

Brief summary of 20 Questions and Answers on Black Europe, by Stephen Small, Professor of African American Studies, University of California, Berkeley.

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This book puts Black people in Europe at the center of academic and political analysis; defines and interrogates some of the most important elements of Black Europe, past and present; and describes and elaborates the circumstances of Black people across twelve nations in Europe (listed below). Who are we? How did we get here (historically)? Where are we located? What are our economic, political and social circumstances? What are our main organizations, including Black women's organizations? What are our priorities and what actions, activities are we involved in – what is our agency – to confront institutional racism and achieve social justice?

There are 46 nations in Europe, with more than 770 million people. I estimate slightly more than 7 million Black people in Europe as a whole, and I estimate more than 90% of all Black people in Europe today can be found in twelve nations. These nations are the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Belgium; Spain, Germany and Italy; Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the Republic of Ireland. This is the heart of Black Europe.

The primary focus is on citizenship and institutional racism – rather than on immigration and assimilation. An analysis of gender is at the core of the book and I examine how gender ideologies and institutional practices shape citizenship, politics, social inequality; as well as describing the main Black women's organizations, their activities and priorities for social justice and knowledge production. While the book draws a great deal on the academic literature on these issues, I also immerse myself in what I call knowledge production outside the academy, but which I mean oppositional knowledge, independent knowledge, and collaborations between progressive academics and community activists and intellectuals.

Most books and journal articles on Black people in Europe focus primarily on nation-specific studies, and mainly on what I call 'the usual suspects' – the UK, France, Netherlands, and maybe Germany. They highlight what is unique and specific to each nation – what I call the **distinct differences** across nations. In this book, I challenge the nation-specific approach, choosing instead to focus on what is common to the Black experience in nations across Europe. In this way, I

highlight what I call the **striking similarities** in our experiences. Historically, these experiences include European nations working collectively to exploit African land and labor, and through the processes of colonization and imperialism; and they include direct and palpable legacies of colonialism and imperialism. Today, in the 21st century, these striking similarities include an ambiguous hyper-visibility, an entrenched vulnerability, and irrepressible resistance and resilience. They also include institutional racism.

I argue that Black people in Europe have contributed massively to the political, economic and social development of Europe, and that Europe is far more democratic, more humane and more socially just, than it would have been without our presence. I maintain that Black social mobilization and organizations (including Black faith communities) exist because of institutional racism, and because mainstream European institutions have failed to provide full citizenship and equal opportunities to Black people. And I insist that Black social mobilization, community actions and Black and multi-racial organizations will continue to exist and will be the main reason that racial inequality and injustice will continue to be challenged in Europe.

This book builds on my personal, political and research experience on Black Europe for the last 40 years, including my education at universities in England, and my doctoral studies at the university of California, Berkeley. It builds on my research and writing on England, the English-speaking Caribbean and the United States, including comparisons across nations. It builds on my experience as Director of the UC, Education Abroad program in Bordeaux and Toulouse, where I lived in 2002-2004; my tenure as the UC, Director of Education Abroad Program in Madrid, where I lived in 2013-2015. And my time as Extraordinary Professor for the Study of Dutch Slavery and its Legacies, at the University of Amsterdam (2010-2015). The book benefits in particular from the research and teaching I've done since I began working with my friend and colleague, Kwame Nimako in the Black Europe Summer School (BESS), which he founded in 2008. And my collaborations with my friend and colleague Sandew Hira, at the International Institute for Scientific Research, in The Hague.

This book is motivated, inspired and researched on the basis of my personal and political experience, my academic training and research, and my commitment to social justice; and determination to produce a more accurate, comprehensive and inclusive analysis of Black Europe and the African Diaspora.