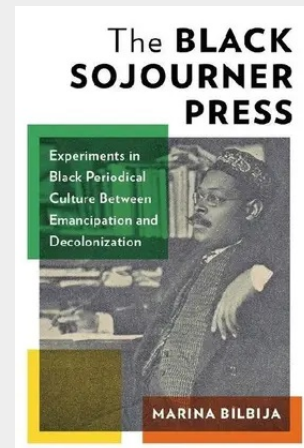


The Black Sojourner Press

Experiments in Black Periodical Culture Between Emancipation and Decolonization

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Black periodical editors roved across oceans and between empires, bearing newspaper texts, formats, and genres with them. As they migrated, they also exported and adapted broader ideas about the distinctive role of the Black journal from one part of the Black world to another. The Black Sojourner Press traces the travels of multiple generations of itinerant Black editors, demonstrating how they transformed Black political and literary culture in the United States, West Africa, and Britain. Reading Nigerian, African American, Ghanaian, and Black British newspapers side by side, Marina Bilbija reconstructs how wandering journalists connected print cultures across what she calls the Black Anglosphere. Wherever they traveled, these sojourners founded experimental journals that addressed Black readers as members of new global communities. Over and over again, they mobilized periodicals to critique the violent and coordinated spread of two "Anglo-Saxon" empires and, likewise, to speculate about the entwined political destinies of these "Anglo" overlords and their Black imperial subjects. Bilbija explores cases including a Jamaican editor in 1860s Lagos who reprinted US writers, journals in 1880s Britain that disseminated texts from the African American press, editors in 1920s New York who reframed Ghanaian literature for American readerships, and a pan-African news magazine in 1930s Lagos that serialized a speculative novel set in the United States. Revealing the links between seemingly disparate histories across the Black diaspora, this groundbreaking book offers a new understanding of the Black periodical as a world literary genre.

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37,50 €

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vorbestellbar, Erscheinungstermin ca.
September 2026

Artikelnummer: 9780231222983

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-231-22298-3

Verlag: Columbia University Press

Erscheinungstermin: 15.09.2026

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2026

Serie: Black Lives in the Diaspora: Past

/ Present / Future

Produktform: Kartoniert

Seiten: 288

Format (B x H): 152 x 229 mm

