be prepared to analyze the feeling precisely.* I would not, however, have left him in, if he did not have some kind of function. (*Letters*: 178, my italics)

It is significant that Tolkien sees Tom Bombadil as 'representing something important' and that this something is a 'feeling', rather than something concrete he can explain easily. I would like to argue here that it is exactly the feeling of his reaction to the landscape of the Berkshire Downs that Tom represents.

The Berkshire Downs was part of the topic of a book by Harold Peake published in 1931, entitled *The Archaeology of Berkshire*. In the preface of the book, Peake comments on the fact that Berkshire includes two monuments of outstanding importance, the White Horse and Wayland's Smithy, but also underlines that there are much more numerous 'minor antiquities', including a great number of barrows, that he discusses in the book (v). Whether Tolkien knew this specific book, or if he only had access to contemporary tourist brochures for Berkshire or other popular publications on the Downs, he must have had an idea of the archaeological remains of the Downs and he must have

been intrigued by the name of the most well-known long-barrow in it. This special importance of the two main monuments of the Berkshire Downs has been commented upon by Shippey, who has also noted the importance of the barrows of the Berkshire landscape as a source for the Barrow-wights, as well as the fascination that the name 'Wayland's Smithy' must have exercised on Tolkien's imagination (Shippey 1982: 23, 83; 2001: 92). The image of the ghost in the barrow might have been created in Tolkien's mind by the *haugbúar*, the mound-dwellers of the Icelandic sagas (Shippey 1982: 83), but the name 'barrow-wight' itself seems to have been taken from Andrew Lang, who talks about 'the graves where treasures were hoarded the Barrowwights dwelt, ghosts that were sentinels over the gold' (1891). Indeed, Tolkien has used elsewhere the idea of the barrow-ghost as a simile. Húrin, when visiting his son's mound, is mistaken for 'a ghost out of some old battle-mound that walked with darkness about it' (*Jewels*: 273), and in *The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth, Beorhthelm's Son*, one of the characters addresses the other, who is deceived by the sound of the wind and his tiredness, in these words: 'and your eyes fancied barrow-wights and bogies' (*Beorhtnoth*).

The 1934 poem on Tom Bombadil had already created the setting that was finally incorporated in the Middle-earth landscape. The Barrow-wight who pursues Tom lives in the 'old grassy mound' in the hill top, with a 'ring of leaning stones' around it, and it haunts the 'buried gold' inside the mound (*Bombadil*). The same setting appears in the chapter 'Fog on the Barrow-Downs' in *The Lord of the Rings*, however this time it is much more dark and terrifying. The description is characteristic:

> ...on that side the hills were higher and looked down upon them; and all those hills were crowned with green mounds, and on some were standing stones, pointing upwards like jagged teeth out of green gums. That view was somehow disquieting; so they turned from the sight and went down

> into the hollow circle. In the midst of it there stood a single stone, standing tall under the sun above, and at this hour casting no shadow. It was shapeless and yet significant: like a landmark, or a guarding finger, or more like a warning. (*FR*: 137)

At the same time, now the Barrow-wight does not just threaten the hobbits, as it does with Tom Bombadil in the poem, but traps them inside the barrow, where they find themselves in the following state:

> They were on their backs, and their faces looked deathly pale; and they were clad in white. About them lay many treasures, of gold maybe, though in that light they looked cold and unlovely. On their heads were circlets, gold chains were about their waists, and on their fingers were many rings. Swords lay by their sides, and shields were at their feet. But across their three necks lay one long naked sword. (*FR*: 140)

The threat of the Barrow-wight is this time real and terrible, but it is Tom Bombadil again who will save the hobbits, carry the gold and other treasures of the barrow on the top of it in the sunshine and leave it there 'free to all finders, birds, beasts, Elves and Men' (*FR*: 145).

Of course Tolkien realised that the incorporation of one of his personal experiences of an actual landscape in the plot of *The Lord of the Rings* had to be 'explained' and had to 'fit' with the historical conception of Middle-earth. Working backwards, he finally decided to associate the barrows of the Downs with the burials of Númenorean kings after a battle with the evil men of Carn Dûm. So, the landscape of the Barrow-Downs becomes a place invested with historical memories, which are now only half-forgotten and are associated with folklore beliefs. It is significant how, by talking to Tom Bombadil, the hobbits visualise the process through which the landscape of the Downs changed in time to acquire its final appearance:

> They heard of the Great Barrows, and the green mounds, and the stone-rings upon the hills and in the hollows among the hills. Sheep were

> bleating in flocks. Green walls and white walls rose. There were fortresses on the heights. Kings of little kingdoms fought together, and the young Sun shone like fire on the red metal of their new and greedy swords. There was victory and defeat; and towers fell, fortresses were burned, and flames went up into the sky. Gold was piled on the biers of dead kings and queens; and mounds covered them, and the stone doors were shut; and the grass grew over all. Sheep walked for a while biting the grass, but soon the hills were empty again. A shadow came out of dark places far away, and the bones were stirred in the mounds. Barrow-wights walked in the hollow places with a clink of rings on cold fingers, and gold chains in the wind. Stone rings grinned out of the ground like broken teeth in the moonlight... (*FR*: 130)

Later on, Tolkien even associated the Barrow-wights and their trapping of the hobbits with the visit of the ring-wraiths in the area when they were looking for the Shire (*UT*: 348).

This tendency of creating landscapes, whose original meaning had been altered by time or forgotten, and then working backwards in the history of Middle-earth to provide explanations for them, is quite common in *The Lord of the Rings*. The Dead Marshes, another landscape of Middle-earth often associated even by Tolkien himself with his own experiences, and especially that of World War I and the trenches of the Battle of Somme in northern France (*Letters*: 303; Garth 2003: 310), is not really 'explained' in the book, apart from Gollum's elusive references to a 'great battle' where fought 'tall Men with long swords, and terrible Elves, and Orcses shrieking' and the marshes 'swallowing up their graves' (*TT*: 628). However, in the Appendices we learn that the Dead Marshes are associated with successive battles of the forces of the Last Alliance with Sauron, and with the dead bodies that were left behind (*RK*: 1033-7). In the same way, the ruins at the hill of Weathertop scare the hobbits and provide the setting for the ring-wraiths' attack upon Frodo, and the only thing explained about it is that is used to be a watch-tower, called Amon Sûl, which is now all burned and broken, 'like a rough crown on the old hill's

head. Yet once it was tall and fair. It is told that Elendil stood there watching for the coming of Gil-Galad out of the West, in the days of the Last Alliance' (*FR*: 185). Again, it is not until the Appendices that the full meaning of the hill-tower is revealed, since we are told that 'the Tower of Amon Sûl held the chief *Palantír* of the North' (*RK*: 1040). Finally, the mounds of Rohan 'where the sires of Théoden sleep' are only commented upon by Gandalf and Legolas in terms of how many generations of the men of Rohan there have been, and how time is different for Men and Elves (*TT*: 507), but at the Appendices we are given their full story, with the names of the kings of Rohan who were buried there, as well as their heroic feats (*RK*: 1063-71).

One last addition to the landscape of Middle-earth, which really belongs to the Second Age, but was added after *The Lord of the Rings* to serve as an 'explanation' for the strong alliance and bond of Gondor and Rohan, deserves to be mentioned here: the tomb of Elendil. This monument is significant not only because it belongs to the era of the latest writings of Tolkien, most probably c. 1969, but also because it sprang from *The Lord of the Rings* as an explanation of a place-name. In the story of 'Cirion and Eorl' we are given the narration of the beginnings of the formal alliance of Gondor and Rohan, which took place in a very ceremonious way in a secret and sanctified monument. Tolkien gives a full account of the 'tradition of Isildur', where the reader learns that in the middle of the kingdom of Gondor a cenotaph was built for Elendil by Isildur, which contained only a casket, as a memorial of him and as place where the king of Gondor would be able to go in secret 'when he felt the need of wisdom in days of danger or distress', as well as on his coronation day (*UT*: 308-10). It is this specific place that the king of Gondor chooses to take the king of Rohan to take the oath of alliance between the

two kingdoms. The presence of the secret mound of this legendary figure in the history of Middle-earth, gives a sacred and much more serious and ritualistic dimension to the oath, and thus acts as a further bonding element between the two peoples. It is characteristic that after the oath taking, the casket is removed from the mound, and is carried to Gondor to be placed in the Tombs of the Kings, 'but the green mound remained as the memorial of a memorial' and even after that it remained 'still a place of reverence to Gondor and to the Rohirrim, who named it in their own tongue Halifirien, the Holy Mount' (*UT*: 310).

5. Conclusions

In this chapter, a study of Tolkien's awareness of the archaeology of his time and its possible influence in the creation of Middle-earth has been undertaken. It has been shown how Tolkien was aware of archaeology as long as it was linked to philology, his own area of expertise, and as long as it was associated with issues that interested him deeply, like the Anglo-Saxon settlement in Britain, or the previous settlement of the Celtic peoples. The Old English poem of *Beowulf*, which was the subject of Tolkien's lectures for years, has also been assessed as a source of knowledge of Anglo-Saxon archaeology for Tolkien. Finally, it seems that Tolkien was keen on the idea of the collaboration of philology and archaeology to cross-examine and validate their results, and he also contributed himself to archaeological studies by providing his philological expertise.

Having this background in mind, the conception of the material culture of the peoples of Middle-earth, mainly that of Gondor and Rohan, has been examined, showing some links with Scandinavian archaeology as well as a superficial knowledge of Egyptian material, and revealing Tolkien's own ideas of materiality in these cultures. The Shire and its materiality have also been examined in detail and its associations with modern Industrial Archaeology have been revealed. Finally, the relatively new discipline of landscape archaeology and the impact of its beginnings in the construction of the landscape of Middle-earth has been discussed, concentrating on the great monuments of the First Age, as well as the half-forgotten and legendary landscapes of the Third Age, which are subsequently given historical 'explanations'.

What can be said in conclusion is that Tolkien's awareness of archaeology was only partial and specific to his special interests. The cultures of Middle-earth do not seem to 'fit' with each other, as Tolkien himself noticed, but they were indeed conceived on the basis of some lose ideas of how specific historical cultures were imagined by him. Finally, although he could have not been aware of the full development of landscape archaeology, which did not really bloom until much later, Tolkien was ahead of his time in terms of the depictions of particular landscapes in Middle-earth and the illustration of the social connotations that each of them have for the peoples that inhabit them.

It should also be remembered that Tolkien was a man of his time and that would affect his work in the same way that the development of archaeology of his time would. A particularly good example that illustrates a clash between what Tolkien would have known from archaeology and his own time's debates and reactions, is the issue of cremation. In Tolkien's mythology cremation appears in very few instances and it is

either associated with disposing of the bodies of evil characters, like the burning of the corpse of the great worm Glaurung (*S*: 226), and the cremation of the slain Orcs by the Rohirrim (*TT*: 438), or with 'corrupt' characters, like Denethor who prefers to burn himself alive, together with his son, like 'the heathen kings, under the dominion of the Dark Power', as Gandalf proclaims (*RK*: 853). Tolkien would of course know that in ancient cultures, and especially in some that he used as source models for his Middle-earth cultures, cremation was practised, but his use of this ritual in his legendarium always bears negative connotations. A small extract from a letter from C.S. Lewis to his brother, written in 1940, is illuminating as far as this issue is concerned. Lewis writes:

> At our Thursday meeting we had a furious argument about cremation. I had never realised the violence of the Papist dislike of the practice, which they forbid. Neither Tolkien nor Harvard, to my mind, produced a real argument against it, but only said 'you'd find in fact' that it was always supported by atheists; and that a human corpse was the temple of the Holy Ghost... I was surprised at the degree of passion the subject awoke in us all. (Hooper 2000: 358)

Cremation was not uncommon in Britain in the 1940s, but the Catholic Church did not allow it until 1963. Tolkien was a devout Catholic and his argument against cremation in Lewis's letter is entirely in line with the Church's respective argument, in favour of the 'reverence for the body as a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit' (Skok 1994: 213). It is characteristic that even when cremation was allowed by the Holy Office in 1963 it was initially only 'for the rapid disposal of bodies in time of pestilence, natural disaster, or other grave public necessity' and it did not become more acceptable until the 1980s (Skok 1994: 213). It is no wonder, then, that only the dragon Glaurung's corpse and the Orcs' bodies are cremated, while Denethor's suicidal pyre is seen as a reversion to 'heathen' customs, which – however – comes to contradict Tolkien's own

proclamations for a mythology without Christianity and a historical era for his legendarium which coincides with proto-prehistory.

Chapter 6: Epilogue: Deconstructing Tolkien's Writings and the Construction of a 'Biographical Legend'

1. Deconstructing Tolkien

In contrast to much scholarship on Tolkien's work, which has concentrated on praising the uniqueness of his literary creation, or on tracing the medieval sources of his motifs and storylines, this thesis has taken a historical approach, seeking to contextualise his work and deconstruct it historically. By using the development and evolution of areas of scholarship in which Tolkien was an expert, or with which he was very familiar, this thesis has shown how his literature is rooted in its historical milieu and how it reflects contemporary ideas and concerns. Deconstructing Tolkien's work historically is a vast task, and it is beyond the scope of any one book or thesis to undertake it completely. Such criticism would have to take into account, for example, major historical events that influenced Tolkien's life like the two World Wars, such 'intertexts' as contemporary literature he had been reading, or the development of such ideological constructions as nationalism and the Christian ideals of the Inklings. These areas have been examined by Tolkien scholars – some more fully, some more partially – and continue to be addressed, illuminating his work in a profound way. For example, Humphrey Carpenter's (1978) and Colin Duriez's (and Porter 2001; 2003) work on the Inklings have enlightened many aspects of Tolkien's writings, John Garth's book on *Tolkien and the Great War* (2003) has provided new insights into Tolkien's early literary production, and Shippey's (1996; 2001) more recent work has been directed towards contextualising Tolkien as a post-war author. This thesis has

chosen the field of Tolkien's scholarly knowledge as a means to trace the historical-specific aspects of his work because it provides a powerful and coherent frame of reference for tracing Tolkien's reactions to his own historical period. There is abundant evidence of Tolkien's actual awareness and knowledge of the areas chosen, since those were associated with his own professional, social and cultural environment as a Professor in Oxford. Other works that have taken this line and have looked at Tolkien's scholarly knowledge and its influence on his literature, not in terms of medieval sources and analogues, but in terms of contemporary developments in academic knowledge and research of his time, are Verlyn Flieger's article (2003a) which clarifies Tolkien's references and arguments in terms of contemporary folklore theory in his essay 'On Fairy-Stories', and Michael Drout's (1997) and Murray McGillivray's (2005) work on Tolkien and the politics of Anglo-Saxon studies. This thesis has attempted a synthesis of four main areas of academic expertise or knowledge of Tolkien and has shown how each one of them has informed Middle-earth in a deeply historical way, and how each one can provide answers to central questions of Tolkien's literary creation.

The introduction of the thesis has presented the main research questions that are addressed, has clarified the scope and range of the present study and has discussed technical issues on sources and conventions of Tolkien scholarship. The second chapter has attempted to explain the centrality of the Elves in Tolkien's legendarium, and has shown how contemporary ideas on the science of folklore, regarding its scope, its function and its relationship with myth, have culminated in the image of the fairies in Tolkien's early writings, and have influenced the moral and nationalistic role of the Elves throughout Tolkien's work.

The third chapter has analysed the implications of 'racial' anthropology, an area of physical anthropology that dominated the end of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century, for the construction of the anthropomorphic creatures of Middle-earth. Tolkien was not a physical anthropologist, but during the period he was writing *The Lord of the Rings*, racial anthropology acquired wider social connotations. Tolkien's own opposition to the more direct and sinister aspects of this development did not, however, prevent the racial construction of the different peoples of Middle-earth. At the same time, the chapter has shown how certain anthropological issues created puzzlement and confusion in Tolkien's mind in terms of his mythological, as opposed to the anthropological, conception of such beings as the half-elven in his legendarium.

The fourth chapter has been devoted to one of the most fundamental, but also one of the most incomprehensible and most avoided (in terms of criticism) aspects, of Tolkien's writings: that of his invented languages. The main reason for the critics' reluctance to address it is not only the fact that the material is very technical and complicated, but also because there seems to be a common view that the languages are marginal to Tolkien's actual creative writing, despite the fact that it is also commonly believed that it was the languages that led to the creation of Tolkien's mythology. Most scholars chose to address the mythology and take the languages for granted as a wonderful and fanciful accessory, but not worthy of detailed study. This thesis has reinstated the importance of Tolkien's invented languages for understanding his literature. It has linked Tolkien's linguistic creation with a very old tradition of the hunt for a perfect universal or philosophical language during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a movement that gave way to the rise of international auxiliary languages in the twentieth century. Within this framework,

Tolkien's ideal languages spoken by ideal beings can be understood and contextualised. It is the same urge for an ideal language that shaped Tolkien's theory of 'linguistic aesthetic' which this thesis has identified with the linguistic phenomenon of Sound Symbolism, which has been largely outdated today by modern research, but which was popular back in the first half of the twentieth century, and was often associated with perfect languages. Tolkien's Elvish script, the Tengwar, has been shown to be part of the same tradition, in this case more associated with a universal writing system that would be able to accommodate all languages, and with the issue of a spelling reform of the English language which would be more faithful to its phonetics. At the same time, this chapter has shown how contemporary philology, as well as the newly emerging science of structuralist linguistics, have shaped Tolkien's descriptions of the languages of Middle-earth, their historical change, their function and their analysis.

The fifth chapter of the thesis has explored such notions as material culture and materiality in Middle-earth, having concentrated on the use of archaeology in Tolkien's literature. The conception of the 'cultures' of Middle-earth, their comparison with actual ancient civilizations, and Tolkien's inconsistency at their depiction because of historical reasons, have been treated in detail. This chapter has thus illuminated Tolkien's claim that Middle-earth is conceived as northern Europe in some remote period in human prehistory, has provided insight in the anachronistic culture of the hobbits by linking it with Industrial Archaeology, and has shown how Tolkien's creation of Middle-earth with the aid of maps, has resulted in the construction of equally meaningful landscapes that change from age to age.

The thesis, however, is not just a new detailed analysis of Tolkien's literature within its historical context, but also a study that seeks to underline the importance of

literature as a cultural product, which cannot be understood as independent from its historical locus and tempus. The methodology of the thesis is not radically new or revolutionary, but it has been applied to a contemporary writer, who lived and wrote most of his published work during the twentieth century, whose work has been elevated to a cult and has triggered phenomena that are today studied by experts on popular culture, and whose influence is still vividly felt today in such genres as science-fiction. The study has shown how the work of an author that wrote so close back in the past has been affected by his own contemporary scientific ideas that are not valid today, or that have been transformed beyond recognition. The charge of racism, for example, against Tolkien has been shown to be not wrong or biased, but ahistorical to the period of time he was writing. The history of ideas, however, has a tendency to evolve and change not in an objectively deterministic way, from primitive to more perfect, but in a parallel way to social developments and historical circumstances. Thus, the thesis has also touched upon the social reality of Tolkien's time and the relationship of literature and society.

2. 'Biographical Legend' and Researching Fiction and Biography

In the same way that details of Tolkien's life in his own period have been called upon to illuminate his literature, this thesis has also focused on this relationship in its reverse form, namely how contextualising Tolkien's work historically can clarify facts about his biography. In the introduction of the thesis (§ 2) the concept of 'biographical legend' has been referred to briefly. According to it, the author creates a romanticised, distorted, image of his biography that provides a point of reference for

literary criticism, ultimately controlled by the author himself (Tomaševskij 1995). In Tolkien's case, as this thesis has shown, nowhere is this more obvious than in the case of his invented languages. As discussed in Chapter 4: § 2.5, Tolkien's embarrassment about his 'mad' and time-consuming hobby made him elevate it in his mind – and consequently, through his interviews and letters, also to his readers' and critics' minds – into the ultimate origin of his mythology, claiming that his work was 'fundamentally linguistic in inspiration' (*Letters*: 219). The concept of the ideal 'biographical legend' is also valid for motifs and ideas that Tolkien refuted as ingredients of his own mythology and did anything he could to denounce them and disassociate his work from them, like the issue of the presence of diminutive fairies in his early work. His seminal essay 'On Fairy-Stories', as well some of his comments in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, in the 'Guide to the names in *The Lord of the Rings*' as well as in some personal comments and anecdotes, condemn tiny fairies, and attempt to demarcate them from his own Elves (see *MC*: 110-111; *RK*: 1137; *Guide*: 164; *Lost Tales I*: 32). However, as shown in Chapter 2, fairies were indeed there in Tolkien's early work, and were not very differently conceived from popular contemporary ideas or folklore about them.

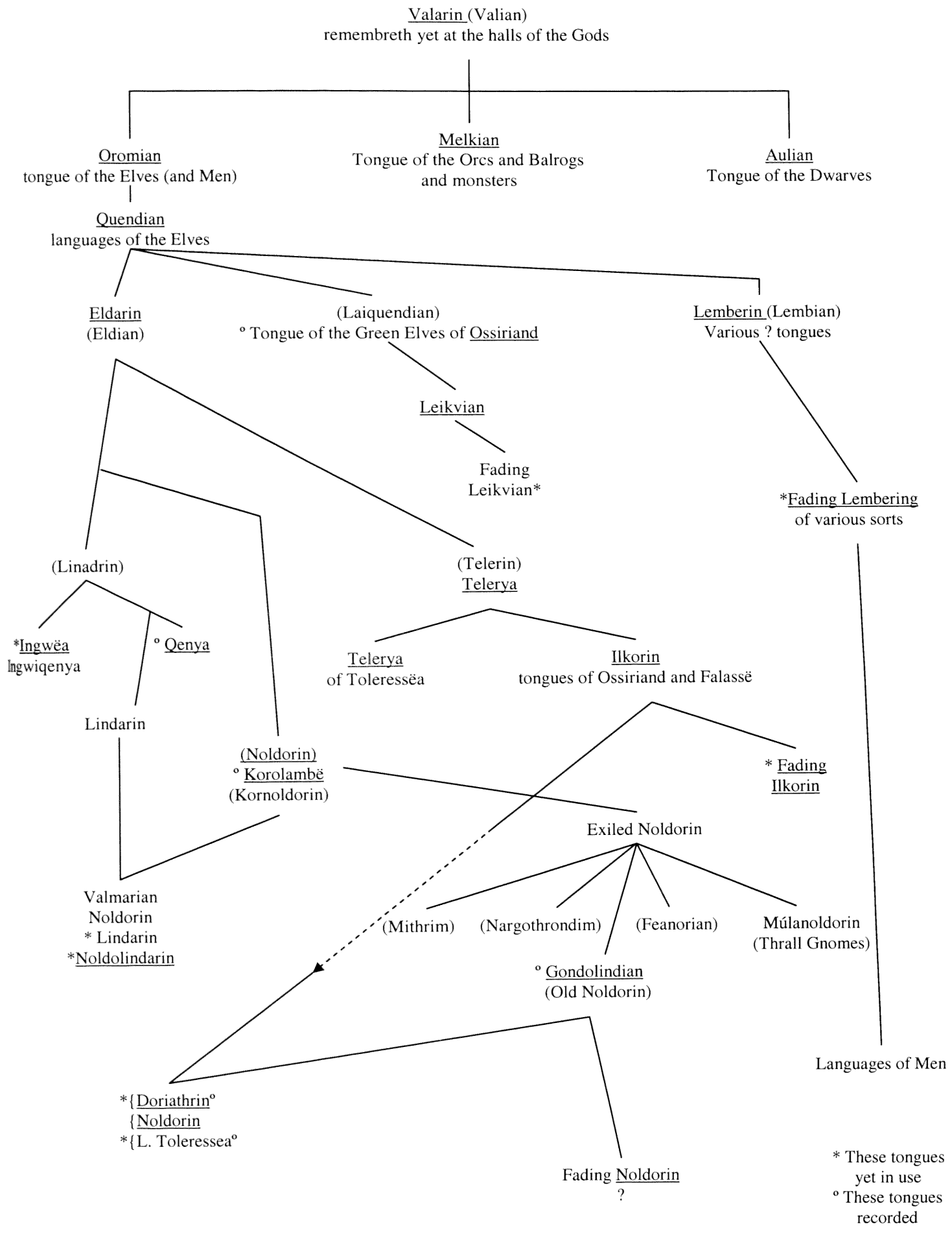
In an interview he gave to Henry Resnick in March 1966, Tolkien talked about research being done on his work. To Resnick's question on whether Tolkien approved of doctoral or master's theses on *The Lord of the Rings*, being completed or in progress at that time, he replied:

> I do not while I am alive anyhow. I do not know why they should research without any reference to me; after all, *I hold the key*. (*Niekas Interview*: 38, my italics)

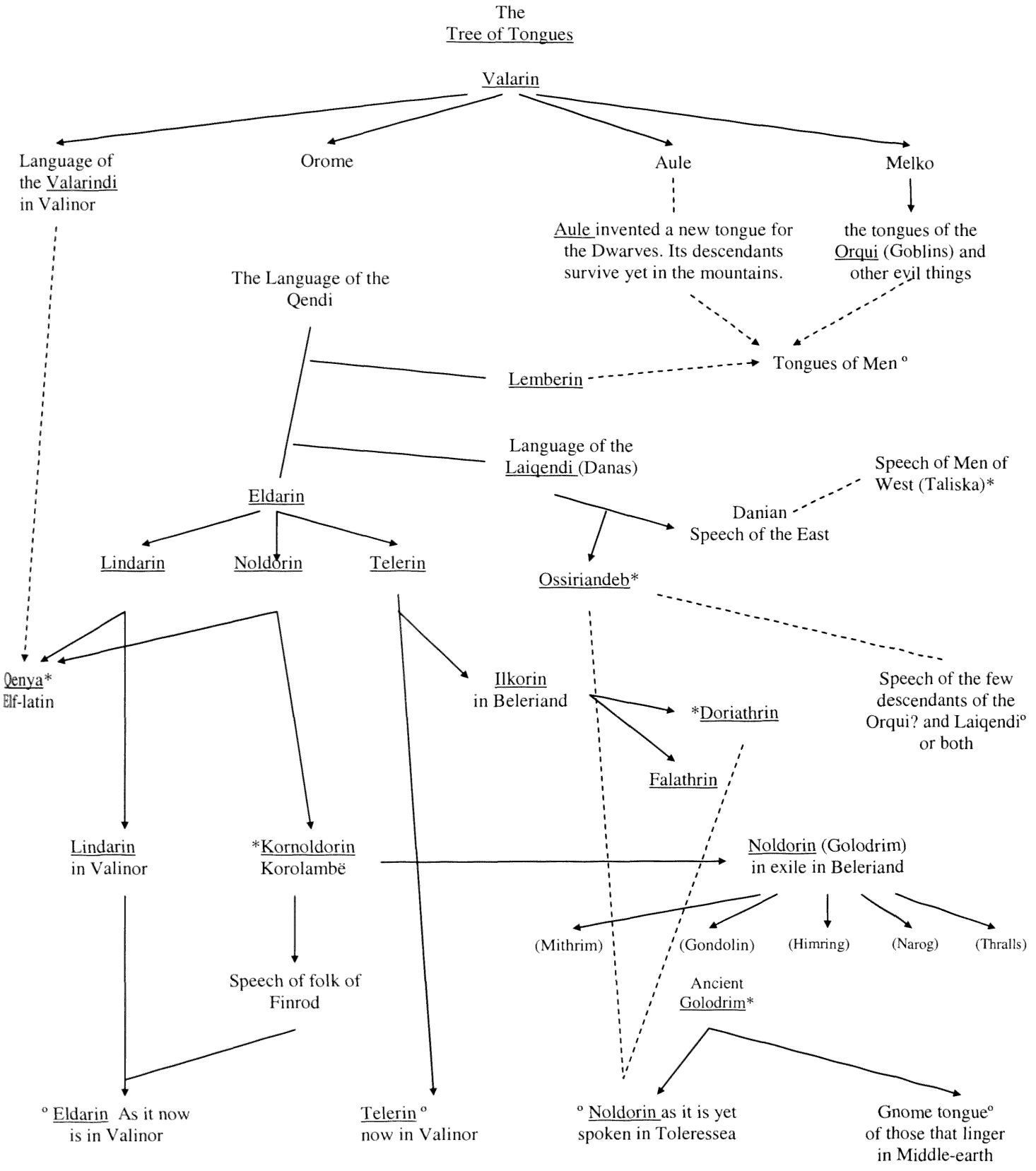
Indeed, Tolkien's claim of 'holding the key' to his own created world is a very interesting one. On the one hand, this seems to confirm the validity of researching

fiction by means of an author's biography, but on he other hand it shows Tolkien's desire of controlling information, on 'guiding' research towards specific directions, of creating his 'biographical legend'. This thesis has tried to 'unlock' Tolkien's creation by using some of the 'keys' he provided, but also by some 'keys' he might have been eager to keep hidden or lost. It has, thus, also served as a case study for the comparative research of fiction and biography, and on how these two can be mutually illuminating.

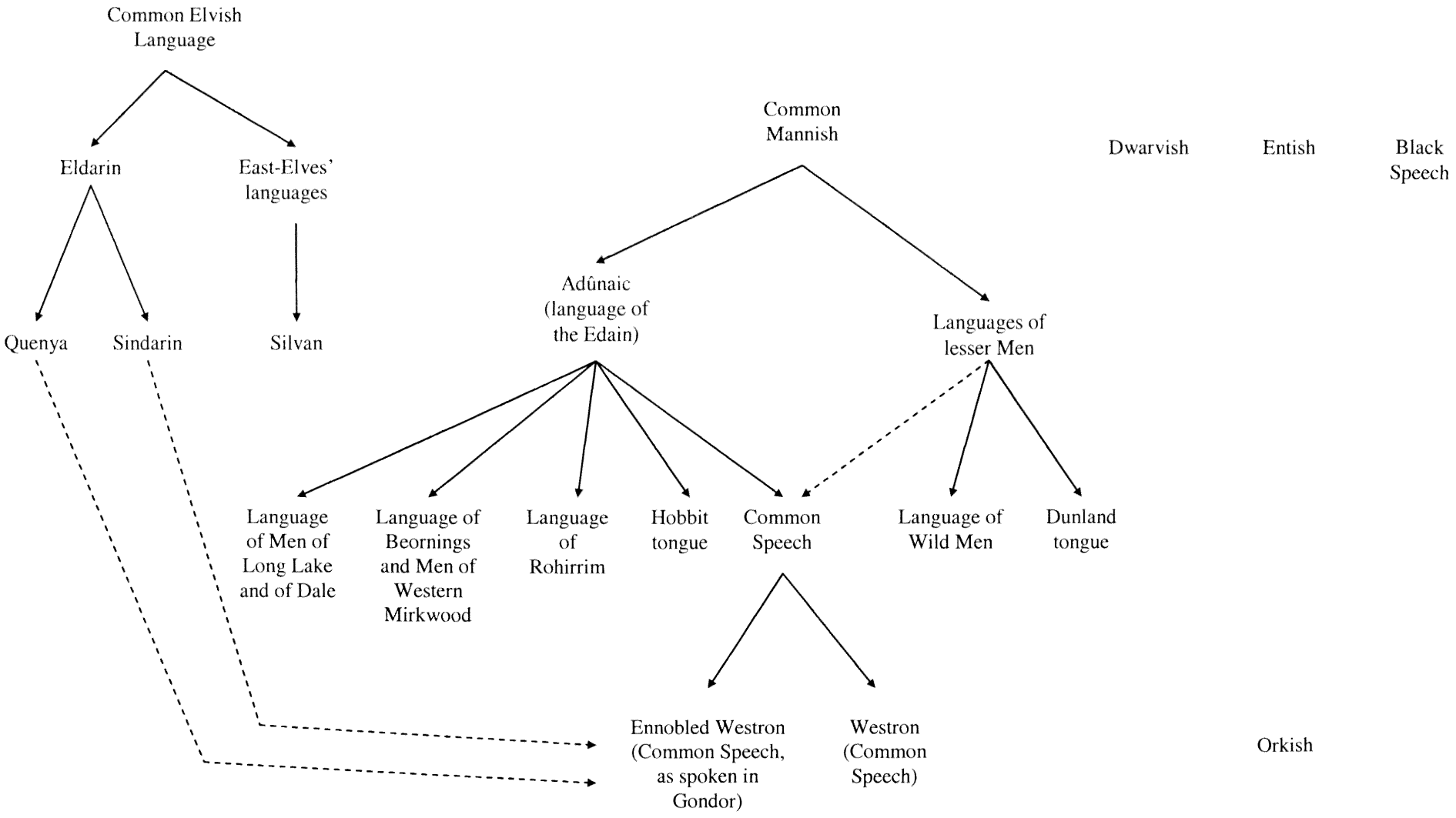
Appendix 1. 'The Tree of Tongues (earlier form)' (*Lhammas*: 169)



Appendix 2. 'The Tree of Tongues (later form)' (*Lhammas*: 170)



Appendix 3. The 'Tree of Tongues' as described in the Appendices of *The Lord of the Rings* (*LotR III*: 513-30)



Bibliography

1. Work by J.R.R. Tolkien, cited in chronological order

'Goblin Feet', pp. 64-5, in Cole, G.D.H. and Earp, T.W. (eds), *Oxford Poetry, 1915*, Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1915

'Philology: General Works', *The Year's Work in English Studies*, Vol. IV, 20-37, 1923

'An Evening in Tavrobel', 'The Lonely Isle' and 'The Princess Ni', pp. 56-8, in *Leeds University Verse 1914-1924*, Leeds: At the Swan Press, 1924

'Philology: General Works', *The Year's Work in English Studies*, Vol. V, 26-65, 1924

'Appendix I: "The Name 'Nodens'"', pp. 132-7, in Wheeler, R. E. M. (ed.), *Report on the Excavation of the Prehistoric, Roman, and Post-Roman Site in Lydney Park, Gloucestershire*, Oxford: Printed at the University Press for The Society of Antiquaries, 1932

'The Adventures of Tom Bombadil', *The Oxford Magazine*, 13, 464-465, 1934

'Chaucer as a Philologist', *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1934, 1-70, 1934

The Hobbit: Or There and Back Again, first edition George Allen & Unwin, 1937, cited here from *The Annotated Hobbit*, revised and expanded edition annotated by Douglas Anderson, London: HarperCollins, 2002

'MS Bodley 34: A Re-Collation of a Collation', with S.R.T.O. D'Ardenne, *Studia Neophilologica*, 20: ½, 65-72, 1948

Farmer Giles of Ham, first edition George Allen & Unwin, 1949, cited here from *Tales from the Perilous Realm*, London: HarperCollins, 2002

'The Homecoming of Beorhtnoth, Beorhthelm's Son', *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, 6, 1-18, 1953

The Lord of the Rings in three volumes:

I, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, first edition George Allen & Unwin, 1954, cited here from 50th Anniversary Edition, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, London: HarperCollins, 2004

II, *The Two Towers*, first edition George Allen & Unwin, 1954, cited here from 50th Anniversary Edition, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, London: HarperCollins, 2004

III, *The Return of the King*, first edition George Allen & Unwin, 1955, cited here from 50th Anniversary Edition, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull, London: HarperCollins, 2004

The Adventures of Tom Bombadil, first edition George Allen & Unwin, 1962, cited here from *Tales from the Perilous Realm*, London: HarperCollins, 2002

'An Interview with Tolkien', interview by Resnick, Henry, *Niekas*, 18, 37-43, 1967

Smith of Wootton Major, first edition George Allen and Unwin, 1967, cited here from *Tales from the Perilous Realm*, London: HarperCollins, 2002

The Road Goes Ever On: A Song Cycle, Poems by J.R.R. Tolkien, music by Donald Swann, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968

'Now Read On', BBC Radio Interview, Denys Gueroult and J.R.R. Tolkien, December 16, 1970, Marquette University Tolkien Archive, JRRT 5/2/9

'Guide to the names in *The Lord of the Rings*', revised for publication by Christopher Tolkien, pp. 153-201, in Jared Lobdell (ed.), *A Tolkien Compass*, La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1975

The Father Christmas Letters, edited by Baillie Tolkien, London: Allen and Unwin, 1976

The Silmarillion, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1977

Pictures by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1979

The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien, edited by Humphrey Carpenter with the assistance of Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981

Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980

The Old English Exodus, edited by Joan Turville-Petre, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981

Finn and Hengest: The Fragment and the Episode, edited by Alan Bliss, London: Allen and Unwin, 1982

The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983

The History of Middle-earth, twelve volumes:

1. *The Book of Lost Tales, Part One*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983

2. *The Book of Lost Tales, Part Two*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1984

3. *The Lays of Beleriand*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1985

4. *The Shaping of Middle-earth: The Quenta, the Ambarkanta, and the Annals together with the earliest 'Silmarillion' and the first Map*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1986

5. *The Lost Road and Other Writings: Language and Legend before* The Lord of the Rings, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1987

6. *The Return of the Shadow*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1988

7. *The Treason of Isengard: The History of* The Lord of the Rings, *Part Two*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: Unwin Hyman, 1989

8. *The War of the Ring: The History of* The Lord of the Rings, *Part Three*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: Unwin Hyman, 1990

9. *Sauron Defeated: The End of the Third Age, The Notion Club Papers and The Drowning of Anadûnê*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1992

10. *Morgoth's Ring: The Later Silmarillion, Part One: The Legends of Aman*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1993

11. *The War of the Jewels: The Later Silmarillion, Part II*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1994

12. *The Peoples of Middle-earth*, edited by Christopher Tolkien, London: HarperCollins, 1996

'I-Lam na-Ngoldathon: The Grammar and Lexicon of The Gnomish Tongue', edited by Christopher Gilson, Patrick Wynne, Arden R. Smith, and Carl F. Hostetter, *Parma Eldalamberon*, 11, 2-75, 1995

'Qenyaqetsa: The Qenya Phonology and Lexicon together with The Poetic and Mythologic Words of Eldarissa', edited by Christopher Gilson, Carl F.Hostetter, Patrick Wynne, and Arden R Smith, *Parma Eldalamberon*, 12, 1-112, 1998

Roverandom, edited by Christina Scull and Wayne G. Hammond, first edition HarperCollins, 1998, cited here from paperback edition, London: HarperCollins, 2002

Beowulf and the Critics, edited by Michael D.C. Drout, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 248, Tempe, AZ: Arizona Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 2002

'Smith of Wootton Major' (essay), edited by Verlyn Flieger, pp. 84-101, in Flieger, Verlyn (ed.), *Smith of Wootton Major: Extended Edition*, London: HarperCollins, 2005

2. J.R.R. Tolkien's Unpublished Manuscripts

2.1. Bodleian Library

2.1.1. MS Tolkien

MS. Tolkien 6. Manuscripts and typescript drafts of 'Leaf by Niggle', 'On Fairy Stories' and *Smith of Wootton Major.*

MSS. Tolkien 7-8. Papers relating to 'English and Welsh', the O'Donnell lecture, printed in *Angles and Britons* (Cardiff, 1963), pp.1-41.

MS. Tolkien 24. Lecture on invented languages, 'A Hobby for the Home', later called 'A Secret Vice', with notes and versions of the poems cited, and including notes on *Finnegans Wake.*

2.1.2. Tolkien 'A'

Tolkien A14/1. Notes and drafts of lectures on Old English and Anglo-Saxon philology.

Tolkien A23. Miscellaneous linguistic notes, including letters to and from Tolkien, 1921-36, n.d.

Tolkien A27/1. Lectures and drafts of lectures, with related notes, on Alfred's verses in the *Cura Pastoralis*, Old English palaeography, including calligraphic examples by Tolkien, and English orthography.

2.2. British Library

Add. 71657. Letters from J. R. R. Tolkien (b.1892, d.1973), author and Professor of English Language and Literature at Oxford University, to Michael George David Reuel Tolkien, his grandson, 1942-1972.

2.3. Marquette University, Special Collections and Archives

JRRT 8/1/1. Screen treatment of *The Lord of the Rings*, written by Morton Grady Zimmerman, annotated by J.R.R. Tolkien, 1957

3. Other Works Cited

Abercrombie, David (1949): 'Forgotten Phoneticians', *Transactions of the Philological Society 1948,* 1-34

Abercrombie, David (1965), *Studies in Phonetics and Linguistics* (London: Oxford University Press)

Abercrombie, David (1981): 'Extending the Roman Alphabet: Some Orthographic Experiments of the Past Four Centuries', in Asher, R. E. and Henderson, Eugénie J. A. (eds), *Towards a History of Phonetics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press)

Aitchison, Jean (1981), *Language change: Progress or Decay?* (Bungay: Fontana Paperbacks)

Aldred, Cyril (1965), *Egypt to the End of the Old Kingdom* (London: Thames and Hudson)

Allan, Jim (ed.) (1978), *An Introduction to Elvish: And to Other Tongues and Proper Names and Writing Systems of the Third Age of the Western Lands of Middle-Earth as Set Forth in the Published Writings of Professor John Ronald Reuel Tolkien* (Hayes: Bran's Head Books)

Allen, Elizabeth M. (1985): 'Persian Influences in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*', pp. 189-206, in Reilly, Robert (ed.), *The Transcendent Adventure: Studies of Religion in Science Fiction/Fantasy* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood)

Allott, Robin (1995): 'Sound symbolism', pp. 15-38, in Figge, Udo L. (ed.), *Language in the Würm Glaciation* (Bochum: Brockmeyer)

Alter, Stephen G. (1999), *Darwinism and the Linguistic Image: Language, Race, and Natural Theology in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press)

Anderson, Douglas (2002) (ed.), *The Annotated Hobbit* (London: Houghton Mifflin)

Anderson, Douglas A. (2003): '"An Industrious Little Devil": E. V. Gordon as friend and collaborator with Tolkien', pp. 15-25, in Chance, Jane (ed.), *Tolkien the Medievalist* (London; New York: Routledge)

Anderson, Douglas A. (2004): 'Note on the Text', pp. xi-xvii, in Tolkien, J.R.R., *The Lord of the Rings*, 50th Anniversary Edition, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull (London: HarperCollins)

Anderson, Douglas A., Drout, Michael D. C. and Flieger, Verlyn (2004): 'Editors' Introduction', *Tolkien Studies*, 1, v

Anderson, Stephen R. (1985), *Phonology in the Twentieth Century: Theories of Rules and Theories of Representations* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press)

Anonymous contribution (1965): 'Sarehole Mill, Birmingham', *The Journal of Industrial Archaeology*, 2:4, 186

Arnold, C. J. (1997), *An Archaeology of the Early Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, 2nd edition (London; New York: Routledge)

Ashcroft, Bill (2001): 'Language and Race', *Social Identities*, 7: 3, 311-328

Augstein, Hannah Franziska (ed.) (1996), *Race: The Origins of an Idea, 1760-1850* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press)

Baden-Powell, R.S.S. (1908), *Scouting for Boys: A Handbook for Instruction in Good Citizenship* (London: Horace Cox; facsimile edition, Liverpool: Bros and Yeoman, 1959)

Bæksted, A. (1952), *Målruner og Troldruner: Runemagiske Studier* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal)

Bahn, Paul G. (ed.) (1996), *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Archaeology* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press)

Baldwin Brown, G. (1915), *The Arts in Early England*, Vol. 3 (London: J. Murray)

Barkan, Elazar (1992), *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States between the World Wars* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press)

Barker, K. and Darvill, T. (1997): 'Introduction: Landscape Old and New', pp. 1-8, in Barker, K. and Darvill, T. (eds), *Making English Landscapes* (Oxford: Oxbow)

Barnes, C. (1992), *Disabling Imagery and the Media: An Exploration of the Principles for Media Representations of Disabled People* (Derby: The British Council of Disabled)

Bascom, William (1965): 'The Forms of Folklore: Prose Narratives', *Journal of American Folklore*, 78: 307, 3-20.

Beddoe, Stella (1997): 'Fairy Writings and Writers', pp. 23-31, in Martineau, Jane (ed.), *Victorian Fairy Painting* (London: Merrel Holberton Publishers)

Bender, B. (1993): 'Introduction: Landscape – Meaning and Action', pp. 1-17, in Bender, B. (ed.), *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives* (Oxford: Berg)

Bernasconi, Robert and Lott, Tommy L. (eds) (2000), *The Idea of Race* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co.)

Bliss, Alan (1982): 'Preface', pp. 1-6, in Tolkien, J.R.R., *Finn and Hengest: The Fragment and the Episode*, edited by Alan Bliss (London: Allen and Unwin)

Blumenbach, Johann Friedrich (1775), *De Generis Humani Varietate Native* (Goettingæ)

Boas, Franz (1911), *The Mind of the Primitive Man* (New York: The Macmillan Company)

Boas, Franz (1935): 'Race', in Seligman, Edwin R. and Johnson, Alvin (eds), *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: The Macmillan Company)

Boas, Franz (1966), *Race, Language and Culture* (New York: Free Press; London: Collier-Macmillan)

Bosley, K. (1989.): 'Introduction', pp. xiii-liv, in Bosley, K. (transl.), *The Kalevala: an Epic Poem after Oral Tradition by Elias Lönnrot* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press)

Bown, Nicola (2001), *Fairies in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Bradley, Richard (1993), *Altering the Earth: The Origins of Monuments in Britain and Continental Europe* (Edinburgh: Society of Antiquaries of Scotland)

Branch, M. (1985): '*Kalevala*: from Myth to Symbol', pp. 1-8, in *Kalevala 1835-1985: The National Epic of Finland* (Helsinki: Helsinki University Library)

Briggs, Katharine M. (1959), *The Anatomy of Puck: An Examination of Fairy Beliefs among Shakespeare's Comtemporaries and Successors* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul)

Brocca, Paul (1864), *On the Phenomena of Hybridity in the Genus Homo* (London: Longman, for the Anthropological Society)

Brown, Michelle P. (1998), *The British Library Guide to Writing and Scripts* (London: British Library)

Brown, Shirley Ann (1988), *The Bayeux Tapestry: History and Bibliography* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press)

Buffon, Georges Louis Leclerc (1791), *Natural History Abridged* (London: C. and G. Kearsley)

Burton, Anthony (1977), *Industrial Archaeological Sites of Britain* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson)

Campbell, George L. (1997), *Handbook of Scripts and Alphabets* (London; New York: Routledge)

Carpenter, Humphrey (1977), *Tolkien: A Biography* (London: Allen and Unwin)

Carpenter, Humphrey (1978), *The Inklings: C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and Their Friends* (London: HarperCollins)

Chadwick, H. M. (1940): 'The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial', *Antiquity*, 14

Chambers, R. W. (1926), *England before the Norman Conquest* (Longmans, Green and Co)

Chambers, R. W. (1932), *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Champion, T. (1996): 'The Celts in Archaeology', in Brown, Terence (ed.), Celticism (Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi)

Chance, Jane (ed.) (2003), *Tolkien the Medievalist* (London; New York: Routledge)

Chance, Jane (ed.) (2004), *Tolkien and the Invention of Myth: A Reader* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky)

Chance Nitzsche, Jane (1979), *Tolkien's Art: A Mythology for England* (London: Macmillan)

Chance, Jane and Day, David D. (1991): 'Medievalism in Tolkien: Two Decades of Criticism in Review', *Studies in Medievalism*, 3:3, 375-87

Chance, Jane and Siewers, Alfred (eds), *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming)

Chapman, Malcolm (1992), *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth* (London: Macmillan)

Chesterton, Gilbert K (1908), *Orthodoxy* (London: John Lane Company)

Collingwood, R. G. and Myres, J. N. L. (1936), *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* (Oxford: Clarendon Press)

Collis, John (1984), *The European Iron Age* (London: Batsford)

Collis, John (1997): 'Celtic Myths', Antiquity, 71: 271, 195–201

Collis, John (2003), *The Celts: Origins, Myths & Inventions* (Stroud: Tempus)

Crawford, O. G. S. (1924): 'Place-names and Archaeology', pp. 143-64, in Mawer, A.H. and Stenton, F.M. (eds.) *Introduction to the Survey of English Place-Names*, Part I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Crawford, O. G. S. (1929), *Air Photography for Archaeologists* (Southampton: Ordnance Survey)

Crookshank, F. G. (1924), *The Mongol in our Midst: A Study of Man and his Three Faces* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd)

Cummings, V. and Whittle, A. (2004), *Places of Special Virtue: Megaliths in the Neolithic Landscapes of Wales* (Oxford: Oxbow)

Cunliffe, Barry W (1997), *The Ancient Celts* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press)

Curry, Patrick (1997), *Defending Middle-Earth. Tolkien: Myth & Modernity* (Edinburgh: Floris)

Curry, Patrick (2000): "Charges of Racism in *The Lord of the Rings* Are Mistaken.", pp. 104-114, in de Koster, Katie (ed.), *Readings on J. R. R. Tolkien* (San Diego, CA: Greenhaven)

Cyrano de Bergerac, S. (1656), *L'Autre Monde: Les États et Empires de la Lune et du Soleil* (Paris)

Dalgarno, G. (1661), *Ars Signorum, Vulgo Character Universalis et Lingua Philosophica* (London)

Daniel, Glyn E (1962), *The Idea of Prehistory* (London: Watts)

Darvill, T. (1997): 'Landscapes and the Archaeologist', pp. 70-91, in Barker, K. and Darvill, T. (eds), *Making English Landscapes* (Oxford: Oxbow)

Day, David (1979), *A Tolkien Bestiary* (London: Mitchell Beazley)

Dechelette, J. (1913), *Manuel d'Archeologie Prehistorique, Celtique et Gallo-Romaine II-2: Second Age du Fer ou Epoque de Hallstatt* (Paris: Alphonse Picard)

Dechelette, J. (1914), *Manuel d'Archeologie Prehistorique, Celtique et Gallo-Romaine II-3: Deuxieme Age du Fer ou Epoque de La Tene* (Paris: Alphonse Picard)

de Jubainville, d'Arbois H. (1904), *Les Celtes: Depuis les Temps les Plus Anciens jusque'en l'An 100 avant Notre-ére; Étude Historique* (Paris: Albert Fontemoing)

Dewey, Godfrey (1971), *English Spelling: Roadblock to Reading* (New York: Teachers College Press)

Dorson, Richard M. (1966): 'Foreword', pp. v-xxxii, in O'Sullivan, Sean (ed.), *Folktales of Ireland* (London: Routledge & Paul)

Dorson, Richard M. (1968), *The British Folklorists: A History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

Down, J.L. (1862): 'Observations on an Ethnic Classification of Idiots', *London Hospital Reports 3*, 259-262

Drout, Michael David Craig (1997), *Imitating Fathers: Tradition, Inheritance and the Reproduction of Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Chicago)

Drout, D. C. (ed.) (2002), *Beowulf and the Critics, by J.R.R. Tolkien* (Tempe, Ariz.: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies)

Drout, Michael D. C. and Wynne, Hilary (2000), 'Tom Shippey's *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* and a Look Back at Tolkien Criticism since 1982', *Envoi*, 9:2, 102-134.

Drout, Michael D. C. et al (2002): 'A Bibliography of Scholarly Studies of J.R.R. Tolkien and His Works'.
URL: http://acunix.wheatonma.edu/mdrout/TolkienBiblio/index.html [accessed September 2005]

Dundes, Alan (1980), *Interpreting Folklore* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press)

Duriez, Colin (2003), *Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Story of a Friendship* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing)

Duriez, Colin and Porter, David (2001), *The Inklings Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide to the Lives, Thought and Writings of C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield and Their Friends* (London: Azure)

Eagleton, Terry (1976), *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London: Verso)

Eco, Umberto (1997), *The Search for the Perfect Language*, translated by James Fentress (London: Fontana)

Edwards, John R. (1982): 'Language Attitudes and their Implications among English Speakers', pp. 20-33, in Bouchard Ryan, Helen and Giles, Howard (eds), *Attitudes Toward Language Variation: Social and Applied Contexts* (London: Edward Arnold)

Ekwall, Eilert (1924): 'The Celtic Element', pp. 15-35, in Mawer, A.H. and Stenton, F.M. (eds.) *Introduction to the Survey of English Place-Names*, Part I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Ezard, John (1991): 'Tolkien's Shire', *The Guardian*, December 28 1991

Fauskanger, Helge (2005): 'How Many Languages did J.R.R. Tolkien Make?', Ardalambion: Of the Tongues of Arda, the Invented World of J.R.R. Tolkien. URL: http://www.uib.no/People/hnohf/howmany.htm [accessed September 2005]

Fimi, Dimitra: '"Come Sing ye Light Fairy Things Tripping so Gay": Victorian Fairies and the Early Work of J.R.R. Tolkien', *Working With English: Medieval and Modern Language, Literature and Drama* (forthcoming)

Finch, William Coles (1976) [first published 1933], *Watermills and Windmills: a Historical Survey of their Rise, Decline and Fall as Portrayed by those of Kent* (Sheerness: Arthur Cassell)

Flieger, Verlyn (1981): 'Barfield's *Poetic Diction* and Splintered Light', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 14:2, 47-66

Flieger, Verlyn (1983), *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World* (Kent: The Kent State University Press).

Flieger, Verlyn (2002), *Splintered Light: Logos and Language in Tolkien's World, Revised Edition* (Kent: The Kent State University Press)

Flieger, Verlyn (2003a): '"There Would Always be a Fairy-tale": J.R.R. Tolkien and the Folklore Controversy', pp. 26-35, in Chance, Jane (ed.), *Tolkien the Medievalist* (London; New York: Routledge)

Flieger, Verlyn (2003b): 'Tolkien's Wild Men: From Medieval to Modern', pp. 95-105, in Chance, Jane (ed.), *Tolkien the Medievalist* (London: Routledge)

Flieger, Verlyn (2004): '"Do the Atlantis Story and Abandon Eriol-Saga"', *Tolkien Studies*, 1, 43-68

Flieger, Verlyn and Hostetter, Carl F. (2000) (eds), *Tolkien's Legendarium: Essays on The History of Middle-earth* (Westport, London: Greenwood Press)

Foigny, G. de (1676), *Les Aventures de Jacques Sadeur dans la Découverte et le Voyage de la Terre Australe* (Paris)

Foster, Robert (1971): 'The One Inconsistency in *LotR*', *Parma Eldalamberon*, 1:1, 9

Foster, Robert (1993), *The Complete Guide to Middle-earth: From 'The Hobbit' to 'The Silmarillion'* (London: HarperCollins)

Fowler, H. N. (ed. and transl.) (1926), *Plato, with an English Translation: Cratylus, Parmenides, Greater Hippias, Lesser Hippias* (London: Heinemann)

Fox, Sir Cyril (1932), *The Personality of Britain: Its Influence on Inhabitant and Invader in Prehistoric and Early Historic Times* (Cardiff: National Museum of Wales)

Frank, Roberta (1992): 'Beowulf and Sutton Hoo: The Odd Couple', pp. 47-64, in Kendall, B. and Wells, Peter S. (eds), *Voyage to the Other World: The Legacy of Sutton Hoo* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press)

Fraser, K. C. (1998): 'Whose Ring Is It Anyway?', *Mallorn*, 25, 12–14

Fulk, R. D. (2001): 'Cynewulf: Canon, Dialect, and Date', pp. 3-21, in Bjork, R. (ed), *The Cynewulf Reader* (London: Routledge)

Galton, Francis (1892): 'Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope and Aims', *Nature*, 70, 82

Galton, Francis (1914), *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences* (London: Macmillan)

Garth, John (2003), *Tolkien and the Great War: The Threshold of Middle-earth* (Houghton Mifflin)

Gates, R. Ruggles (1920): 'Heredity and Eugenics', *The Eugenic Review*, 12, 1-13

Gaur, Albertine (1994), *A History of Calligraphy* (London: British Library)

Giles, Howard and Coupland, Nikolas (1991), *Language: Contexts and Consequences* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press)

Giles, Howard and Niedzielski, Nancy (1998): 'Myth 11: Italian is Beautiful, German is Ugly', pp. 85-93, in Bauer, Laurie and Trudgill, Peter (eds), *Language Myths* (London; New York: Penguin Books)

Giles, Howard, Bourhis, Richard and Davies, Ann (1979): 'Prestige Speech Styles: Imposed Norm or Inherent Value?', pp. 589-96, in McCormack, William and Wurm, Stephen A. (eds), *Language and Society: Anthropological Issues* (The Hague, Paris, New York: Mouton Publishers)

Gillespie, Gerald (2002): 'In Search of the Noble Savage: Some Romantic Cases', *Neohelicon*, 29:1, 89-95

Gilson, Christopher (1999), 'Narqelion and the Early Lexicons: Some Notes on the First Elvish Poem', *Vinyar Tengwar*, 40, 6-32

Gobineau, Joseph Arthur (1915), *The Inequality of Human Races* (London: William Heinemann)

Godwin, F. (1638), *The Man in the Moone or a Discourse of a Voyage thither by Domingo Gonzalez, the Speedy Messenger* (London)

Gramsch, A. (1996): 'Landscape Archaeology: Of Making and Seeing', *Journal of European Archaeology*, 4, 19-38

Grant, E. G. (1987): 'Industry: Landscape and Location', pp. 96-117, in Wagstaff, J.M. (ed.), *Landscape and Culture: Geographical and Archaeological Perspectives* (Oxford; New York: Blackwell)

Gunnell, Terry (2002): 'Tívar in a Timeless Land: Tolkien's Elves', Paper Presented at 'Tolkien, Laxness, Undset: A Symposium', Sigurður Nordal Institute and Nordic House, Reykjavik, 13-14 September 2002. URL: http://www.nordals.hi.is/Apps/WebObjects/HI.woa/wa/dp?detail=1004509&name=nordals_en_greinar_og_erindi [accessed September 2005]

Haddon, Alfred Cort, and Huxley, Julian (1935), *We Europeans: A Survey of 'Racial' Problems* (London: Cape)

Haggard, H. Rider (1887), *She: A History of Adventure* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co.)

Hale, Amy and Payton, Philip (2000): 'Introduction', pp. 1-14, in Hale, Amy and Payton, Philip (eds), *New Directions in Celtic Studies* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press)

Hall, Alaric Timothy Peter (2004), *The Meanings of Elf and Elves in Medieval England* (Unpublished PhD Thesis: University of Glasgow)

Hall, John R. Clark (ed. and transl.) (1912), *Essays on Questions Connected with the Old English Poem of Beowulf, by Knut Stjerna* (Coventry: Curtis & Beamish for the Viking Club)

Halladay, Jean R. (1993), *Eight Late Victorian Poets Shaping the Artistic Sensibility of an Age: Alice Meynell, John Davidson, Francis Thompson, Mary Coleridge, Katharine Tynan, Arthur Symons, Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson* (Lewiston, N.Y: E. Mellen Press)

Hamerow, Helena (1994): 'Migration Theory and the Migration Period', pp. 164-77, in Vyner, Blaise (ed.), *Building on the Past: Papers Celebrating 150 Years of the Royal Archaeological Institute* (London: The Royal Archaeological Institute)

Hammond, Wayne G. and Scull, Christina (1995), *J.R.R.Tolkien: Artist & Illustrator* (London: HarperCollins)

Hammond, Wayne G. and Scull, Christina (2004): 'Note on the 50th Anniversary Edition', pp. xviii-xxi, in Tolkien, J.R.R., *The Lord of the Rings*, 50th Anniversary Edition, edited by Wayne G. Hammond and Christina Scull (London: HarperCollins)

Helms, Randel (1976), *Tolkien's World* (St. Alban's: Panther)

Herder, Johann Gottfried (1784), *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Riga; Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch)

Higham, N. J. (1992), *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons* (London: Seaby)

Hills, Catherine M (1997): 'Beowulf and Archaeology', pp. 291-310, in Bjork, Robert E. and Niles, John D. (eds), *A Beowulf Handbook* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press)

Hines, John (1990): 'Philology, Archaeology and the Adventus Saxonum vel Anglorum', pp. 17-36, in Bammesberger, Alfred and Wollmann, Alfred (eds.), *Britain 400-600: Language and History* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter – Universitätsverlag)

Hines, John (1998): 'The Anglian Migration in British Historical Research', *Studien zur Sachsenforschung*, 11, 155-165

Hines, John (2004), *Voices in the Past: English Literature and Archaeology* (Cambridge: Brewer)

Hinton, Leanne and Bolinger, Dwight (2003): 'Sound Symbolism', pp. 110-14, in Frawley, William J. (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*, Vol. 4 (New York: Oxford University Press)

Hinton, Leanne, Nichols, Johanna and Ohala, John J. (1994), *Sound Symbolism* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press)

Hobsbawm, E. (1983): 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', pp. 1-14, in Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds) (1983), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Holroyd, Michael (1991), *Bernard Shaw: Volume III: 1918-1950: The Lure of Fantasy* (London: Chatto & Windus)

Honko, Lauri (1985): 'The Kalevala Process', pp. 16-23, in *Kalevala 1835-1985: The National Epic of Finland* (Helsinki: Helsinki University Library)

Hooper, Walter (ed.) (2000), *C.S. Lewis: Collected Letters, Volume 1: Family Letters* (London: HarperCollins)

Horsman, Reginald (1976): 'Origins of Racial Anglo-Saxonism in Great Britain before 1850', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 37:3, 387-410

Hoskins, W. G. (1955), *The Making of the English Landscape* (London: Hodder and Stoughton)

Hostetter, Carl F. (1991): 'Over Middle-earth Sent unto Men: On the Philological Origins of Tolkien's Eärendil Myth', *Mythlore*, 65, 5-10

Hudson, Kenneth (1996): 'Industrial Archaeology', pp. 351-2, in Fagan, Brian M. (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Archaeology* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Hudson, R. A. (1996), *Sociolinguistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Hunt, James (1863-4): 'On the Negro's Place in Nature', *Memoirs Read before the Anthropological Society of London*, 1, 52

Huxley, Julian (1939), *'Race' in Europe*, Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs, 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press)

Hyde, Paul Nolan (1982), *Linguistic Techniques Used in Character Development in the Works of J. R. R. Tolkien*, Volumes I-III (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Purdue University)

Hyde, Paul Nolan (1988): 'Narqelion: A Single, Falling Leaf at Sun-fading', *Mythlore*, 56, 47-52

James, Simon (1999), *The Atlantic Celts: Ancient People or Modern Invention?* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press)

Jameson, Robert (1999): 'Diffusionism', pp. 200-1, in Shaw, Ian and Robert, Jameson (eds), *A Dictionary of Archaeology* (Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers)

Jespersen, Otto (1922), *Language, its Nature, Development and Origin* (London: Allen & Unwin)

Johnson, Judith A. (1986), *J.R.R. Tolkien: Six Decades of Criticism*, Bibliographies and Indexes in World Literature 6 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press)

Johnston, Edward (1906), *Writing & Illuminating, & Lettering* (London: J. Hogg)

Joseph, John E. (2000): 'Language and 'Psychological Race': Léopold de Saussure on French Indochina', *Language and Communication*, 20, 29-53

Joseph, John E. (2004): 'Root and Branch: Pictet's Role in the Crystallization of Saussure's Thought', *Times Literary Supplement*, January 9 2004

Keightley, Thomas (1873), *The Fairy Mythology, Illustrative of the Romance and Superstition of Various Countries* (London: Bell & Daldy)

Keith, Arthur (1917): 'The Physical Characteristics of two Pitcairn Islanders', *Man*, 17, 121-131

Keith, Thomas (1988), *History and Literature* (Swansea: University College of Swansea)

Kemble, John Mitchell (ed.) (1833), *The Anglo-Saxon Poems of Beowulf, The Travellers Song, and The Battle of Finnesburg* (London: William Pickering)

Kemble, John Mitchell (ed.) (1837), *A Translation of the the Anglo-Saxon Poem of "Beowulf", with a Copious Glossary, Preface and Philological Notes* (London: William Pickering)

Knox, Robert (1862), *The Races of Man: A Philosophical Enquiry into the Influence of Race over the Destinies of Nations* (London: Henry Renshaw)

Koerner, E. F. K. (2000): 'Ideology in the 19th and 20th Century Study of Language: A Neglected Aspect of Linguistic Historiography', *Indogermanische Forschungen*, 105, 1-26

Kristeva, Julia (1986): 'Word, Dialogue, and the Novel', pp. 35-61, in T. Moi (ed.), *The Kristeva Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press)

Lang, Andrew (1891), *Essays in Little* (New York: Charles Scribner's Son)

Langer, Johnni (2002): 'The Origins of the Imaginary Viking', *Viking Heritage Magazine*, 4

Larson, Jennifer (2001), *Greek Nymphs: Myth, Cult, Lore* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press)

Leeds, E. Thurlow (1913), *The Archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (Oxford: Clarendon)

Lincoln, Bruce (1999), *Theorizing Myth: Narrative, Ideology, and Scholarship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press)

Lindqvist, Sune (1948): 'Sutton Hoo and Beowulf', translated by R. L. S. Bruce-Milford, *Antiquity*, 22, 131-40

Little, K.L. (1940): 'The Study of Racial Mixture in the British Commonwealth', *The Eugenics Review*, 32, 114-120

Little, Kenneth (1948), *Negroes in Britain: A Study of Racial Relations in English Society* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner)

Löffler, Marion (2000): 'The Welsh Language Movement in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: An Exercise in Quiet Revolution', pp. 181-216, in Jenkins, Geraint H. and Williams, Mari A. (2000), *'Let's Do our Best for the Ancient Tongue': The Welsh Language in the Twentieth Century* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press)

Lucy, Sam (1998), *The Early Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries of East Yorkshire: An Analysis and Reinterpretation* (Oxford: J. and E. Hedges)

Luling, Virginia (1996): "An Anthropologist in Middle-earth.", pp. 53-57, in Reynolds, Patricia and GoodKnight, Glen (eds), *Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference, 1992: Proceedings of the Conference Held at Keble College, Oxford, England, 17th-24th August 1992 to Celebrate the Centenary of the Birth of Professor J.R.R. Tolkien, Incorporating the 23rd Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon XXIII) and Oxonmoot 1992* (Milton Keynes: Tolkien Society)

MacCarthy, P. A. D. (1969): 'The Bernard Shaw Alphabet', in Haas, W. (ed.), *Alphabets for English* (Manchester: Manchester University Press)

Mac Dougall, Hugh A. (1982), *Racial Myth in English History: Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Hanover: University Press of New England)

Magnus, Magaret (2001), *What's in a Word? Studies in Phonosemantics* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Trondheim)

Malik, Kenan (1996), *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western Society* (Basingstoke: Macmillan)

Marmor, Paula (1971): 'Beth-Luis-Nion', *Parma Eldalamberon*, 1:1, 2

Mason Shena (2002), *Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery Sarehole Mill Guide* (West Bromwich: Hill Shorter Ltd.)

McGillivray, Murray (2005): '"Die zwei Türme"?: Anglo-Saxon Scholarship 1935-36', Paper Presented at the Munich Meeting of the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists, 1 August 2005

Medvedev, P.N. and Bakhtin M.M. (1978), *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press)

Melman, Billie (1991): 'Claiming the Nation's Past: The Invemtion of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 26:3/4, 575-595

Metraux, A. (1951): 'United Nations Economic and Security Council, Statement by Experts on Problems of Race', *American Anthropologist*, 53:1, 142-5

Meyers, Walter E. (1980), *Aliens and Linguists: Language Study and Science Fiction* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press)

Mjoen, Jon Alfred (1922): 'Harmonic and Unharmonic Crossings', *The Eugenics Review*, 14, 35-40

Montagu, Ashley (1997), *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (London: Altamira Press)

Morgan, P. (1983): 'From a Death to a View: The Hunt for the Welsh Past in the Romantic Period', pp. 43-100, in Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger T. (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Morpurgo Davies, Anna (1992), *Nineteenth-Century Linguistics*, History of Linguistics, Volume IV (London: Longman)

Noel, Ruth (1980), *The Languages of Tolkien's Middle-earth* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin)

Odenstedt, Bengt (1990), *On the Origin and Early History of the Runic Script: Typology and Graphic Variation in the Older Futhark* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiskell International)

Odom, Herbert H. (1967): 'Generalizations on Race in Nineteenth Century Physical Anthropology', *Isis*, 58:1, 4-18

Olsen, Magnus (1937): 'Preface', pp. v-vii, in Shetelig, Haakon and Falk, Hjalmar (1937), *Scandinavian Archaeology*, translated by E.V. Gordon (Oxford: The Clarendon Press)

Orwell, George (1949), *1984* (London: Secker & Warburg)

Page, R. I. (1987), *Runes* (London: British Museum Press)

Peake, Harold J.E. (1931), *The Archaeology of Berkshire* (London: Methuen)

Perry, Michael W (2003), *Untangling Tolkien: A Chronology and Commentary for* The Lord of the Rings (Seattle: Inklings Books)

Perry, W.J. (1923), *The Children of the Sun* (London: Mehtuen)

Perry, W.J. (1924), *The Growth of Civilization* (London: Methuen)

Phillips, C. W. (1940): 'The Excavation of the Sutton Hoo Ship Burial', *Antiquaries Journal*, 20, 149-202

Pictet, Adolphe (1877), *Les Origines Indo-européennes; ou, les Aryas Primitifs: Essai de Paléontologie Linguistique* (Paris: J. Cherbuliez)

Pimlott, J.A.R. (1978), *The Englishman's Christmas: A Social History* (Sussex: The Harvester Press)

Pombo, Olga (1987), *Leibniz and the Problem of a Universal Language* (Münster: Nodus Publikationen)

Poole, William (2002): 'A Baboon in the Garden of Eden: The Private Heresies of Francis Lodwick – Merchant, Linguist and Amateur Theologian', *Times Literary Supplement*, December 27 2002

Poole, William (2003): 'The Divine and the Grammarian: Theological Disputes in the 17th Century Universal Language Movement', *Historiographia Linguistica*, 30, 273-300

Pope, Alexander (1714), *The Rape of the Lock: An Heroi-Comical Poem, in Five Canto's* (London: Bernard Lintott)

Priestman, Judith (1992), *J.R.R. Tolkien: Life and Legend: An Exhibition to Commemorate the Centenary of the Birth of J.R.R. Tolkien (1892-1973)* (Oxford: Bodleian Library)

Purkiss, Diane (2000), *Troublesome Things: A History of Fairies and Fairy Stories* (London: The Penguin Press)

Pyles, Thomas (1964), *The Origins and Development of the English Language* (New York: Harcourt Brace & World)

Quak, Arend (1996): 'Noch einmal die Latein-These', pp. 171-9, in Looijenga, Tineke and Quak, Arend (eds), *Frisian Runes and Neighbouring Traditions: Proceedings of he First International Symposium on Frisian Runes at the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden 26-29 January 1994* (Amsterdam: Rodopi)

Quiñonez, Jorge (1988a): 'The Purposes, Goals and Plans of the Elvish Linguistic Fellowship', *Vinyar Tengwar*, 1, 3

Quiñonez, Jorge (1988b): 'A Report from Mythcon XIX', by Jorge Quiñonez, *Vinyar Tengwar*, 1, 4

Rautala, Helena (1992): 'Familiarity and Distance: Quenya's Relation to Finnish', pp. 21-32, in ," in Battarbee, K.J. (ed.), *Scholarship & Fantasy: Proceedings of the 'The Tolkien Phonomenon', May 1992, Turku, Finland* (Turku: University of Turku)

Rearick, Anderson III (2004): "Why Is The Only Good Orc a Dead Orc? The Dark Face of Racism Examined in Tolkien's World", *Modern Fiction Studies*, 50:4, 861-875

Reay, I. E. (1994): 'Sound Symbolism', pp. 4064-70, in Asher, R.E. (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, Vol. 8 (Oxford; New York; Seoul; Tokyo: Pergamon Press)

Redford, Donald B. (ed.) (2001), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press

Reilly, Robert J. (1963): 'Tolkien and the Fairy Story', *Thought*, 38, 89-106

Renan, E (1887), *Histoire du Peuple Israël* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy)

Renfrew, Colin (1973), *Before Civilization: The Radiocarbon Revolution and Prehistoric Europe* (Harmondsworth: Penguin)

Restad, Penne L. (1995), *Christmas in America: A History* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Roach Smith, Charles (1852), *Collectanea Antiqua: Etchings and Notices of Ancient Remains, Illustrative of the Habits, Customs and History of Past Ages* (London: privately printed)

Roberts, B. K. (1987): 'Landscape Archaeology', pp. 77-95, in Wagstaff, J. M. (ed.), *Landscape and Culture: Geographical and Archaeological Perspectives* (Oxford; New York: Blackwell)

Robins, R. H. (1997), *A Short History of Linguistics* (London: Longman)

Rogers, Deborah C. (1975): 'Everyclod and Everyhero: The Image of Man in Tolkien', pp. 69-76, in Lobdell Jared (ed.), *A Tolkien Compass* (Illinois: Open Court)

Rosebury, Brian (2003), *Tolkien: A Cultural Phenomenon* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan)

Ryan, J. S. (1969), *Tolkien: Cult or Culture* (Armidale, N.S.W: University of New England)

Salo, David (2004), *A Gateway To Sindarin: A Grammar of an Elvish Language from J.R.R. Tolkien's* Lord of the Rings (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press)

Sampson, Geoffrey (1980), *Schools of Linguistics: Competition and Evolution* (London: Hutchinson)

Sapir, Edward (1921), *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co.)

Sapir, Edward (1929), 'A Study in Phonetic Symbolism', *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 12, 225-239

Sapir, Edward (1931): 'Wanted: A World Language', *The American Mercury*, February 1931

Saussure, Ferdinand de (1916), *Cours de Linguistique Générale* (Paris: Payot)

Saussure, Léopold de (1899), *Psychologie de la Colonisation Française* (Paris: Félix Alcan)

Shaw, Ian (1999): 'Culture History', pp. 185-6, in Shaw, Ian and Robert, Jameson (eds), *A Dictionary of Archaeology* (Oxford, UK; Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers)

Shetelig, Haakon and Falk, Hjalmar (1937), *Scandinavian Archaeology*, translated by E.V. Gordon (Oxford: The Clarendon Press)

Shippey, T. A. (1982), *The Road to Middle-Earth* (London: Allen and Unwin)

Shippey, T. A. (2001), *J.R.R. Tolkien: Author of the Century* (London: HarperCollins)

Shippey T. A., et al (eds) (1991), *Leaves from the Tree: J.R.R. Tolkien's Shorter Fiction* (London: Tolkien Society)

Shippey, Tom (1980), 'Book Review: An Introduction to Elvish', *Mallorn*, 13, 7-10

Shippey, Tom (1996): 'Tolkien as a Post-War Writer', pp. 84-93, in Reynolds, Patricia and GoodKnight, Glen (eds), *Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference, 1992: Proceedings of the Conference Held at Keble College, Oxford, England, 17th-24th August 1992 to Celebrate the Centenary of the Birth of Professor J.R.R. Tolkien, Incorporating the 23rd Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon XXIII) and Oxonmoot 1992* (Milton Keynes: Tolkien Society)

Shippey, Tom (2002): 'Tolkien and Iceland: the Philology of Envy', Paper Presented at 'Tolkien, Laxness, Undset: A Symposium', Sigurður Nordal Institute and Nordic House, Reykjavik, 13-14 September 2002. URL: http://www.nordals.hi.is/Apps/WebObjects/HI.woa/wa/dp?detail=1004508&name=nordals_en_greinar_og_erindi [accessed September 2005]

Shippey, Tom (2004): 'Light-elves, Dark-elves, and Others: Tolkien's Elvish Problem', *Tolkien Studies*, 1, 1-15

Sibley, Jane (1989): 'J.R.R. Tolkien's Runes', *Vinyar Tengwar*, 6, 7-8

Silver, Carole (1999), *Strange and Secret Peoples: Fairies and Victorian Consciousness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Sinex, Margaret (2005): 'Tolkien's Haradrim and Medieval Constructions of the Other', Paper Presented at the 40th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, 5-8 May 2005

Skok, Charles (1994): 'Cremation', p. 213, in Glazier, Michael and Hellwig, Monica K. (eds), *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan)

Smedley, Audrey (1999), *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder: Westview Press)

Smiles, Sam (1994), *The Image of Antiquity: Ancient Britain and the Romantic Imagination* (Yale University Press)

Smith, Arden R. (1995): 'The Túrin Prose Fragment: An Analysis of a Rúmilian Document', *Vinyar Tengwar*, 37, 15-23

Smith, Arden R. (2000): 'Certhas, Skirditaila, Fuþark: A Feigned History of Runic Origins', pp. 105-12, in Flieger, Verlyn and Hostetter, Carl F. (eds), *Tolkien's Legendarium: Essays on the History of Middle-earth* (Westport; London: Greenwood Press)

Smith, Arden R. (ed.) (2001): 'The Alphabet of Rúmil', *Parma Eldalamberon*, 13

Smith, Arden R. (ed.) (2003): 'The Valmaric Script', *Parma Eldalamberon*, 14

Smith, Arden R. (ed.) (2004): 'Early Runic Documents', *Parma Eldalamberon*, 15

Smith, Arden R. and Wynne, Patrick (2000), 'Tolkien and Esperanto', *Seven: An Anglo-American Literary Review*, 17, 27-46

Smith, G.E. (1923), *The Ancient Egyptians and the Origin of Civilization* (London: Harper)

Smith, G.E. (1933), *The Diffusion of Culture* (London: Watts)

Spencer, Herbert (1874), *The Study of Sociology* (London: King)

Steeves, Edna L. (1973): 'Negritude and the Noble Savage', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 11:1, 91-104

Stenström, Anders (1996): 'A Mythology? For England?', pp. 310-14, in Reynolds, Patricia and GoodKnight, Glen (eds), *Proceedings of the J.R.R. Tolkien Centenary Conference, 1992: Proceedings of the Conference Held at Keble College, Oxford, England, 17th-24th August 1992 to Celebrate the Centenary of the Birth of Professor*

J.R.R. Tolkien, Incorporating the 23rd Mythopoeic Conference (Mythcon XXIII) and Oxonmoot 1992 (Milton Keynes: Tolkien Society)

Stepan, Nancy (1982), *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800-1960* (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books)

Stocking, George W. (1968), *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (New York; London: The Free Press; Collier-Macmillan Limited)

Stocking, George W. (1987), *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press)

Stocking, Jr. George W. (1966): 'Franz Boas and the Culture Concept in Historical Perspective', *American Anthropologist*, 68, 4, pp. 867-882

Tawber, Abraham (ed.) (1965), *George Bernard Shaw On Language* (London: Peter Owen)

Thompson, Francis (1913), *The Works of Francis Thompson.* Vols. 1 and 2 (London: Burns & Oates)

Thoms, William J. (1849), *The Primeval Antiquities of Denmark. Translated and Applied to the Illustration of Similar Remains in England* (London: Oxford printed)

Tilley, C. (1994), *A Phenomenology of Landscape* (Oxford: Berg)

Tinkler, John (1968): 'Old English in Rohan', pp. 164-9, in Isaacs, Neil D. and Zimbardo, Rose A. (eds), *Tolkien and the Critics: Essays on J.R.R. Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings'* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press)

Tolkien, Christopher (1983), 'Foreword', pp. 1-4, in Tolkien, J.R.R., *The Monsters and the Critics: and Other Essays*, edited by Christopher Tolkien (London: Allen and Unwin)

Tolkien, Christopher (2002): 'Foreword', pp. 1-7, in Tolkien, J.R.R., *The Return of the Shadow*, edited by Christopher Tolkien (London: Allen & Unwin)

Tomaševskij, Boris (1995): 'Literature and Biography', pp. 81-89, in Burke, Seán (ed.), *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern: A Reader* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press)

Trafford, Simon (2000): 'Ethnicity, Migration Theory, and the Historiography of the Scandinavian Settlement of England', pp. 17-39, in Hadley, Dawn M. and Richards, Julian D. (eds), *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries, Studies in the Early Middle-Ages*, vol. 2 (Turnhout, Belgioum: Brepols)

Trevor-Roper, H. (1983): 'The Invention of Tradition: The Highland Tradition of Scotland', pp. 15-41, in Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Trigger, Bruce G. (1989), *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press)

Turville-Petre, Gabriel (1964), *Myth and Religion of the North: The Religion of Ancient Scandinavia* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson)

Turville-Petre, Joan (1981): 'Editor's Preface', pp. v-vi, in Tolkien, J.R.R., *The Old English Exodus*, edited by Joan Turville-Petre (Oxford: Clarendon Press)

Tyler, J. E. A. (2002), *The Complete Tolkien Companion* (London: Pan Books)

Vance, J. (1958), *The Language of Pao* (New York: Bouregy)

Ward, O. C. (1999): 'John Langdon Down: The Man and the Message', *Down Syndrome Research and Practice*, 6:1, 19-24

Webster, Leslie (1986): 'Anglo-Saxon England AD 400-1100', pp. 119-160, in Longworth, I. and Cherry J. (eds), *Archaeology in Britain Since 1945* (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Publications)

West, Richard C. (1981), *Tolkien Criticism: An Annotated Checklist* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press)

Wheeler, Robert Eric Mortimer (1932), *Report on the Excavation of the Prehistoric and Post-Roman Site in Lydney Park, Gloucestershire* (Oxford: Society of Antiquaries)

Whitehouse, Ruth D. (ed.) (1983), *The Macmillan Dictionary of Archaeology* (London: Macmillan Press)

Williams, Henrik (1996): 'The Origin of the Runes', pp. 211-218, in Looijenga, Tineke and Quak, Arend (eds), *Frisian Runes and Neighbouring Traditions: Proceedings of he First International Symposium on Frisian Runes at the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden 26-29 January 1994* (Amsterdam: Rodopi)

Wrenn, C. L. (1959): 'Recent Work on Beowulf to 1958: Chapter I, Sutton Hoo and Beowulf', in Chambers, R.W. (ed.), *Beowulf: An Introduction to the Study of the Poem with a Discussion of the Stories of Offa and Finn.* 3rd ed (London: Cambridge University Press)

Wright, Joseph (1910), *Grammar of the Gothic Language* (Oxford: Clarendon Press)

Wright, David (2001), *Mental Disability in Victorian England: The Earlswood Asylum 1847-1901* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

www1: The Elvish Linguistic Fellowship: A Special Interest Group of the Mythopoeic Society. URL: http://www.elvish.org/ [accessed September 2005]

www2: Ardalambion: Of the Tongues of Arda, the Invented World of J.R.R. Tolkien.
URL: http://www.uib.no/People/hnohf/ [accessed September 2005]

www3: The First International Conference on J.R.R. Tolkien's Invented Languages - Omentielva Minya.
URL: http://web.comhem.se/~u86023928/omentielva/ [accessed September 2005]

www4: Sarehole Mill – Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery.
URL: http://www.bmag.org.uk/sarehole_mill/ [accessed September 2005]

Yaguello, Marina (1991), *Lunatic Lovers of Language: Imaginary Languages and their Inventors, translated by Catherine Slater* (London: Athlone Press)

Young, Robert J. C. (2002), 'Race and Language in the Two Saussures', pp. 63-80, in Osborne, Peter and Standford, Stella (eds), *Philosophies of Race and Ethnicity* (London; New York: Continuum)

