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*Duzen and Ihrzen in the German Translation of *The Lord of the Rings**

Abstract

Discusses difficulties in translating *Lord of the Rings* into German, in particular the complications arising from the second person plural: singular/plural and familiar/ deferential forms. Notes the special challenges in translating dialogue in a fantasy novel, such as conversations with animals and objects.

Additional Keywords

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Lord of the Rings*—Translations—German

DUZEN AND IHRZEN IN THE GERMAN TRANSLATION OF THE LORD OF THE RINGS

ARLEN R. SMITH

Translation is not an easy task, and certain differences between languages make it even more difficult. One of the difficulties encountered in translating from English into German, or indeed from English into any one of a number of languages, lies in the fact that languages like German, French, and Russian make a distinction in the second person pronouns between singular and plural and between familiar and deferential forms, whereas modern standard English makes no such distinctions. Thus, in translating out of English, the translator of a literary text must determine whether a character in the text is speaking to one or more other characters and what sort of relationship exists between these characters (cf. Kotowski). The latter is generally more difficult, especially in a narrative featuring a large number of interactions between characters of various ages, cultural backgrounds, and social classes, with varying degrees of familial relationship, friendship, and politeness. *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien exhibits a wide variety of such interactions, and the German translation by Margaret Carroux, *Der Herr der Ringe*, has to contend not only with this complex assortment of dialogue types, but also with others that are peculiar to the fantasy genre or even to this particular work alone.

The pronoun *you* in modern standard English can be rendered into modern standard German by any one of three pronouns: familiar singular *du*, familiar plural *ihr*, or polite singular and plural *Sie*, in their various declensional forms:

	ENGLISH	GERMAN			
	sg. / pl.	sg.	familiar	pl.	polite sg./pl.
nominative	you	du		ihr	Sie
accusative	you	dich		euch	Sie
dative	you	dir		euch	Ihnen
genitive	yours	deiner		euch	Ihrer
possive adj.	yours	dein-		euer-	Ihr-

The choice between what I call here the familiar and polite forms is governed by a number of guidelines, some of which are by no means clear-cut. The *Duden Grammatik* codifies these guidelines thus:

Das Personalpronomen *du* ist als Bezeichnung für die angesprochene Person vor allem im vertraulich-familiären Bereich gebräuchlich: Man duzt sich in der Familie, zwischen Verwandten, Freunden, Jugendlichen; Erwachsene duzen Kinder.

Auch in Leichenreden verwendet man noch *du*, wenn man den Verstorbenen anredet, ebenso ist *du* die Anrede an heilige Personen, an Tiere, Dinge oder

Abstrakta. Daneben wird *du*, vor allem in der Umgangssprache, in kollektiver Bedeutung (an Stelle von *man*) gebraucht...

[...]

Das Personalpronomen *ihr* wird wie *du* im vertrauten Kreise gebraucht, und zwar für mehrere Personen. Gelegentlich, vor allem in bestimmten Gegenden, wird es auch gegenüber Personen gebraucht, die man einzeln mit *Sie* anredet (etwa ein Geistlicher gegenüber seiner Gemeinde).

[...]

Großgeschriebenes *Sie* ist, obwohl pluralisch, auch Anredepronomen für eine einzelne Person. Es ist die höflich distanzierte Anredeform zwischen Personen, die sich fernerstehen. (Drosdowski 317-19)

[The personal pronoun *du* is used to indicate the person addressed especially in intimate and familiar circles: *du* is used within the family and between relatives, friends, and young people; adults address children with *du*.

du is still used in funeral orations when one addresses the deceased, and *du* is likewise the form of address for holy persons, animals, things, or abstract concepts. In addition, *du* is used, especially in colloquial speech, with a collective meaning (instead of the indefinite pronoun *man*)...

The personal pronoun *ihr*, like *du*, is used in intimate circles, but it is used to address more than one person. Occasionally, especially in certain regions, it is used with people who would be addressed with *Sie* individually (as in the case of a clergyman speaking to his congregation).

Capitalized *Sie* is, although plural in form, also the pronoun of address for an individual person. It is the politely distanced form of address used between people who are not on such close terms. (my translation)]

Lederer gives a slightly different set of guidelines, stating that *du* and *ihr* are used within the family; with close friends; for conversations with or among children (and by small children when addressing adults); among equals in certain trades or occupations, especially among laborers, soldiers, athletes, and criminals; when addressing animals; in prayer and that their use normally coincides with addressing people by their first names. *Sie* is used for all other persons and normally coincides with addressing people by their last names or title (192-93). Hartmann, however, expresses the difference in usage between *du* and *Sie* very differently:

Die Verwendung von Pronomina wie innerhalb des Deutschen mit seinem zweielementigen Anredeparadigma gilt als der Gebrauch eines Zeichens, das eine Beziehung der Bekanntheit, Vertrautheit, Intimität oder auch der Herablas-

sung bzw. Verachtung ausdrückt, die zwischen Sprecher und Angesprochenem entweder schon besteht oder initiiert werden soll. Sie dagegen gilt als Ausdruck der Beziehung der Unbekanntheit oder Distanz oder besonderen Höflichkeit sowie Ehrerbietung und des Respekts. (85)

[The use of pronouns like *du* in the German language, with its bipartite paradigm of forms of address, is regarded as the use of a sign that expresses a relationship of acquaintance, familiarity, intimacy, or even of condescension or disdain, that either already exists between the speaker and the person addressed or is supposed to be initiated. *Sie*, on the other hand, is regarded as an expression of a relationship of unfamiliarity or distance or of especial politeness as well as respect. (my translation)]

It should also be noted that the use of *du* between husband and wife did not become widespread until the late eighteenth century, and children only came to address their parents with *du* during the course of the nineteenth century (Ljungerud 353-55). Much more has been written on this topic (see especially Brown and Gilman and, for German, Augst 18-23), but this will suffice for the purposes of this paper.

Departing from the modern standard language, we encounter yet another second person pronoun. As Lederer writes, the capitalized form of *Ihr* occurs in the singular as a polite form of address to show respect to people of higher rank in older texts and in works depicting older periods (193). The use of *Ihr* as a polite form of address has its origins in the use of the Latin second person plural *vos* as a "*pluralis reverentiae*" and was first used (in the form *ir*) during the Middle High German period by subjects addressing their lords. It spread thence to use by members of the upper class in addressing both their superiors and their equals, a practice that was in place by 1300 (Augst 25-27; Ljungerud 363). This *du/ir* dichotomy lasted from roughly 1200 to 1550, after which time other pronouns of address (*Er*, *Sie* (sg.), *Sie* (pl.)) were introduced into the system, and *Ihr* came to be used in addressing servants, soldiers, farmers, and other members of the lower class (Augst 35-39; Ljungerud 363-64). Toward the end of the nineteenth century, according to Augst, *Er* and *Sie* (sg.) virtually disappeared, whereas *Ihr* enjoyed a resurgence in popularity due to 1) the rediscovery of the Middle Ages, 2) strong French influence (*tu/vous*), and 3) through recourse to the regional dialects, in which the *Er* and *Sie* forms had never taken hold (39). Nevertheless, by 1900 the plural *Sie* had become the sole polite second person pronoun in the standard language, though *Ihr* still survives — either as the sole polite form or as a form between *du* and *Sie* — in certain dialects, such as that of Bern in Switzerland (Augst 39; Ljungerud 365).

In her translation of *The Lord of the Rings*, Carroux makes use of three second person pronouns: familiar singular *du*, familiar plural *ihr*, and polite singular and plural *Ihr*. She presumably eschews *Sie* in order to give the story a more mediaeval flavor. If she uses *Ihr* where *Sie* is used in the modern standard language, we should expect to find *du* and *ihr* used in addressing the following: rela-

tives; spouses; (close) friends; equals in certain occupations (especially laborers, soldiers, athletes, and criminals); someone to whom respect is deliberately not being shown (i.e. as a sign of condescension or disdain); young people and children; the dead; deities and saints; animals; inanimate objects; abstract concepts. Assuming that this list is sufficiently complete for the purposes of translating Tolkien (which it is not, as we shall see below), we should expect *Ihr* in all other exchanges. Let us now see how closely Carroux adheres to these guidelines; for the sake of clarity and consistency, I will be referring to characters by the names given to them in the English original.

RELATIVES. Familiar forms of address are used among all hobbits who are related to one another, between Aragorn and his mother Gilraen (III: 354, 357) and between him and his kinsman Halbarad (III: 49-50), between Éomer and his sister Éowyn (III: 131, 160), by Théoden to his nephew Éomer (II: 138, 167, and elsewhere) and his niece Éowyn (II: 135; III: 73, 76), by Faramir to his (dead) brother Boromir and his father Denethor (II: 314-15; III: 93, and elsewhere) and by Denethor to both his sons (III: 24, 92-5), by the boy in Sams story to his dad (II: 370-71), by Ioreth to her kinswoman (III: 276), between Thrór and his son Thráin (At: 59-60), by Thráin to his son Thorin (At: 63), and by Dáin to Thráin, his first cousin once removed (At: 63). Relationship by marriage also seems to apply, since Celeborn and Galadriel address Aragorn with *ihr* while he is in Lothlórien (II: 428, 452-53) but with *du* after



ARTIST'S COMMENT

Suddenly Frodo noticed that a strange-looking weather-beaten man, sitting in the shadows near the wall, was also listening intently to the hobbit-talk. He had a tall tankard in front of him, and was smoking a long-stemmed pipe curiously carved.

...As Frodo drew near he threw back his hood, showing a shaggy head of dark hair flecked with grey, and in a pale stern face a pair of keen grey eyes.

"I am called Strider," he said.

The Fellowship of the Ring

I love the way Tolkien reveals Aragorn, and the effort in this picture was to present Frodo's viewpoint of that moment: the strange, mysterious man peering down as the hobbit with a skeptical, cautious, evaluating state. Aragorn's wariness is appropriate, as he later tells the hobbits: "I had to study you first, and make sure of you. The Enemy has set traps for me before now."

This uncomplicated piece is really nothing more than a portrait. With drawing time severely limited these days, I didn't want to get into a more involved composition. Even so, this still took almost a year to complete. It sat for months and months before I could get around to the finishing touches.

— Paula DiSante

he has married their granddaughter (III: 294). The only apparent violations of this rule appear when Éomer and Éowyn address Théoden, their mothers brother. Éomer consistently uses *Ihr* when speaking to Théoden (II: 137-38, 210-11; III: 70), whereas Éowyn bids him farewell with *du* before his departure for the Battle of the Hornburg (II: 144-45) but greets him with *Ihr* upon his return (III: 73). The source of this inconsistency is clear. *Ihr* is used to translate *you* in these exchanges, but Éowyns farewell speech is given in a ceremonial style using the archaic pronoun *thou* (II: 127). The appearance of *du* is therefore due merely to a calque and has nothing to do with the fact that Éowyn and Théoden are related. The use of *Ihr* may here be explained by the fact that Théoden is not only their uncle but also their king. Note, however, that both Éomer and Éowyn address Théoden with *thou* in Old English (II: 122, 127; III: 138, 144).

SPOUSES. Conversations between married couples are rare in *The Lord of the Rings*. Mrs. Maggot addresses her husband with *du* (II: 125). The Ent and the Entwife in Treebeards song use a capitalized *Du* between themselves (II: 89). The remaining examples are problematic. Galadriel first addresses Celeborn with *du* (II: 430), but at the ceremonial drinking of the cup of parting she addresses him with *Ihr* (II: 452), although the original English version uses *you* in both instances (I: 371, 390). Throughout the "Tale of Aragorn and Arwen," the two lovers address each other with *Ihr* both before and after their wedding (III: 353-59). In the main text of the book, Arwen's one message to Aragorn uses the pronoun *du* (III: 50), but this, like the Éowyn-Théoden example above, is a calque of *thou* (III: 48).

The use of *Ihr* between husband and wife may reflect a class distinction, with upper-class couples using *Ihr* and lower-class couples using *du*. This seems to be the case when Faramir, the Steward of Gondor, and Éowyn, sister of the King of Rohan, address each other with *Ihr* during their courtship (III: 267-74), but Sam and Rosie, working-class hobbits, address each other with *du* during theirs (III: 324). It is also worth noting that the use of *du* among upper-class married couples is a relatively recent innovation, as I have mentioned above. If this class distinction is a factor in the choice between *du* and *Ihr*, then the instance of *du* between Galadriel and Celeborn must be regarded as an error.

CLOSE FRIENDS. It is difficult to determine the degree of friendship between characters necessary to justify the use of *du* in a translation. Nevertheless, Carroux is fairly consistent in this regard. Hobbits use familiar forms of address when conversing with old friends (such as Bilbo and Frodo with Gandalf, II: 40, 48-59, and elsewhere) or anyone living nearby (such as Gaffer Gamgee and his cronies amongst themselves, II: 37-39). On the other hand, hobbits generally address strangers and acquaintances from other parts of the Shire with *Ihr*; Gaffer Gamgee addresses the visitor from Michel Delving (II: 38) and the Black Rider (II:

94) thus, and Farmer Maggot addresses all his visitors in a similar fashion (II: 121-26). Travelling companions generally use *du* amongst themselves, as can be seen among the members of the Fellowship of the Ring (II: *passim*), as well as among Gildors band of wandering elves (II: 107). Elves in general are apt to address others with *du/ihr*, especially hobbits, and hobbits address elves in the same way. Certain elves of noble blood are exempt from this generalization, so the hobbits (and others) address Elrond and Galadriel with *Ihr* (II: 281, 295, 438, and elsewhere). The men of Gondor and Rohan, however, are more likely to address their friends with *Ihr*, though comrades-in-arms are usually addressed with *du* (see below).

EQUALS IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS. This category overlaps somewhat with the category above, as in the case of the working-class hobbits, who use *du* amongst themselves. Soldiers address their comrades with *du/ihr*: the orc-soldiers, the Riders of Rohan, the men of the Guard of Minas Tirith. Of course, the two latter groups address their commanders (e.g. Théoden, Éomer, Faramir) with *Ihr*, as befits high-ranking nobles.

CONDESCENSION OR DISDAIN. Characters who would normally be addressed with *Ihr* are often addressed with *du* in scorn or mockery. Since the evil characters usually speak in such a manner, it is not surprising that the orcs never address anyone with the polite pronoun in any of their recorded dialogue. The Nazgûl use *du*-forms when dealing with Fredegard (II: 219), Frodo (II: 263), Gandalf (III: 113), and Éowyn (III: 127), but when offering gold to Farmer Maggot in exchange for information, they address him politely with *Ihr* (II: 122-23). When in an information-seeking encounter with the dwarves of Erebor, however, the Nazgûl use *du/ihr*, but in this conversation there is an implied threat of reprisal if their demands are not met, so there is no attempt at politeness (II: 293-94). The use of *du* between the Lord of the Nazgûl and Éowyn may be due in part to the fact that the Lord of the Nazgûl uses *thou* in the original (III: 116), but in any case this is one of the finest examples of scornful dialogue in the entire work. The Mouth of Sauron likewise speaks to Aragorn and Gandalf with a condescending *thou/du* (III: 165; III: 185).

YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN. Children are rare in *The Lord of the Rings*. Gandalf addresses the hobbit-children as a group with familiar plural *Ihr* (II: 40). Pippin uses *du* when speaking to ten-year-old Bergil (III: 42, 149).

THE DEAD. There are no clear-cut examples here. Denethor and Faramir address the slain Boromir with *du*, but blood relationship would have dictated this anyway. Aragorn commands the Army of the Dead with the familiar plural *ihr* (III: 64, 66, 169-70), but he also uses this when he addresses his living soldiers (III: 49, 65). One clear counter-example can be seen when Merry addresses his dead lord, King Théoden, with *Ihr* (III: 287).

DEITIES AND SAINTS. The elves use *du* in their hymn to Elbereth, which has *thou* in the English version (I: 88-89; II:

106). Irwin's claim that Tolkien seems to make no semantic distinction between *thy* and *your* in this song is erroneous (46); the one occurrence of *your* refers not to Elbereth but to the stars that are addressed in the third stanza.

ANIMALS. The following types of animals are addressed with *du/ihr* in *Der Herr der Ringe*: dogs (It: 120), wolves (It: 362), ponies (It: 181, 341, 368), horses (It: 122, 236; III: 33-34, 140), and the giant spider Shelob (It: 391). The eagle Gwaihir is a special case, since he is himself capable of using language. Gandalf addresses him with *du*, but this could be due to friendship, since Gwaihir also uses *du* in addressing Gandalf (It: 318; III: 119-20; III: 256).

INANIMATE OBJECTS. Pippin, Bombadil, and Quickbeam all use *du/ihr* when speaking to trees (It: 144, 153-54; It: 97), and *du* is used in an old rhyme that calls on the power of the herb athelas (III: 156). Aragorn and Legolas address the wind with *du* (It: 18-19). Aragorn uses *du* when addressing his sword (III: 177) and uses a *du*-imperative when talking to a troll that has turned to stone (It: 253). This last example is not particularly indicative of this category, since he would most likely have used *du* even if the troll were alive.

ABSTRACT CONCEPTS. There are no examples of this use of the second person pronoun in *The Lord of the Rings*.

This list of situations that dictate the use of familiar second person pronouns is of course incomplete. Conversational exchanges appear in *Der Herr der Ringe* that clearly illustrate other common uses of *du/ihr*. People talk to themselves using *du*, and we find Frodo, Sam, Merry, Pippin, and Bombadil doing this (It: 159, 274, 341, and elsewhere; It: 226; III: 127). The translations of old songs, poems, and proverbs generally make use of the familiar forms as well, but sometimes this can be attributed to forms like *thou* and *ye* in the English originals (as at I: 88-89, 219-20, 394; II: 80-81, 106-07; III: 241). Songs with a specific audience in mind, such as Bombadil's musical conversations with the hobbits, tend to use the forms of address that would be used in prose, but there are exceptions (see below). Curiously, the voice that speaks in rhyme to Boromir and Faramir in their dreams (and therefore separately) addresses them with *ihr* (It: 299; III: 305).

Class distinctions also play a major role in determining whether to use familiar or polite pronouns. High-ranking nobles (e.g. Elrond, Galadriel, Théoden, and Denethor) are almost always addressed as *Ihr*, except where other factors come into play. Some of these factors have already been noted, such as the use of *du* between blood relatives and travelling companions, but there are others as well. An interesting example is Ghân-buri-Ghân's use of *du* in addressing King Théoden (III: 116). The Wild Man's use of the familiar pronoun is not unlike that of a young child using *du* to address an adult in that it demonstrates a lack of social skills (cf. Lederer 192). Conversely, lords and kings generally address their subjects with *du/ihr*, as when Denethor speaks to his servants and messengers (III: 107-10, 141, 144) and when Théoden speaks to Háma (III: 138),

Ceorl (III: 149), Dúnhere (III: 71), Widfara (III: 121), and Elfhelm (III: 122). An interesting exception is Thoden's use of *Ihr* in addressing his advisor Grma (III: 139-41). Théoden also addresses Gandalf, Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli (III: 132ff.), Saruman (III: 211-12), and the errand-riders of Gondor (III: 77-80) with *Ihr*, but not Pippin (III: 184-6), Merry (III: 184-86; III: 51-52, and elsewhere), and Ghân-buri-Ghân (III: 117, 120). In the case of Ghân, there are two factors to be considered: firstly, Ghân uses the familiar form in addressing Théoden, and secondly, the Rohirrim regard the Wild Men as little better than beasts anyway (cf. Ghân's comment about the hunting of Wild Men, III: 107; III: 117). It is difficult to say why the hobbits are treated thus, but Pippin nevertheless remarks that the king is "very polite" (II: 164; III: 186). Merry would in any event have come to be addressed with *du* after he became the kings sword-thane. Another example of this sort can be found in Aragorn's conversations with the hobbits in Bree. He addresses Frodo, Merry, and Pippin, all three of them from well-to-do families, with *Ihr*, but he uses *du* in speaking to Sam, probably because Sam is Frodo's servant (It: 197-224, esp. 214). Faramir addresses Frodo and Sam in the same way (III: 304-45).

The translator of Tolkien is also confronted by types of dialogues that could not occur in the real world. In *The Hobbit*, for instance, we have talking birds, talking spiders, a talking dragon, and even a talking purse. In *The Silmarillion*, not only does Túrin speak to his sword, but the sword also replies. How should a purse address a pick-pocket? How should a sword address its owner? These decisions must be made by the translator without recourse to any guidelines set by actual practice (Scherf in fact has the purse say *Ihr*, while Krege has the sword say *du*; It: 43; St: 252). The translator of *The Lord of the Rings* encounters fewer dialogues involving non-humanoid speakers and thus is able to avoid this dilemma. Carroux does of course have to deal with Gwaihir, a talking eagle, but he is a good friend of Gandalfs and the two address each other with *du*, as has been mentioned above. Among certain humanoid characters, however, there are certain characteristics that must be noted when rendering their speech into German. Uncultured, evil races, such as orcs and trolls, would most likely refrain from using polite forms of address, and Carroux does translate the speech of orcs and the orc-like ruffians with this in mind.

Gollum, despite his idiosyncratic manner of speaking, presents no major problems for the translator with regard to pronouns of address. Gollum normally talks to himself in the first person plural — addressing both his physical self (Sméagol) and his Precious (the Ring) — and to others in the third person. Such dialogue is translated accordingly. He does, however, occasionally use the second person to address others, and at those times he uses the familiar forms, whether he is speaking to his fellow-travellers Frodo and Sam (III: 253ff.) or to the Dark Lord Sauron in absentia (III: 255). Gollum never uses the second person when speaking to his Sméagol-self, although he

does at one point use a *du*-imperative in speaking to his *Schatz*, his Precious (II: 253). This *du* should nevertheless be interpreted as the *du* used in speaking to oneself rather than that used in speaking to an inanimate object, considering the close bond between Gollum and the Ring.

Another difficulty in translating *The Lord of the Rings* is deciding when characters relationships have progressed far enough to warrant the switch from polite to familiar pronouns. As I have mentioned previously, Carroux has characters switch from *Ihr* to *du* when they become traveling-companions. Galadriel first addresses the various members of the Fellowship with *Ihr* (It: 430-54) but during and after the mirror scene she uses familiar forms in her conversations with Frodo and Sam (It: 436-42, 453-54), perhaps as a sign of affection for them. The switch from *Ihr* to *du* in Gandalf's talk with Gríma has a different motivation: Gandalf first addresses him with courtesy befitting the King's counsellor (II: 132, 134), but after Gríma's treachery is revealed he addresses him as a criminal (II: 141, 208). Éowyn addresses Merry with *Ihr* (III: 81, 288), but when she is disguised as Dernhelm she uses *du*, probably because she is posing as a fellow soldier (III: 83-84).

Éomer also makes an interesting change in addressing Merry: when Merry is the Kings sword-thane and thus a soldier under his command, Éomer uses *du* (III: 75), but after Merry has been made a knight of the Mark, Éomer's use of *Ihr* reflects this change (III: 288-89). A couple of other explainable switches from familiar to polite forms occur in hailing situations. Farmer Maggot first addresses the trespassers with *Ihr*, but after he recognizes Pippin he switches to *Ihr* (It: 120, 126; the change is only relevant in written form). Aragorn behaves similarly when he hails the Riders of Rohan with *Ihr* but switches to *Ihr* when speaking face to face with their commander (II: 34).

The fictitious background for *The Lord of the Rings* explains that it is a translation of part of the Red Book of Westmarch, which was written in a language called *Westron*. In his discussion of the translation of this document, Tolkien remarks:

The Westron tongue made in the pronouns of the second person (and often also in those of the third) a distinction, independent of number, between "familiar" and "deferential" forms. It was, however, one of the peculiarities of Shire-usage that the deferential forms had gone out of colloquial use. They lingered only among the villagers, especially of the Westfarthing, who used them as endearments. This was one of the things referred to when people of Gondor spoke of the strangeness of Hobbit-speech. Peregrin Took, for instance, in his first few days in Minas Tirith used the familiar forms to people of all ranks, including the Lord Denethor himself. (III: 411)

A note to this paragraph states further:

In one or two places an attempt has been made to hint at these distinctions by an inconsistent use of *thou*. Since this pronoun is now unusual and archaic it is employed mainly to represent the use of ceremonious language;

but a change from *you* to *thou*, *thou* is sometimes meant to show, there being no other means of doing this, a significant change from the deferential, or between men and women normal, forms to the familiar. (III: 411 n. 1; see Irwin for a more detailed analysis of the use of archaic pronouns in *The Lord of the Rings*.)

Curiously, the German version of this note does not say the same thing:

Ein einzelnen Stellen ist versucht worden, diese Unterschiede durch die nicht konsequent durchgeführte Verwendung von "Ihr" anzudeuten. Da dieses Pronomen heute ungewöhnlich und archaisch ist, wird es hauptsächlich benutzt, um eine feierliche Sprache wiederzugeben. (At: 123 n. 5)

[In one or two places an attempt has been made to hint at these distinctions by an inconsistent use of *Ihr*. Since this pronoun is now unusual and archaic it is employed mainly to represent the use of ceremonious language. (translation based on the original English text but modified to indicate the key difference; the remainder of the English note is not reflected in the German version)]

Thus, according to the two versions of the note, the English *thou*-forms are used to indicate both ceremonious and informal pronouns of address, whereas the German *Ihr* (not *du*!) is employed to indicate ceremonious language, while *du* would implicitly be used in its normal function as a familiar pronoun.

We should therefore expect *Ihr* at many of the points where the English text has *thou*, but does Carroux really adhere to the guidelines set forth in this note? I present here a (hopefully) complete list of all the occurrences of *thou/thee/ty* in the English text of *The Lord of the Rings* along with citation forms of the pronouns used to translate them in the German version (i.e. the nominative case forms of the pronouns, whether or not the nominative actually appears in a given text):

Hymn to Elbereth	I: 88-89	du	It: 106
"The Stone Troll"	I: 219-20	du	It: 254-55
Translation of "Namárië"	I: 394	du	It: 456
Song of Ent and Entwife	II: 80-81	Du	II: 89
Galadriel's messages to			
Aragorn, Legolas, Gimli	II: 106-07	Ihr	II: 120
Éowyn's farewell to Théoden	II: 127	du	II: 144-45
Faramir's dream-cry to Boromir	II: 274	du	II: 314
Elrond's message to Aragorn	III: 48	du	III: 49
Arwen's message to Aragorn	III: 48	du	III: 50
Isildur to the King of the			
Men of the Mountains	III: 55	du	III: 57
Éowyn to Aragorn	III: 58-59	du	III: 61
Lord of the Nazgûl to Éowyn	III: 116	du	III: 127
Denethor to Gandalf	III: 128-30	du	III: 142-44
Mouth of Sauron to Gandalf	III: 165	du	III: 185
Renewal of the Stewardship	III: 245	du	III: 276
Aragorn to Éowyn	III: 256	du	III: 288

This table clearly demonstrates that *thou* is almost exclusively rendered as *du* in the German version, even though the note on familiar and deferential pronouns states otherwise. The only instances in which *Ihr*-forms represent *thou*-forms occur in Galadriel's messages to Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli, where *Ihr* is the pronoun Galadriel would normally use in speaking to them. In some of these examples, however, the *du*-calque has spread to portions of the conversation that have you in the original. In the conversation between Aragorn and Éowyn, correspondence between *you* and *Ihr* and between *thou* and *du* is maintained throughout, except in the portion of Éowyn's speech where she says,

All your words are but to say: you are a woman, and your part is in the house. But when the men have died in battle and honour, you have leave to be burned in the house, for the men will need it no more.

Thus Éowyn has Aragorn fictitiously addressing her with *du* (for you), although in actuality he uses *Ihr* (for you) when speaking to her in this conversation (III: 58-59; III: 60-61). Another instance of *du*-spread is found in Éowyn's conversation with the Lord of the Nazgûl, where the English version has the Nazgûl using *thou* and Éowyn using *you*, but the German version has both using *du* (III: 116; III: 127).

There are instances, however, in which characters who would normally address each other with *du* use *Ihr* in ceremonial situations, as in the previously noted case of Galadriel addressing Celeborn with *Ihr* at the drinking of the cup of parting (II: 452). Similarly Gandalf, who normally uses the familiar pronoun when speaking to Aragorn, addresses him with *Ihr* when presenting him with the Palantír (II: 229) and after they have found the sapling of the White Tree (III: 282). The shift in style is not marked by the pronouns in the original English version, but these encounters are unusual in that Gandalf addresses Aragorn by title, calling him "lord" (II: 200) and "King Elessar" (III: 250).

Certain shifts occur, however, which can be attributed to no other causes but error and inconsistency. Bilbo addresses the guests at his Farewell Party with *Ihr* at the first occurrence of a pronoun of address but then inexplicably switches to *ihr*, which he uses consistently henceforth (II: 45). Carroux also has Treebeard erroneously speak to Merry and Pippin with *Ihr* at one occurrence (II: 99), although he addresses them with the familiar forms elsewhere. The other instances of unmotivated *Ihr/ihr* switching are much more erratic, as when Bombadil addresses the hobbits in song (II: 153, 161), when Aragorn addresses them in Bree (II: 213-25), and when Faramir speaks to Frodo and Sam (II: 310-45). Faramir also vacillates when addressing Frodo in the singular, normally using *Ihr*-forms but at two occurrences using *du*-forms (II: 320, 343); he always addresses Sam with *du* (II: 313, 330-32, 334; see above). Other inconsistencies of this type are: Gandalf addressing Butterbur with *du* (II: 209-10, 321) and then *Ihr* (III: 305-08); Pippin addressing Bombadil with *du* (II: 181) and then *Ihr* (II: 185); Elrond addressing Bilbo with an *Ihr*-

imperative (II: 280) but later with *du* (II: 303); Elrond addressing Gandalf with *du* (II: 305) and then *Ihr* (II: 336); and Thoden once using *ihr* instead of *Ihr* in speaking to Saruman (II: 212). A number of these inconsistencies have been rectified in the 1992 revised edition: Bilbo now addresses his guests consistently with *ihr* (HdR: 43); Treebeard consistently uses familiar forms in speaking to Merry and Pippin (HdR: 493); Pippin always addresses Bombadil with *Ihr* (HdR: 155, 159); Elrond always addresses Bilbo with *du* (HdR: 240, 258-59); Théoden always addresses Saruman with *Ihr* (HdR: 587). The inconsistencies in the cases of Bombadil, Aragorn, and Faramir addressing the hobbits have been reduced in number but not eradicated (see HdR: 132, 139, 182-92, 671-703). The cases involving Gandalf addressing Butterbur (HdR: 179, 273, 997-99), Elrond addressing Gandalf (HdR: 260, 286), and Faramir addressing Frodo (HdR: 671-703, esp. 679, 697) still require revision.

The patterns of pronominal address in Walter Scherfs German translation of *The Hobbit* (*Der kleine Hobbit*) are fairly compatible with those in *Der Herr der Ringe*, but Scherf uses *ihr* (not capitalized) as the plural of both *du* and *Ihr*. The characters in Scherfs translation, however, have a greater tendency to use polite forms of address, and even Bilbo, Gandalf, and the dwarves use *Ihr* amongst themselves, even though they are travelling companions. This can perhaps be attributed to the dwarves generally polite speech. The one exception to this is when Bombur addresses Bilbo with *du* when calling him a Faupelz (Ht: 133, for "lazybones" H: 139); the use of *Ihr* here would no doubt have produced an inconsistency in tone. Bilbo is also addressed with *du* by one of the eagles (Ht: 118) and by Beorn (Ht: 135), but both of these can perhaps be linked to their perception of him as something similar to a rabbit and thus subject to the rule for addressing animals; in the 1992 revised edition, however, Beorn uses *Ihr* (Ht: 169). The dragon Smaug also uses *du* in conversation with Bilbo, who responds in kind (Ht: 224-30), yet in absentia they address each other with *Ihr* (Ht: 236, 238). We should probably expect the evil characters to use *du* in addressing the good characters, as is the case when the trolls and the spiders talk to Bilbo. The Great Goblin surprisingly addresses Thorin with *Ihr*, but this conversation is remarkably civil for an exchange between an orc and a dwarf. Even Gollum, miserable social outcast that he is, employs the *Ihr*-form when conversing with Bilbo.

Wolfgang Kreges version of *The Silmarillion* (*Das Silmarillion*) treats the pronouns of address in quite a different manner. Kreges makes no distinction between polite and familiar but uses *du* for the singular and *ihr* for the plural, irrespective of who is speaking to whom. As a result, gods, monarchs, nobles, commoners, animals, and weapons are all addressed in the same way. This can perhaps be reconciled with the pronominal system of *Der kleine Hobbit* and *Der Herr der Ringe* by taking it as a more archaic system. The pronominal system of Old High German, like Kreges system, contained only *du* and *ihr* forms,

with reverential singular pronouns (plural in form, based on a Latin model) occurring seldom until around the year 1200 (Augst 24-25). The temporal gap between most of the events in *The Silmarillion* and those in *The Lord of the Rings* is much wider than that between Old High German and Middle High German or even that between Old High German and the language of the present day. "Quenta Silmarillion," which comprises the bulk of the book, ends some six millennia before the beginning of the events chronicled in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. "Akalabêth, the next section of the book, ends about three thousand years before the beginning of *The Hobbit*, and of the three conversations containing second person pronouns in "Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age," only one takes place during the time of *The Hobbit* (S: 302; S: 331), with the next most recent example set two thousand years earlier (S: 304; S: 334).

The treatment of the second person pronouns in the German translations of Tolkien's works therefore present the reader with a complex web of intentions and motivations. The standard rules of German pronominal usage, the various translators' interpretations of relationships, and the authors' original texts all intertwine to produce a unified whole. The web is serviceable, though not flawless, but the flaws can be remedied without unravelling the entire structure. Is Margaret Carroux's version of *The Lord of the Rings* a good translation? The answer is largely a matter of personal taste. Yet the proper treatment of second person pronouns in rendering English into German is a necessary ingredient toward a good translation, and in this respect *Der Herr der Ringe* is — for the most part — a success. ☞

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