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# 1 Contributions of the Isthmian Press in National Development its 2 Beginnings and Times of the Colonies

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## 7 **Abstract**

8 The appearance of the written press in Panama dates back to the first half of the 19th  
9 century, in the midst of constant political, social and economic debates. This article is a  
10 contribution to scientific knowledge, 30 existing newspapers between 1821 and 1903 are listed  
11 and systematized. The year of launch, the intention and associated writers are taken into  
12 consideration; categorized into 5 periods attending the Justo Arosemena Institute School of  
13 Journalism, which had its first graduation in 1956.

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15 **Index terms**— panama, national newspapers, postcolonial era.

## 16 **1 Introduction**

17 According to the Dictionary of the Royal Academy, the written press is the set of publications printed on paper,  
18 with varied periodicity, whose objective is to inform and entertain society. Newspapers are part of the most  
19 widely distributed written press. According to Saint Charles in (Arona Castillo, 2016), newspapers "are the  
20 best instruments of the history of an era, whatever point of view from which one wants to study it." They are  
21 published daily and offer general information on political, social, economic, geographical, cultural, sports, judicial  
22 and educational issues of a region, country, territory or state (Kayser, 1974). For UNESCO, newspapers are all  
23 printed media published in a certain country, intended for the public, whose publications constitute a continuous  
24 series, with the same title, with a certain periodicity not exceeding one year, dated and numbered copies (Arona  
25 Castillo, 2016).

26 In Panama, the written press has its origins at the beginning of the 19th century, when José María Goytía  
27 imports to the isthmus the first printing press destined for the propagation of liberal doctrines (Castillero,  
28 1958), the first newspaper *Miscelánea del Istmo* (Luna Vásquez, 2012), edited by Juan José Argote, Manuel  
29 María Goytía, Juan José Calvo and Mariano Arosemena. It was a four-page weekly with a small format, which  
30 appeared every Sunday. This newspaper supported the independence of the Isthmus from the Spanish crown and  
31 its adherence to Colombia (Candanedo, 2003).

32 Despite the wide variety of newspapers that have circulated in Panama, there are few scientific documents,  
33 published in Spanish and open access that can demonstrate the contribution of newspapers in the historical  
34 development of the national context or, present a systematization or record of these newspapers as a strategy  
35 to understand the evolution of the country. In this document we present chronologically the newspapers that  
36 emerged, evolved and became extinct from the Isthmian press, during the period of the Unification to Colombia  
37 -1821 to 1903, attending the School of Journalism of the Institute Justo Arosemena, located in Panama.

## 38 **2 II.**

## 39 **3 Developing**

## 40 **4 First Period**

41 In the period of union between Panama and Colombia, the government created in 1823 an organ of information:  
42 The Official Gazette of the Department of the Isthmus which, towards the end of 1825, was called *Gaceta del*

## 8 FOURTH PERIOD

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43 Istmo de Panamá (Del Rosario, 1968) in (Estrella de Panamá, 2021). Published the administrative acts of the  
44 Government of Colombia. In 1823, the first official newspaper of the Department under the name of Gaceta Del  
45 Gobierno Independent of Panama. Apparently it is not a new newspaper but a name change of the Gazette  
46 founded the previous year. He is followed in order by The Prosecutor and The Law and later The Panamanian  
47 (Castillero, 1958).

## 48 5 Second Period

49 Researchers of the matter place this stage between the 1830s and the mid-19th century, in which economic  
50 conditions, the California gold mines, the construction of the Panama railroad, among others, facilitated the  
51 proliferation of approximately 30 newspapers, Table 2, characterized by their political ideal, their euphoria for  
52 having achieved their "own virtue". His primary desire was the permanent validity of these ideals, fighting at all  
53 costs the contrary outbreaks.

## 54 6 Among the most prominent newspapers

55 The Union dedicated itself to fighting and fighting for the integrity of the Isthmus under a democratic government.  
56 The war on Press Censorship made itself felt with the closure of all printing presses and the suspension of the  
57 Union, which, because it has such an ephemeral and important life, is classified as the first victim of a tyranny  
58 in the territory of the Isthmus.

59 The Isthmus Constitutional was created for government acts. After the movement of General Espinar was  
60 suffocated and the Isthmus returned to the bosom of Gran Colombia, other newspapers with very different  
61 tendencies arose, perhaps less conservative and more broad-minded.

62 The Commercial Trade, founded by Mr. Mariano Arosemena to defend the Department's fiscal affairs. Colonel  
63 Tomás Herrera founded the Civic Society Los Amigos del País in January 1831 and to sustain their patriotic  
64 brotherhood, they founded a newspaper with the same name, whose publication lasted until 1841. With this  
65 newspaper, the first outbreak of informative journalism appeared on the Isthmus, since local and foreign news  
66 and daily incidents and armed conflicts that occurred in other provinces were published in its columns.

67 The Star of Panama "La Estrella de Panamá" centennial newspaper, founded in 1853 It was born from a  
68 need for information for gold prospectors heading to the legendary California, and a century later it continues to  
69 be published, fulfilling an admirable function, a newspaper that places it among the most prestigious from the  
70 Continent and even from the Old World. Since its foundation, this newspaper kindly cared about the social and  
71 cultural improvement of the isthmus.

72 The Star of Panama "La Estrella de Panamá", in force today, has been a true champion of Spanish-American  
73 interests, an eager propagator of whatever could redound to the good of the various sections, a defender of their  
74 rights and the disseminator of all the information it could procure on its immense natural resources.

## 75 7 Third Period

76 This third period opens with the Aspin Wall Courier, published in English in the city of Colón, although with  
77 a small section in Spanish. Due to the work on the Trans-Isthmic Railroad, something that publicists took  
78 advantage of to found this body that has been published for more than a year.

79 Subsequently, a series of jocular-style newspapers burst into national life. From their titles it is clear that a  
80 wave of humor had invaded the Isthmus and that things were taken half jokingly and half seriously. The content  
81 of its columns is a valuable source of information to learn about the customs of that time. Some of the titles  
82 that are known are: The Triangle, The La Nueva Era began publication in February 1861 to strongly oppose  
83 the government of General Santiago de La Guardia. and closes this third period El Istmeño, published in 1867,  
84 organ of the Conservative Party and during the validity of the Constitution of Rio Negro, which, despite being  
85 "an organized anarchy", enshrined the rights of the law on printing and advocated because it was the press that  
86 assumed the responsibilities of their actions.

## 87 8 Fourth Period

88 In this time of a true literary awakening, we must include the first journalistic organs that appeared in the interior  
89 provinces, thus demonstrating that humanistic concerns were spreading beyond the valleys and mountains of our  
90 countryside. We have to mention in the foreground The Torch "La Antorcha", a handwritten newspaper that  
91 circulated in David, Chiriquí, around the years of 1854. Then appears El Coclesano, in Penonomé, written by the  
92 illustrious Simeón Conte and Manuel de Jesús Quijano. In Santiago de Veraguas, El Republicano is published.  
93 La Voz De Chitré made its first edition in 1882.

94 The Isthmus was also distinguished by its literary effervescence, a latent restlessness animated the intellects  
95 and the newspapers flourished with different tendencies. El Cefiro was published to collect the literary production  
96 of a romantic generation that throbbed poetry and emotion.

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97 **9 Fifth Period**

98 This period is known as the pre-independence period and The chronicler "El Cronista trail" opens. Then follows  
99 The Republican Union "La Unión Republicana" in 1884, a political newspaper founded to support the candidacy  
100 of Dr. Justo Arosemena for president of the Sovereign State of Panama. The Idea "La Idea" in 1888 with  
101 a fighting spirit and fight for independence. Finally, The Regeneration "La Regeneración" appears in 1897,  
102 advocating for an immediate separation from Colombia, in order to organize The Isthmians "El Istmeños", a free  
103 and sovereign government.

104 **10 III.**

105 **11 Conclusion**

106 It is concluded that, during the post-colonial period, there was an ephemeral proliferation of newspapers with  
107 national circulation, newspapers that supported the expressions of liberal thought, politics and the separatist  
108 movements of Panama from Colombia. Only the Star of Panama remains today.

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| Name of the Newspaper                                 | Year | Description   |
|---|------|---|
| THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE Isthmus | 1823 | Sole Interest of its Publishers it accepted subscriptions to cover the expenses of paper. |
| THE COMET OF THE Isthmus                              | 1823 | It presented as its motto the following thought of Rousseau: "When                        |

*[Note: Legislation Weakens, Customs Degenerate; But then the judgment of the censors will do what the force of the laws has not done".( ) Global Journal of Human Social Science -Year 2022 A Author: Faculty of Social Community, University of Panama, Panama-Republic of Panama. e-mail: gdelis06@gmail.com Garrit Geneteau Delis THE PROSECUTOR AND THE LAW 1824 Printed Fortnightly.]*

Figure 1: Table 1 :

## 11 CONCLUSION

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| Name of the News-paper           | Year | Description  |
|----------------------------------|------|--|
| THE UNION                        | 1830 | Edited by the company of José Ángel Santos and company. Its printing was prohibited by General Espinar, whom he frequently lashed out.   |
| THE CONSTITUCIONAL OF THE ISTMUS | 1831 | Weekly. Promoted the publication of information on the latest administrative provisions and others of public interest. The annual subscription cost ten pesos and was distributed at home. |
| FREE TRADE                       | 1834 | By Mariano Arosemena. Circulation was free and he defended what was called the greatly plan of free transit trade.   |
| THE WATCH-MAN OF THE Isthmus     | 1834 | Sunday publication. He was greatly concerned about the prosperity of the Isthmus, as stated in one of his slogans.   |
| THE FRIENDS OF THE COUNTRY       | 1834 | Published by Arosemena, Obaldía and Arango. He was a tireless defender of the progress of Panama.  |
| THE POLITICAL MONKEY             | 1836 | Printed by Jaime Bousquet. Small format and only two pages. Its content of a satirical nature offered intentional parables and business epigrams.  |
| THE CLADY FOX                    | 1836 | Posted by José Ángel Santos. Sunday. It was one of the most important political humor publications of the time.  |
| THE POLITICAL MONKEY             | 1836 | It happened to the POLITICAL MONKEY, which had caused a great impact in the political circles of the Isthmus. It had the same characteristics of the previous publication.                 |
| TELESCOPE OF BOTH SEAS           | 1841 | It appeared when there was important news to communicate, the monthly subscription costing four reales (Four Five-cents) at the time.  |
| THE POPULAR PRIMER               | 1843 | Fortnightly, He dealt preferentially with the problems of the people and the isthmian education. The annual subscription cost six reales at the time.                                      |
| THE NEWS                         | 1847 | It reported on the most recent independence events and the latest  |

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Figure 3:

## 11 CONCLUSION

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