

National and Transnational News Distribution 1400-1800

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The human need for news and communication about news has been fulfilled in various ways in different eras and cultures by diverse technical means. Beginning with local dissemination by means of word-of-mouth information from person to person about events near and far, the news made its way via random lines of communication and sporadically organized messenger routes or permanently institutionalized postal networks. These had varying degrees of exclusiveness as well as increasingly shorter intervals and delivered the news in ever greater intermittency to reading publics of differing size. The news ranged from covert intelligence for the king to printed newspapers for the nation. The increasing regularity and frequency of news reporting, as well as its growing public nature, are especially notable features of its development.

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Terminology

News is information whose significance lies in its novelty and its relevance to the receiver. As a specific form of information, it is circulated and consumed in a variety of ways – verbally (in oral or written form), graphically, gesturally or symbolically.

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News becomes national communication when its scope encompasses an extended group with a national consciousness. Since the categories of nationalism before 1800 are still imprecise, the word "national" is mostly a linguistic or regional term of reference. When such (national) linguistic or regional-political borders have been surmounted, it is possible to speak of transnational (→ Media Link #ab) communication. Here, transnational is to be distinguished from international, for the communication not only crosses the borders between states and institutions, but also between groups and individuals as well as actors who cannot be accurately classified according to a linguistically or regionally and politically defined concept of nationalism.³

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News and communication about news belong to human sociability.⁴ However, the novelty of news and its relevance to the addressee are also the aspects that stimulate interest in rumours, which are usually distinguished from news by their anonymous origin and uncertain reliability. Nevertheless, the boundary between news and rumour is blurred, because a rumour can become news at any time, especially if it turns out to be true.⁵ To the extent that a piece of news is not only recognized as such but also understood, an exchange may be said to take place that can be called news distribution.

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Messengers and Letters: Oral and Written Messages

At the beginning of the early modern period, information was transmitted as news by word-of-mouth among small groups. In these contexts, news was principally local and communicated person-to-person. News from afar appeared only intermittently and quite randomly such as when it was brought along by widely travelled eyewitnesses, merchants, pilgrims, mercenaries, craftsmen, stu-

dents, etc. The traditional locations for news transmission and discussions about it were ports (→ Media Link #ac), marketplaces, inns (→ Media Link #ad), town halls, churches and financial exchanges, not to mention peasant kitchens and royal courts. Whereas the radius of communication of a village tavern was generally small, hostels on major roads collected news from considerably more distant places.

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In Venice (→ Media Link #ae), one could hear local, but also international news on the Piazza San Marco near the Doge's Palace or the Rialto Bridge. This was also possible in London (→ Media Link #af) near St. Paul's Cathedral, in Hamburg (→ Media Link #ag) or Antwerp (→ Media Link #ah) near the stock exchange or the post office and, finally, in Rome (→ Media Link #ai), Paris (→ Media Link #aj), Prague or Vienna within the vicinity of the court. At these gathering places, people would arrive with either something to report or something they wanted to learn more about. European courts and cities, but also the church, merchants' societies (→ Media Link #ak), religious orders (→ Media Link #al) and universities, had been establishing messenger systems ever since the late Middle Ages. From the 15th and 16th century onwards, such messenger systems regularly kept selected correspondence sites in contact with each other. This led to the development of transnational connections between locations that were temporally and spatially linked over wide geographical and cultural expanses. A comprehensive network for news reporting was still missing, however.

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Since the establishment of permanent national diplomatic offices in the middle of the 15th century (at the latest) in Italy, the communication between governments and their local representatives depended on a reliable and stable channel for reporting. Until the advent of the cheap medium paper in the middle of the 13th century in Italy and Spain, messengers mostly transmitted simple messages by word-of-mouth. Only legally relevant matters were recorded on parchment at a considerable expense. For this reason, there are very few extant written messages from the period before 1300. These messages are characterized by a largely matter-of-fact, descriptive and sober style of dictation that is atypical for later letters. It was not script (→ Media Link #am), but rather the invention of the more economical storage medium paper that caused the oral transmission of news to be eventually replaced to some degree.

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The increasing circulation of initially confidential diplomatic messages due to dissemination among friends, secretaries and clients became a problem for political agents relying on secrecy. Drawing on the methods of the Roman Curia in the 14th century, different ciphers were developed above all in Venice. ¹¹ Governments not only used this to protect internal reporting from being intercepted by foreign "spies", but to also to prevent news leaking out from their own circles and to interrupt the existing chains of communication that had developed at various courts and political centres through dynastic (→ Media Link #an) relations, friendships and business or other personal ties. ¹²

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In Europe, large merchant companies have long been considered the first purveyors of a transnational information culture. Recent research on the so-called "Fugger newspapers" has emphasized, however, that their letters should not be confused with general news correspondence which was the basis for newspapers. The Fuggers' business correspondence, for example, transmitted economic and business information, but only rarely political information. On the other hand, the Fuggers also did collect general news that was separately archived from company correspondence. Commonly known as *Fugger newspapers* → Media Link #ao), these reports mostly deal with military and political events. Although the dissemination of published news sheets frequently made individual company-related news reporting unnecessary, business correspondence continued. Correspondence from *Société typographique de Neuchâtel*, for instance, provided essential insights into the illegal sale of censored books. It also continued to be used by large overseas companies – even after the advent of printed newspapers –because it specifically fulfilled internal company objectives. In the internal company objectives.

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The letters of the far-flung network of the humanists (→ Media Link #aq) or the reformers (above all the second generation) contained numerous general news reports. Among these are the nearly 12,000 letters from over 1,000 correspondents that were saved by Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575) (→ Media Link #ar), the successor of Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) (→ Media Link #as) in Zurich. This treasure trove encompasses more letters than all the messages from Martin Luther (1483–1546) (→ Media Link #at), Johannes Calvin (1509–1564) (→ Media Link #au) and Zwingli combined. Postal channels were used to promote international Calvinist networks (→ Media Link #av) and to spread the reformers' message (→ Media Link #aw). The counter-reformers also left behind significant epistolary records such as those of the Milanese Cardinal Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584) (→ Media Link #ax), amounting to around 40,000 letters. Similar networks were maintained by other religious circles such as the Catholic orders (Benedictine, Jesuits) or the European Jewry (→ Media Link #ay). Frequently, the correspondence of scholars (→ Media Link #az) not only contained scientific, but also political news, just as in the case of the Fugger correspondence.

The Commercialization of the News: "Avvisi"

The news distribution within these intellectual, economic and diplomatic spheres was selective, insular and targeted until the end of the Middle Ages. Only the emerging habit of excerpting pieces of news from these kinds of official (or even friend- or family-related) reports to send them on to others removed them from their original communicative contexts and led to their linguistic formalization.

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As the direct relationship between sender and receiver was dissolved, salutations, greetings, return addresses and personal references were abandoned in favour of general information that would also be of interest and understood by unknown readers in diverse settings. Newsletters typically provided the date and the location where the news had been aggregated (i.e. not where an event had taken place), and this information served as a primary means of categorization. One location for aggregating news could thus bring together news from several other places of origin. This type of fact-based newsletter was developed in Italy and called *Avvisi*. Individual news items were written down on separate slips of paper, copied by means of mass dictation and compiled according to the individual needs of the subscribers.²⁰ For this reason, it is nearly impossible to gain an overview of the *Avvisi* that circulated in Europe. Every individual source that is still extant was compiled differently – even in cases where the *Avvisi* were provided by the same agency.²¹

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As this kind of information gathering was expensive, the (often-covert) compilers of the *Avvisi* had to safeguard against unwanted copying. It was thus necessary to keep an eye on the writers employed by the compilers as well as on the subscribers who not only ordered *Avvisi* for their own purposes, but also copied them for further sale.²²

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Thanks to cheaper paper the news slips could not only be enclosed in diplomatic, but also in business and scholarly correspondence. Around 1530, Italian news dealers began to assemble the news sources from the diverse circulation streams and send them to others on a regular basis for a fee. These *Avvisi* have been characterized as a kind of outsourcing of diplomatic news traffic, ²³ yet they were also interesting for wider audiences because they collected news from other sources, including business, intellectual, religious or private circles. Whoever had connections to the *Avvisi* writers or news dealers could have relevant weekly news sent to them for a set price.

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The *Avvisi* marked the transition to the commercialization of news distribution. In the 1550s, they also began to circulate among princes and the city elites of the old German Empire, and from the 1570s onwards they reached large parts of Europe.²⁴ The cultural transfer (→ Media Link #b0) from Italian *Avvisi* to German newspapers − which was actually facilitated by the Fuggers²⁵ − involved a clear shift in their function. While the content in fact remained the same, even in the German translation (apart from editorial abridgments and changes), the newsletters' role in the overall communication picture was nonetheless entirely different. While *Avvisi* for the Italian royal courts represented merely a supplementary source of information to diplomatic reports, ²⁶ for the German princes they substituted a not yet existing system of regular diplomatic reporting.²⁷

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Here, political and military news clearly dominated, whereas economic and cultural reports, along with sensational news, remained rather marginal. In the 16th and early 17th century, almost half of the news was compiled in Venice and Rome. The news arriving in Venice came principally from the eastern Mediterranean, the Ottoman Empire, the Middle and Far East or even from Spain and Portugal (via Lyon). Rome was the main channel for news from the Vatican, southern Italy and North Africa. Besides Lyon, the Habsburg cities of Antwerp, along with Prague and Vienna, were important news centres of the Empire. On the contrary, the Iberian Peninsula was remarkably underrepresented, as well as large parts of France and above all England and north-eastern Europe. 28

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The regular dissemination of the news relied mainly on the infrastructure of the postal service (→ Media Link #b1), which had been developed in the German Empire, in France and in England since the late 15th century. This expensive system of transportation, which was initially only used by the operators, reduced travel time dramatically by means of relay couriers, permanent stations (posts) and horse exchanges. It thus represented a logistical triumph that relied on relatively minimal technical innovation.²⁹ The postal service, which had been set up in the German Empire as an imperial fief by the family Thurn and Taxis beginning in 1597, was crucially improved by being made available to the general public for a fee in 1516. This made even transnational deliveries af-

fordable.³⁰ Until 1700, older messaging channels and competing postal services combined their routes into a European network that was accessible to everyone.³¹ Scandinavia gained access to the network of postal routes around 1620 via Hamburg,³² while the development in Eastern Europe beyond the German Empire was delayed.³³

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The regular influx of news that is sometimes referred to as the "news revolution", ³⁴ which transcended nations and governments, was made possible by the weekly arrivals of the so-called "Ordinari Post". Scholars entrusted their correspondence to the postal service as much as Catholic orders, reformed networks, merchants' societies or families did. Even routine diplomatic correspondence was partly carried out by the postal service, even though special couriers and messengers continued to play a significant role. In this case, the postal connections utilized and promoted the existing network of roads and streets, which had to be massively expanded in order to allow for the transition from foot and horse messengers to postal carriages. ³⁵

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Printed News

The introduction of the printing press (→ Media Link #b2) in the 1450s did not immediately change daily news reporting. This is because initially only texts that were usable over a long period were printed: the Bible, the writings of the Church fathers, grammar books and contracts. News, conversely, was printed only if there was a potential for commercial success. Reports on triumphant battles, papal elections, natural catastrophes (→ Media Link #b3) or other sensational events (→ Media Link #b4) found their way onto the market in frequently illustrated broadsheets or short brochures containing only a few pages which were called "Neue Zeitungen" (new news). "Zeitung", "Tijding", "nouvelle", "notizia", "nova" literally meant "news" or "novelty". Their actual appearance was as unpredictable as the events (→ Media Link #b5) themselves that they reported.

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Apart from the calendar, regular and reliable news was first printed after 1583 (and intermittently until 1806) in the *Messrelationen* (fair relations) – over 100 years after Johannes Gutenberg (ca. 1400–1468) (→ Media Link #b6). Nevertheless, this (apparently specifically German) type of text was only printed annually, and before long semi-annually, for the most important fairs in Cologne, Frankfurt (→ Media Link #b7), Leipzig and several other cities. Rather than current news, it presented a chronological and geographical classification of the history of the prior months. ³⁶

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Similar products included the English *news books* (>> Media Link #b8) from the middle of the 17th century, the French serial chronicles and the Swedish Hermes Gothicus (Stockholm 1624).³⁷ However, and this was innovative, the specifically British *news books* published from 1641 onwards offered on a few pages an up-to-date weekly summary of domestic political events from a frequently partisan perspective. In this way, they strongly distinguished themselves from the neutral and politically detached Messrelationen which were published in book form.³⁸ The serial chronicles published in Germany, France and elsewhere were certainly contemporary accounts of recent history. Unlike the fair relations, however, they were published at irregular intervals.³⁹

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Serially numbered newspapers were constantly published, albeit discontinuously, from the 1560s onwards. They attempted to appeal to the buyers' interest in "new news" by publishing them in instalments. Yet they were monothematic, focusing, for example, on the Turkish wars, the French religious wars, the Dutch revolt and similar subjects. This explains why they seldom had runs of more than ten issues.⁴⁰

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The hand-written price lists and exchange rates in merchant correspondence from Italy to London and Damascus which emerged in the 14th century are also considered to be an early form of European publishing. Ever since the 16th century (Antwerp 1540, Venice 1585), they were printed weekly in the Italian language as *listini dei prezzi* and became further differentiated in the 17th century, when they appeared in separate publications for particular goods and prices. Furthermore, geographical and nautical news was published in map form as woodcuts or copper etchings from the late 15th century onwards. In this way, cartographic information that had always been a well-kept secret became the common property of all Europeans.

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Given the demand for news and the infrastructure that was already in place for the postal network and the handling of written communications, the first printed weekly periodical was founded surprisingly late. In 1605, the Strasbourg printer Johann Carolus (1575–1634) (→ Media Link #bb) applied for the privilege of printing his previously hand-written news. His request for protection against reprinting was rejected, but by transferring the language, selection and presentation of the mainly political, diplomatic and military reports from the hand-written news into print, he succeeded in creating the newspaper genre that would define the future. The fact that the first newspaper did not emerge in an important centre for news may be attributed to the obstacles presented by the (for diplomatic reasons) strict censorship (→ Media Link #bc) in such centres (Venice⁴⁴), the competing interests of the traders and officials who made a living from written news (Augsburg, Danzig, Cologne, Nuremberg, Rome) and the irregular shipping connections (Antwerp, London), which favoured a serial publication, but not a regular periodical. 45

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The humanist Carolus, however, received permission from the city council to print his hand-written news in the comparatively remote Strasbourg, which had been linked to the nearby Taxis postal route. The *Relation* (→ Media Link #bd), as he called it, only found imitators after a period of several several years (Wolfenbüttel 1609; Basel 1610).⁴⁶ In the run-up to the 30 Years' War, the number of newspapers did grow − in many cases they were reprints of previously handwritten newspapers.⁴⁷

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The new genre spread throughout Europe with the usual delayed intervals: The first non-German newspapers appeared in Amsterdam (Dutch 1618; French and English 1620; Yiddish 1686), ⁴⁸ Valencia (Spanish 1619), ⁴⁹ Antwerp (Dutch and French 1620), London (English 1621), Copenhagen (German / Danish 1634; Danish 1672), ⁵⁰ possibly Florence in 1636 or Milan in 1637, but undoubtedly in Genoa (Italian 1639), ⁵¹ Lisbon (Portuguese 1641), Barcelona (Catalan 1641), ⁵² Kraków / Warsaw (Polish 1661), ⁵³ St. Petersburg (Russian 1703), ⁵⁴ Prague (Czech 1719), Oslo (Norwegian 1763), Åbo / Turku (Finnish 1776), Preßburg [Bratislava] (Hungarian 1780, Slovak 1783), Vienna (Serbian 1791–1794) and Ljubljana (Slovenian 1797). ⁵⁵

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The format Carolus used, with four (later eight) quarto pages, was also utilized by other publishers in countries ranging from Spain to Poland and Sweden to Italy. Only the (early) newspapers from Amsterdam and London preferred the double-sided printed folio format. Because of their relatively frequent use of images and their similarity to illustrated broadsheets, newspapers from Antwerp were somewhat unusual. Whereas newspapers only appeared once a week to start with, in those places where postal routes crossed, their regularity increased to two or more times a week. The first dailies appeared in Leipzig in 1650, in London in 1702, in Madrid in 1758, in Venice in 1765, in Stockholm 1769 and in Paris in 1777.

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Not only did the printed newspapers make the sober, fact-based and largely commentary-free style of the *Avvisi* familiar to a much larger audience, the diplomats also regularly included printed newspapers in their reports.⁵⁸ For example, the Russian foreign ministry had German and Dutch newspapers systematically translated for internal use.⁵⁹

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Until the year 1700, between 60 and 80 German-language newspapers with an average circulation of about 400 issues had been established, 60 18 of which in Switzerland. In the Northern Netherlands approximately 20, 62 and in Italy around 25 publishers have been identified. These places stand for the polycentrically organized political spaces in Europe. In contrast, the press land-scape in the centrally governed kingdoms was dominated by the model of a unique and royally privileged newspaper, which effectively had no competition in its particular territory. Hence, around 1700, there was only a single newspaper in France (*Gazette*, Paris from 1631), 64 in Spain (*La Gazeta nueva / Gazeta de Madrid* from 1661) and in Sweden (*Ordinarie Post Tijdender*, Stockholm from 1645). In Portugal, after the demise of the *Gazeta de Lisboa* (1641–1647) interested readers had to resort to foreign titles until 1715. Only a few newspapers, which often had short lifespans, appeared before 1700 in Poland in Polish, German and Italian (Warsaw and Kraków), 66 while perhaps half a dozen appeared in Copenhagen in Danish, German and French.

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In England, the history of the newspaper was rather discontinuous. After the early *Corantos* of the 1620s and the era of wide-ranging press freedom during the Civil War and the Republic (1641–1660), pre-censorship was introduced in 1662. This essentially led to the monopoly (1665–1679) of the *London Gazette* (→ Media Link #be) during the Restoration. ⁶⁸

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The number of new newspapers increased in the 18th century, as did their life spans. England in particular caught up with the countries with traditionally diverse press landscapes (→ Media Link #bf), like Holland or Italy, which had around 80 and 90 new

publications⁶⁹ respectively, or the German Empire and Switzerland, which had between 200 or 250 and 40 publications respectively.⁷⁰ A real boom was seen in England after censorship had been eliminated in 1695. This not only affected London, the traditional hub for news (with approximately 20 newspapers, 14 of which were dailies in 1790), but also the provinces, where around 70 newspapers emerged in the 18th century. The English press, moreover, became highly diverse with regard to type (→ Media Link #bg), content and format.⁷¹

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The press landscape also developed in countries like Denmark, Sweden and Poland. On the other hand, the Copenhagen newspapers were able to preserve their monopoly (for Danish, German and French news) in Danish-controlled Norway by preventing the establishment of Norwegian newspapers until the 1760s.⁷² In France, the strength of the *Gazette*'s monopoly started to decline in the 1770s.⁷³

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Languages and Content

Although many intellectual journals continued to use Latin into the 18th century, newspapers in Latin were generally rare. Thanks to a range of translation activities (→ Media Link #bh), a large number of geographically and linguistically overlapping enterprises made transnational news reporting possible, if only in simplified form. The German-language newspapers were not only the first and the most numerous to publish transnationally, but they were also frequently printed in non-German-speaking regions in northern and eastern Europe. In Denmark, the modern-day Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, German newspapers had emerged even before newspapers in the locally spoken languages were founded.

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Before 1789, the majority of francophone newspapers of the "gazette" type appeared outside of France. In France itself, only 14 gazettes were published before 1789. Swedish newspapers, on the other hand, also appeared in Finland, whereas Polish newspapers could also be found in Lithuania (Wilna / Vilnius 1760–1793) and Ukraine (Lemberg 1783–1786). Italian-language papers, moreover, appeared outside of Italy in Warsaw in 1661, Amsterdam in the 1680s, Vienna until 1742, in Gorizia from 1774–1776, in Nuremberg in 1753, in Weimar from 1787–1789, in Lugano (Switzerland) from 1746–1799, in Corsica in 1764–1790 and in Monaco in 1793.

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Holland (→ Media Link #bi), though, was the leader in the production of newspapers in multiple languages. Depending on the edition, the still-sporadic *Nieuwe Tijdinghen* (→ *Media Link #bj*) published by Abraham Verhoeven (1575–1652) (→ Media Link #bk) was printed either in Dutch, French or Latin. ⁸¹ Since 1620, newspapers had appeared in French, along with those in Dutch, in the Spanish Netherlands (Antwerp) and in the United Provinces (Amsterdam). In Amsterdam, they were additionally published in English. In contrast, the first English newspapers in London did not emerge until 1621 or, for that matter, the first French papers in Paris only appeared in 1631. By the same token, newspapers were printed in Spanish, Italian and Yiddish in Amsterdam around 1680. ⁸² There were cities with newspapers outside of Holland, though, that also had offerings in multiple languages. German as well as French newspapers were published, for instance, in Altona, Berlin, Bern, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Copenhagen, Warsaw and Vienna.

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In 1622, advertisements and classified notices began to appear in German-language newspapers. They maintained their modest foothold there until the introduction of the so-called *Intelligenzblatt* (intelligence paper) in the 18th century. This classified newspaper (*Frag- und Anzeigungsnachrichten* (→ Media Link #bl) in Frankfurt from 1722) served as a marketplace for the local exchange and employment opportunities, as a publication platform for authorities and also partly as a medium for popular enlightenment.⁸³ This new type of newspaper was adopted in 1745 in France under the title *Feuille d'annonces*.⁸⁴ Around this time, the first daily advertising circular (*The Daily Advertiser*) was established in London, even though papers principally devoted to advertising had already existed since 1657.⁸⁵

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The range of topics, however, was not as comprehensive as the contemporary definition of a newspaper would imply. Indeed, the newspapers of the early modern period reported primarily on war and diplomacy, although to a gradually diminishing degree: In 1626, 90 per cent of each newspaper focused on this subject; in 1674, 78 per cent; and, in 1796, 77 per cent. Socially relevant topics gained more attention from in the late 17th century onwards (1674: 12 per cent; 1736: 24 per cent; 1796: 13 per cent), whereas other subjects (business, law, culture, religion and sensational news) remained relatively marginal with values of 1 to 4 per cent.

Around 90 per cent of news items were reports on actual events. Rarely, however, did they present opinions, declarations of any kind or speculation. 70 per cent were focused on objective issues, and only 30 per cent of the information was personalized. As a result of the censorship – which mostly worked regionally and locally in German-speaking countries – the newspapers of the 18th century dedicated 70 per cent of their content to foreign reporting and slightly less than 30 per cent to news from the German Empire. Hardly any space at all was devoted to local events.⁸⁸

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A preference for foreign news can be observed with most every newspaper in the 17th, but also in the 18th century. ⁸⁹ The strictly controlled monopoly newspapers, however, tend to represent an exception from this rule, but their news reporting was not critical. Instead, they served as a mouthpiece for their royal courts. The prototype of this particular class of newspapers, for example – the *Gazette* from Paris –, designated around 21.5 per cent of its content to France. ⁹⁰

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European news geography shows the existence of similar features and developments, despite national and temporal differences. News reporting in the 17th and 18th century primarily took place between the German Empire, Italy and France, and also increasingly in England, whereas the contributions of Iberia, Scandinavia and Eastern Europe were noticeably smaller. As in the times of handwritten news, Italy was the region where the most printed news was published in the early 17th century. The best information on the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East came from Venice; Hamburg reported on Scandinavia and Russia; and Amsterdam and London covered England and its territories overseas. Other news sources included European political centres like Rome, Vienna (→ Media Link #bm), Paris and London.

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Between the 17th and 18th century, the reporting and event locations tended to shift from the south to the north. While the number of news gathering sites increased, the relative importance of the heretofore most prominent ones waned. It is notable that the already rather peripheral Spain was represented increasingly less in newspapers in the 17th century, whereas England gained more and more attention. Here, sport (→ Media Link #bn) for the first time appears to have become a topic for news reporting in the late 17th century, although mostly in advertisements and to a lesser extent in articles. On the other hand, in the 18th century so-called "scholarly articles" started to arrive in the newspapers of many countries as a means of popularizing knowledge.

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To help classify and interpret the news disseminated by newspapers, a variety of new press genres were created from the late 17th century onwards. Newspaper extracts, consisting of a weekly or monthly summary of events, were published for readers with little time or for those who were less familiar with newspapers. Moreover, since 1702, so-called "news lexicons" (*Zeitungs-Lexika*) had begun to alphabetically categorize geographical and genealogical contextual information. They represent a precursor to the later conversation lexicon.⁹⁵

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Journals began to meet the need for explanatory pieces and commentary since 1665. These periodicals, which typically appeared monthly in book form, contained lengthy articles in elevated prose on specific topics. In the course of the 18th century, journals differentiated into scholarly (scientific (→ Media Link #bo)), popular (entertainment) and political titles (with commentaries on current events). In Germany (→ Media Link #bp) alone, there were more than 6,000 journals. ⁹⁶ They put the sundry individual news items into a larger context and offered critical reviews of books that the readers otherwise might not have been able to acquire themselves.

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Handwritten and Printed Newspapers

Despite the inexorable rise of the printed newspapers, they were unable to completely replace the handwritten *Avvisi* in transnational news reporting, as these were tailored to a particular audience. With their often critical commentaries on domestic policy or the king, the handwritten newspapers appealed not only to readers in countries with repressive publishing policies, such as Spain, France, Austria and Sweden, but also beyond. ⁹⁷ The Spanish handwritten newspapers, for instance, cultivated a bold and satirical style, whereas their Viennese counterparts were relatively docile, yet published faster and were more local in their orientation. ⁹⁸

The Brussels doctor Adrien Foppens, on the one hand, published a printed, pre-censored monopoly newspaper (*Relations véritables / Gazette de Bruxelles*, 1649–1791), because his close relationship to the government not only afforded him a pension, but also gave him access to information from the chancelleries. On the other hand, he also secretly distributed a handwritten newspaper with more critical views, for which he received news from England, Rome and the German Empire. ⁹⁹ The imperial postmaster from Frankfurt, Johann von den Birghden (1582–1645) (→ Media Link #bq), also served both readership segments in the first half of the 17th century, while the French editors in Paris tended to publish handwritten "gazetins" simultaneously with the printed *Gazette* between 1695 and 1774. The publishers of French-language papers in Cologne, Wesel and Frankfurt followed this example. ¹⁰¹

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Even in England, the handwritten *Avvisi*, which had been imported from the continent since the 1590s at the latest, continued to be sold to niche customers. Although decreasing in number, these readers were nonetheless affluent. Until the 18th century, the nouvelles à la main (> Media Link #br) continued to serve select customers from France and were an information source for printed London newspapers. In Spain and East Central Europe, where printed newspapers emerged comparatively late, handwritten newspapers also persisted until the late 18th century alongside imported printed newspapers from France and Germany. In Paris, there was even a handwritten newspaper that was printed as a copper etching (nouvelles burinées). Conversely, it may be observed that the handwritten news services often merely took their material from printed newspapers. On the whole, handwritten newspapers had outlived their heyday by the early to late 17th century, depending on the region, and had almost disappeared by the 18th century.

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Transnational News Reporting: Translation

Given that the news that generally circulated over great distances between 1400 and 1800 mostly concerned Europe as a whole, it seems appropriate to speak of transnational communication. The classical form of newsletter (*Avviso*), which also influenced the early modern newspaper, was adopted by all European news cultures. Despite − and to some degree because of − the numerous interstate conflicts, the shared Christian and cultural framework (in contrast e.g. to the Ottoman Empire (→ Media Link #bs)) and the European state system (→ Media Link #bt) provided the underpinning for a medially communicated realm of experience which was facilitated by transnational news reporting. This is suggested by a variety of indicators. In many countries, for instance, the European dimension of news transfer was reflected by the fact that the names of important press organs often featured the words "European" or "Europe". The contract of the co

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The transmission of news from continental Europe demanded a tremendous linguistic (→ Media Link #bu) and to some degree cultural translation capacity. It is notable that the numerous transnational border crossers carried news with them beyond linguistic barriers or introduced and spread information cultures. The leading European news centres were thus always also multilingual, multicultural metropolises: Venice and Rome in the 15th and 16th century, or Amsterdam and London in the 17th and 18th century respectively. Whereas the Fuggers introduced the Italian *Avvisi* to German-speaking states, Dutchmen like Nicolaas de Stopp (d. 1568) (→ Media Link #bv) worked as early news writers in Venice, 112 and French Huguenots (→ Media Link #bw) were founders and employees of press organs in Holland, England, Germany and Switzerland. Italian journalists in Switzerland, Vienna and Poland as well as German printers, publishers and editors in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe also promoted the exchange.

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Successful publications like the Dutch journal *Mercure Historique et Politique* (the Hague, 1686–1782) were reprinted in Brussels, Geneva, Liège, and in one German city¹¹⁶ and repeatedly translated and imitated in countries ranging from Sweden to Spain and from Germany to Italy via Switzerland.¹¹⁷ The *Gazette d'Amsterdam* was reprinted in Avignon, Bordeaux, Geneva, La Rochelle and London,¹¹⁸ and the *Gazette de Leyde* (→ Media Link #bx) in Vienna as well as in Naples in Italian translation.¹¹⁹ The *Gazette de France* not only appeared as a licensed edition in 38 French cities, it was also published for a short period of time in Catalan and Portuguese.¹²⁰ German-language newspapers from Hamburg, Schaffhausen and Vienna appeared in Italian translation in Milan.¹²¹

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Generally, many newspapers copied or translated news from other newspapers, whose reliability needed to be ascertained through appropriate verification strategies in order to distinguish actual news from mere rumour. Besides citing locations and dates of the transcriptions or – increasingly in the 18th century – the source of the news, a conventional newspaper formulation like "it has been reported from x that..." liberated publishers from having to vouch for inaccurate information. Along with linguistic standardization, the periodical form of the news alone helped to build confidence among sceptical readers, especially because the newspapers themselves would define news as uncertain or provide a follow-up on previously printed news stories with corrections

The prototypes of the periodical news press – newspaper, journal, *Intelligenzblatt* – were as pervasive in Europe as the printed broadsheet, flyer or poster. The varieties of text that had been developed in these instances for the transmission of news were part of a European-wide news system that relied on the cheap availability of paper, scholarly, business and commercial correspondence networks and a printing press that utilized movable type. Moreover, due to the expansion of national and transnational postal routes and road systems, it was possible to produce an increasingly regular supply of current news items in various national languages. At the same time, more or less tightly interwoven and interrelated national public spaces developed, although they may not entirely reflect a transnational "European public". 128

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Appendix

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- 7. ^Raymond, The Newspaper 2002, pp. 114–116; Ries, The Anatomy 1977, pp. 185–189; Böning / Moepps, Hamburg 1996, p. XX; Bauer, Zeitungen 2011, p. 163.
- 8. ^Küster, Vier Monarchien 2004, p. 243; Farge, Lauffeuer 1993; Dooley, Introduction 2010, p. 11.
- 9. Anderson, The Rise 1993; Fubini, Diplomacy 2000, pp. 25–48.
- 10. Zwierlein, Gegenwartshorizonte 2010, pp. 13-20, 32-34.
- 11. Preto, I servizi segreti di Venezia 1999, pp. 263–275.
- 12. See Zwierlein, Fuggerzeitungen 2010; Atherton, The Itch Grown a Disease 2002, pp. 44–51; Würgler, Die Tagsatzung 2012, Kap. 2.5.
- 13. For instance, the famous 125,000 letters composed from 1368 to 1410, which are in the company archives of the merchant Francesco di Marco Datini (1335–1410) of Prato near Florence, were written in Datini's numerous branches throughout Europe and, in addition to the internal operational information, reported on news about prices and exchange rates. Their large quantity hints at the active merchant messenger systems. Nonetheless, as recent research highlights, the Datini letters hardly contain any political news. See Behringer, Im Zeichen 2003, p. 56.
- 14. ^ibid., pp. 234–331; Dauser, Informationskultur 2008; Zwierlein, Discorso 2006, pp. 578–588; idem, Fuggerzeitungen 2010, p. 176f.; idem, Gegenwartshorizonte 2010, pp. 29–32; Bauer, Zeitungen 2011.
- 15. ^Darnton, Glänzende Geschäfte 1993; Kaiser / Vernon, Moyens 2007; Huigen, The Dutch Trading Companies 2010.
- 16. Bullinger, Briefwechsel, vol. 1-14.
- 17. Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Carteggio di San Carlo Borromeo 2000-[forthcoming].
- 18. See Wriedt, Christian Networks 2011; Friedrich, Der lange Arm 2011; Thulin, Jewish Networks 2010.
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- 20. Infelise, Prima dei giornali 2002, pp. 19–47.
- 21. See Karnehm, Korrespondenznetz 2005, p. 305f.; Zwierlein, Fuggerzeitungen 2010, pp. 172f., 184ff.; Henrich, Bullinger's

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- 22. Infelise, Merchants' Letters 2007, pp. 43f.; Zwierlein, Discorso 2006, pp. 258–262.
- 23. [^]ibid., p. 262f.
- 24. For England after 1590: Randall, Epistolary Rhetoric 2008, pp. 20–22.
- 25. [^]Zwierlein, Discorso 2006, pp. 574–588. See Karnehm, Korrespondenznetz 2005; Behringer, Fugger 2008; Bauer, Zeitungen 2011, pp. 149–159.
- 26. Italian diplomats enclosed avvisi in their reports from 1550 onwards (Zwierlein, Discorso 2006, pp. 249, 262–264).
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- 30. ^ibid., p. 74f.
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- 32. ^Ries, The Politics 2001, p. 239; Nielsen, Die Presse 2008, p. 190; Hatje, Von der königlichen Postzeitung 2008, pp. 213f., 219.
- 33. [^]Simeček, Geschriebene Zeitungen 1987; Behringer, Im Zeichen 2003, p. 95; Barbariks-Hermanik, Handwritten Newsletters 2010, p. 156.
- 34. Sommerville, The News Revolution 1996, pp. 3–17.
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- 36. Würgler, Medien 2009, p. 33; Wilke, Media Genres 2010.
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- 38. Raymond, The Invention 1996, pp. 9, 13f.; Clarke, From Grub Street 2010, pp. 24–34.
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- 49. ^Espejo, El primer periódico 2011.
- 50. Nielsen, Die Presse 2008, p. 193.
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- 52. ^Sáiz, Historia 1983, pp. 42-45.
- 53. Rietz, Entstehung 2008, p. 234.
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- 57. Würgler, Medien 2009, p. 38; Capra, La stampa italiana 1999, p. 378; Sgard, Dictionnaire 1991.
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- 62. ^ A chronological survey of all historical newspapers of the Netherlands is provided by the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in Amsterdam.
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- 72. Nielsen, Die Presse 2008, pp. 194–198; Hatje, Von der königlichen Postzeitung 2008; Rietz, Entstehung 2008.
- 73. Feyel, La presse en France 1999, p. 27f.
- 74. See Lankhorst, Les premier courants hollandais 1999, pp. 213–216, on Antwerp 1619/1620; and Mercurius veridius (ex Hungarica) 1703–1710, an irregularly published news bulletin about the Hungarian aristocratic uprising under Ferenc II Rákóczi (1676–1735); see Kowalská, Frühes Zeitungswesen 2008, p. 259.
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- 93. ^ Harris, Timely Notices 1999, pp. 146, 148.
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- 95. Würgler, Medien 2009, pp. 55, 108; Körber, Zeitungsextrakte 2009.
- 96. Böning / Moepps, Hamburg 1996, p. IX; Würgler, Medien 2009, p. 109.
- 97. Moureau, Les nouvelles à la main 1993, pp. 129–134; Infelise, Le marché des informations 1999, pp. 117f., 127; Atherton, The Itch Grown a Disease 2002; Böning, Handgeschriebene und gedruckte Zeitung 2011, pp. 24, 32–39, 44–46.
- 98. Ettinghausen, Politics and the Press 2001, pp. 202–205; Küster, Vier Monarchien 2004, pp. 61–63.
- 99. ^Arblaster, Policy 2001, pp. 188–193.
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- 109. [^]Zwierlein, Discorso 2006, pp. 278–282, talks about a "Nachrichtenhimmel" (news heaven), p. 600; see also idem, Fuggerzeitungen 2010, p. 206; Dooley, Introduction 2010; Schultheiss-Heinz, Contemporaneity 2010.

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- 121. ^Capra, La stampa italiana 1999, p. 373: *Staffetta del Nord* (Hamburg), Milano 1788–1792; *Staffeta di Sciaffusa*, Milano 1788–1796; *Estratto della Gazetta di Vienna*, Milano 1789–1791.
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- 127. ^Arndt, Die europäische Medienlandschaft 2010, p. 37.
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Anverpia 1572, UB Heidelberg 🗹

Link #ai



(http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/braun1582bd1/0101)

Roma 1582, UB Heidelberg I

Link #aj



(http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/braun1582bd1/0025)

Pariß 1582, UB Heidelberg 🗹

Link #ak

Economic Networks (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-networks/economic-networks/christian-marx-economic-networks)

Link #al

 Religious Orders (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-networks/christian-networks/joachim-schmiedl-religious-orders-as-transnational-networks-of-the-catholic-church)

Link #am

• Literacy (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/literacy/robert-a-houston-literacy)

Link #an

Dynastic Networks (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-networks/dynastic-networks/daniel-schoenpflug-dynastic-networks)

Link #ao

(http://www.univie.ac.at/fuggerzeitungen/de/?tag=september-2012-rom-14-10-1581)
Fugger newspaper from Rome dated October 14, 1581; Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

Link #aq

Humanistic Letter-Writing (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-networks/intellectual-and-academic-networks/gabor-almasi-humanistic-letter-writing)

Link #ar

Heinrich Bullinger (1504–1575) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/56624475) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/118517384)
 ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118517384.html)

Link #as

Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/71399367) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/118637533) ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118637533.html)

Link #at

Martin Luther (1483–1546) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/14773105) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/118575449) ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118575449.html)

Link #au

Johannes Calvin (1509–1564) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/90631825) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/118518534)
 ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118518534.html)

Link #av

 Christian Networks (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-networks/christian-networks/markus-wriedt-christian-networks-in-the-early-modern-period)

Link #aw

 Wittenberg Reformation (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/european-media-events/marcel-nieden-the-wittenberg-reformation-as-a-media-event)

Link #ax

Carlo Borromeo (1538–1584) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/69005084) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/118661957)
 ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118661957.html)

Link #ay

Jewish Networks (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-networks/jewish-networks/mirjam-thulin-jewish-networks)

Link #az

 Albrecht von Hallers Korrespondenz (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/de/threads/europaeische-netzwerke/intellektuelle-und-wissenschaftliche-netzwerke/europaeische-korrespondenznetzwerke/hubert-steinke-gelehrtenkorrespondenznetzwerke-im-18jahrhundert-albrecht-von-haller)

Link #b0

Cultural Transfer (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/theories-and-methods/cultural-transfer/wolfgang-schmale-cultural-transfer)

Link #b1

(http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/mediainfo/european-postal-routes-in-1563) European Postal Routes in 1563

Link #b2

Book Market (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/the-book-market/ernst-fischer-the-book-market)

Link #b3

 Historische Klimatologie Mitteleuropas (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/de/threads/hintergruende/natur-und-umwelt/atmosphaere /ruediger-glaser-historische-klimatologie-mitteleuropas)

Link #b4

(http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/mediainfo/a-ioyfull-medytacyon-to-all-englonde-of-the-coronacyon-of-ourmoost-naturall-souerayne-lorde-kynge-henry-the-eyght-en)

A ioyfull medytacyon to all Englonde of the coronacyon of our moost naturall souerayne lorde kynge Henry the eyght

Link #b5

 European Media Events (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/european-media-events/frank-boesch-european-media-events)

Link #b6

 Johannes Gutenberg (ca. 1400–1468) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/9815820) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/118543768) ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118543768.html)

Link #b7



(http://digital.slub-dresden.de/id314411712)

Historicae Relationis Continuatio 1595, SLUB Dresden. 🗹

Link #b8



(http://archive.org/details/perfectdiurnallo00londuoft)

A Perfect diurnall of the passages in Parliament 1642, Internet Archive.

Link #bb

ADB/NDB (http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd138878536.html)

Link #bc

 Censorship and Freedom of the Press (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/european-media/censorship-and-freedom-of-thepress/juergen-wilke-censorship-and-freedom-of-the-press)

Link #bd



(http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/relation1609)

Relation 1609, UB Heidelberg.

Link #be



(http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/mediainfo/the-london-gazette-no.-85)

The London Gazette No. 85

Link #bf

Media Genres (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/media-genres/juergen-wilke-media-genres)

Link #bg

Moral Weeklies (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/models-and-stereotypes/anglophilia/klaus-dieter-ertler-moral-weeklies-periodical-essays)

Link #bh

Translation (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/translation/mary-snell-hornby-juergen-f-schopp-translation)

Link #bi

• The "Dutch Century" (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/models-and-stereotypes/the-dutch-century/dagmar-freist-the-dutch-century)

Link #bj



(http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/mediainfo/nieuwe-tijdinghen-1623-en)

Nieuwe Tijdinghen 1623

Link #bk

Abraham Verhoeven (1575–1652) VIAF W (http://viaf.org/viaf/36970328)

Link #bl



(http://hdl.handle.net/2027/njp.32101080460890)

Ordentliche wochentliche Franckfurter Frag- und Anzeigungsnachrichten 1750; Hathi Trust Digital Library. 🗗

Link #bm



(http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=wrz&datum=17041231&seite=1&zoom=33)

Wienerisches Diarium dated December 31, 1704, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

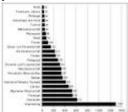
Link #bn

 Entstehung des Sports in England (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/de/threads/modelle-und-stereotypen/anglophilie/michael-maurerdie-entstehung-des-sports-in-england-im-18-jahrhundert)

Link #bo

Science (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/science/paul-ziche-joppe-van-driel-science)

Link #bp



(http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/mediainfo/types-of-journals-in-germany-168220131830)

Types of journals in Germany 1682-1830

Link #bq

• Johann von den Birghden (1582–1645) VIAF Md (http://viaf.org/viaf/26490908)

Link #br



(http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b90618231)

Nouvelles à la main 1748; BnF Gallica. 🗹

Link #bs

• From the "Turkish Menace" to Orientalism (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/models-and-stereotypes/from-the-turkish-menace-to-orientalism/felix-konrad-from-the-turkish-menace-to-exoticism-and-orientalism-1453-1914)

Link #bt

State Forms and State Systems (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/crossroads/political-spaces/robert-von-friedeburg-state-forms-and-state-systems-in-modern-europe)

Link #bu

Mosaic of Languages (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/crossroads/mosaic-of-languages/harald-haarmann-europes-mo-saic-of-languages)

Link #bv

Nicolaas de Stopp (d. 1568) VIAF (http://viaf.org/viaf/25496192) DNB (http://d-nb.info/gnd/122885236)

Link #bw

• Confessional Migration of the Huguenots (http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/europe-on-the-road/confessional-migration/ute-lotz-heumann-confessional-migration-of-the-reformed-the-huguenots)

Link #bx



(http://www.gazettes18e.fr/gazette-leyde/annee/1750/page/22824)

Gazette de Leyde, no. 1 dated January 2, 1750, Gazettes européennes du 18e siècle. 🗹





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