

History of Journalism

History of Journalism – Quick Reference Notes

1. Origins & Early Forms (c. 400 BC – 1500 AD)

Period	Key Developments	Representative Examples
Ancient Rome & Greece	• Government issued <i>acta</i> (official notices) • Public <i>acta</i> posted in forums	<i>Acta Diurna</i> (Daily Acts) – “Roman newspaper” (c. 59 BC)
Middle Ages	• Hand-copied newsletters for merchants & clergy • Early “gazettes” circulated among courts	<i>The Gazzetta di Mantova</i> (Italy, 1664) – often cited as the first modern newspaper, but its roots lie in medieval hand-written missives
Early Print Era	• Invention of movable-type printing (c. 1440) → mass production of pamphlets & broadsheets • Emergence of regular news sheets in Europe	<i>Relation</i> (1555, Germany) – considered the first newspaper with a regular publishing schedule

2. The Birth of the Modern Newspaper (16th–18th Centuries)

Century	Milestones	Notable Publications
16th	• Weekly news sheets in England and the Netherlands • Growth of “corantos” – foreign news summaries for merchants	<i>The Courante</i> (London, 1621)
17th	• First daily newspapers appear in Germany & the Netherlands • Rise of political pamphleteering during the English Civil War	<i>The London Gazette</i> (1665) – still published today

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Century	Milestones	Notable Publications
18th	• Expansion of the public sphere (Enlightenment) ? demand for news, essays, criticism • Birth of the “press” as a commercial enterprise	<i>The Spectator</i> (1711, UK) – essay newspaper; <i>Gazette de France</i> (1631, France) gains wide readership

3. 19th Century: Mass Market Journalism

Theme	Details
Industrial Revolution	• Cheaper paper (wood pulp) & steam-powered presses cut costs • Faster distribution via rail and telegraph
Penny Press (U.S.)	• <i>The New York Sun</i> (1833) – first successful daily sold for a penny, targeting a broad audience • Emphasis on human-interest stories, crime, and sensationalism
Investigative & Reform Journalism	• “Muckrakers” (late 1800s) expose corruption, e.g., Ida Tarbell's <i>Standard Oil</i> series (1904)
Rise of Press Agencies	• <i>Agence Havas</i> (France, 1835) ? <i>Reuters</i> (1851) ? <i>Associated Press</i> (1846) – provide syndicated news to multiple papers
International Expansion	• Newspapers appear across Asia, Africa, Latin America, often founded by colonial powers but soon localized

4. Early 20th Century: Broadcast & Professionalization

Development	Impact
Radio News	• First regular news bulletins (1920s) • Real-time reporting during events (e.g., 1938 <i>Hindenburg</i> broadcast)
Journalistic Standards	• Formation of press clubs & societies (e.g., American Society of News Editors, 1922) • Emergence of ethics codes (objectivity,