

Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics and Literature

JETLEE

Journal homepage: journal.iainlhokseumawe.ac.id

Peirce's Triadic Analysis in the Script of "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring" Film

Shelma Kamilia Hamidah^{1*}, Pepen Priyawan², Fourus Huznatul Abqoriyyah³

^{1*,2,3} Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, Indonesia

ARTICEL INFO

Keywords: Triadic Analysis Film/Movie Object Index Symbol

History:

Received (9 August 2023) Revised (24 November 2023) Accepted (28 November 2023)

ABSTRACT

Using Charles Sander Peirce's theory, this study examines the object, representation, and interpretant in the screenplay for The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring. The research methodology employed in this study is qualitative research. Each of the triadic element is composed of three components. An object is denoted by an icon, which is a sign exhibiting a comparable appearance to its reference; an index, which signifies a connection between the representation and the object in terms of presence and occurrences; and a symbol, which is universally acknowledged through mutual agreement. Legisign, a sign in accordance with a general rule or code; qualisign, a sign perceived by quality; and sinsign, a sign based on actual shape or form, are all components of representation. The interpretant possesses rheme, which is a sign predicated on the interpreter's comprehension; dicent sign, which pertains to something that truly exists; argument, which comprises a justification for a given matter. The findings of this analysis indicate that the ring is of the utmost significance in the narrative of the film.

INTRODUCTION

There are plenty of signs all throughout the place and the formats vary, such as images, texts, or a blend of both. The sign has a certain significance based on what persons who view it understand. Sign can be found in a variety of places, including product logos, advertisement, and posters. Aside from that, sign has a part in the film. Film, whether fiction or non-fiction, is utilized to describe society's reality while also entertaining the general audience (Rutsyamsun & Sakinah, 2023). Film is divided into genres such as drama, fantasy, horror, romance, history, and comedy.

Prior to producing a film, it is imperative to develop a script in order to ensure a coherent and well-structured storyline. According to Murtagh et al. (2009), film script is a semi structured in the way that is divided into scenes and, on occasion, additional structural components. There is also information gathered about place (internal, specific, or general location designation), characters, day, and night. Along with that, there is includes free text dialogue and narrations.

This research used The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring film script as the object of the research. The film script is written by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyyens, and Peter Jackson. The plot of the story is based on the first volume of the novel titled The Lord of the Ring by J.R.R. Tolkien, "The Fellowship of the Ring" in 1954 (Lobdell, 1975). This film narrates the tale of a hobbit and eight other companions who united as the Fellowship of the Ring with the purpose of annihilating the 'One Ring' possessed by the antagonist, Dark Lord Sauron (Tolkien & Hicklin, 2022).

The Lord of the Rings is a trilogy of fantasy films. Fantasy is a genre in literature that incorporates elements of fiction. Timmerman (1983) stated that fantasy invites someone to become immersed in another world for a while until finding or recovering an alternate viewpoint in this world. The researchers selected the initial film, namely The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring, which was released in 2001. This film received 4 Academy Award wins, achieved a total of three awards at the 55th British Academy Film Awards, and also secured the award of Best Fantasy Film at The Saturn Award. Lawson & Macdonal (2018) featured The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring in their list of the top 100 film ranking.

The objective of this study was to analyze the signs present in the film script of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring. The field of study that examines signs is known as semiotics. Semiotics is the examination of all entities that represent or symbolize something, rather than solely focusing on what we commonly refer to as "signs" in everyday language (Belucci, 2020). Signs are ubiquitous and each sign must possess a significance. Various forms such as words, images, sounds, gestures, or objects can all serve as signs. Charles Sander Peirce, a linguist and philosopher, posits that human cognition operates through the use of signs, which are integral to the process of communication.

This research employs semiotic theory developed by Charles Sander Peirce. According to Peirce (Van der Veer Martens, 2023), semiotics is the scholarly examination of meaning, interpretation, representation, and reference. Peirce's descriptions are notable for their emphasis on the necessity of interpretation in the process of signification. According to Peirce (1931: 2249) in Abdullah, et al., (2021), signs that fall under the category include words, sentences, books, and other conventional signs. According to Peirce, a sign can vary in its level of comprehensibility (Gorlée, 2022). In contrast to Saussure, Peirce does not perceive the sign as the most minimal unit of significance. Any object or event, regardless of its level of intricacy, can be recognized as a sign as soon as it becomes part of a semiotic process.

The semiotic process in Charles Sander refers to the study and analysis of signs and symbols. Peirce's theory is classified into three aspects, referred to as triadic (Yakin & Totu, 2014). There are three fundamental components: object, representment, and interpretant, each consisting of three distinct aspects. An object possesses an icon, which is a visual representation that closely resembles its referent; an index, which is a sign that signifies a connection between the representation and the object in terms of events and presence; and a symbol, which is a sign that is widely recognized and accepted through mutual agreement.



Representment encompasses three types of signs: qualisign, which is a sign perceived through its quality; sinsign, which is a sign based on its physical shape or form; and legisign, which is a sign that adheres to a general rule or code. The concept of "interpretant" refers to a sign that is derived from the interpreter's understanding. A "dicent sign" is a sign that reflects something that actually exists. An "argument" is a sign that contains a reason or justification for something (Annisa & Sakinah, 2020).

METHODS

The research employed a qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research is a method that involves analyzing the understanding of a social problem by creating a detailed and comprehensive description using words. This description includes the opinions of the individuals involved and is conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 2017). Qualitative research involves the collection and analysis of nonnumerical data, such as text, video, or audio, to gain a deeper understanding of concepts, opinions, or experiences (Nassaji, 2020). Qualitative research is a research approach that relies on descriptive data, such as text, and is based on subjective interpretation.

The data obtained from this research method pertain to social phenomena, perceptions, motivation, and other related factors. This study employed a qualitative research approach due to the nature of the research object, which consists of textual data extracted from "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" film script. The triadic analysis, which is based on Charles Sanders Pierce's semiotic theory, can be used to analyze films' script by looking at the signs, their meanings, and the relationships between them. This method entails identifying and interpreting various signs found in the film, such as icons, symbols, and indexes, in order to discover hidden meanings and comprehend the film's deeper significance. The aim was to analyze the object, its representation, and the interpretant within it.

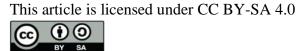
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Object

An object is any entity that is referred to by a sign or classified into one of three categories of objects (Dawkins, 2020). An icon is a sign that closely resembles its reference. An index is a sign that signifies a connection between the representation and the object in terms of events and presence. A symbol is a sign that is widely recognized and accepted through mutual agreement.

1.1 Icon

An icon is a visual symbol that reflects a resemblance to its referent, establishing a connection between the representation and the object based on shared characteristics. An example of this is the use of



female and male symbols on public restroom signs. Below is an explanation of the icon featured in the film script of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.

GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In the land of Mordor, in the fires of Mount Doom, the Dark Lord Sauron forged in secret a Master Ring t o control all others.

IMAGE: The ONE RING reflecting the FIERY LAVA! FIRE WRITING emerges on the plain BAND OF GOLD.

GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

...and into this Ring he poured his cruelty, his malice and his will to dominate all life. IMAGE: THE ONE RING falls through SPACE and into flames... GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D) One Ring to rule them all...

(Excerpt from the script, page 2)

The forging of the One Ring advanced the narrative. The villainous Dark Lord Sauron crafted a simple golden ring, filling it with his maleficent power to dominate all of Middle Earth and plunge it into eternal darkness. This is the process by which a single ring is forged, resulting in a ring of great power. The narrative of The Lord of the Rings originated at this precise spot.

The ring's importance became evident in the aforementioned data, and it subsequently became a symbol of the story. Peirce defines an icon as a symbol that bears a resemblance to its referent, leading to a connection between the representation and the object, manifested as a 'similarity in various attributes'. The term "ring" is used as a symbol in this context to signify its function as a weapon for exerting control over everything, with malicious intentions. Consequently, the ring assumes the role of the story's icons as it symbolizes the material manifestation of an object.

1.2 **Index**

An index is a sign that signifies a connection between the representation and the object in terms of an event and its existence (de Almeida et al., 2014). This can be described as a causal relationship, such as smoke appearing because there is fire. The following is an elucidation of the index derived from the film script of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.

Flames instantly consume the envelope ... revealing the RING, as it sinks into the red hot embers. GANDALF reaches into the fire with a pair of tongs ... he lifts the RING out.

GANDALF

Hold out your hand, Frodo ... it is quite cool. GANDALF drops the RING into FRODO'S hand ... he reacts to its weight. GANDALF (CONT'D)

> What can you see? Can you see anything? FRODO Nothing ... there's nothing. Wait...

"CLOSE ON: THE GOLD BAND of the Ring as fiery letters begin to appear ...





a tiny inscription glows red ... as if burning from within. FRODO (CONT'D)

...there are markings.

CLOSE ON: GANDALF ... STILL ... TENSE.

FRODO (CONT'D)

It's some form of Elvish. I can't read it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: GANDALF

(ominous)

There are few who can ... the language is that of Mordor, which I will not utter here. FRODO

Mordor?

GANDALF

In the common tongue, it says: "One Ring to rule them all. One Ring to find them.

One Ring to bring them all and in the darkness bind them."

(Excerpt from the script, page 38-39)

Eventually, the hidden truth of the ring is revealed. The mark, an incandescent symbol, encircles the ring entirely. Sauron, the malevolent ruler, desires the return of his ring as it symbolizes the ring's intended functions. He possesses an intense fixation on plunging Middle Earth into a state of darkness, and acquiring the ring will grant him immense power.

Gandalf aims to ascertain the veracity of whether the secret is truly revealed in the aforementioned data. He hurls the envelope that holds the ring. Eventually, he retrieves the ring and inquires Frodo if he perceives anything. The hidden truth of the ring is unveiled, as a fiery inscription emerges, serving as a distinctive symbol. The purpose of the marking on the ring is to enable the revelation of its secret through exposure to fire. The symbol in question denotes a causal relationship referred to as an index. Peirce defines an index as a sign that establishes a causal connection between the representation and the object, specifically in terms of events and presence.

1.3 Symbol

A symbol is a universally recognized sign that is widely accepted through mutual agreement (Lawes, 2019). Symbols can convey various meanings, including emotions, thoughts, concepts, objects, or actions. For instance, roses serve as a representation of love. The following text provides an explanation of the symbol featured in the film script of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.

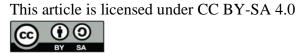
> ANGLE ON: The RINGWRAITH pauses right beside their hiding place ... he sits very still with head bowed, listening. From inside the hood comes a sniffing noise

as if he is trying to catch an elusive scent: he head turning from side to side.

CLOSE ON: FRODO ... beads of sweat gather on his brow ANGLE ON: The RINGWRAITH suddenly slides off his horse, leaning over the mossy log,

peering suspiciously into the woods.

CLOSE ON: FRODO ... he is drawing the RING out of his pocket, with trembling hands ...





his face fevered and sweating as if in the grip of some terrible INTERNAL STRUGGLE. The SOUND OF SNIFFING intensifies as the RINGWRAITH darts his head from side to side like a bird of prey.

CLOSE ON: FRODO SQUEEZING HIS EYES SHUT... QUICK PSYCHIC BLASTS! AN EVIL DARK TOWER ... A GREAT EYE ... A BURST OF FLAME.

(Excerpt from the script, page 56)

Frodo comes across a Ringwraith, a subordinate of Sauron assigned with the mission of capturing and eliminating the bearer of the ring, which happens to be Frodo in this instance. Frodo conceals himself beneath the log and narrowly avoids capture as the Ringwraith leans over the log.

A Ringwraith is a towering being clad in somber garments, devoid of facial features, and mounted on a jet-black steed as it traverses Middle Earth. The narrative features a collective count of nine Ringwraiths. The Ringwraiths were originally mortal men who underwent a transformation after receiving one of the Nine Rings of Power from Sauron. Their descent into darkness was a consequence of their insatiable greed. They bear a striking resemblance to the Grim Reaper, an iconic embodiment of mortality. Consequently, the Ringwraiths also serve as a symbol of death in this narrative as their objective is to eliminate Frodo, the bearer of the ring.

Consequently, the Ringwraiths also serve as a symbol of death in this narrative as their objective is to eliminate Frodo, the bearer of the ring. According to Peirce, a symbol is a sign that is arbitrary and conventional, meaning it is determined by a commonly accepted law or mutual agreement. Hence, the symbol can signify various concepts such as emotions, cognition, concepts, objects, or behavior.

2. Representment

Representment refers to a physical shape or any observable entity that is connected to something (Arfiana & Zein, 2021). The sign is derived from its origin and can be categorized into three types: the representment, which is a sign perceived through its quality; the sinsign, which is a sign based on its physical shape or form; and the legisign, which is a sign that follows a general rule or code.

2.1 Qualisign

A qualisign is a sign that is perceived through its quality. A qualisign is a sign that is significant in itself, independent of its components or any other factors, as it pertains to the personality being referred to (Santaella, 2015). For instance, the color black symbolizes darkness and death. The following is an explanation of the qualisign from the film script of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.

GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

It waited.

FADE UP: Bathed in COLD MOONLIGHT, the WORLD lies DARK and STILL ... the unsettled quiet before the storm...



GALADRIEL (V.O.)

Darkness crept back into the forests of the world. Rumor grew of a Shadow in the East ... whispers of a nameless fear. And the Ring of Power perceived ... its time had now come.

It abandoned Gollum.

SLOW MOTION: Unseen by its KEEPER, THE RING falls to the MUDDY FLOOR of a MOUNTAIN TUNNEL... GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But something happened then the Ring did not intend...

(Excerpt from the script, page 6)

The ring was in Gollum's possession for many years, but it eventually abandoned him in a mountain tunnel and dropped into the muddy floor. The ring appears to sense something calling it and wishes to return to where it came from. The ring is abandoned by Gollum due to the rumor about the shadow. Because shadows appear in bright locations when lights strike an object, the shadow in this story refers to a terrible dark figure that resembles a shadow in bright places. This shadow in the data is unusual since it grew when "Darkness crept back into the forests of the world." This can be regarded as a sign in semiotics. The meaning of shadow in the preceding datum is a qualisign, which is one of the components of Peirce's triadic model, Representment. Accroding to Peirce, qualisign in a component, perception, or other sign that is relevant regardless of its components or anything else since it involves the referred-to personality.

2.2 Sinsign

A sinsign is a sign that is derived from the physical shape or form of an object in the real world (Nagara & Machfauzia, 2020). A sinsign is a basic indicator of the existence of things in reality. A sinsign refers to any statement that is not institutionalized. To illustrate, laughter is indicative of happiness. Below is an explanation of the sinsign from the film script of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring.

FRODO

(thinking fast)

We put it away, we keep it hidden! We never speak of it again. No one knows it's here, do they? GANDALF shifts uncomfortably.

FRODO

(CONT'D)

Do they, Gandalf? GANDALF looks at FRODO sadly...

GANDALF

There is one other who knew that Bilbo had the Ring. I looked everywhere for the creature Gollum,

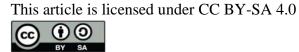
but the enemy found him first.

CUT TO:

INT. BARAD-DÛR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A TEASING GLIMPSE of GOLLUM being tortured by the ORCS.

The wretched creature screams in pain.



GANDALF (V.O.)

I don't know how long they tortured him ... but amidst the endless screams and inane babble, they discerned two words.

> **GOLLUM** (screaming) S...Shire! Baggins!

CUT TO:

INT. BAG END LIVING ROOM - NIGHT CLOSE ON: FRODO'S HORRIFIED FACE! **FRODO**

Shire! Baggins! That will lead them here!

(Excerpt from the script, page 40-41)

Frodo, aware of the dangerous condition of the ring, reacted with alarm and promptly proposed hiding it, reasoning that its presence would remain unknown. Regrettably, their efforts to evade danger were in vain, as Gollum, a captive of the Orc and a subordinate of Sauron, divulged the ring's location in the Shire, specifically mentioning the name Baggins, while in the midst of agonizing torment.

The preceding information is characterized by an intense emotional atmosphere; one individual expressed their agony through screaming, while the other was filled with fear and apprehension about the forthcoming events. The portrayal of the emotion is insignificant. Peirce defines a sinsign as a sign that is grounded in the physical shape or form of an object. A sinsign is a basic indicator of the existence of things in reality.

2.3 Legisign

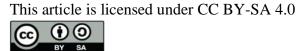
Legisgn is a sign accordance with a general rule or code (Pratiwi et al., 2022). A legisign is any approved sign. It is not a specific thing, but rather a wide category that has been considered notable. For example, the color on the traffic light. The legisign from The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring film script is described below.

ANGLE ON: A group of ELVES pass slowly through the forest, some on horseback, some walking, some with banners. The group seems to shine of its own light, their white garments softly glowing against the purples and midnight blues of the woods. Their haunting song continues.

ELVEN VOICES

(Elvish) a Galad ren i veniar hi' aladhremmin ennorath A Elbereth Gilthoniel ithil nâ thûl, ithil lîn hen

O Light to us that wander here



Amid the world of woven trees! O Elbereth! Gilthoniel! Clear are thy eyes and bright thy breath!

ANGLE ON: FRODO and SAM watching the procession from behind a tree.

FRODO

They're going to the harbour beyond the White Towers. To the Grey Havens.

SAM

They're leaving Middle-earth. **FRODO** Never to return.

SAM

I don't know why ... it makes me sad.

(Excerpt from the script, page 47)

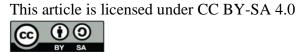
While crossing the forests, Frodo and Sam encountered wood-elves engaged in the act of singing in the Elvish language. They are covertly observing the elves from their perch behind the tree and have already determined their desired destination. The elves journeyed towards the Grey Havens, a seaport situated beyond the White Towers. This conduct seems to be a mandatory or customary practice within the domain of Elves. They will journey to the Grey Havens with the explicit purpose of not returning to Middle Earth. This regulation is encompassed within the symbol referred to as legisign. Legisign, as defined by Peirce, is a sign that conforms to a universal rule or code. A legisign refers to any sign that has been approved. It does not refer to a particular item, but rather encompasses a broad range of things that have been regarded as noteworthy.

3. Interpretant

An interpretant refers to the concept of a sign as perceived by the individual who employs it, thereby eliciting a specific understanding in another person's mind regarding the object or concept being represented by the sign (West, 2021). The interpretant refers to the meaning derived from a sign. The interpretant refers to the mental representation that a sign creates in the mind, enabling the perception of the connection between the sign and its referent. It can be categorized into three types: the rheme, which is a sign based on the interpreter's understanding; the dicent sign, which reflects something that actually exists; and the argument, which is a sign that provides a reason for something.

3.1 Rheme

A rheme is a sign that is determined by the interpreter's comprehension of the sign (Wijaya & Zein, 2020). The sign's meaning can only be fully understood with additional information, such as context. It suggests a probable outcome rather than a particular occurrence. Red eyes can be indicative of eye irritation,



drowsiness, or intoxication. The following excerpt elucidates the central theme of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring film script.

GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A last alliance of Men and Elves marched against the armies of Mordor.

On the slopes of Mount Doom, they fought for the freedom of Middle-Earth.

TEASING SHOTS: THE BATTLE OF DAGORLAD ... THE ELF LORD, ELROND,

commands rack after rank of ELVEN ARCHERS...

ELROND (Elvish)

Tangado haid! Leithio i philinn!

(English)

Hold positions! Fire the arrows!

TEASING SHOTS: ARROWS FIRING ...

ORCS RETREATING before the ARMY of the LAST ALLIANCE ...
ELENDIL, KING OF GONDOR, holds aloft the great SWORD ... NARSIL!
GALADRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Victory was near!

(Excerpt from the script, page 3)

The final alliance of Men and Elves is engaged in combat against the forces of Mordor with the objective of liberating Middle Earth and preventing it from succumbing to the clutches of malevolent authority. The elven ruler commanded the soldiers to release an arrow, prompting the orcs to retreat due to the overwhelming bombardment of arrows.

Exclamation marks are commonly employed in dialogue to convey anger or strong emotions. Nevertheless, in this particular scenario, the significance is a furious command, an intense longing to obliterate the adversary. The rheme serves as the interpretant for the exclamation marks in this story. According to Peirce, a rheme is a sign that relies on the interpreter's comprehension of the sign. The sign's meaning can only be fully understood with additional information, such as context. It suggests a possible outcome rather than a particular occurrence.

3.2 Dicent Sign

Dicent sign is a specific sign reflects on something that genuinely exists (Queiroz, 2012). A sign that corresponds to the fact (Johansen & Larsen, 2005). For example, 'do not litter' sign is made because people throw garbage out of place. The dicent sign from The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring film script explained below.

INT. BAG END KITCHEN - NIGHT CLOSE ON: THE RING lies on FRODO'S simple kitchen table.



GANDALF

This is the One Ring, forged by the Dark Lord Sauron, in the fires of Mount Doom ... taken by Isildur from the hand of Sauron himself.

FRODO

(quiet realization) Bilbo found it ... in Gollum's cave. **GANDALF**

Yes. For sixty years, the Ring lay quiet in Bilbo's keeping, prolonging his life, delaying old age ... but no longer, Frodo. Evil is stirring in Mordor. The Ring has awoken. It's heard its master's call. AT THAT MOMENT: A FLEETING, LOW WHISPER OF BLACK SPEECH emanates from the RING. FRODO looks at GANDALF, each knowing the other has heard it

(Excerpt from the script, page 39)

One of the ring's powers is to extend the lifespan of its wearer. According to the provided information, Bilbo is able to live a prolonged life due to his sixty-year possession of the ring. The ring can be regarded as a symbol of longevity, albeit in an incorrect and unnatural manner. The ring has been activated by the reappearance of its owner. The creature desires to reunite with its owner. The interpretant derived from the datum is a dicent sign. Peirce defines a dicent sign as a sign that accurately represents something that actually exists, it is an indicator that aligns with the given fact.

3.3 Argument

Argument is a sign contain a reason for something (Jackson, 1990). It is a sign that represents a general rule or law that applies to its object for the purpose of its interpreter (Van den Hoven, 2015). For example, 'no smoking' sign in gas station because the place is flammable. The argument from The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring film script explained below.

They fall silent. A low rolling BOOM rises from the depths below ... growing louder ... BOOM ... BOOM ... as if the caverns of MORIA were turned into a vast drum. A great horn blasts nearby ... ANSWERING horns ... running feet ... harsh cries ... CLOSE ON: SAM'S eyes glance at FRODO'S belt...

> **SAM** (worried) Mr. Frodo! (CONTINUED) CONTINUED: (2)

ANGLE ON: FRODO looks down. A cold blue glow is emanating from STING'S SCABBARD! FRODO draws the SWORD ... and stares at its glowing blade! **LEGOLAS**

Orcs!





ARAGORN (to the Hobbits) Get back! Stay close to Gandalf.

(Excerpt from the script, page 126-127)

The fellowship of the ring was in peril when they heard something loud approaching them. Frodo pulled out the cold blue glowing sword after Sam detected something shining on his belt. Legolas recognizes the enemy that they face, the Orcs. If an orc is nearby, the sword will illuminate. The interpretant of glowing sword in datum above is argument. According to Peirce, argument is a sign contain a reason for something. It is a sign that represents a general rule or law that applies to its object for the purpose of its interpreter.

CONCLUSION

Through utilizing Peirce's triadic framework to perform a qualitative analysis of the film script, this study demonstrates that there was a notable concentration of symbols revolving around the central element—the ring. This observation underscores the profound importance of the ring in the narrative, emphasizing its crucial role in shaping the plot. Upon careful examination, it becomes evident that the intricate storyline and profound symbolism of The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring are deeply intertwined with the powerful symbolism of the ring.

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