

# Manual for the quetta (ᑭᑭᑭ) module

Florent Michel

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. ‘Quetta’?

‘Quetta’ (ᑭᑭᑭ) means ‘word’ in Quenya [1], one of the fictional languages invented by British writer and philologist J. R. R. Tolkien. It thus seemed fitting for a module aimed at making the process of typing these languages easier.

Words are also, loosely speaking, the base units this module works on, as we shall see in more details below. While its general philosophy is to map each symbol used in Tolkien’s elvish languages to letters from the Latin alphabet, a few word-wise substitution rules were implemented so that, in *most* (but probably not all) cases the correct spelling can be obtained by typing the word phonetically. For the same reason, the mapping generally works on groups of letters when there is no natural one-to-one mapping between individual symbols.

### 1.2. The Tengwar script

A proper introduction to Tengwar is way beyond the scope of this document. We refer interested readers to Appendix E of Reference [2] and online references such as [wikipedia.tolkiengateway.net](http://wikipedia.tolkiengateway.net), [omniglot.com](http://omniglot.com), or [tecendil.com](http://tecendil.com).

In short, Tengwar (ᑭᑭᑭ in Quenya mode) is one of the scripts invented by Tolkien, primarily consisting of 36 letters (called *tengwar*; singular: *tengwa* (ᑭᑭᑭ)) and diacritics (*tehtar* (ᑭᑭᑭ singular: *tehta* (ᑭᑭᑭ))). There are several ways to relate tengwar to sounds, called *modes*. This module primarily focuses on the Quenya (ᑭᑭᑭ), or ‘classical’, mode, in universe the original way to write tengwar. Support for the other modes described by Tolkien is planned for a future version.

## 2. How to use

### 2.1. Design principles

The module provides one main command for each supported mode (in the curr).

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Alternative glyphs, when they exist, can be obtained with the symbol £. For instance, typing `n` produces the tengwa *numen* while typing `fn` produces *noldo*:

`quenia[n]` *n*    `quenia[fn]` *n*

`quenia[s]` *s*    `quenia[fs]` *s*    `quenia[ss]` *s*    `quenia[fss]` *s*

`quenia[sa]` *s*    `quenia[fsa]` *s*    `quenia[ssa]` *s*    `quenia[fssa]` *s*

## 2.2. Quenya

The implementation of the Quenya mode follows Reference [3].

Here are a few basic examples:

`quenia[aha]` *ā*

`quenia[namárië]` *namárië*

### 2.2.1. Punctuation

End-of-paragraph symbols can be obtained by combining commas and periods:

`quenia[.-]` *~*    `quenia[.,]` *·*    `quenia[. .]` *::*    `quenia[, .,]` *··*

**Note:** Generally, parentheses in Quenya are denoted by the single symbol *⌈*—there is no distinction between opening and closing parentheses. We deviate from this convention by mapping the symbol ‘(’ to ‘(’ and ‘)’ to ‘)’. The proper Tengwar parenthesis is mapped to ‘/’.

The decorations *≈* and *≲* are obtained using the French quotation marks ‘»’ and ‘«’:

`quenia[»quenia«]` *≈quenia≲*

The symbol ‘:’ can be used to prevent glyph combination:

`quenia[nn n:n]` *nn n*    `quenia[na n:a]` *na n*

### 2.2.2. Number system

**Example:** `quenia[123]` *123*

### 2.2.3. Example: Namárië

One of the most famous texts written in Quenya is the poem *Namárië* (நம்மர்யீ), originally written in [2]<sup>1</sup> and available for instance in Reference [4]. Below we show the same text without (left) and with (right) the `#show: quenya` command. We use a spacing between line of 0.7em to clearly separate them (some tengwar have a relatively large vertical extension).

#### Namárië

Ai! laurië lantar lassi súrinen,  
yéni únótimë ve rámar aldaron!  
Yéni ve lintë yuldar avánier  
mi oromardi lisse-miruvóreva  
Andúnë pella, Vardo tellumar  
nu luini yassen tintilar i eleni  
ómaryo airetári-lírinen.

Sí man i yulma nin enquantuva?

An sí Tintallë Varda Oiolossëo  
ve fanyar máryat Elentári ortanë,  
ar ilyë tier undulávë lumbulë,  
ar sindanóriello caita mornië  
i falmalinnar imbë met, ar hísië  
untúpa Calaciryo míri oialë.  
Sí vanwa ná, Rómello vanwa, Valimar!

Namárië! Nai hiruvalyë Valimar.  
Nai elyë hiruva. Namárië!

#### நம்மர்யீ

ஈ! டௌரி லந்தர் லாசி சூரினெ.  
யேனி உனோதிமெ வெ ராமர் அல்டரன்!  
யேனி வெ லிந்தெ யுல்டர் அவானீர்  
மி ஓரொமர்டி லிஸ்செ-மிருவோரேவா  
அநுனெ பல்லா, வர்டொ டெல்லுமர்  
நு லுனி யாஸ்செ திந்திலர் இலெனி  
ஓமர்யோ அரீதாரி-லீரினெ.

சி மான் இ யுல்மா நின் என்குவா?

அன் சி திந்தல்லெ வர்டா ஒயோஸ்சே  
வெ ஫ான்யர் மார்யாத் எலெந்தாரி ஓர்தானெ,  
அர் இல்யெ தீர் உந்டுலாவெ லும்புலெ,  
அர் சிந்தனாரீல்லொ கைதா மொர்னீ  
இ ஫ால்மலின்னார் இம்பெ மெத், அர் ஹீசி  
உந்துபா காலாசிரியோ மீரி ஓயாலெ.  
சி வன்வா நா, ரோமெல்லொ வன்வா, வாலிமர்!

நம்மர்யீ! நை ஹிருவல்யெ வாலிமர்.  
நை எல்யெ ஹிருவா. நம்மர்யீ!

### 2.3. Sindarin—Mode of Gondor

Not yet implemented

### 2.4. Sindarin—Mode of Beleriand

Not yet implemented

<sup>1</sup>Book 2, ch. 8 “Farewell to Lórien”

## 2.5. Black Speech

Although the Black Speech is not implemented yet, the One Ring inscription can be reproduced using the Quenya mode as follows:<sup>2</sup>

```
quenya[
  _»fKa:nssangw:ndfrombtaflokwô, fKa:nssangw:ngwmbetalo«
  #linebreak()#v(0.7em)
  fKa:nssangw:sfrquataflokwô, fNgwa:mbfrossmofkii:qufrpetalo_
]
```

Obviously, that's not quite how the ring inscription is supposed to sound. One reason is simply that the Quenya and Black Speech modes have different relations between symbols and sounds: to obtain the same written result, one has to 'transcribe' the phonetic description to how it would be read in the Quenya mode. Another difference is that some of the tengwa forms used in the ring inscription are generally not used in Quenya; we thus use the symbol **f** to get variants. We also use **f** to switch between **n** and **ŋ**. Finally, words are separated with **:** to avoid repeated consonants being combined. Here is the result, with a color gradient in the background to mimic a golden surface:



Not yet implemented

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<sup>2</sup>This is obviously a bit of a hack, meant only to show how the limitations of having only one mode implemented can be circumvented. This example is not supposed to be stable and might render differently in a later version.

### 3. How to contribute

Any kind of contribution is warmly welcome! Here are a few ways you can help:

- **Bug reports:** Some text rendering incorrectly in Tengwar? Unexpected formatting? Any other issue with the code or documentation? Please report it! This module was only tested on a very small corpus so far, and identifying any corner case where it does not work as intended is very useful!
- **Language help:** My knowledge of Tengwar and the languages invented by J. R. R. Tolkien is quite superficial, and I may well have missed or misunderstood some of the rules for writing in Tengwar. If you spot anything that looks wrong, please let me know!
- **Implementation:** The Typst code is likely not quite as efficient as could be. If you can see better ways to implement something, please feel free to let me know or to submit a pull request with an improved version!
- **Feature requests:** Any feature request is welcome. I can't promise I'll have the time and knowledge to implement everything that would be nice to have; but if you'd like to see something implemented please let me know—or submit a pull request if you've already implemented it!

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### Bibliography

- [1] “elfdict.com.” [Online]. Available: <https://www.elfdict.com/>
- [2] J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*.
- [3] “Quenya Tengwar – A mini course by Eruantalincë.” [Online]. Available: <https://www.councilofelron.com/languages/QTL.htm>
- [4] “Namárië.” [Online]. Available: <https://tolkiengateway.net/wiki/Nam%C3%A1ri%C3%AB>