

MOON-LETTERS

Created by the Dwarves, the Moon-letters were regular runes, but of a kind that could only be read when the moon or starlight shone from behind the script. The words would be read as the light passed through the characters causing them to shimmer. It is likely that the letters were written using *Ithidin*, (or *true-silver*) - the ink for which made by the Elves from the precious metal *Mithril* mined by the Dwarves in Khazad-dûm (later becoming the aforementioned Moria).

Additional measures could be used by the Elves to make scripts more secure that would permit viewing only at the time of the year it was first written, or by a moon of the same shape. An example of such Moon-letters appeared on Thrór's Map of Erebor, which kept hidden the secret entrance (or Back-Door) to the Lonely Mountain. Given to Thorin by Gandalf, the map was said to be created on a Midsummers Eve (20th June), during what would have been a crescent moon.

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III.53 – *The Moon Letter script as it appears on Thrór's Map of Erebor, reading "stand by the grey stone when the thrush knocks and the setting sun with the last light of Durin's Day will shine upon the key-hole".*

RUNES OF GONDOLIN

The runes of Gondolin were known to be used during the First Age, however their origin cannot be known with any certainty. However, sparse evidence leads us to believe Pengolodh, known as the greatest Loremaster since Fëanor and Rúmil, to be the likely creator. The system reflects the same sound/shape relationship as the Cirth, although it is noted that Pengolodh had no prior knowledge of any previous system, meaning that he would have arrived at the respective values independently. It is also interesting to note that this system does not follow the phonetic patterns of other Middle-earth languages, but reflects those closer to Old English - another passion of Tolkien's academic studies.

This system is detailed in an issue of *Mythlore*, a publication authored by the Mythopoeic Society, in which an early concept of the system was conjectured. Furthermore, a variation of the Gondolin system is thought to have been created, motivated by sword inscriptions found in *The Hobbit*. If we accept the values shown in the table below, such inscriptions would read '*Glamdring*' (Foe-hammer) and '*Orcrist*' (Orc-cleaver).

	<i>dental</i>		<i>labial</i>		<i>palatal</i>		<i>velar</i>	
<i>plosives (voiceless)</i>	ᚱ	t	ᚱ	p	ᚱ	k	-	-
<i>plosives (voiced)</i>	ᚲ	d	ᚲ	b	ᚲ	ch	ᚲ	g
<i>fricatives (voiceless)</i>	ᚷ	th	ᚷ	f	ᚷ	h	-	-
<i>fricatives (voiced)</i>	ᚸ	th	ᚸ	v	ᚸ	j	-	-
<i>nasals</i>	ᚹ	n	ᚹ	m	ᚹ	ng	-	-
<i>semivowels</i>	ᚺ	r	ᚺ	w	-	-	ᚺ	l

ADDITIONAL GONDOLIN RUNES

└	sh	<	s	≡	z	↓	zh
✕	lh	✕	rh	✕	hw	↯	hy
℞	ngh	✕	mh	-	-	-	-
℥	x	✕	ks	-	-	-	-

GONDOLIN RUNE VOWELS (short)

▷	a	℥	e	└	i	℥	o
◊	u	▷	æ	℥	œ	◊	y

GONDOLIN RUNE VOWELS (long)

✕	a	℥	e	†	i	℥	o
◊	u	✕	æ	℥	œ	◊	y

Despite being a more evolved rune-based system, the Gondolin runes were slowly removed following the reinstating of the Certhas Daeron. By the dawn of the Third Age, the system had long since been forgotten.