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DH 8991: Introduction to Digital Humanities

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<div align="center">Research Intervention – useR! 2022 Conference Abstract for Elevator Pitch</div>

Title: Translation Trouble in *Le Roman de Silence*: Using Shiny and bookdown for Digital Editing of Medieval Texts

Abstract:

Since its first edition produced by Lewis Thorpe in 1972, *Le Roman de Silence* — a thirteenth century Picard verse narrative — has been the fuel for much debate concerning its mysterious author/narrator, Heldris of Cornwall, and his message regarding gender. Some label the text a misogynist defense of the status quo (Gaunt 1990). Others revel in the gendered possibilities the text allows its readers to imagine (Barr 2020). Despite many interpretations, the common thread running through this contentious scholarship is a shared frustration with the inability of modern language translations to convey the text's multilayered meanings. However, it is not the fault of editors and translators but rather the limitations of traditional print technology that prevent us from properly engaging with this unique manuscript. Unlike a traditional print edition, a flexible, interactive digital edition could reflect the mutability of Heldris's language, thereby better articulating the ways *Silence* itself translates gender (Campbell 2019). I have developed this new digital edition and propose new methods toward the editing of medieval manuscripts such that the polysemy of the original is not lost on a modern audience. I will present a new translation of verses 2439-2688 of *Silence* in a bookdown book, and harness the interactive power of Shiny to allow the modern reader to fully engage with the text. By structuring my translation as tidy data,

capturing all translation possibilities, and allowing the reader to interact with those possibilities via Shiny, the true depth of the text is unlocked as never before.

Keywords: digital editing; translation; bookdown; medieval manuscripts; Silence

Primary Topic: "R in the wild"

GitHub: https://github.com/leeloren/silence.git

Website: https://leeloren.github.io/silence/

Previously presented or published elsewhere?: No