



### Africans in Tudor and Stuart Westminster Q&A: History Masterclass 2021 teachers' notes

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#### Questions for discussion

Watch the recording of the question and answer session between Dr Miranda Kaufmann and Lou Cash, Learning Officer at Westminster Abbey.

#### **Question 1** – beginning at [02:02]

*Out of the 360 Africans living in Renaissance Britain, where does it look like the majority immigrated from?*

Dr Kaufmann explains that 'the nature of the sources means that we don't actually know exactly where the majority of Africans that we have records of came from' and that 'geographical terms were quite vague' although it is probable that most came from West Africa and Spain. What other challenges do the contemporary sources pose for the historians studying Africans in Britain during this period?

#### **Question 2** - beginning at [04:28]

*What is your personal opinion on how [John Blanke] came to be in Britain and what happened to him next?*

From the limited evidence it appears that John Blanke arrived in England as part of Catherine of Aragon's entourage c 1501 but according to Dr Kaufmann, John Blanke 'just disappears from the records after 1512'. If the sources do not provide all the answers, then historians should fill the gaps with their own informed imagination. Do you agree and why?

#### **Question 3** – beginning at [10:05]

*In Tudor society, did the African community preserve their culture or did they have to anglicise themselves to "fit in"?*

Dr Kaufmann states that 'if you were not a baptised Christian, you were not going to be treated as an equal in Tudor society'. Was religion the most important factor in determining social acceptance in Tudor England?

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**Question 4** – beginning at [22:39]

*You stress in your presentation the equality seen in society through religious and legal acceptance of Africans in England in the 1500s and 1600s, but you allude to a change in attitudes and status by the 1800s? When, why and how did attitudes change?*

Dr Kaufmann suggests that institutional racism was not a feature of early Tudor life and that this developed later during the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the British enslavement of Africans became established. She thinks a lot more research needs to be conducted into Barbados which she describes as ‘the crucible of a lot of these institutionally racist measures’. What types of evidence need to be examined in order to establish the beginnings of institutional racism rather than interpersonal racism?

**Question 5** – beginning at [40:03]

*Where do you think research on Black Tudors should go next?*

Dr Kaufmann would like to see more research into archival evidence and linking it to literary evidence and ideas about race from the time in order to get ‘a more blended kind of idea of what the African experience was.’ As the next generation of scholars, what areas of Black British history do you feel drawn to and which areas need the most immediate attention?

Transcript

**Speaker:**

Dr Miranda Kaufmann

**Chair:**

Lou Cash, Learning Officer at Westminster Abbey

**Introduction:**

Dr Jamie Hawkey, Canon Theologian at Westminster Abbey

Hello I’m Lou. Welcome to this Westminster Abbey Q&A discussion with Dr Miranda Kaufmann, that's following on from the lecture that she gave on Africans in Tudor and Stuart Westminster. To formally introduce Dr Kaufmann, I’m going to hand over now to my colleague Dr Jamie Hawkey, Canon Theologian here at the Abbey. Thanks Jamie.

Thank you Lou and hello everyone. Good afternoon, it's lovely to welcome you here at least virtually to Westminster Abbey. You can see the Abbey's nave behind me and I regret to say that I’m not sitting in a chair facing outside the West Door. I’m sitting in my study with a backdrop but we very, very much hope that you'll be able to visit us here in person sometime soon. I have the privilege to oversee our wonderful Learning department with it’s wonderful and transformative work. And it's a real delight to welcome this afternoon Dr Miranda Kaufmann, whose lecture you've all heard. I want to say a particular

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thank you to her for recording the lecture for us and for being willing to engage in the question and answer this afternoon. Miranda is leading this masterclass, which of course has as much contemporary resonance as it does historic importance. So you're very, very welcome to this discussion. Hope you have a wonderful afternoon and we look forward to welcoming you to the Abbey in person at some point soon, so I'm going to hand now back to Lou I think.

Yes thank you. So to all the students and teachers who are watching and thank you ever so much, you've sent in so many questions. We were flooded with questions. I apologise in advance if your particular question is not put to Dr Kaufmann today. We have sort of assimilated as many as we can and we're going to go through as many as we can in the time that we have together.

**Question 1 [02:02]**

So first question up is from Cariad from Esher College {just going to put my glasses on for this one} and Cariad's question Miranda is this: Out of the 360 Africans living in Renaissance Britain, where does it look like the majority immigrated from?

**Answer**

Right thank you everybody and thanks for tuning in today. And okay so let's just dive straight in there because there are so many questions. Let's try and get through as many as we can. So the problem is that the nature of the sources means that we don't actually know exactly where the majority of Africans that we have records of came from. In terms of the fact that sometimes they're just listed with words, like ethnic descriptors, like Blackamoor or Ethiop. Ethiop doesn't mean from modern day Ethiopia, it was used much more generally. But if we look more, there are a few instances where somebody's it says they're from Guinea and so we know that was sort of the west coast of Africa. Again some of these geographical terms were quite vague or from Barbary, which was what they called Morocco. But if we look more broadly at the way that Africans were moving around the world at this time, we can see that Africans were coming to Britain with English merchants who were trading with West Africa and Morocco. That was one way that Africans could have come here. Some of them were coming from Europe because there were larger Black populations in Spain and Portugal and Italy in this period and those Africans have got to Europe usually again from North and West Africa. And then when English people capture Africans in privateering raids on Spanish and Portuguese ships in the Atlantic. Again those Africans were being usually trafficked across the Atlantic from an area known as Senegambia, so between the Senegal and Gambia rivers. So broadly I'd say most of them are coming from West Africa but we can't always be much more specific. Although you know in the book we do we do have you know the Prince of River Cestos so we know exactly where he came from so that's something; modern-day Liberia.

**Question 2 [04:28]**

That's great, thanks Miranda. Fantastic. Now I have to say that we had so many questions from students who were really interested in John Blanke's life. And obviously you've told us quite a bit about John Blanke's life in your presentation but I really felt that there was quite a strong feeling of; but Miranda what is your personal opinion on how he came to be in Britain and what happened to him next? Everybody wants to know what happened to him at the end of his life and how much light can you throw on that?

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**Answer**

Oh well none. There's no evidence. I think, when I was writing the book and pretty much I have written everything I know in that chapter one, but when I was writing the book the earliest record I knew of about like locating him at the Tudor court was 1507. And so although people had theorised that he'd come with Catherine of Aragon, of course Catherine of Aragon arrived in 1501, so there's this gap of six years. And that I did find this other, I can't even remember who it was now, but there was some other sort of European nobility who had been shipwrecked on the English coast, so I thought that was potentially another potential route. But since then Michael Ohajuru found this 1502 reference to John Blanke playing at the funeral of Prince Arthur. And so that ties the dates much more closely together so I do think that even though we don't have a specific sort of passport stamp on his arrival in Plymouth, I think it is pretty likely that he came from Spain in the entourage of Catherine of Aragon. You know as we were saying there's a much bigger population, Black population, in Spain at this time so that makes sense. And in terms of what happened afterwards again you know he just disappears from the records after 1512, but hopefully people will do more research and maybe find things. You know as more and more records get digitised, it does become slightly easier to search for people. And the name does appear in sort of some other records from the London area but there's just nothing to sort of pin it together. Unfortunately I'm going to give that annoying historian answer and say there's no evidence so it's up to you to decide. You know choose your own adventure, write your story of what you think happened to John Blanke after he got married.

**Question 3 [06:59]**

That's great, thanks Miranda. Yes I wonder whether one of the historians watching this session today might you know give us some more answers in the future. Thank you. Right now we've got a question from John. John asks: Who did you find the most interesting in your research and why?

**Answer**

It's interesting that you say everyone's really interested in John Blanke and I do feel like that's because we have a picture of his face. I think that does kind of connect us with him but you know as we as you saw in the lecture we only have these fragments in his life. I think you know whichever one I was writing about I found the most interesting at the time. But I do have a soft spot for Diego because I think his life is just sort of so swashbuckling and such a sort of amazing story of him sort of joining Drake, and connecting him with the Cimaroons, and then sailing around the world, and you know again his sort of four years in Plymouth, we don't have any detail on that. So again that could be another History homework - write the story of Diego's four years in Plymouth and what he might have got up to. He might have gone off and fought you know in that horrible campaign in Ireland with Drake but that's another story. And I do think yeah Dederi Jaquoah, the Prince of River Cestos is a really interesting story as well. Especially because as a prince he's sort of challenging those preconceptions of the roles of Africans in that period in England. I just really like this moment where this East India Company merchant encounters him in River Cestos and is sort of bowled over by the fact that he can speak really good English. And you know I like that kind of confounding expectations but they're all great stories and do dive in and find out about them. When I say dive in, the salvage diver is a great story too. Carry on. What's next?

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**Question 4 [09:01]**

Just out of interest, does that mean Miranda, did you have a whole load of characters that you had to sort of cut for that book, and if so what are you going to do with those extra characters that you've researched?

**Answer**

No unfortunately the reason that I chose those 10 was really because they're the ones we know the most about, where there's slightly more meat on the bones. There was one that I cut because we couldn't be quite sure whether she was of African or East Asian origin. Maybe I should just put that on my website sometime but I have sent it on to some other scholars who are looking at that period so who knows. And actually somebody is researching the life of Harry Domingo who was an adulterous highwayman in Aberdeen in the early 17th century, so that's another great character that you know I didn't know much about when I was writing the book but it would be it'd be great. Hopefully she'll write that up at some point as well. There's more to be found, there's more to be found in the archives.

**Question 5 [10:05]**

Definitely sounds that way, thank you. Right lovely. Well the next question comes from Eugenie from Upton High School and Eugenie's question is: In Tudor society, did the African community preserve their culture or did they have to anglicise themselves to "fit in"?

**Answer**

I think again this is one where we don't have a lot of evidence to really fully answer that question, and I know that's an annoying historian answer again. But I suppose the records that we do have of baptisms, marriages and burials show that they were kind of anglicising themselves but more importantly they were "Christianising" themselves and "Protestantising" themselves and it wasn't just Africans that had to do that in order to fit into Tudor society. I mean if you were not a baptised Christian, you were not going to be treated as an equal in Tudor society. For example you were not allowed to marry in the Church of England unless you're been baptised and so you do find Africans being baptised you know three weeks before being married. So I suppose the short answer is that yes but it wasn't exclusive to Africans. You know we also have records of Jews conforming to the Church of England. There are several Portuguese Jewish families that sort of ostensibly kind of live their lives in the parish. You could be fined for not going to church and you have refugees from Europe as well and merchants. Tudor society is a lot more cosmopolitan than people sometimes imagine, especially obviously in London, but the second most cosmopolitan place was Norwich at the time. So yes but we don't have that interior life, I suppose again John Blanke's turban is quite an interesting point to discuss on that. Was he wearing that turban as a retention of his cultural heritage? Or you know Henry VIII liked playing dress up, so you know Henry VIII was dressing up as a Moor or a Turk half the time so you know we can't be certain.

**Question 6 [12:31]**

Fantastic, thank you. Lovely, right now the next question comes from Jenni from King's Academy. Thank you, Jenni, for this question and your question was: Do you perceive any sense of intersectionality in terms of the experience of Black Tudors, for instance, where does gender come into the mix? Were the experiences of Black men and women different do you think and did class come into play? You might need a bit of time for this one Miranda and you've got a bit of time.

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**Answer**

So I think intersectionality wasn't that something that I was thinking about very explicitly when I was writing the book. Well I I'm not even sure I knew what that word meant when I started certainly, or not when I started doing the research in 2004. But I did think a lot more about gender when I was creating the FutureLearn Black Tudors course where we had a whole week on (it's available now,) we have a whole week on women and gender in week five of that course. Of course there was intersectionality and African women's opportunities in Tudor society were much more curtailed than those of African men because they were women. And you know English women weren't having the best time of their lives a lot of the time either. So for example, we find African men working independently as craftsman so a silk weaver, needle maker or pursuing kind of skilled roles like John Blanke the trumpeter or Jacques Francis the salvage diver. Or working as sailors like Diego or John Anthony, so they're able to earn a living in those ways and travel the world and have that independence. Whereas the women we encounter, are much more likely, well not more likely to be in domestic roles, but they are in domestic roles. Possibly Anne Cobbe as an independent woman in Gloucestershire is relatively unusual. I mean there are women who inherit small legacies in the wills of their former employers, which gives them a measure of financial independence. As we talked about in the lecture, Anne Cobbe is able to make quite a lot of money for herself through prostitution. I think that sometimes gets read backwards. So there's more evidence of African prostitutes in the 18th century and that often gets read backwards but actually there isn't a huge amount of evidence of African prostitutes in this period so I don't want to over emphasise her experience. But I think that tackles the gender side of things. And class, absolutely as one might expect you know, in the same ways as we have issues, there are intersectional issues in our own society. So for example Prince Dederi Jaquoah comes with a lot of sort of cultural capital, as do several of the other Africans coming here directly from Africa with English merchants do tend to be your princes or sons of you know higher ranking people in their own societies. And when the Moroccan Ambassador and his entourage show up, they're obviously treated as ambassadors and again but if you had a skill like John Blanke or Jacques Francis, then you were treated in a certain way. That gave you opportunities but if you had been captured from a Portuguese ship by a privateer, you didn't have anything. You were coming here with nothing and that would obviously affect your sort of life chances. I mean there's so much more one can say on that but I think that will do.

**Question 7 [16:59]**

I think you definitely covered that, that's fantastic thank you. Lovely. Now we did touch on religion just a couple of questions back but we did have two questions, one from Lucy and one from Soliyana, two questions that are kind of very similar. So Lucy's question: Were all Black Tudors in England Christians? And Soliyana's question: Are there any records of Africans in Tudor England who followed a faith but were not Christian? And I know we touched on this a little bit but could you just expand that a bit more for us please.

**Answer**

So again not a lot of evidence. What we know about religious practices in North and West Africa and we know obviously that there were large Muslim populations there, but also people who would have had more kind of animist faiths. I suppose we can assume that people brought that knowledge and those religious ideas with them although if they'd arrived as young children then they maybe might not have had, for example Mary Phyllis. It depends how you define it. So when we have records of baptisms, especially if they're adult baptisms, then we can kind of posit that that they have those other faiths kind

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of in their hinterland. And again there's this debate about John Blanke's turban and whether that reflects maybe a Muslim past, but again he gets married in 1512 so by that point he must be a Christian. And he certainly sort of words his petition for a pay rise in 1509 in Christian terms, but you know again like as we were saying earlier you that was what you had to do to sort of get on. The only other faith - there were these several African servants in the households of these Portuguese conversos or Jewish merchants and so it's plausible that that they might have also sort of followed the Jewish faith in private at home, even though ostensibly you know conforming to the Church of England.

### **Question 8 [19:16]**

Fabulous thanks Miranda. That's great. Okay and a question from Chester School now: What forms of discrimination and racism do you think Africans in Tudor England faced?

### **Answer**

That's another big question isn't it. Again the evidence that I look at is not as kind of illuminating as it might be, but I think that this is again something that I didn't really get to the bottom of in my book. And I think this is an area where historians need to work with literary scholars. You know there's a long history of people studying Shakespeare, for example looking at Othello, but there are many other Black characters in early modern drama, exploring issues of race and racial ideas forming you know in that literature. And I think now it's important for the next generation of scholars to take the things they've learned from looking at the literature and put it alongside the more quotidian pieces of evidence, of the sort that I've looked at like parish registers and court records. I think that again something we thought about making the FutureLearn course - I think my understanding of racism is deepening hopefully as the years continue and keep thinking about it. All of the discussion over the last year particularly very intensely but I'm quite interested in this definition of the difference between structural or institutional racism and interpersonal racism. And so I think that what I've found about the way Africans were treated by the law and by the church in Tudor society, might go towards an argument that perhaps there wasn't any like institutional racism established at this point. Partly because there was a very small African population, it was a new thing in a lot of ways and so there hadn't been time for the institutions to kind of react. I mean there wasn't even an official conversion ceremony in the Book of Common Prayer I think until the 17th century, late in the 17th century, so they kind of cobbled these adult baptisms together from you know the infant baptism and when you had to rehearse your creed and things that I think confirmation or something like that. So looking at this question it's interesting to make that distinction between institutional racism and interpersonal racism. But you know I have looked at things like wages and John Blanke seems to be being paid similar levels of wages to the other trumpeters at court. There are these opportunities and I think when you compare the experiences of Africans in Tudor England with what happens later in British colonies and in later centuries in England, you can see that things weren't quite as bad perhaps.

### **Question 9 [22:39]**

Great, interesting how you ended that answer because actually we have a whole raft of questions from students who are particularly interested in sort of how we get from the picture that you paint of what the experience of Africans in Tudor England was like. How we get from there to the whole period of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and slavery. So a question now then from Hannah. Hannah from Sheffield Academy asks, she says: You stress in your presentation the equality seen in society through religious and legal acceptance of Africans in England in the 1500s and 1600s, but you allude to a change in attitudes and

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status by the 1800s? When, why and how did attitudes change? Another big one there so when, why and how did attitudes to Africans change?

**Answer**

Well a lot of work has been done on Africans in Britain in the long 18th century, but not a huge amount has actually been done in the 17th century. So my research sort of finished for my doctorate in around 1640 and I sort of took it up to the Civil War period and a lot of other scholars kind of start maybe in the 1660s, but they quite quickly get sucked into the 18th century because there's more evidence and there's a lot to say about the 18<sup>th</sup> century. So I think there's actually a PhD student currently in Lancaster who's doing her PhD on Black Stuarts, so I think that 17th century period is really where we need to look really carefully at what was happening in Britain. How to really pinpoint the when and the how and the why. But I think at the same time we do have more of an idea of the why, particularly from scholars of the Caribbean. So I'm actually looking at Caribbean history more now and I've been reading a lot about this. Barbados is very much sort of seen as the, what's the word not the melting pot, the crucible of a lot of these institutionally racist measures. So Barbados is one of the earliest colonies. I mean Virginia was founded in 1607 but the English get to Barbados in 1627. But Barbados becomes a society with a large number of enslaved people faster and it's where the first slave code is written in 1660 I think. So I think that a lot of the answer is to do with the way that enslavement emerges in these early colonies and I think it comes from initially an economic motive, that enslaved labour you know proves to be the most efficient way of producing these labour-intensive crops like sugar. But then the experience of living in that society and that is brought back and quite early on Africans then are being brought back to London and England from those colonies by their enslavers. And so that that experience of living alongside, living in a society where Africans are enslaved and demeaned in that way obviously you know changes the way they're perceived. There's still more work needs to be done as to how that evolves and how it most importantly I think a lot of work has been done on how it evolves in the society, in those Caribbean islands or in early America. But not so much has been done on how that plays out in England. I have recently seen a 1647 will made in England leaving two enslaved men to the man's brother but they are living in Barbados. It happens quite quickly I think. Again, if you look at British involvement in trading and trafficking of enslaved Africans, there's really not a lot of activity until the 1640s and then suddenly if you look at [slavevoyages.org](http://slavevoyages.org) which is a massive database of all those voyages, it this it just goes up sort of exponentially. I'm probably not using that what term properly, but it goes up a lot from in the 1640s and 50s and sort of really takes off from that point. So that there's a big shift. So I think that you know enslavement and colonialism is the why really, a lot of times certainly for the institution. But more research and discussion needs to happen on that.

**Question 10 [27:50]**

Great and you've given me a fantastic tip there of a website [slavevoyages.org](http://slavevoyages.org) I think you said Miranda, which sounds like a really good one for students to sort of get their teeth into and have a look at themselves. Thank you for that. So Zahra from Harris Westminster wants to know: Under which monarch from the previous centuries do you think Africans experience the most equality, and why?

**Answer**

I don't think we can really answer that question because I don't think that the change of monarch has that much impact on institutions or the way people view each other. It's not that neat. You don't say



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“Alright there's a new king we're going to treat people differently”. And so I think we have to think more in shifts over time in a much broader way.

**Question 11 [28:47]**

So in that case then would you suggest then, from what you've researched already, would you suggest that under the sort of the general Tudor period then that Africans experience more equality than any other would you think in the past?

**Answer**

Well I'm increasingly hesitant to sort of try and argue that Africans ever experienced equality. I'm not sure that's the right term to be thinking in because you know because partly of all the things we've already been talking about with intersectional prejudice and things. Although you know racism as we know it today didn't really exist in those terms, the ideas about race have evolved over time in a lot of different ways. But clearly there was prejudice and there was intersectionality as well. In the book I talk a lot about your class and religion being the main sort of ways in which people were judging each other, but obviously if somebody were to encounter someone with darker skin in the street, questions might be raised in their mind about whether they were a Christian or not, or where they came from and how much class they had. I mean that would obviously depend on what clothes they were wearing. There's lots of other factors that people take in when they make snap judgments about each other. I'm not sure equality is the right lens to be kind of approaching the question through really.

**Question 12 [30:19]**

Now a lot of the questions that we've had so far Miranda have obviously focused very much on the topic that you did your lecture on which was you know fascinating, but we also had loads of questions from students about your work as a historian; you know your methods of research and that kind of thing. So I think we'll do some questions Now on that sort of whole area. So we'll start off with Halle who wants to know: What sparked your interest in this topic?

**Answer**

My mind wandered in a lecture. I was in this lecture in my last year of university and it was about Early Modern trades and it was pretty boring and then suddenly my ears pricked up because the lecturer said that the English has started trading to Africa in the 1550s. And I just had never heard about that and I've been obsessed with the Tudors since I was about nine and I had never ever heard about that. Whereas you know the only time we've been taught about trade with Africa was in the context of the slaving in the 18th century. So I went to the library to try and find out more and then I quite quickly found references to Africans actually in England but there wasn't a lot of material about it so that's when I decided I had to find out more.

**Question 13 [31:39]**

That's brilliant thanks. Thanks Miranda, great. Freya asks the question: What specific sources, either written during the Tudor period or modern, did you find the most useful for finding information on Africans in the Tudor period?

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**Answer**

Well I do like to go back to the primary sources. Like I said when I went to the library in 2004, there wasn't a lot of secondary material. Since then, there are a couple of key books. The original key book was Peter Fryer's *Staying Power* which is sort of before David Olusoga the first kind of really big overview of Black history in Britain, going back to sort of before the Romans and coming through to his present day of the 1980s. And there were a couple of pages in that book on the Tudor period which had really useful footnotes so that was really helpful. And since I started my research, several other scholars have written about this specifically Imtiaz Habib's book, *Black Lives in the English Archives*, that came out in about 2008. And Onyeka Nubia has written two books now about Africans in Tudor society and so those are obviously really important now if you want to look at books. Both very rich in detail. But in terms of primary sources, in order to get a sense of what the population and how widely spread the African presence was across Britain, then parish registers are the most useful. But they are very brief and you can supplement the bit with tax returns but there doesn't seem to be as much material about Africans and tax returns. But in terms of the most interesting it's got to be court records, legal records because that's when you get more of a story, you get detailed sort of depositions sometimes from the Africans themselves talking about whatever it is it that the court case is about and that's where you can kind of really get a bit more detail I think.

**Question 14 [33:51]**

Fantastic. We had an anonymous question, I think it's a really interesting question. How does your work challenge typical or dominant portrayals of Black people in history?

**Answer**

Well, I think the headlines are they were here and they were not enslaved. I think those are the main things. I think a lot of people assume there were no black people in Britain until the 1940s, after the Second World War, and then people tend to assume that all Africans in European history were powerless and enslaved and it was more complicated than that.

**Question 15 [34:30]**

Fantastic, thank you. Now a question from Chester School who asked: What was the initial response to your book, *Black Tudors*, being written by a white woman?

**Answer**

Well, I think there's always lots of different responses to these sorts of issues and it depends who from. In general, I got a really positive response to my work altogether and you know a lot of nice book reviews and people interested in it. So I think a lot of people were kind of overwhelmingly just interested in the topic and they hadn't necessarily heard about it before even though some of those earlier books had already come out by Black scholars actually, Imtiaz Habib and Onyeka Nubia. Because my book was a trade book, it was aimed at a popular audience and I also tried to work with schools as well to really kind of bring it into the classroom in an accessible way. I think the story got out there widely but I would also say that obviously I think you know as a white woman and as a sort of Oxford educated, privately educated woman I had opportunities to get my foot in the door to get my book out there and to spread the word in a way that somebody from a different background might not have found as straightforward. And that's why I think it's really important that I'm you know not the only person to be talking about this and to continue the dialogue and to bring other people into the

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conversation and I hope that I've brought the topic to a wider audience and therefore you know a wider more diverse group of the next generation of historians can come to it and find more and reinterpret it. Well firstly you never really know what people are saying behind your back but thanks to the internet you can sometimes find negative comments in horrible places. There was somebody who accused me of cross-racial ventriloquism partly because of those opening sections to the to the book where I sort of try and imagine something from the perspective of the person I'm writing about. So I think that you know inevitably anybody coming to source material will you know have biases that you can't always put to one side or you try to. I was taught that as a historian you have to be objective but increasingly I think that's impossible and it's more important to declare your biases at the beginning. I think I'm really interested. There are younger students coming through here and you know I am really interested in talking about the material with others and seeing what other perspectives there are because you know maybe I got it all wrong.

**Question 16 [37:29]**

Fabulous. You mentioned about you know the future generations of historians and so we did have also lots of questions thinking about the future of the study of Black Tudors and the future of teaching diversity in the curriculum. So if I could ask you Anna's question. Anna asks: How are you hoping your book might be used in the future? And she says, do you think it would be an important thing to be taught in schools or do you want it to inspire other authors to write similar works about parts of history that have been overlooked and ignored?

**Answer**

All of that sounds great. I don't want it pulped or used in the bathroom. Like I said I have been working to get it into schools and this is part of that grand plan, thank you for tuning in everyone, but I have a project called Teaching Black Tudors. I've been working with educational publishers and teachers and we've created teaching resources I've mostly aimed at Key Stage Three. There is increasing evidence that it is being taught in schools which is great and I'm doing my best to sort of support that. This FutureLearn course that I've mentioned a couple of times. It's a six-week free course that anybody can sign up and do and I know that a lot of teachers have actually started doing it and that's I think really helpful because one of the barriers to Black history being taught in schools is that teachers don't feel fully equipped to do it because they weren't taught it themselves and so that's why I'm hoping you know that that could be a model. And FutureLearn is very open to doing more courses in this area so I think that can be a model where if you do create these short courses and there's a new one on the Colonial Countryside, country houses and enslavement coming up, and there is the Black curriculum have done a course on Teaching Black History on FutureLearn as well. So I think that's one way. Of course, I want people to follow that example and get more Black history into the classroom in all periods and all topics. Yeah I definitely hope that, people think they knew that know the Tudors and this was part of to the history that people didn't know and I hope that that encourages people to challenge everything they're told and go back to the archives and find new stories because they're there. It depends what questions you ask of the past but I'm excited to see what people find next.

**Question 17 [40:03]**

Definitely and on that and I know we've only got a couple of minutes left Miranda, but where do you think research on Black Tudors should go next?

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## Answer

Well like I said I think there's definitely some important work that needs to be done taking the archival evidence that has been brought together recently by myself and particularly Imtiaz Habib and Onyeka Nubia and trying to marry that up in the conclusions we can draw from that alongside the literary evidence and ideas about race in the literature to try and get a more blended kind of 3D idea of what the African experience was. As much information as we can get about what that lived experience was and what ideas were circulating because as some of the questions have referred to, it's so important to try and understand how the racism we're still lumbered with today evolved and came to being. Because if we can understand where it came from and hopefully that will help us combat it now. Like I said, also there's a lot more digitisation so there's more research. It should be a lot easier to find things in parish registers and other source material by using keyword searches in a way that hasn't been possible. Sometimes you do have to go back to the archives. I think someone should go back into the High Court of Admiralty records because I think there's a lot more material in there; they're very badly catalogued. Like I said you know expanding into the Stuart period as well and making those contrasts as well but I'm sure people will have lots of other ideas that haven't thought of and I look forward to seeing where it where it all goes next.

Fantastic. Well I'm really sad to say that time seems to be up on our Q&A and Miranda, we know that you have a book to carry on researching and writing. So I'd just like to say on behalf of Westminster Abbey, how grateful we are to you for giving up your time today and for your lecture, which was absolutely fascinating and all the insights that you've given us today, and also the opportunity that you've given to students to sort of connect with you in this way, just asking their own questions in their own voice, which I think is an amazing thing to be able to do. I certainly don't remember having that experience when I was studying A Level History myself, so thank you ever so much for your time today. And thank you to all of the students and teachers who've taken part as well for your fantastic questions that you've sent in, really thought-provoking and challenging questions so thank you as well. And I think we'd both like to wish you all the very best in your studies and we'll definitely be keeping our eyes open you know to see where the future research comes from, from you. So all the best to you all and thank you Miranda. And we're going to say goodbye now, so thanks everybody. Bye-bye.

## Biography of the Speaker

Dr Kaufmann is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, part of the School of Advanced Study, University of London. She is also an Honorary Fellow of the University of Liverpool and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and has written extensively on the topic of diversity in Early Modern Britain. She has acted as a consultant for TV programmes including David Olusoga's BAFTA award-winning series "Black and British: A Forgotten History" and critically acclaimed prizewinning, "Black Tudors: The Untold Story" (Oneworld 2017), is now being developed into the drama series, 'Southwark', with BritBox.

## Context of the event

Westminster Abbey's Learning Department hosted the online event "Africans in Tudor and Stuart Westminster" on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Dr Miranda Kaufmann, author of "Black Tudors: The Untold Story" (2017), discussed the presence of Africans in Tudor and early Stuart Westminster in a pre-recorded

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lecture that students were able to watch and submit questions before the live event. Lou Cash, Learning Officer at Westminster Abbey chaired a live question and answer session with Dr Kaufmann, during which students' questions were answered.

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