

## Abstract for Festival of Methods

Digital Humanities group, Fondazione Bruno Kessler (Trento), Italy

In order to analyse how Ireland is represented in UK parliamentary discourse, we downloaded the “Hansard Corpus” and created a subcorpus including only the documents containing Ireland/Irish and related words. Then, we processed it with our pipeline called ALCIDE (available at [http://celct.fbk.eu:8080/Alcide\\_Demo/](http://celct.fbk.eu:8080/Alcide_Demo/)) and explored the corpus content using the interactive modules integrated in the platform.

We used some functionalities to explore how the frequency of some key terms related to Ireland change over time in the subcorpus, and whether they are connected with some relevant events. A few examples are reported below (Fig. 1-2):

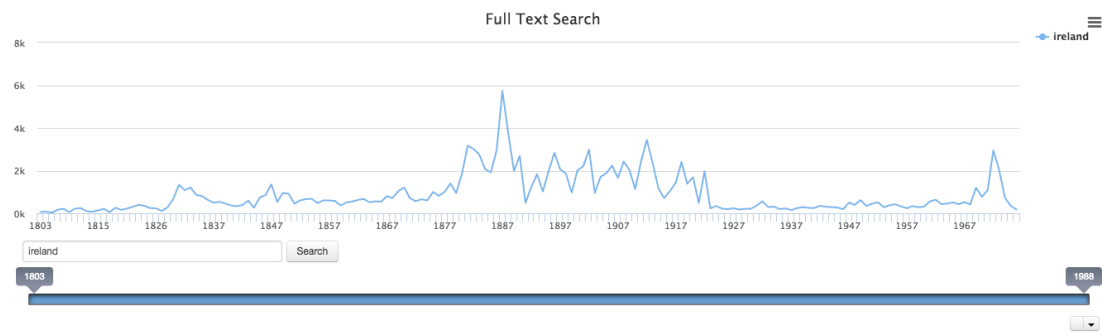


Fig. 1: Number of documents containing the word “Ireland”

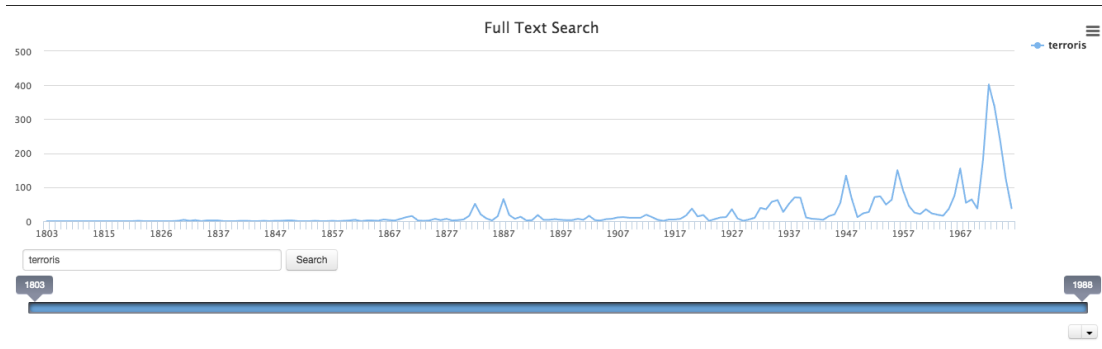


Fig. 2: Number of documents containing the word “terrorism”

The peaks in Fig. 1 are related to specific years: in 1887, when Ireland is mainly mentioned in association with the Irish Land Act and the Bloody Sunday, in 1912, with the Home Rule Crisis, in 1922, at the end of the Independence war, and in 1972, with the second Bloody Sunday.

In order to understand better what topics were mentioned in relation to Ireland, we ran the keyword extraction tool in ALCIDE and analysed the top-scored ones for each of the four peaks shown in Fig. 1. The extractor recognizes single and multiword

keywords and ranks them by relevance.

We manually analysed the top-ranked keywords and identified some broad topics specific to the years taken into account. Specifically, we observe that in **1887** Irish products and agriculture play a relevant role in Parliamentary discourse. This is shown by the presence of the following keywords: *exportation of Irish cattle, Irish cattle, condition of Irish cattle, Irish cattle export trade, Irish roll tobacco manufacturers, Irish roll tobacco, quality of Irish horses, Irish linen, question of Irish agriculture, Irish wool*. Another topic was related to schools, because Catholics supported catholic schools in Ireland. Some relevant keywords are *Irish national school teachers, Irish teachers, question of Irish education, Irish scholarship, subject of Irish education, Irish educational system, Irish teacher, control of Irish education, money on Irish education, Irish education*.

In **1912**, a peak of the “foot and mouth disease” was observed in Ireland, which was found to be related to meat. Therefore, some relevant keywords in such year are *importation of Irish cattle, importation of Irish store, reception of Irish cattle, Irish cattle, movement of Irish cattle, prohibition against Irish cattle, holyhead for Irish cattle, detention of Irish cattle, opposition among Irish cattle, Irish store cattle, importation of Irish animals, inspection of Irish animals, Irish animals, importation of Irish livestock, reception of Irish animals*. Other products are also mentioned in the same year, for example *development of Irish fisheries, quality of Irish whisky, importation of Irish hay, importation of Irish stock, Irish peers, disqualification on Irish peers*.

In **1916**, the year of the Irish insurrection, frequently mentioned keywords are *Irish prisoners, internment of Irish prisoners, situation of Irish prisoners, statement that Irish prisoners, Irish Sinn Fein prisoners, Irish insurrection*. In this year, Irish products are mentioned but are not as relevant as in the previous years, and cattle is not listed. Some products extracted by the keyword extractor are *Irish flax, carriage of Irish eggs, Irish butter, Irish wool and Irish hay*.

In **1922**, the year in which the Irish Free State was settled, it played a very relevant role, being mentioned in some top-ranked keywords such as *free state troops, free state forces, free state constitution pill, free state authorities, free state police, free state territory, Irish free state stamps, free state men, free state side, Irish free state citizenship, Irish free state subject, Irish free state coinage, free state constitution, Irish free state citizen, Irish free state conflicts, Irish free state authorities, free state people, Irish free state people, free state citizenship, free state buildings, Irish free state advance, free state official, Irish free state citizens, free state existence, free state party, free state, free state nationality, free state lines*.

Finally, in **1972** we observe the presence of several keywords related to Northern Ireland, especially in connection with elections. Some examples are *Northern Ireland business, Northern Ireland legislation, Northern Ireland situation, Northern Ireland affairs and Northern Ireland constituencies*.

The above results are only an example of the analyses provided by ALCIDE. The platform will be available during the workshop, allowing participants to look for keyword trends and other information. Other functionalities will be available to check who are the top-mentioned persons in the subcorpus related to Ireland, and see how their frequency changes over time.

Contact: Sara Tonelli [satonelli@fbk.eu](mailto:satonelli@fbk.eu)