

The love story of Arwen and Aragorn in 'The Lord of the Rings': The difference between original and adaptation

Kathrin Weinen



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Seminar paper from the year 2006 in the subject Communications - Miscellaneous, grade: 8,0 (NL) - ca. 2,0 (DE), Maastricht University, course: Narrative Media, 9 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Every best-selling novel has to be turned into a film, the assumption being that the book itself whets an appetite for the true fulfilment – the verbal shadow turned into light, the word made flesh. (Elliott quoting from Burgess, 2004, p.235)

This quote probably describes what Peter Jackson also had in mind when he read The Lord of the Rings for the first time and what influenced him to make a Hollywood movie out of this most famous work of fantasy fiction. Reading a book and feeling a need to see the characters, to hear their voices and follow them through their adventure, is probably also the experience many readers of The lord of the Rings trilogy had. And they expressed this feeling by watching the movies in the cinemas more than just a single time. The amount of money the movies brought in was incredible. The box office reported a worldwide total of approximately 3 billion dollars, which merely includes the amount, brought in by the movie-goers, and not even the sale of the DVDs and other merchandising articles. How many of them had actually read the novels before is not clear, but it seems obvious that many of them were craving for a filmic adaptation of their favourite book. However, this is not the only truth concerning the movies. Right after the start of the first film, the fan community of the book started criticizing the adaptation in a substantial amount of Internet forums. According to them, too many changes had been made, too many chapters had been left out and too many new aspects had been included. The fans claimed that Jackson had financial reasons in mind rather than fidelity to the original.

The question came and still comes up, if the filmic adaptation was really a good representation of the novels and if there is a need for reproducing a literary work one to one in a filmic version and if this is even possible.

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