CELT - Corpus of Electronic Texts

CELT, conceived by Professor Donnchadh Ó Corráin, is Ireland’s biggest single Internet corpus of scholarly multilingual XML-encoded electronic texts on Irish history, literature, and politics. Founded in 1991, it was Ireland’s first website. It has 11.5 million words from over 1,000 years of Irish history in over 1,000 text documents, including bibliographical information and background material. All documents have been edited by CELT staff to TEI standards.

CELT has been a leader in electronic text editing. Widely used by the scholarly community in Ireland and beyond, CELT’s website celtnet.ie is the highest ranking UCC individual research project in pages served per day; with 10% of successful page requests from UCC.

CELT’s funding comes from private donors, public bodies (HEA, IRCSSH), and through its own fundraising. CELT also includes stand-alone projects, such as Writers of Ireland (2006) funded by UCC. Under PRTLI 4, CELT makes available a) materials for Authors of Ireland (1600–1900) including editions provided by members of History and other UCC departments. In addition, there will be materials for travel, economy, historiography and politics from the early modern period, including hitherto unpublished items; b) Irish sagas and hagiographical texts; and c) materials relating to the history of science from the early modern era. Between February 2006 and October 2008, our corpus has grown by over 3.4 million words in 285 new texts, and we are looking forward to publishing more online. We would like to acknowledge the help of CELT volunteers who enthusiastically give of their time to make more texts available.

History

Nearly 90 historical and historicist texts, many with English translations, make up CELT’s offering in this section. Geoffrey Keating’s Foras Feasa in Éirinn, made accessible online when-ever you need to check, verify, or compare entries, are a great resource and essential for medieval Irish historians. All the major annals are on CELT, and a few will be published in 2009, such as the Annals of Clonmacnoise.

Literature

Old and Middle Irish literature offers a rich treasure chest. Although CELT has about 130 texts, many with English translations, there are many more on our list.

Anglo-Irish Literature from the 18th and 19th century also is at the heart of CELT, and growing. Pick Jonathan Swift, Oliver Goldsmith, Thomas Osborne Davis, James Clarence Mangan, Sheridan Le Fanu, Bram Stoker, or Oscar Wilde. Political documents and writings complement the literary works, from Spenser to de Valera, and from Sir John Davies to James Connolly.

History of Science

CELT has started to make available electronic texts from the history of medicine and astronomy. Irish medical texts nearly are unique in Europe, in that the Latin was translated into the vernacular. Much has been added to them, which allows fascinating insights into contemporary health. Searchable texts also complement well-known existing projects, such as ISOS (DIAS). ISOS has been engaged for years in the digitisation and online presentation of manuscript images from major Irish research libraries.

Above: Ógontacht ealaí ar scoí ar bhrosháid chaungail saoí gach éimí. Sa gheirmhsbhail, umorro, toghthag in uair bhuns rosc mar an cóisia don earrach scoí don earrachtí ar an sanadhna ríosa an gheirmhsbhail mar na roimh sácha is neasa don tsamhradh díbh díghíd in uair bheith mar uair an tsamhradh ocus an gheirmhsbhail ocus an tsamhradh ocus mar an cathacht uíomh uíomh a neasa don gheirmhsbhail toghthag in uair bhuns rosc measra.

Dr. . . cause and who has his desire free in every one thing. Yet, in the winter, let the time that is warmer be chosen and so also of the spring and of the autumn, for these warmer times are appointed towards the summer and towards the winter; for it is in the portions that are nearer to the summer of them that the time should be like the time of summer and the portions which are nearer the winter let the time of moderate warmth be chosen.


Right: From the Middle Ages well into the modern era, the raised urine glass symbolised the learned doctor in the medicine of the Humours, emissions and secretions enabled inferences about what went on inside the body. Thus the colour and sediment of the urine demonstrated the proportions of the four fluids; blood, phlegm, and the yellow and black bile. (Braunmuthsches Hausbuch, 1644 edn. Zentralbibliothek Zürich, Hand-schriftenabteilung, MS C 34 fol. 35v.)

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