

# Agreement of adjectives in Quenya

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Oct. 8th 2006

Who shall say whether the free adjective has created images bizarre and beautiful, or the adjective been freed by strange and beautiful pictures in the mind?

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*A Secret Vice*, last sentence

## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Earliest Qenya sources</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Early Qenya Grammar</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Qenya poems of the 20s</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1	Case-inflected . . . . .	3
3.2	Not case-inflected . . . . .	5
3.3	Additional nominative . . . . .	6
3.4	Discussion . . . . .	6
<b>4</b>	<b>Qenya of the 30s and 40s</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Qenya of <i>The Lord of the Rings</i></b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Qenya of the 50s</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Qenya of the 60s</b>	<b>9</b>
7.1	With case inflection . . . . .	9
7.2	Without case inflection . . . . .	10
<b>8</b>	<b>Summary and final discussion</b>	<b>10</b>
8.1	Attributive usage in the late years . . . . .	10
8.2	Predicative usage . . . . .	11

## Introduction

Whenever nouns are qualified by adjectives the link between them can be established by making the adjective agree in case, number, or gender. In various languages the treatment is different – there may be no agreement at all, agreement in all three instances or just in some combinations of them.

There is no grammatical gender in Tolkien’s Q(u)enya apart from some personalized forms in the early sources, so we are limited to case and number. The adjective can be in preceding or postpositive position and agree in case, number, both, or none; so that with a case-inflected plural noun there are 8 theoretical possibilities of how the adjective can behave. For a case-inflected singular noun or for a not inflected plural noun there are 4. It will not surprise a scholar of Tolkien’s works that there is at least one example for almost every possible pattern; but some patterns are more usual than others and some are only used in verse.

Thus the aim of this article is to examine Q(u)enya adjectives through their external development regarding plural and case agreement with the nouns they qualify.

# 1 Earliest Qenya sources

The poem *Narqelion* was one of the earliest, if not the earliest Qenya text written. It is untranslated, but a tentative translation and analysis with the help of the QL was attempted in VT40:8-32. So all references to adjectives and the nouns they qualify are bound to the right interpretation. I give here the proposed translation, see VT40 for more detail.

Other examples can be found on the world ship map in LT1:84-85.

preceding adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- **ōmi karmar** \*'all deeds' (PE15:32,33) < **ōmi** pl. 'all' (cf. **ompi** '[plur. adj. with pl.] all, every' (QL:70)), **karma** 'shape, fashion – act, deed' (QL:45) + pl. -r

postpositive adjective (plural noun), no plural agreement

- **lasser pīnea** \*'small leaves' (VT40:8,13-14) < **lasser**, pl. of **lasse** (e) 'leaf' (QL:51), **pīnea** 'small' (QL:73)
- **rotser simpetalla pinqe** \*'pipes whistling thin' (VT40:8,24) < **rotse** 'pipe (tube)' (QL:80), **#simpeta** 'pipe' + present participle **-lla** (cf. **SIPi** 'whistle, pipe' (QL:84)), **pinqe (i)** 'slender, thin' (QL:73)  
[Here, **pinqe** might be employed as an adverb qualifying the process of piping, but it might also be a poetical word order for \*'thin pipes whistling'. If so, there is no agreement of **pinqe** with pl. **rotser**.]

postpositive adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- **ve sangar voro úmeai** \*'like throngs ever large' (VT40:8,15-16) < **ve** 'as, like' (QL:101) **sangar** 'throng, light mass, crowd' (QL:81), **voro** 'ever, always' (QL:102), **úmea** 'large' (QL:97)
  - **sangar úmeai** again in line 17
- **kuluvaí ya karnevalinar** \*'golden and orange-red [ones]' < **kuluva** 'of gold' (QL:49), **ya(n)** 'and' (QL:104), **{karnewalin}** 'russet, orange-red' (QL:48), cf. **'walin(a)** 'brown' (QL:103).  
[Here, **kuluva** and **#karnevalina** are both pluralized and refer either to the following **sinqi** 'jewels' or to earlier **lassi** 'leaves'.]
- **sangar [...]** **oíkta rāmavoite malinai** \*'thongs [...] of birds, having yellow wings' (VT40:8,16) < **oi** 'bird, hen' (QL:69) + **-kta, rāmavoite** 'having wings' (QL:78), **malinai**, pl. of **malina** 'yellow' (QL:58)
  - **sangar [...]** **oíkta rāmavoite karneambarai** \*'thongs of birds, having wings, red-breasted' < **karneambar** 'readbreast, robin adj. or noun', **-a** adj. (QL:48)  
[This line was first written exactly like the earlier one, **oíkta rāmavoite malinai**. Both phrases seem to be a group of three adjectives with only the last one agreeing in number with **sangar**.]
- **natsi nostalen máre** \*'things/beings good by nature' (PE15:32) < **nat (tt)** 'thing' (QL:64) + pl. **-i** with **-tt-** > **-ts-**, **nostalen mára** 'good by nature' (GL:10), here pl. **máre**
- **i hondor nērinwe** \*'the hearts of men' (PE15:32,36) < **hondo** 'heart' (QL:40) + pl. **-r**; **#nērinwa** \*'mannish' (cf. **ner** 'man, husband', **nerea** 'manly, stout, brave' (QL:65)), pl. **\*-ai** > **-e**
- **Tolli Kimpelear** \*'Twilit Isles'? < pl. **Tolli** of **Tol (Il)** 'an island, any rise standing alone in the water, plain of grass etc.' (QL:94); **#kimpelea** is of unclear origin, perhaps connected to **PELE**-<sup>(1)</sup> 'fence in' (QL:73) because the isles are bounding and protecting Valinor?
- **I Tolli Kuruvar** 'The Magic Isles' < **kuru** 'magic, wizardry (of the good magic)' (QL:49), **kuruvar**, pl. of **#kuruva** \*'magical' (QL:49))
- **I Nori Landar** \*'The Great Lands' < cf. **nōre** 'native land, nation, family – country' (QL:66) + **landar**, pl. of **landa** 'broad, wide' (QL:51)
- **Neni Erùmear** 'Outermost Waters' < **nen** 'river, water' (QL:65), **erùmear**, pl. of **erūmea** 'outer, outermost' (QL:36)  
[The accent in **Erùmear** is perhaps an ill-formed or misread macron.]

It appears that at this time it is usual in Qenya to postpose adjectives. They usually agree in number (there is no attestation with cases), but at least one example lacks agreement (**lasser pínea**), so that it seems optional – at least in verse. The more complicated formation of several adjectives with only the last one inflected probably plays a special role and another such example will occur later (part 8.2).

In *Narqelion* the usual plural marker is **-i** for adjectives ending in **-a**, although **-r** appears in **karnevalinar**. This might be explained by its use as a noun, \*'orange-red ones' or by poetical alteration in the phrase **kuluvai ya karnevalinar** (rather than repetitional \***kuluvai ya karnevalinai**). The adjectives that are part of geographical terms from LT all add **-r**.

## 2 Early Qenya Grammar

The *Early Qenya Grammar* was written by Tolkien around 1923 and consists out of a manuscript version and a typescript version – a partially expanded fair copy of the former. Some valuable explanations regarding the agreement of adjectives are given here.

At first, an important thing to consider is the 'loose compound', *a free and living function* which is *written with a 'raised stop'*, but often as full compound in poetry (PE14:45). Loose compounds differ from usual compounds in the way that they are not lexicalized, the respective parts are more distinct and *usually retain their own accentuation*. Thus **ohta** 'war' and **karo** 'deed' form **óhta-káro** 'warlike deed, hostile unfriendly act'; **maptale** 'seizure' and **lehesta** 'riding, raid' form **máptale-lehésta** 'a raid' (the acute accent apparently indicates the primary stress and the grave the secondary). Although not said by Tolkien, 'a war deed' and 'a seizure raid' would probably be the loose compound equivalents in English.

But important in our context is that adjectives may precede in just the same way and are then uninflected, for example **anda-ráma** 'long arm(ed)' – as it can be seen from the translation, the result may be used either as a noun or as a new adjective. The plural would presumably be \***anda-rámar** 'long-arms'.

Furthermore Tolkien distinguishes the four *cases* (nominative, accusative, genitive and dative) from the five *adverbial suffixes*: inessive **-sse**, ablative **-llo**, allative **-nta/-tta**, partitive **-inen** and manner **-ndon**. The adverbial suffixes (1) *cannot all be formed from every noun and adjective* and (2) *they are never added except in verse to an adjective in agreement with its noun: where a qualified noun receives one of these endings the adjective usually precedes uninflected (unless for plural) and may be written as a loose compound* (PE14:46).

The example given is **tára-kasse** 'on the high head', where the adjective **tára** 'high' precedes and is not inflected.

The typescript version gives further expansions to this idea, noting that *the Qenya adj. may either precede or follow the qualified noun; in the former case it forms virtually a loose compound with the noun, but is written separate* (PE14:76), so **anda ráma** '(a) long wing'. The wording in the manuscript *precedes uninflected (unless for plural)* is changed to *precedes uninflected (except rarely for plural)* (PE14:78).

So the possibilities in the plural are **tára-kasisse(n)** or rarely **tare kasissen** (sic). According to the explanation, agreement would be poetical: \***†tárasse kasse** or \***†tárasen kasissen**.

Agreement would be usual for the four 'ordinary' cases (as compared to the adverbial suffixes) and indeed we find: **ni-hepsine** [...] **i-mailinen losselin** 'I myself bound [...] the beautiful flowers' (PE14:56) where both **#mailina** 'beautiful' and **#losse** 'flower' are put into the accusative plural.

## 3 Qenya poems of the 20s

The three Qenya poems *Oilima Markirya*, *Nieninqe* and *Earendel* are presented in PE16 and MC with all draft forms. This is where most examples concerning the morphology of adjectives is found. Conventions from PE16 will be used for the denotation of the versions. The late versions from the 50s or later are discussed further below.

### 3.1 Case-inflected

preceding adjective (singular noun), no case agreement

- OM1a,b,c: **lúne veasse** \*'in the blue sea' < **lúne** 'blue' (QL:57, PE16:75), **vea** 'sea' (PE16:138) + inessive **-sse**
- OM1a,b,c: **tanda kiryaiko** \*'with that ship' < **tanda** \*'that' (cf. TA in QL:87; PE14:54), **kirya** 'ship' (PE15:77) + comitative sg. **-iko**

- OM1c: **móre veasse** \*'in the dark sea' < **móre** \*'dark' (cf. MORO in QL:62)
- OM1: **pinilya wilwarindon** 'small like a butterfly' < **pinilya** 'small' (cf. PINI (QL:73)), **wilwarin** 'butterfly' (QL:104) + similative **-ndon**
- OM2a: **oilima óresse** 'in the last morning' < **oilima** 'last, ultimate' (PE16:75), **óre** 'the dawn, Sunrise, East' (LT1:264) + inessive **-sse**
- OM2a: **valka wilwarindon** 'vague as a butterfly' < **valka** 'vague' of unclear origin, perhaps the same or similar to **walda** 'excited, wild', also **walka** (PE17:154)
- OM2: **oilima ailinello** \*'from the last shore' < **oilima** 'last, ultimate' (PE16:75), cf. **aile, ailin** 'beach' (PE16:75) + ablative **-llo**
- OM2: **ringa ambar** 'in her cold bosom' < **ringa** 'damp, cold, chilly' (QL:80), **\*amba** 'breast' + dative **-r** [QL:30 actually gives **Ambar** (-r or -s) 'breast']
- OM2: **lúnelinqe vear** \*'in the blue-flowing sea' < **lúnelinqe** 'blue-flowing' (PE16:75), **vea** 'sea' + dative **-r**
- OM2: **silda-ránar** 'in the moon gleaming' < **silda** 'gleaming' (cf. SILI (QL:83)), **rána** 'moon' (Silm:ran-) + dative **-r**

preceding adjective (singular noun), case agreement

-not attested-

preceding adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, no plural agreement

- OM1d,e,f: **laiq' ondoisen** < 'on the green rocks' < **laiqa** 'green' (QL:52), **ondo** 'stone' (PE15:77, PE16:138) + archaic/poetic inessive pl. **-isen** (PE16:115)
- OM1: **laiqa'ondoisen**
- OM2: **laiqa ondolissen**

preceding adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, plural agreement

see 3.3

preceding adjective (plural noun), case agreement, plural agreement

-not attested-

preceding adjective (plural noun), case agreement, no plural agreement

-not attested-

postpositive adjective (singular noun), no case agreement

- OM1,OM1d,e,f,: **veasse lúnelinqe** \*'in the blue-flowing sea' < **lúnelinqe** 'blue-flowing' (PE16:75)
  - OM1g: **laivarisse luunelinkve** \*'in the blue-flowing ocean' < **laivar** 'ocean' (PE16:77)
  - OM2a: **vear lúnelinqe** < **vea** 'sea' + dative **-r**
- OM2: **óresse oilima** 'in the last morning' < **óre** 'the dawn, Sunrise, East' (LT1:264) + inessive **-sse**, **oilima** 'last, ultimate' (PE16:75)

postpositive adjective (singular noun), case agreement

- OM1a: **kiryinqen tinweningen** \*'a star-white boat' < #**kiryinqe** \*'little ship' from **kirya** 'ship' (PE15:77), **tinwe** 'star' (QL:92), **ninqe** 'white' (QL:66); both with nominative **-n** [This is a tentative interpretation, another one would be **kir-** 'to sail' + inf. **-inqe** (PE14:28), so \*'to sail white-star', see PE16:57]
- OM1d,e: **ailisse oilimasse, ailinisse oilimasse** \*'on the last shore' < **aile, ailin** 'beach' (PE16:75)
- OM1d,e: **oilimisse alkarasse** \*'in the bright ending' < #**oilin (m-)** \*'ending' + inessive **-isse** (PE16:113), **alkara** adj. 'bright' (PE16:75) + inessive **-sse**

- OM1d: **alkarisse oilimasse** \*'on the last morning' < **alkar** 'shining, light of day' (PE16:75) + inessive **-isse** or **-asse**, **oilima** 'last, ultimate' (PE16:75)
- OM1e: **alkarisse panyarasse/wanyarasse** \*'in the light of the setting sun' or \*'in the fading daylight' < **#panyara** \*'setting' (cf. PANA 'arrange' (QL:72)) or **#wanyara** \*'disappearing, fading' (cf. VAHA (QL:99), AVA 'go away, depart, leave' (QL:33))
- OM1g addition: **tauren lintyulussean** \*'forest having many poplars' < **taure** 'forest' (PE16:75), **lintyulussea** 'having many poplars' (QL:53) + nominative **-n**
- OM1g addition: **tauren linqarassean** \*'forest, where many watch' < **linqarassea** perhaps related to QARA- 'care for, guard, watch (over)' (QL:76) + nominative **-n**

postpositive adjective (plural noun), case agreement, plural agreement

- OM1d: **ondon móren** >> **ondoin mórin** >> **ondoin morin** 'the dark rocks' < **ondo** 'stone' (PE15:77, PE16:138) + archaic/poetic nom. pl. **-in** (PE16:115); **more** \*'dark' (cf. MORO in QL:62) > nom. pl. **morin**
  - OM1e,f,g: **öndöin moorin**, **ondoin {mórin}**, **ondoin moorin**
- OM1b,c: **ondoisen andalissen** \*'on the long rocks' < **ondo** 'stone' (PE15:77, PE16:138) + archaic/poetic inessive pl. **-isen** (PE16:115), **anda** 'long' (PE15:74) + inessive pl. **-li-ssen**
- OM1,OM1f: **ailissen oilimaisen** \*'on the last shores' — see above
  - OM1g: **ailinissen oilimaisen**
- OM1g addition (PE16:80): **ornin lassevarnen** \*'brown-leaved trees' < **orne** 'tree' (PE16:139), **lasse** (e) 'leaf' (QL:51), **varne** 'brown' (Etym:BÁRAN-) + nominative **-n**
- OM1g addition (PE16:80): **tavárin lilyen** \*'many wood-fays' < **tavāri** 'fay of the woods' (PE14:10), **#lilya** perhaps \*'many' (cf. LĪ (QL:53)) + nom. pl. **-in** (PE16:115)
- E1a: **wingildin silqelosseän** 'foam maidens with flower white hair' < **wingild-** 'foam maiden' (PE16:100) (cf. **'wingild-** 'nymph' (QL:104)) + nom. pl. **-in** + **#silqelossea** \*'white-haired' (cf. **silqe** (e) 'a tress of hair' (QL:83), **losselie** 'white people' in *Nieninqe*), archaic/poetic nom. pl. **silqelosseän** with **\*-eain** > **-eän**
  - E1b: **vingildin silkvelosseän**
- N1b variant: **wingildin wilwarindeän** 'the foam-fairies like the butterflies' < **wilwarindea** 'like a *wilwarin* or butterfly' (cf. **'wilwarin** 'butterfly' (QL:104)), nom. pl. **\*-eain** > **eän**
- E1a: **tyulmin aiqalin** 'the masts tall' < **#tyulm-** 'mast' (cf. **tyulma** 'mast' (QL:50)), nom. pl. **tyulmin** + **aiqa** 'steep' (QL:29) + nom. pl. **-li-n**
  - E1b: **tyulmin aikvalin**

postpositive adjective (plural noun), case agreement, no plural agreement

-not attested-

postpositive adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, plural agreement

- OM1d: **{ondoisen laiqe}** 'on the green rocks' < **ondo** 'stone' (PE15:77, PE16:138) + archaic/poetic inessive pl. **-isen** (PE16:115), **laiqa** 'green' (QL:52), pl. **laiqe**
- OM2: **tollalinta ruste** 'upon crumbling hills' < **tolla** 'hill top' (PE16:75) + allative pl. **-li-nta**, **rusta** 'crumbling' (cf. **rusta kirya** 'broken ship'), pl. **ruste**
- OM2: **assari silde** 'on bones gleaming' perhaps < **as-** (ass-) 'bone' (QL:33) + dative pl. **-ri**, **silda** 'gleaming' (cf. SILI (QL:83), **silda-ránar** in OM2), pl. **silde**

postpositive adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, no plural agreement

-not attested-

### 3.2 Not case-inflected

Now follow some examples without an explicit case suffix. As the underlying Qenya grammar changes, OM1g still shows inflected nominative, but no explicit accusative. In OM2 and OM2a the nominative flexion also disappears. For these examples we cannot say anything about case agreement, of course:

preceding adjective, plural agreement

- OM2: **níve qímari** 'pale phantoms' < \***níva** 'pale' of uncertain origin, pl. **níve** + #**qímar** 'phantom', pl. **qímari** perhaps from \*QIM- related to QIV-, QIPI- \*'awake' (QL:29)
- E1a: **laiqali linqi falmari** 'green wet waves' < **laiqa** 'green' (QL:52) + pl. **-li**, #**linqe** 'wet', pl. **linqi** (cf. **linqea** 'watery', **liqin(a)** 'wet' (QL:54)), **falmar** 'a wave as it breaks' (QL:37) + pl. **-i**
  - E1b: **laikvali linkvi falmari**
- OM1g: **moori raukvi** \*'dark storms' < **móre** \*'dark' (cf. MORO in QL:62), pl. **móri**; **rauko** 'ravens, rushing' (PE16:77), pl. **rauovi**

preceding adjective, no plural agreement

-not attested-

postpositive adjective, plural agreement

- N1a,b: **wingildi wilwarindear** as above, with pl. **-r**
- N1a,b: **táli paptalasselindear** 'with feet whose music is that of falling leaves' < **tāl** 'foot' (PE14:76), pl. **táli**, **paptalasselindea** < **papt-** 'small leaf' (QL:72), **lasse (e)** 'leaf' (QL:51), #**lindea** 'musical' (cf. **lindelea** 'melodious' (QL:54)) + pl. **-r**

postpositive adjective, no plural agreement

- OM2: **ondoli losse** 'white rocks' < **losse** 'white' (cf. **losselie** 'white people' in *Nieninqe*)
  - OM2a: **ondoli ninqe** < **ninqe (i)** 'white' (QL:66)

### 3.3 Additional nominative

A special kind of pattern is when adjectives agree with case-inflected nouns in number, but are themselves put into the nominative. The adjective may either precede or follow.

- OM1g: **laikven ondolissen** \*'on the green rocks' < **laiqa** 'green' (QL:52), nom. pl. \***-ain** > **-en**; **ondo** 'stone' (PE15:77, PE16:138) + inessive pl. **-li-ssen**
- OM1,OM1f,g: **alkarissen oilimain** \*'in the shinings [that are] last' < **alkar** 'shining, light of day' (PE16:75) + inessive pl. **-issen**, **oilima** 'last, ultimate' (PE16:75) + archaic/poetic nom. pl. **-in**
- OM1,OM1f: **ailinisse alkarain** \*'on shores [that are] bright' < **aile**, **ailin** 'beach' (PE16:75) + inessive **-isse**, **alkara** 'brilliant' (QL:30), 'bright' (PE16:75) + archaic/poetic nom. pl. **-in**
  - OM1g: **ailinissen alkarain**

[In **ailinisse** the plural marker **-n** is missing; the suffix **-isse** forms the inessive/locative singular of consonantal nouns as **pilin** > **pilindisse** (PE16:113), but **ailinisse** is perhaps poetically interpreted as plural with pl. **-i**.]

The nominative might be explained as a construction with a relative sentence: \*'on the rocks that are green [ones]'.

### 3.4 Discussion

Since we are once again dealing with poetry here, several constructions must be archaic or poetic. Although there are examples for most of the possible patterns, some quantification can be made.

For preceding adjectives it seems usual not to agree in case or number, for singular and plural nouns alike. The only example with agreement is **laikven ondolissen**, hence probably poetical – and this goes together with EQG. But if the noun is not case-inflected there are some examples with agreement (even manifold as in **laiqali linqi falmari**), but no example without agreement.

Postpositive adjectives always agree in plural, there are no examples without. But there are about as many samples with case agreement as without it – perhaps one of the two patterns is also poetical.

The plural markers employed are **-i** (including **-e** < **-ai** (PE14:45)), **-r** and **-li**. PE14:46 explains for forms like **anda** 'long', pl. **ande** (rather than **\*andali**) that *the differentiation of the endings has come about through tending to avoid the longer endings and their jingling repetition – but the -li of vocalic plurals is originally secondary [...]*. Another reason for the alternation may be their fitting into the metre, as in **ondoisen andalissen**. No pl. **-r** is found in the *Oilima Markirya* versions, probably because of its coalescence with the dative ending.

The conception from EQG that adjectives always agree in the four cases (as compared to the adverbial suffixes) does not seem to find its application. We find for instance **lúnelinqe vear** and other similar samples with dative **-r**.

## 4 Quenya of the 30s and 40s

This timespan includes mainly the samples given in the *The Lost Road* and one example from the draft to *The Lord of the Rings*.

preceding adjective (plural noun), no plural agreement

- **ilya maller** 'all roads' (LR:47, SD:310) < **ilya** 'all, the whole' (Etym:IL-), **malle** 'street, road' (Etym:MBAL-) + pl. **-r**

preceding adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, no plural agreement

- **Kuivië, kuivië! laurea'esselfnen >> ankalim'esselfnen** \*'Vivat, vivat! By (many) glorious names' (SD:47) < **kuivië** glossed 'awakening' (Etym:KUY-), 'life' (VT42:8) is here perhaps a literal translation of *hail* = 'health, prosperity, good luck' or something like *vivat* 'live (long)!', **laurea** 'golden, like gold' (Rgeo:66) – perhaps poetically for 'glorious', **esse** 'name' (VT43:14, PM:339) + part. pl. instrumental **-lí-nen**

Unfortunately, the changed variant shows elision of the final vowel, so that we do not get to know whether sg. **ankalima** 'exceedingly bright' (Let:211) or pl. **\*ankalime** was intended.

## 5 Quenya of *The Lord of the Rings*

It is probably better to regard *The Lord of the Rings* separately. As the first piece of work released for the public and containing substantial Quenya material, it surely had a lot of influence on the following development of Elvish. Although Tolkien always kept experimenting, it is good to keep in mind which patterns were 'fixed' in the LotR. A comparison with the non-poetical word order of *Namárië* given in *The Road Goes Ever On* (1966) is also noteworthy. (See <http://www.uib.no/people/hnohf/namarie.htm> for an analysis.)

preceding adjective (singular noun), no case agreement

- **yuldar lisse-miruvóreva** 'draughts of the sweet mead'
- **i-aire táríva** or **tárió** 'of the holy queen' (prose, PE17:76)

preceding adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- **laurië lassi** 'leaves like gold'

- **lintë yuldar** 'swift draughts' (same in Rgeo)
- **ilyë tier** 'all paths' (same in Rgeo)
- **nu luini tellumar** 'under blue domes' (Rgeo)

postpositive adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- **lassi laurië** 'leaves like gold' (Rgeo)
- **tellumar nu luini** 'under blue domes'

Note that at some time Tolkien interprets **laurië** as the adverb 'goldenly' (homophone to the abstract noun 'goldenness') formed with the adverbial suffix **-ie** as in **norne lintie** 'he ran quickly' (PE17:58,61). This is not the sole explanation, however – *The Road Goes Ever On* cites the adj. **laurëa** (pl. **laurië**) 'golden'.

Note also Tolkien's later explanation for **lisse-miruvóreva**:

*The prefixing of an uninflected adjective to a noun as in lisse-miruvóre to make a loose compound is normal in Quenya. So, as in English, is the prefixing of an uninflected noun to make a loose genitival or adjectival compound: so tári-líre "queen-song". But the piling up in this line, aire-tári=lírinen and the word order are in poetical style* (PE17:67; a similar, but shorter account in PE17:76).

We can see that the concept of loose compounds (both 'adjective + noun' and 'noun + noun') itself remained, and in **lisse-miruvóre** only the noun receives the ending.

However, there is no attestation of 'adjective + pluralized and case-inflected noun' in *Namárie*.

## 6 Quenya of the 50s

This time includes the drafts for the translations of Catholic prayers (VT43-44), the essay *Quendi and Eldar* (1959-60) and the *Nieninqe* version N2 from 1955 (PE16:96). There are not many examples with case-inflected nouns, but some with plural inflection:

preceding adjective (plural noun), no plural agreement

- **menya lucandor** 'our sinners' (At.I, VT43:8) < **me-nya** 'our', #**lucando** 'sinner' (probably < \*ULUK-'evil'), + pl. **-r**
  - **menya lucindor** 'our sinners' (At.IIa, IIb; VT43:9,10)
- **musse teñgwi** 'soft elements' (VT39:17) < **musse** 'soft' + **teñgwe** 'sign', pl. **teñgwi** [vowels and sonants/semivowels]
- **lehta teñgwi** 'free, released elements' (ibid.) < **lehta** 'released' ('loose, slacken' in Etym:LEK-) [vowels]
- **sarda teñgwi** 'hard sounds' (ibid.) < **sarda** 'stony, hard' (cf. Etym:SAR-) [consonants without sonants/semivowels]
- **tapta teñgwi** 'impeded elements' (ibid.) < **tapta** 'impeded' (cf. Etym:TAP- 'stop') [consonants]

[UPDATE February 4, 2014: Further linguistic terms of this kind appear in the *Tengwesta Qenderinwa* (probably first written in 1937, later revised around 1951, see PE18:10,20): **qenderin ólamar** 'Quendian consonants' (PE18:30), **qenderin ómandi** >> **Qenderin ómar** (PE18:32,83) and **alómea na-súrimar** 'voiceless aspirate' (PE18:30). The last word of the latter example is probably a nominalized adjective, thus lit. \*'voiceless aspirates'.]

preceding adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- **menye rohtar** 'our sinners' (At.III; VT43:11)
- **hlonaiti tengwi** 'phonetic signs' (VT39:4) < **hlonaitë** 'phonetic'
- **quante tengwi** 'full signs' (VT39:5) < **quanta** 'full' (Etym:KWAT-) [unit consonant + vowel]
- **rakine tengwi** 'stripped/deprived signs' (VT39:6) < #**rakina** 'tripped, deprived', cf. **rákina** 'broken' in MC:223 [consonant with the following vowel lost]

- **penye tengwi** 'lacking/inadequate signs' (VT39:6,8) < **penya** 'lacking' (cf. PEN- 'the lacking, the poor' WJ:408) [vowel with the preceding consonant lost]

postpositive adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- N2: **wingildi wilwarindie** 'foam-faires like the butterflies' (PE16:96) – see above
- N2: **táli lantalasselie** 'feet whose music is that of falling leaves' < **lantalasseliea** 'with a musical sound of falling leaves'

preceding adjective (singular noun), case agreement

- **Amille Eruva lisseo** 'Mother of divine grace' (VT44:12,18) < **amille** 'mother' (cf. **amil** (Etym:AM<sup>(1)</sup>-), **Eruva** 'divine' < **Eru** 'the One' + **-va**, **lisse** 'grace, sweetness' + gen. **-o** [**Eruva** can also be interpreted as the possessive inflection of **Eru** rather than an adjective, i.e. 'mother of the grace of God'.]
- **menya rohtaliello** (<< **menya ruhtaliello**) 'our sinners' (At.IV, VT43:11), lit. 'our sinner-people', so **#rohta** \*'sin, tresspass' + **lie** 'people' (Etym:LI-) + ablative **-llo**

preceding adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, no plural agreement

- **ilya raxellor** 'from all dangers' (VT44:5) < **ilya** 'all, the whole' (Etym:IL-), **raxe** 'danger' + ablative pl. **-llo-r**
- **Aran linta ciryalion** \*'king of swift ships' (PE17:147) < **aran** 'king' (ibid., WJ:369) + **linta** 'swift' (Rgeo:66), **cirya** 'ship' + part.pl. genitive **-li-o-n** [There is also a variant with the possessive case and a full compound: **Aran lintaciryalíva**]

The linguistic terms **musse/lehta/sarda/tapta teṅwi** are from the note to *Quendi and Eldar* called *Noldorin words for Language*. The forms given in *Quendi and Eldar Appendix D* contain singular adjectives: **hlon-aiti/quante/rakine/penye tengwi**. We seem to meet two different conceptions here – one following **ilya maller**, the other **ilye tier**. It is not clear, however, if the two may coexist. Perhaps they could; and an uninflected form results from a treatment as a loose compound where **musse-teṅwe** etc. are regarded as single morphological units. The other treatment would be that of a qualifier + noun.

## 7 Quenya of the 60s

This part includes examples from several late essays and the last two *Markirya* versions (MC:221-223), the later one will be designated OM3 by convention.

### 7.1 With case inflection

preceding adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, no plural agreement

- OM3: **atalantëa mindonnar** 'upon fallen towers' < **atalantëa** 'ruinous, downfallen', **mindon** 'tower' (Etym:MINI-) + allative pl. **-nna-r**
- **{ve quenderinwa koainen}** 'as with bodies of Elvish-kind' (PE17:174) < **ve** 'as, like' (Rgeo:66) + **#quenderinwa** \*'of the Quendi' (cf. **sindarinwa** 'Grey-elven' (LotR App.E)), pl. **quenderinwe**; **koa** 'house' (MR:250, PE17:199) + instrumental pl. **-i-nen**

preceding adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, plural agreement

- OM3: **{atalantië mindoninnar}** 'upon fallen towers' < **mindon** 'tower' (Etym:MINI-) + allative pl. **-i-nna-r**

- **ve quenderinwe koaron** 'after the manner of bodies of Elvish-kind' (PE17:174) < **koa** 'house' (MR:250, PE17:199) + genitive pl. **-r-on**

preceding adjective (singular noun), no case agreement

- **métima hrestallo** \*'from the last beach' < **métima** 'last', **hresta** 'beach' + ablative **-llo**
- **ringa súmaryasse** 'in her cold bosom' < **ringa** 'cold'; **súma** 'hollow cavity, bosom', locative **súma-ryasse** 'bosom-her-in'
- OM3 (first version): **métima amaurëasse** 'in the last morning' < **métima** 'ultimate, final', **amaurëa** '† dawn, early day' + locative **-sse**
  - OM3: **métim' auresse** < **aure** 'sunlight, day' (*Silm.index*)

postpositive adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, plural agreement

- **râmainen elvië** 'on wings like stars' < **râma** 'wing' + instrumental pl. **râma-inen**; **elvëa** 'starlike', pl. **elvië**
- **ondolissë mornë** 'on the black rocks' < **ondo** 'stone' + part.pl. locative **-li-ssë**; **morna** 'black', pl. **mornë**

postpositive adjective (plural noun), no case agreement, no plural agreement

-not attested-

## 7.2 Without case inflection

preceding adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- OM3 (first version): **ninqi ondor** 'white rocks' < **ninqe** 'white' (Etym:NIK-W), pl. **ninqi**
  - OM3: **ninqi carcar** < **karka** 'tooth' (Etym:KARAK-) + pl. **-r**
- **Eldarinwe Leperi are Notessi** 'The Elvish Fingers and Numerals' (VT48:4) < #**eldarinwa** 'Elvish', pl. **eldarinwe**; **leper** 'finger' (VT47:10) + pl. **-i**; **are** 'and' (cf. *√asa* 'beside' (VT47:31)); #**notessi** pl. 'numerals' < **nóte** 'number' (Etym:NOT-), **essi** 'names' (PM:339)
- **ve quenderinwe koar** 'like Elvish bodies' (PE17:175)
- **Kenime Kantar** 'Visible Shapes' (PE17:175) < #**kenima** 'visible' (cf. **ken-** 'see, behold' in OM3), pl. **kenime**, **kanta** 'shape' (cf. Etym:KAT-) + pl. **-r**

preceding adjective (plural noun), no plural agreement

- OM3 (first version): **i néka fairi** 'the pale phantoms' – cf. singular **néka** 'vague, faint, dim to see' above

postpositive adjective (plural noun), plural agreement

- OM3: **i fairi néke** 'the pale phantoms' < **faire** 'phantom, disembodied spirit', pl. **fairi**; **néka** 'vague, faint, dim to see', pl. **néke**
- OM3: **maiwi yaimië** 'like gulls wailing' < **maiwe** 'gull' (Etym:MIW-), pl. **maiwi**; **yaimëa** 'wailing' (adj.), pl. **yaimië**
- OM3: **ve tauri lillassië** \*'like many-leaved forests' < **taure** 'great wood, forest' (Etym:TÁWAR-), pl. **tauri**; **lillassëa** 'having many leaves', pl. **lillassië**

postpositive adjective (plural noun), no plural agreement

-not attested-

## 8 Summary and final discussion

### 8.1 Attributive usage in the late years

Which patterns were dominant in the last decades? At first one has to state that there is not a single example of case agreement, not even in the poems – so it does not seem to be usual, at best poetical. Let us consider plural agreement. For adjectives preceding a case-inflected plural noun we find five examples without agreement:

- **laurea’esselinen** \*’by (many) shining names’ (SD:47)
- **ilya raxellor** ’from all dangers’ (VT44:5)
- **atalantëa mindonnar** ’upon fallen towers’ (OM3)
- **Aran linta ciryalion** \*’king of swift ships’ (PE17:147)
- **{ve quenderinwa koainen}** ’as with bodies of Elvish-kind’ (PE17:174)

And only two examples with plural agreement:

- **{atalantië mindoninnar}** ’upon fallen towers’ (OM3)
- **ve quenderinwe koaron** ’after the manner of bodies of Elvish-kind’ (PE17:174)

Among these, **atalantië** >> **atalantëa** was a change from the second pattern to the first and **quenderinwa** >> **quenderinwe** went just the opposite way. This distribution goes well with the explanation of the EQG: *where a qualified noun receives one of these endings [-sse, -llo etc.] (a somewhat archaic mode) the adjective usually precedes uninflected (except rarely for plural) and is virtually a loose compound* (PE14:78).

On the other hand, for nouns that are not inflected in case, plural agreement seems to be more usual:

- **menye rohtar** ’our sinners’ (At.III; VT43:11)
- **laurië lassi** ’leaves like gold’
- **lintë yuldar** ’swift draughts’ (same in Rgeo)
- **ilyë tier** ’all paths’ (same in Rgeo)
- **luini tellumar** ’blue domes’ (Rgeo)
- **hlonaiti/quante/rakine/penye tengwi** ’phonetic/full/stripped/lacking signs’ (VT39:5-6)
- **ninqi ondor/carcar** ’white rocks’ (OM3)
- **Eldarinwe Leperi are Notessi** ’The Elvish Fingers and Numerals’ (VT48:4)
- **quenderinwe koar** ’Elvish bodies’ (PE17:175)
- **Kenime Kantar** ’Visible Shapes’ (PE17:175)

But also here, lack of agreement is found at various external stages:

- **ilya maller** ’all roads’ (LR:47, SD:310)
- **menya lucandor** ’our sinners’ (At.I,II)
- **musse/lehta/sarda/tapta teñgwi** ’soft/free/hard/empeded elements’ (VT39:17)
- **i néka fairi** ’the pale phantoms’ (OM3 first version)
- **qenderin ólamar** ’Quendian consonants’, **qenderin ómandi/ómar** (PE18:30,32,83)
- **alómea na-súrimar** ’voiceless aspirate’ (PE18:30)

For postpositive adjectives there is only one pattern – as far as the samples go, they always agree in plural. Probably it needs the convention of an immediately preceding adjective (be it a loose compound or not) to drop inflection and still keep the meaning unambiguous.

## 8.2 Predicative usage

Let us finally take a look at predicative adjectives. There are not many examples, and they are many years apart, but we can find samples for both possible patterns as well. Without plural agreement:

- **pilingwe súyer nalla qanta** \*'the airs being full with feathers' < **pilin** 'feather' (QL:54), possibly pl. **pilini** + **-ngwe** 'with', **súyer**, pl. of **súye** 'airs, breezes, winds' (QL:86), **nalla** \*'being', **qanta** 'full' (QL:78)
- **ondoin morin ninqe** 'the dark rocks [were] white' (PE16:64) < **ondo** 'stone' + archaic/poetic nom. pl. **-in**, **ninqe** 'white', **more** \*'dark' + pl. **-n**
- **i-Eldar "ataformaite"** 'Elves were ambidextrous' (AS1, VT49:6-8) < **ataformaite** 'ambidextrous' (< **ata** 'double, bi-, di-' (VT42:26) + **forma** 'right hand' (VT47:6) + adj. **-ite**)

And with plural agreement:

- **naltur** [...] **ulqe nūsimar** \*'they are noticeable as evil' (PE15:32,33) < **naltur** \*'they are' (cf. **NĀ** 'be, exist' (QL:64)); **ulqa** 'bad, evil' (PE15:70), pl. **-e**; #**nūsima** \*'noticeable' (cf. **nuste** 'sense of smell', Goldogrin **nus-** 'take notice, perceive' (GL:61)) + pl. **-r**
- **nalto ūsiēre** (PE15:32,37) \*'they are having escaped' < **nalto** \*'they are' #**ūsiēra** 'having escaped' (cf. **usin** 'he escapes' (QL:98), past tense \***ūsie** + adj. **-ra**), pl. **-e**
- **nalto fustūme** \*'they can be detected' (PE15:32,39) < **nalto** \*'they are' #**fustūma** \*'noticeable' (cf. **fausta-** 'to get smell of' (QL:37)), pl. **-e**
- **táli paptalasselindeën** 'the music of their feet was like falling leaves' (N1b variant, PE16:93)
- **ilya sī maller raikar** lit. 'all now roads bent' (LR:47, SD:310) < **sī** 'now' (Etym:SI-), **raika** 'crooked, bent, wrong' (Etym:RÁYAK-)
- **toi írimar** \*'which are beautiful' (LR:72) < **toi** 'they', **írima** 'beautiful' (cf. **ĪR-** 'desireable, beautiful' (VT45:18)), pl. **-r**
- **Eldar atiformaiti** 'Elves were ambidextrous' (AS4-6, VT49:6-8)

An emendation goes here **ataformaite** >> **atiformaiti**, from the first pattern into the second.

Note that the verb 'to be' is usually omitted, even in the past tense.

The example **táli paptalasselindeën** is a curious one. If interpreted correctly, this literally means \*'[their] feet [were] leaf-music-like', i.e. the actual subject **táli** does not receive a nominative suffix, but the predicative adjective does. The same variant reading shows nominative **n-oromandin** and **wingildin wilwarindeën**. Compare the pattern given in 3.3.

In **raikar**, **írimar** the plural marker **-r** is used, at that time it is typically a plural marker for nouns and adjectives pluralized this way are used substantively like **vanima** 'fair' (Etym:BAN-), pl. **vanimar** 'beautiful ones' (LotRVI, ch.6; Let:230), **linda** 'fair, beautiful (of sound)' (Etym:LIND-, VT45:27), pl. **Lindar** 'the fair' as a tribe name (LR:168). So **maller raikar** may literally mean \*'the roads are bent ones' and **toi írimar** \*'they are beautiful ones'. But **atiformaiti** is ordinarily pluralized by **-i**.

Finally, a rather special example is found in LR:72:

- **Toi aina, mána, meldielto** 'They are holy, blessed, and beloved' < **toi** 'they', **aina** 'holy' (Etym:AYAN-), **mána** 'blessed' (cf. Etym:MAN-), **melda** 'beloved, dear' (Etym:MEL-), compound tense **meld-ie-lto** 'beloved-are-they'

At this stage the verb 'to be' is expressed by a suffix (or compound tense) **-ie**. Note that the three adjectives are all in the singular, though 'they' would require plural. This plurality only seems to be expressed by the final **-ie-lto** 'they are' with the pronoun repeated again. Compare a similar construction with presumably attributive adjectives in **oikta ránavoite malinai** or **oikta ránavoite karneambarai** in *Narqelion*, but on the other hand plural agreement **laiqali linqi falmari** in *Earendel*.

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I would like to thank Thorsten Renk for his critical remarks on the first version of the article.