

**CONSTRUCTING THE IRISH OF  
BRITAIN: ETHNIC RECOGNITION AND THE  
2001 UK CENSUSES**

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## ABSTRACT

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### **CONSTRUCTING THE IRISH OF BRITAIN: ETHNIC RECOGNITION AND THE 2001 UK CENSUSES**

Systems of ethnic monitoring are of fundamental importance in the context of policy commitments to improving the life-chances of minority ethnic groups. In effect, without a system of ethnic monitoring the targeting, implementation and gauging the outcomes of multicultural policies would be impossible. Primary amongst these systems of ethnic monitoring is the national census. The ethnic data generated comprise the informational foundation of multicultural policy. Moreover, these data are presented as a meaningful representation of ethnic plurality but, despite the validity ascribed to statistical representations of ethnic pluralism, on closer analysis they are shown to be of limited value. On the one hand, the institutionalisation of a particular pattern of ethnic designations has the effect of reifying this pattern, while at the same time it renders conceptually and statistically invisible those minority ethnic groups not included in the original patterning. On the other hand, the implementation of multicultural policies acts as an opportunity incentive for ethnic mobilisation—for ethnic activists to lobby to secure the inclusion of the community they purport to represent in the multicultural framework. The consequence of this is that the list of ethnic designations (named groups) used on systems of ethnic monitoring can be subject to radical discontinuities: changes that reflect the outcomes of political struggles by ethnic entrepreneurs rather than deeper changes in the ethnic structure. The manner in which an “Irish” option came to be included on the ethnic group questions of the 2001 censuses of Great Britain is an example of the politics of ethnic monitoring. This paper presents an account of this activism, its successes and its consequences, and argues that despite the validity accorded to ethnic statistics in the context of multiculturalism they tell us little about sociological reality.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

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**Kevin Howard** is a post-doctoral researcher at the Institute for British-Irish Studies at University College Dublin. His research interests are in the general fields of ethnic mobilisation and the politics of identity, and he completed his PhD dissertation entitled *From group to category: the emergence of the Irish in Britain as an ethnic minority* in October 2003.

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# CONSTRUCTING THE IRISH OF BRITAIN: ETHNIC RECOGNITION AND THE 2001 UK CENSUSES

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## INTRODUCTION

“2001 census: replacing myths with facts”: thus read the opening quotation in the headline of a Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) press release (CRE, 13 February 2003). This had been issued in response to the publication in February 2003 of data generated by the “ethnic group” question included in UK’s 2001 censuses. The “myths” being referred to are the responses generated by a MORI opinion poll carried out in January 2003 that sought to gauge the British public’s perceptions regarding minority ethnic groups. According to CRE’s press release:

The figures released today reveal that many commentators have over-estimated the size of the ethnic minority population. A recent MORI poll found that people estimated that ethnic minorities comprised 22.5% of the total population, nearly three times the actual size...The release of this [census] data provides fascinating new insights into Britain’s multiracial society...9.9% of the population in England and Wales in April 2001 identified themselves as being from an ethnic minority (including 1.2% Irish). 87.5% gave their origin as White British (CRE, 2003: 20).<sup>1</sup>

The explicit assumption is that, quite unlike the subjective perceptions recorded by MORI pollsters, the census data is a meaningful representation of social reality—ethnic groups are real entities that can be statistically quantified.<sup>2</sup> These facts, in turn, constitute the informational foundations upon which the state’s multicultural policies are based (Aspinall, 2000a; Ballard, 1997). According to the same press release, this data “will be an invaluable resource for the public, private and voluntary sectors both in setting employment targets and ensuring equal access to goods and services over the next ten years”, that is, between now and the next census. However, continuing the construction analogy, on closer inspection these foundations prove to be rather less than solid. Indeed, the argument made in this paper is that they are inherently unstable. This calls into question the utility of the vast range of policies as well as administrative and academic analyses that rely on ethnic data collated through the mechanism of the census.

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<sup>1</sup>The interchangeable usage of the terms “ethnic” and “racial” has become so embedded in British political, legal, administrative and academic discourses concerned with ethnic diversity in the UK that attempts to untangle the terms of the debate are up against a powerful discursive pattern.

<sup>2</sup>There is nothing new in the white majority’s overestimation of the size of the non-white population in Great Britain. A poll conducted by MORI in July 2001 showed that respondent’s estimated the percentage of “immigrants” at 20% of the population (*Reader’s Digest*, 7 July 2001).

A contributing factor to this inherent instability is the method of data collection. Modern censuses, in the main, are completed by individual householders and not by state enumerators (Farley, 1991; Lee, 1993; Waters and Lieberman, 1993; Robbin, 1999; Kertzer and Arel, 2002). In terms of “identity-type” questions on race, ethnic group, cultural background and ancestry, for example, people are asked to choose from the options available or else to write in the designation with which they most closely identify. In this sense, responses are a form of self-determination. We cannot know just from the census data, upon which so much is built, the degree, if any, of consultation within households in responding to these questions. Perhaps every person in the household considers the ethnic options open to them; but perhaps they do not, or perhaps some do and some do not. Censuses are expensive operations; the 2001 round taken across the UK cost about £230 million (Office of National Statistics, 2001). Given Treasury concerns over the cost of the census, the additional expense in discovering how response options are exercised within households is not likely to be incurred (Treasury Select Committee, 2002).

When we consider the time-gap between decennial censuses it would be unusual if the patterns of self-ascribed responses did not show some change. This is even more likely in western liberal democracies characterised by, on the one hand, large-scale inward migration and, on the other, by formal commitments to the implementation of multicultural policies. We can include in this category the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Argentina and Brazil (all classic countries of immigration) as well as the UK (a *de facto* country of immigration even if this title is officially abjured). Indeed, it is a sobering fact that in none of these countries has the list of identity-type designations used on the various national censuses stayed the same over time, not even from one census to another. Intergenerational change in patterns of self-ascription is therefore to be expected, with the consequence that the institutionalised designations used in censuses can be expected to change to reflect this.

However, what also compels caution against taking ethnic data at face value is the way in which the census may be embroiled in politics (Farnsworth, 1999; Hirschman, Alba and Farley, 2000; Nobles, 2000). As the CRE’s press release makes clear, the rationale for garnering information on ethnic group membership is to facilitate the implementation of so-called multicultural policies. This provides an opportunity incentive for ethnic activists to mobilise on behalf of their putative constituency. Politicians, not census administrators, ultimately decide the format the census takes: what questions will be asked, how they are asked and whom they are asked of. What this means is that the system of ethnic categorisation used in the census has become a site of contest in contemporary identity politics. The list of ethnic designations (named groups) from which respondents exercise their options often reflects the outcome of politically motivated ad-hoc compromises rather than considered evaluation as to which ethnic groups are relevant from a policy perspective. This is usefully shown through an analysis of the manner in which an “Irish” ethnic option came to be included on the list of ethnic designations for the 2001 censuses in Great Britain. Such an option was not included on the ethnic group question for the 1991 round of censuses, the first time such a question

appeared in a census in Great Britain. The dynamics that led to this inclusion on the census forms of England and Wales first, and then of Scotland, highlight graphically the inherently politicised nature of measuring ethnic membership in the context of the opportunity structure created by the state's implementation of multicultural policies.

## **THE LEGAL, HISTORICAL AND TERRITORIAL CONTEXTS**

Analysis of this essential political process needs to be preceded by consideration of the appropriate legal, historical and institutional contexts. Under British race relations law discrimination against an individual on the grounds of that individual's perceived membership of an ethnic group is illegal. This has been the case since the first race relations legislation introduced by the Labour government in 1965, the Race Relations Act. However, despite the longevity of such concepts as race, nationality and ethnicity in British legal, political, administrative and academic discourse, the question of what exactly constitutes an ethnic group (or indeed a race, nation, people or community) remains unresolved. It is therefore more fruitful to examine how these concepts are used to mobilise, legitimise and de-legitimise social and political struggles rather than trying to define a lexical hierarchy of "better" or "worse" definitions. Even the process of lexical definition is itself political; in the end, power relations decide which social collectives "merit" the title of ethnic group, and hence fall under the protection of the race relations legislation.

This point was graphically illustrated in the 1983 *Mandla vs Lee* case, finally adjudicated by the UK's de facto supreme court, the House of Lords. In brief, the law lords' role as arbiter over what makes a designated collectivity an ethnic group came about as a result of a dispute between a public school and a Sikh schoolboy. The father of the boy claimed that the school that he was attending was discriminating on racial grounds, given the school's insistence that the boy remove his turban. The parallels and differences between this case and the controversy over French Muslim female pupils wearing the hijab is striking. In both cases, the school authorities opposed the wearing of sartorial symbols of ethnic distinctiveness. However, in the French case the dispute revolved around the issue of the displaying of "non-French" ethnic symbolism in public spaces. The British case revolved around the question of whether the school was discriminating against the boy on the basis of his ethnic origin, which is illegal, or his religion, which is not illegal. The school claimed that being a Sikh was a matter of religious orientation, not ethnicity. In 1983 in their final judgement the law lords overturned previous county and High Court rulings and found against the school. In so doing Lord Justice Fraser handed down a set of criteria that have become a benchmark in British case law:

For a group to constitute an ethnic group in the sense of the 1976 Act, in my opinion, it must regard itself, and be regarded by others, as a distinct community by virtue of certain characteristics. Some of these characteristics are essential; others are not so essential, but one or more of them will commonly be found, and will help to

distinguish the group from the surrounding community. The conditions which appear essential are these:

1. A long shared history, of which the group is conscious as distinguishing it from other groups, and the memory of which is kept alive
2. A cultural tradition of its own, including family and social customs and manners, often, but not necessarily associated with religious observance. In addition to those two essential characteristics the following characteristics are in my opinion, relevant
3. Either a common geographical origin, or descent from a small number of ancestors
4. A common language, not necessarily peculiar to the group
5. A common literature peculiar to the group
6. A common religion different from that of neighbouring groups or from the general community surrounding it
7. Being a minority or being an oppressed or a dominant group within a larger community

This set of criteria is familiar to sociologists and political scientists in the field of ethnic studies (see for instance Smith and Hutchinson, 1996 for a standard definition). But, once again, all of these conditions are a matter of interpretation and in the end, as in the Sikh case, and more recently in the case of Irish Travellers in Great Britain, it is also a matter of legal ruling. So, in sum, designating ethnic groups is not as straight-forward a task as is implied by the kind of language used in the CRE's press release. On the one hand, in the context of large-scale immigration social boundaries are constantly being reconfigured. On the other hand, in the context of multiculturalism, formal recognition has material consequences and therefore issues of definition are resolved at the political level.

Moreover, the task of measuring minority ethnic groups is further complicated by the anomalous nature of census taking in the United Kingdom. As table 1 shows, in one sense there is no British census but, rather, three territorially and administratively distinct ones, with three separate political authorities each ultimately responsible for the census in its region, a consequence of the UK's episodic constitutional and territorial evolution (Rose, 1982; Davies, 1999; Barnett, 2000, 2002).

This legal and institutional melange can engender conflict over what constitutes a salient ethnic group, and what dimensions of difference are deemed relevant to the implementation of policy. In the end, it is the politicians who decide, with the consequence that measuring ethnic groups is inherently politicised. The manner in which the Irish were initially excluded and then came to be included on the list of ethnic designations highlights how systems of ethnic classification operate their own inclusions and exclusions but are open to politically motivated reconfiguring. Irish efforts to secure inclusion were set in the context of the politics of post-1997 devolution and in turn had consequences for this. But analysis of how and why the

Irish came to be included on the multicultural framework of Great Britain has to take into account three distinct aspects of ethnic politics, including the politics of a neighbouring state.

**Table 1. Decentralised census taking in the UK**

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<b>Country</b>	<b>Statistical Agency</b>	<b>Political Authority</b>
England and Wales	Office of National Statistics (Statistics UK)	Houses of Parliament, London
Scotland	General Registrar's Office Scotland (GROS)	Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh
Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Statistical and Research Agency (NISRA)	Northern Ireland Assembly, Belfast

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- The British state's accommodation of ethnic minorities formed as a consequence of immigration: the politics of multiculturalism
- The British state's accommodation of territorial ethnonationalism: the politics of devolution
- The Irish state's engagement with its "people" overseas: the politics of diaspora.

Each of these dynamics is separate and of differing degrees of institutionalisation. The politics of multiculturalism in Great Britain is a set of ongoing discursive and institutional practices aimed at the integration of post-war immigrants from the former empire and their British-born descendants (Parekh, 1998; 2000). The politics of devolution, while spanning a similar timeframe, is a separate dynamic (Nairn, 2000; Ruane et al, 2003; O'Neill; 2004). The resurgence of ethnonationalism in the peripheries in the 1960s had little to do with immigration but was a local manifestation of the global upsurge in ethno-territorial demands for political autonomy. Moreover, the scale of settlement of non-white ethnic minorities in the peripheries is slight, compared to that of major urban sites in England. Irish immigration on the other hand has been exempt from the legislative package of restrictions introduced to stop the immigration of non-white British subjects. By extension the Irish were not a focus of attention for the race relations regime that emerged to accommodate non-white ethnic groups established in the UK (particularly in England) as a result of this immigration (Hickman, 1998; Walters, 1999). Traditionally, the Irish political elite paid little regard to Irish emigrants once they had left Ireland, beyond the ritualistic decrying of emigration as a national failing, or alternatively interpreting it as indicative of the global upward mobility of Irish youth (MacLaughlin, 1997; 2000; Task Force on Emigration, 2002). Through the 1990s the Irish political elite began to take a greater interest in the Irish outside Ireland, the so-called Irish diaspora, particularly during the presidency of Mary Robinson (1990-97). While this interest has been largely rhetorical there has been some substantive "outreaching" to the Irish abroad. The support of the Irish

government in 1999-2000 for the efforts to have an “Irish” option included on the British censuses constitutes a limited and brief but nonetheless historically novel concrete example of this proactive approach.

### **EMBEDDING “COLOUR” AS THE MARKER OF ETHNIC DIFFERENCE**

During the introduction of the 1965 Race Relations Bill the Labour Home Secretary, Frank Soskice, assessed the non-white population of the United Kingdom at between 800,000 and 1,000,000, but the fact is that no one really knew. The traditional place of birth question included on all censuses since 1841 captured only the immigrant cohort. A question on nationality had been introduced in 1851 and remained in place until 1961. But by 1961 the question was proving to be confusing for people from the former Empire, whose nationality was at one level British but who were not “native” to the UK. A nationality question has not been included on the census since then (Booth, 1985: 256; Ni Bhrolcháin, 1990). In 1971 the census schedules included a question on parents’ place of birth. However, this was not a wholly satisfactory way of identifying the non-white population. On the one hand there was a significant degree of non-response, and on the other a significant number of white Britons had parents born in the former colonies. For instance, in the 1971 census it is estimated that of the 322,670 persons identified as born in India, over 100,000 were white (Leach, 1989: 5). In addition, it was recognised that a question on parents’ place of birth was subject to similar temporal limitations as that of the place of birth question; over time even the parents of people of non-dominant minority ethnic groups would be British-born. By the mid-1970s, testing was taking place on a question format that would identify ethnic groups independently of their birth place. Quite clearly, this reflected the abandonment of the view that the descendants of immigrants would and should assimilate into British society.

The CRE regarded the information that would be garnered from the inclusion in the census of a question on ethnic group as essential to the implementation of the 1976 Race Relations Act. In the run-up to the 1981 census it declared that including this question was of “the highest importance in the national interest” (Leach, 1989: 14-15). The government’s white paper on the 1981 census, published in 1979, set out the case for a self-ascribed ethnic origin question to facilitate service providers:

In carrying out their responsibilities under the Race Relations Act, and in developing effective social policies ... authorities need to know how the family structure, housing education, employment and unemployment of the ethnic minorities compare with the conditions in the population as a whole. Any study of community relations must start from a knowledge of the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the ethnic minorities ... The Census, which is comprehensive and confidential, could provide most of the basic information (cited in Booth, 85: 255-6.)

However, public reaction “on the ground” was less positive. The 1979 Haringey census test, in which an ethnic group question was introduced as a means of testing its viability, has been described as a fiasco (Bulmer, 2000). A local activist

campaign with the operating slogan "Say no to racist census" had considerable success. The response rates to the question were low; only 54% of households returned their test census forms. Moreover, the National Front's enthusiasm for an ethnic origin question only added to the fears of ethnic minority groups:

The 1981 census MUST ask the vital question "What is your ethnic origin?" Only then can we get an idea of the true size of the coloured population ... Our repatriation policy demands that we have accurate figures of the number of people who, sooner or later, are going home (cited in Leach, 1989: 24).

Electoral support for the National Front, formed in 1967, has been historically low in Great Britain. But in the late 1970s there was a view that this explicitly racist party was about to make a breakthrough into the political mainstream (Taylor, 1979). Leading politicians lent this opinion a degree of plausibility when they referred to the "understandable" appeal extremists such as the National Front had for people fearful of the adverse consequences of immigration. In January 1978 the Conservative leader Margaret Thatcher had appeared on a television documentary claiming that she:

Would not make [immigration] an election issue ... but ... not talking about this ... is one thing that is driving people to the National Front ... If we do not want people to go to the extremes, and I do not, we must ourselves talk about this problem and we must show that we are prepared to deal with it (Taylor, 1979: 144).

Moreover, the Conservative Party had come to power in 1979 committed to introducing new citizenship legislation. This took shape as the British Nationality Act of 1981, legislation that finally removed the *ius soli* dimension of the British citizenship regime. It was this backdrop that contributed to fears in Haringey over the purpose of the census ethnic group question. The Office of Population and Census Statistics (forerunner of the Office of National Statistics) advised against the inclusion of an ethnic origin question on the grounds that hostility to it might threaten the integrity of the entire census project and the Conservative government of the day followed this advice. The suggestion that the Conservatives' nationality legislation might have been a contributing factor in the perceived opposition to the ethnic group question was dismissed.

But the fact was that people were suspicious of the inclusion of the ethnicity question in such a high profile, comprehensive and compulsory data collection exercise as the decennial census. This was in contrast to the general acceptance and high response rates to similar questions on data collecting mechanisms such as the general household survey (GHS) and the labour force survey (LFS). The essential points about these surveys however is that they are small scale, frequent and, crucially, the responses are voluntary. Moreover, as Labour MP for York Alex Lyon argued, there was a general awareness that the information from these surveys was primarily related to service delivery. In short, the information was gathered, nominally at least, to benefit minority ethnic communities. In Lyon's view what was required to make the census ethnic question acceptable was an emphasis on how the information would be used to tackle racial discrimination. In addition, during the 1970s the Labour government had ruled out systems of ethnic

monitoring that relied primarily on visible difference as a proxy for ethnic difference. The Haringey census test followed this prescription: the “ethnic” categories used did not rely on somatic difference at all. The options listed were: (1) English, Welsh, Scottish or Irish (2) Other European (3) West Indian or Guyanese (4) African (5) Indian (6) Pakistani (7) Bangladeshi (8) Arab and (9) Chinese. Category (10) was a residual write-in option with the instruction: “Any other racial or ethnic group or if of mixed racial or ethnic descent please describe”. For Alex Lyon, this was its failing; racial discrimination was a white non-white issue. The Haringey Census test should not have prevaricated and should have asked people “Are you black or white?” During the Commons debate on the 1981 census, Lyons argued:

Black people are proud to acknowledge they are black and would not necessarily display the anxiety that liberals of 1960s thought would be the case, if we were to ask that question...[in future censuses] we must monitor colour (Hansard, Commons Report, series V, vol. 983, col. 1309).

The Labour MP Alf Dubs stressed how blacks in the USA regarded ethnic monitoring as essential to affirmative action policies. He quoted the slogan of black organisations in the run-up to the 1970 US census, the first to be taken following the introduction of the affirmative action legislation: “on census day say it loud and clear: I’m black, I’m proud and I’m here! Be counted, baby” (ibid, col. 1328).

From the early 1980s onwards, the assumption that racial discrimination could only be directed against visibly different non-white minorities structured the pattern of ethnic monitoring. As the 1980s progressed, Turkish and Greek Cypriots, while regarded as distinct ethnic minority groups, were also subsumed within the white majority. By 1987 both the Office of Population and Census Statistics and the General Registrar’s Office Scotland (GROS) were committed to the inclusion of an ethnic question on the census, seeing it as a necessity in the light of the government’s formal commitment to tackle racial discrimination. The 1988 white paper setting out the government’s proposals for the 1991 census initially proposed a format that did not differentiate the black category. In short, the proposed categories were White, Black, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and the ubiquitous residual “any other” category. This format was modified early in 1989 to differentiate the black category between Black-Caribbean, Black-African, and Black-Other. The final format used in the census test of April 1989 taken across Great Britain (Scotland, as well as England and Wales) was that used in the actual census (see appendix 1). The ethnic options were: one undifferentiated white category and a selection of non-white categories that combined legal nationalities, regional origins, colour and language, as proxies for ethnic group membership but, significantly, not religion.

The ethnic group question for the 1991 round of censuses was not included in the census of Northern Ireland. In 1965 when the Race Relations Bill was being debated, Northern Ireland’s politicians rejected the idea that the legislation had any relevance for their region, and indeed race relations legislation was not introduced into Northern Ireland until the 1997 Race Relations Act (Northern Ireland) on foot of which an office of the CRE was opened in the province. However, a question on

religious background was included in the 1991 Northern Ireland census, as it has been in all major decennial censuses in Ireland since 1861. If we regard religious background as the primary marker of ethnicity in Northern Ireland since then by 1991 ethnic group membership was included as a key variable across all of the UK's census regions.

**Table 2. "Ethnic" composition of Great Britain, 1991**

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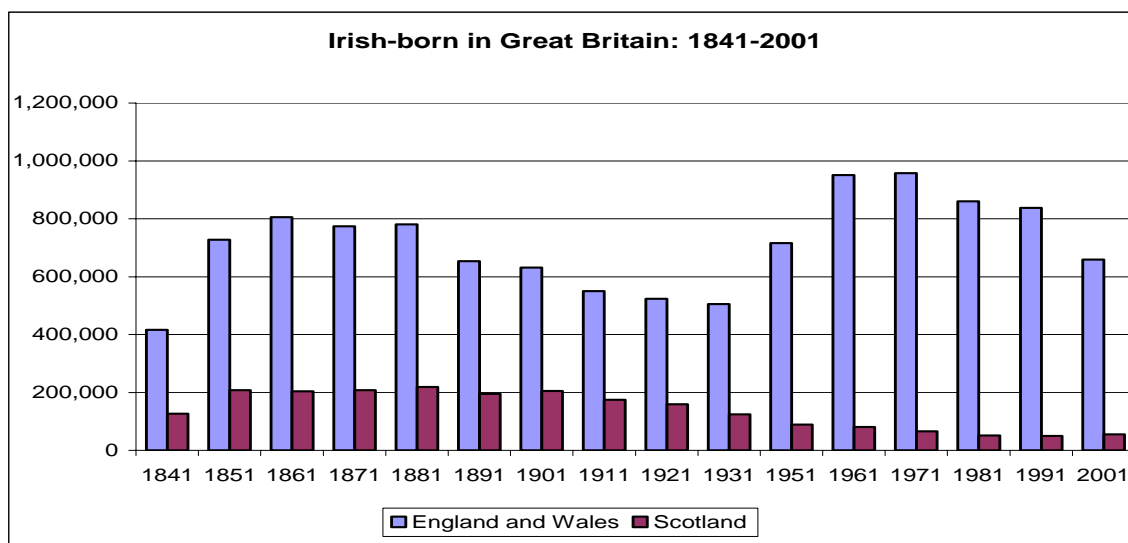
"Ethnic" category	Number	% of total population
White	51,873,794	94.5
Total non-whites	3,015,050	5.5
<i>Black-Caribbean</i>	<i>499,964</i>	<i>0.9</i>
<i>Black-African</i>	<i>212,362</i>	<i>0.4</i>
<i>Black-Other</i>	<i>178,401</i>	<i>0.3</i>
<i>Indian</i>	<i>840,255</i>	<i>1.5</i>
<i>Pakistani</i>	<i>476,555</i>	<i>0.9</i>
<i>Bangladeshi</i>	<i>162,835</i>	<i>0.3</i>
<i>Chinese</i>	<i>156,938</i>	<i>0.3</i>
<i>Other-Asian</i>	<i>197,534</i>	<i>0.4</i>
<i>Other-Other</i>	<i>290,206</i>	<i>0.5</i>
Total	54,888,844	100.0

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Source: Office of National Statistics 1993.

The data generated became the foundation upon which all race relations policies and most academic analysis were based. The census of 1991 has served to reinforce the idea that Great Britain's (not the UK's) ethnic minority groups are on the one hand non-white and on the other defined in secular terms, producing the distribution that may be seen in table 2.

Figure 1. The scale of Irish migration to Great Britain 1841-2001



Source: adapted from Jackson, 1963; Office of National Statistics, 2002; GROS, 2002.

### BECOMING NON-WHITE: IRISH ACTIVISM AND THE CRE

It was the pattern of ethnic differentiation represented by the list of designated groups used in the 1991 censuses in Great Britain that Irish activists mobilised against. In their view, the culturally specific social welfare needs of Irish migrants and the ethnic identity of the multigenerational Irish minority were both being ignored. The central planks upon which the Irish case for inclusion in the British multicultural framework was built were the arguments that:

- Multicultural policy in Great Britain, erroneously modelled on the US experience has embedded visible difference as the salient marker of ethnic difference
- The socio-economic disadvantages of the Irish ethnic community are rendered invisible according to this white versus non-white binary
- Endemic anti-Irish sentiment in British society means that the Irish are routinely discriminated against but this is not described as racism because the Irish are white
- The Irish ethnic community, because of this endemic anti-Irish racism plays down its Irish identity for pragmatic reasons. This “masking” has been misrecognized as unproblematic assimilation
- This “hidden” Irish community constitutes the largest and longest-established ethnic minority group in Great Britain

The scale of Irish migration to Great Britain over the last two centuries dwarfs that of any other overseas group. In 1961 there were over one million Irish-born migrants in Great Britain. When the British-born descendants of this migrant cohort are included it is not hard to understand why the Irish are regarded as Great Britain's largest ethnic minority (see figure 1).

The 1970s saw a reversal of the general pattern of migration from Ireland when for the first time since the early nineteenth century more people arrived in Ireland than left. However, in the 1980s migration resumed its traditional pattern: outward. Those who migrated to Great Britain, particularly those who migrated to London, entered a very different context than that of the post-war mass migration 30-40 years previously. The early 1980s was a period in which the new Conservative government led by Margaret Thatcher was implementing a neo-liberal agenda of social welfare cutbacks while at same time propounding a strident Anglo-British nationalism. Moreover a context in which British Irish tensions, particularly in the wake of the republican hunger strike, and an ongoing bombing campaign in London by Irish republican paramilitaries, was keenly felt.

Prior to the arrival of post-war non-white immigrants "the Irish" constituted the major minority immigrant group in Great Britain (O'Day, 2000). In addition, the Irish, particularly the Catholic Irish, occupied the lowest rung of Britain's ethnic hierarchy (Curtis, 1997). Despite their role as storm-troopers of the industrial revolution, the Catholic Irish constituted an alien and inferior "Other" perennially viewed with suspicion. The outbreak of political violence in the north of Ireland and the resumption of attacks from the early 1970s on civilian and military targets in Great Britain, particularly London, did nothing to combat this perception. Of course there is nothing particularly new in Irish paramilitaries bombing London but the campaign between 1972 and 1996 was sustained and brutal. The effect of this was a rekindling of the perception of the Irish as a "suspect community" (Hillyard, 1993). The impact this had on the Irish community as a whole is subject to some debate. The Irish in Great Britain are not in any sense a homogenous community; indeed the designation "Irish" in Britain is doubly misleading in that it refers to Irish migrants, there is no recognised designation to identify the British born descendants of Irish immigrants. There are observable areas in Great Britain where Irish ethnonational symbolism is self-consciously displayed by communities descended from the mass-wave of nineteenth century migration, particularly in areas of West Lanarkshire, in Glasgow, to some extent in Liverpool, Manchester and areas of north London. Nonetheless, when the scale of Irish migration is considered there has historically been very little evidence of Irishness on display in Great Britain. By the early 1980s however the children of the 1950s migration were coming of age so to speak in a context in which identity politics and the place of ethnic minorities in British society provided a vocabulary and a legal and institutional framework through which claims of ethnic distinctiveness could be articulated. The conjunction of events meant that the opportunity presented itself for Irish activists to lobby for the inclusion of their community on the grounds set out above.

The support of the CRE, as the primary institution overseeing multicultural policy in Great Britain, was essential if the Irish challenge to the established white-nonwhite binary was to gain the critical mass needed to overcome the established patterns of operationalising ethnic difference in Great Britain. The CRE was statutorily obliged to include an Irish element in all its work if it could be shown that Irish people were systematically subjected to racial discrimination in a similar way to non-whites. The CRE took a conventionally social scientific approach, regarding discrimination as something that could be tested. Discrimination testing was, and is, routinely carried out in research into the condition of Great Britain's non-white ethnic minorities. Irish activists argued that the political and historical trajectories of the migrant communities in Great Britain were entirely different and that anti-Irish racism was not operationalised in the same way as that directed against non-whites. Anti-Irish racism, they argued, was more insidious, less direct, the consequence of centuries of antagonism that continually reinforced notions of the Irish as a people that were usually perceived as part of the "British family", but the least rational, least law-abiding, least civilised member of that family (Douglas, 2002). Perennial political violence in Ireland across the centuries and the sporadic outbursts of resistance to the idea of accepting British rule merely served to underpin the constructed perceptions of Irishness as irrational, violent and erratic. However, the CRE argued that, notwithstanding the odd isolated case, there was no evidence of systemic discrimination against Irish people similar to that experienced by non-white Britons.

Over the course of nearly eight years, from 1984 to the end of 1992, the CRE and the network of Irish social welfare activists and their academic allies had seemingly talked themselves into a conceptual and methodological dead end. However, a radical restructuring of the CRE in late 1993 provided an opportunity for those within the commission who were open to integrating an Irish dimension into the CRE's framework of analysis and concern. In particular the roles of Chief Executive and Chairman, a division of labour that had caused some tension in relation to the Irish, were combined. The newly appointed occupant of this position met with representatives of 17 Irish community groups in September 1993. In January 1994 the CRE decided that an Irish category be included in its system of ethnic monitoring, recommended for use by public and private institutions, including the national census administrators. It was 18 months before the CRE actually published this revised recommended list but by August 1995 the Irish were officially "non-white". The CRE's officially recommended ethnic origin categories as of August 1995 were "White, Indian, Irish, Pakistani, Black-African, Bangladeshi, Black-Caribbean, Chinese, Black-Other (please specify), Other".

In addition to this breakthrough, from the activists' perspective, a research project into the Irish community in Great Britain that did not require a discrimination testing element was sanctioned. The project was completed in 1996 but it proved impossible to find a publisher, with the result that the CRE itself published the project's report in 1997, entitled *Discrimination and the Irish Community in Britain* (Hickman and Walters, 1997). Although it is not at all clear that the project proved its claim that anti-Irish discrimination is widespread in British society the delay in publication was politically fortuitous. A new Labour government, with a wider

political agenda of ethnic management, was receptive to Irish concerns and had received the CRE's report favourably by June 1997.<sup>3</sup>

It was in this context that in December 1997 the CRE presented its case to the Office for National Statistics (the successor of the Office of Population and Census Statistics) on the need for an ethnic group question to be included on the 2001 census with the addition of an Irish option. The CRE argued that in order to clearly identify the Irish, the most expedient course would be to break down the white category into "English", "Scottish", "Irish", and "Welsh", with a residual "Any other white group" write-in option. The Office of National Statistics was very resistant to including any intra-white differentiation and it was not until the Labour government's white paper on the 2001 census of population appeared in March 1999 that it was clear that an Irish ethnic option was actually going to be included in the ethnic group question. In the event, the Office of National Statistics rejected the CRE's arguments on the need to disaggregate the white category in the way it had recommended. The consequence of this was that although an Irish option was included the alternative white option was "British" or the residual "Any other white group" (see appendix 2). When responding to the census ethnic group question, only one option is allowable; in this case therefore the census of England and Wales presented respondents with the option of being either British or Irish. The value of this question was thus undermined, given that the object of the exercise was to identify the British-born descendants of Irish immigrants, people who are British citizens but of Irish parentage, and plausibly of a British and Irish cultural background. Nonetheless, it represented a starting point for the project to have the Irish of Britain institutionalised as a recognised ethnic minority group. However, this recognition only extended to the census of England and Wales, not to Great Britain and not to the whole of the UK.

## **POLITICS AND ETHNIC DIFFERENTIATION**

In addition to the redrawn ethnic group question, for 2001 the Office of National Statistics and its political masters in London had agreed to the inclusion of a religious question on the census. The rationale was to render statistically visible the significant and growing Muslim population in Great Britain that hitherto had been measured wholly unsatisfactorily by proxy, through inference from responses to the Pakistani and Bangladeshi options included since 1991. Ironically, the Sikh minority group was also included in the religious question, not the ethnic group question. As we recall, it was the House of Lords' recognition of the Sikhs that had engendered the famous definitional criteria as to what constitutes an ethnic group for the purposes of British law. In 1983 Sikhs struggled to have themselves defined as an ethnic group for the purposes of gaining protection under the race relations legislation; by 2001 the Sikhs (in common with the Jews) were recognised as an

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<sup>3</sup>This was not the reaction in the British media. Indeed, the reaction to the very idea that the Irish could be discriminated against was in some quarters so hostile that it merely served to highlight precisely the attitudes the report identified as the problem to be tackled.

ethnic group and also as a religious group. The decision to include the religious question generated intense debate particularly in the House of Lords (Aspinall, 2000b); it was after all the first time since 1851 that a question on religion was to be included on a census schedule in Great Britain. Indeed, the 1920 Census Act had no provision for the inclusion of such a question. In the event, the question was included on the census though, unlike any other question, responses were voluntary; the form it took reflected the fact that intra-Christian differences were not considered salient. The question asked "What is your religion?" and the categories used were "None, Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations), Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim Sikh, Any Other Religion" (*Census News* No. 44: 27).

The most important feature of new Labour's constitutional restructuring was the devolving of varying degrees of autonomy to the peripheries. This had unforeseen consequences for the campaign to secure Irish inclusion. Under the terms of the Scotland Act 1998, the legal authority for the census in Scotland had been devolved to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. The symbolic significance of the census being laid before the Scottish Parliament on the 10 January 2000 was widely noted. The context was a new millennium with a new parliament holding new powers to define Scottish public identities. The census format presented to the Scottish Parliament by the deputy first minister Jim Wallace was the same as that published in the UK government's white paper 10 months before. Despite the lobbying efforts of southern-based Irish activist groups, the CRE and a network of local academics centred around the medical sociology department of Glasgow University (Williams, 1996; Walls, 2001), the white category remained undifferentiated. The only difference from the 1991 question (see table 1) was the addition of a residual "Mixed" category, ostensibly to capture people of white and non-white background. Moreover, in a further departure from the census in England and Wales, the Scottish census framers decided that a religious question was not needed in Scotland, the reason put forward being that the populations the England and Wales religious question was designed to capture were minimal in Scotland.

However, in those intervening 10 months the issue of religious and specifically anti-Catholic sectarianism had dramatically re-emerged into Scotland's public debate. In August 1999 the Scottish Catholic composer James MacMillan delivered the opening address at the Edinburgh Festival in which he described Scotland as a land of sleepwalking bigotry in which anti-Catholic sectarianism remained endemic (*Times*, 8 August 1999; Devine et al, 2000). The acrimonious debate this engendered focussed the spotlight on the census, and in particular on the omission of a religious question. Initially the Scottish Executive stood over the census format recommended by the GROS, presenting it as a product of five years of consultation and research and eminently suited to Scottish circumstances. Despite this, a significant degree of opposition had emerged amongst parliamentarians, particularly from MSPs on the Equal Opportunities Committee, who persuaded the Executive that it faced possible defeat when parliament voted on whether to accept the Executive's recommended census format. This focussed the collective political mind and brought about a rapid reversal of policy. A new consultation exercise was

undertaken to ascertain what form both the religious question and an expanded ethnic group question should take, a consultation exercise to be completed by 17 March 2000 (GROS, 2000).

The expanded ethnic group question and new religious question included in the Scottish census of 2001 (see appendix 3) were the result of an ad hoc decision in February 2000 to head off parliamentary opposition. There is little suggestion that the politicians who made this decision or the census administrators who were overruled accepted that the question was required on sound social welfare grounds. The religious question followed the form used in Northern Ireland in that it had two parts. The first (question 13 on the census) asked "What religion, religious denomination or body do you belong to?" The categories used were "None, Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic, Other Christian (please write in), Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Another religion (please write in)." The second (question 14 on the census) used the same categories but the lead-in was "What religion, religious denomination or body were you brought up in?" (*Census News*, No, 44: 27) On the ethnic issue, even more arbitrarily, given the territorial context, in addition to an Irish option, the GROS decided to include a Scottish ethnic option as well, even though there had been no previous demand for it.

The Scottish Parliament's exercising of its legislative autonomy in ordering the reconfiguring of the census for Scotland resulted in a radically different census format from that recommended by the census administrators of the GROS. This in turn had other unforeseen consequences in that it stimulated a reaction amongst Welsh nationalists, who now started to demand the inclusion of a Welsh category in the census of England and Wales. As with the Scottish ethnic option, there had been no previous demand for this, but Welsh nationalists used the census issue as a means of mobilising against what they saw as the relative impotence of the Welsh Assembly vis-à-vis the Scottish Parliament. The census was due to be taken at around the same time as the 2001 general election, and the lack of a Welsh category on the census was presented for political reasons as an insult to Welsh identity by an Anglocentric Labour Party. To placate Welsh sensitivities the Office of National Statistics added a question on national identity to the 2001 general household survey. In addition, it undertook that if anyone used the "write-in" option to self-identify as Welsh, they would be counted as such rather than being collapsed into the white meta-category.

The Scottish political decision to reconfigure the ethnic question also stimulated English demands for census inclusion. These demands were more muted than in Wales; English criticism could be seen as a veiled attack on the whole notion of multiculturalism. It is clear that in these reactions the primary rationale of the census question, to aid the orientation of policies towards tackling ethnic disadvantage, was forgotten. Non-inclusion was reinterpreted as an insult to Welsh and English identities. In the event, the controversy over the census has resulted in a fundamental redrawing of the official map of salient ethnic contours in Great Britain, a redrawing that has come about as a consequence of the Irish challenge to being homogenised as white (see appendices 4 and 5).

## THE SELF-DESIGNATION OF THE “HIDDEN” IRISH OF BRITAIN

Once the Irish option had been included, the vindication of the activist case required a significant number of people to identify as Irish. The general academic consensus regarding the history of the Irish experience in Great Britain is one of rapid assimilation (Hornsby-Smith, 1978; Ryan, 1990; Akenson, 1993; Hutchinson and O'Day, 1999). This consensus was regarded, particularly by key academics involved in the census campaign, as a fundamentally flawed misreading of the Irish experience (see for instance Hickman, 1995; 1998; 1999; 2000). Implicit in the Irish activist claims was how the census would render this hitherto hidden community visible. It was hoped, if not indeed actually assumed, that once an Irish category had been included on the census schedules the numbers generated would substantiate this “revisionist” interpretation of the nature and size of the Irish ethnic minority in Great Britain. However, the privileging of self-ascription as the only legitimate system of categorising people is a double-edged sword. The community of which ethnic activists assert their representation may not in fact identify itself in the way that the activists claimed it would, if given the opportunity. In other words, it may be that this ethnic minority may be more accurately characterised as an “imaginary community” rather than an “imagined community”, existing more in the mind of the activist than as sociological reality. Opinion within the CRE in the run-up to the census indicated that if the Irish activists’ claims as to the nature and scale of Irish ethnicity in Great Britain were to be credible then the census results should identify at the very least a million British-born ethnic Irish.

The slogan of the campaign mounted in the Irish ethnic media and through the mechanism of a large-scale leaflet distribution around localities of Irish migrant settlement was “Be Irish Be Counted!”. As would be expected, the most comprehensive coverage in the Irish ethnic press was in the week before the census was taken. The front page of the *Irish Post*, 28 April 2001, carried a banner headline “Proud to be Irish, Sunday’s census gives British-born the chance to declare their Irish identity”. Ten photographs of visibly white people of both British and Irish birth appeared together with comments from them. Amongst the ten was the Irish soccer team manager Mick McCarthy, described by the *Irish Post* as a second-generation Irishman and quoted as saying:

I believe that I am Irish, that’s why I will tick the box...I played for Ireland, I’m manager of Ireland and I’m an Irish citizen. I would encourage anyone to register as Irish if that’s what they believe they are (*Irish Post*, 28 April 2001).

In this extract the emphasis is clearly on self-designation: if people regard themselves as Irish they should identify as such. Interestingly, of the ten people featured only one alluded to the social welfare rationale of the census ethnic group question. Liam Purcell, described as a Dublin-born voluntary worker suggested, “a lot of people have not declared that they are Irish, so a lot of funding is not being distributed to the correct sources”. In other words, the reason the Irish ethnic community is not a major concern for social welfare initiatives is because of the hidden nature of this community. The implication is that the Irish should “come out”. The other nine of the ten people featured were all presented as interpreting the

census as an identity issue. Liverpool-born Stella Hooligan, a manager at the Hammersmith Irish Centre was quoted thus: "Identity is what your culture is—and culturally I regard myself as Irish". The Irish government gave its endorsement through its ambassador, Ted Barrington: "We hope that the vast majority of the millions of Irish people who live in Britain will tick the [Irish ethnic] box [on the census form]". The *Irish Posts's* editorial of the same edition captures graphically, though perhaps unwittingly, how the institutionalisation of "Irish" as an ethnic category in the multicultural framework was essential to validating the Irish as a multigenerational ethnic minority. The editorial was couched in a curious idiom that mixed post-modernist notions of the fluidity and ultimately self-ascriptive character of ethnicity with primordialist notions of ethnicity passed down through the blood. What is most interesting is the reworking of the notion of the people's right to self-determination:

No one has the right to set a boundary to the march of a nation, declared Charles Steward Parnell in...pursuit of independence and self-determination. On the eve of Census Day 2001, we can for the first time say that the Irish in Britain have the opportunity to establish the true dimensions of our community through an act of self-determination...The intention...is not to seek out an ethnic ghetto and cut us off from the mainstream of British society, of which we are very much a part. It is rather an assertion of our distinctiveness...disadvantage does not die out with the Irish-born but is somehow passed on to their children and even grand-children, the second and third generation Irish...The census question is not perfect and will lead to undercounting. If a person has one British and one Irish parent and considers himself or herself to be "half-Irish", they can write that in but there is no guarantee that this will show up in the statistics. But there is a much more positive reason to welcome the inclusion of an Irish category in the census, which looks beyond birthplace to cultural background and allows people to choose what to call themselves (*Irish Post*, 28 April 2001).

The original rationale for the census question, that is, to gain benchmark information on Irish relative socio-economic disadvantage seems to be secondary in this perspective. The census is seen as a countrywide, legally required identity survey that is vital to vindicating the claim of the activists, the *Irish Post* and the Irish government that "the Irish" constitute the largest ethnic minority in Great Britain.

In 1988 Richard Kearney offered a breakdown of the composite dimensions of the so-called Irish diaspora:

The following is an approximate breakdown of the 70 million plus people outside of Ireland claiming Irish descent: US 42 million; UK 13 million; Canada, 5 million (including some 50% of the Newfoundland population); Australia almost 5 million (one-third of the total population); New Zealand 700,000; Argentina 300,000 (Kearney, 1988: 7).

The 70 million Irish diaspora has become a myth of modern Ireland, recited uncritically by politicians, social commentators, journalists and even academics. At the very least, the assertion that 13 million people in the UK claim Irish descent is problematic, especially in light of the UK census results. This of course is the ethnic

activist's dilemma: people may not see themselves in terms of their ethnic identity in the way that is ascribed to them by ethnic entrepreneurs. The census showed that just over 750, 000 people in Great Britain on census night were born on the island of Ireland (see table 3).

Across the whole of Great Britain fewer than 700,000 identified as being of an Irish ethnic background, fewer than the total recorded as born on the island of Ireland. In this context it is useful to recall Floya Anthias's observation that, "the fact that a population category is identifiable by an attributed origin (other or self) does not provide sufficient grounds for treating it as a valid sociological category" (Anthias, 2000: 565). But the future is open and the embedding of an Irish option on systems of ethnic monitoring can be seen as a first step in a consciousness raising exercise targeted at whites with the option to choose, as the *Irish Post* puts it, their own identity.

**Table 3. Irish born and Irish identifiers relative to recorded population totals: 2001 census**

Country	Irish-born population				Identifying as "Irish"		
	<i>Republic of Ireland</i>	<i>Northern Ireland</i>	<i>All Ireland</i>	<i>% of total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>% of Irish born</i>	<i>% of total</i>
England	459,662	215,124	674,786	1.4	624,115	92.5	1.3
Scotland	21,767	33,409	55,176	1.1	49,608	89.9	1.0
Wales	12,718	7,851	20,569	0.7	17,689	86.0	0.6
Great Britain	494,147	256,384	750,531	1.3	691,412	92.1	1.2

Source: Office of National Statistics/General Registrars Office (Scotland).

## CONCLUSION

The Labour party leader Tony Blair in his historic address to both houses of the Irish Parliament in 1999 spoke about how Ireland was in his blood, and how many of his constituents in the mining town of Sedgefield traced their ancestry back to Ireland. In Sedgefield, one quarter of one percent of people recorded their ethnicity as Irish. The format of the response options was known in April 2001 when the *Irish Post's* editorial stated: "ultimately you choose your own identity". When given the chance to exercise their ethnic options, it seems the British-born descendants of Irish immigrants did not choose, as the slogan put it, to "be Irish and be counted"; they chose "British" or "Scottish". What are we to make of these results (see table 4 for overall results)?

The census results lend themselves to at least three rather different interpretations:

1. The assimilationist interpretation: that the Irish experience in Great Britain is characterised by rapid assimilation. If at all, Irish ethnicity is only weakly evident beyond the migrant generation

2. The inadequacy of the question interpretation: that the British-born descendants of Irish migrants misrecognized the question in the census and interpreted it as pertaining to citizenship and not ethnic background

**Table 4. "Ethnic" composition of Great Britain, 2001**

"Ethnic" category	Number	% of total GB population
White British	45,533,741	79.7
White Scottish	4,459,125	7.9
Other White	1,796,452	3.1
Irish	691,412	1.2
Mixed	673,689	1.2
Indian	1,051,993	1.8
Pakistani	746,716	1.3
Bangladeshi	282,855	0.5
Other South Asian	247,348	0.4
Black Caribbean	565,868	1.0
Black African	484,727	0.8
Other Black	97,081	0.2
Chinese	243,146	0.4
Other	229,372	0.4
Total	57,103,525	100.0

Note: In England 87% identified as White British; In Scotland 88.1% identified as White Scottish; The category "Other White" includes "Other White British".

Source: Office of National Statistics/General Registrars Office (Scotland).

3. The hidden community interpretation: that the multi-generational Irish ethnic community is continuing to maintain its historical low-social profile, due perhaps to the persistence of anti-Irish racism in British society.

The first of these interpretations is precisely what the wider campaign to secure the institutionalisation of the Irish as an ethnic minority was aimed at refuting, and it is of course the overwhelming academic consensus regarding the Irish experience. The second interpretation was flagged pre-emptively in the run-up to the census in the *Irish Post*; the academics centrally involved in the campaign claimed that their focus group research amongst second-generation Irish showed that these people were unclear about what the question was asking and were tending to opt for "British", but when the nature of the question was explained to them they were more likely to choose "Irish". While this may indeed be the case, 88% of Scotland's population without any ethnic media publicity do not seem to have had difficulty in determining the nature of the question. Indeed, 20% of the population of Wales identified as Welsh even in the absence of a Welsh ethnic option. The third and final interpretation is difficult to reconcile with the high-profile of "Irishness" in Great Britain across the 1990s. It could be argued that the atmosphere in multicultural Great Britain, particularly in London, has never been so "hiberno-centric". How

changes in the wider society's pattern of consumption of Irish orientated cultural products (the *Riverdance* phenomenon, U2 and Ballkissangel are usually cited) affects, if at all, the self-definition of the British-born descendants of Irish migrants requires the type of research and is likely to produce an understanding of the Irish far more nuanced than the crude representation offered by the census figures. What can be asserted as a fact rather than a myth is that in the census 1.2% of the respondents ticked the Irish box. This tells us little about sociological reality.

Nonetheless, the future is open and the census campaign may in fact be the first stage in bringing about that which Irish ethnic activists claimed already existed. In this sense Irish ethnicity in Great Britain could be more usefully understood in Herbert Gans phrase as an optional ethnicity (Gans, 1979). Religion, accent, naming conventions, territorial concentrations, cultural practices and so on at differing degrees of intensity across both time and space have identified the Irish as a distinct minority group. The Irish were historically regarded as occupying the lowest rung of the intra-British ethnic hierarchy; this is deeply embedded in British culture. On the other hand, no somatic difference, or the more common intra-white marker of linguistic difference, identifies the British born descendants of Irish immigrants as alien and "Other". The historical and widespread disparagement of Irishness in the absence of any significant markers of difference meant that there were good reasons for the descendants of Irish migrants to assimilate rapidly. That they felt compelled to do so is of course precisely the type of coercion that multiculturalism and its rhetoric of celebrating diversity is formally at least aimed at reducing. Only in the wake of the establishment by the British state of a formal commitment to multiculturalism has the space been created within which elites linked to formerly denigrated but assimilable groups can lobby for state support for their group's culturally specific needs and for state validation of the group's identity.

The list of ethnic designations used on the census acts as the template for derivative mechanisms of ethnic monitoring. An either/or British or Irish choice precludes identifying as Irish-British. The either/or option reflects on the one hand the historic antagonism of Irish and British and on the other the strongly assimilationist orientation of British culture vis-à-vis immigrants—until the arrival of non-whites. The presence of British born non-white groups has forced the issue of hyphenated British identities. By so doing has created a conceptual space in which an Irish-British form of official categorisation could emerge. Whether this official identitive option would in fact be in tune with a hitherto hidden sociological reality or act as a stimulus for a new pattern of self-definition remains an open question.

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**Appendix 1: Ethnic group question, England and Wales,  
and Scotland, 1991 census**

<b>Ethnic Group: Please Tick the appropriate box.</b>	<b>White</b>	
	<b>Black–Caribbean</b>	
	<b>Black–African</b>	
	<b>Black-Other</b> <i>Please describe</i>	
	<b>Indian</b>	
	<b>Pakistani</b>	
	<b>Bangladeshi</b>	
	<b>Chinese</b>	
	<b>Any other ethnic group?</b> <i>Please describe</i>	
<p><b>If the person is descended from one or more ethnic or racial group, please tick the group to which the person considers he/she belongs, or tick the “Any other ethnic group” box and describe the person’s ancestry in the space given.</b></p>		

Source: Bulmer, 2000.

**Appendix 2: Ethnic group question, England and Wales, census of 2001**

What is your ethnic group? Choose one section from (a) to (e) then tick the appropriate box to indicate Your cultural background

**(a) White**

- British
- Irish
- Any other white background

***Please write in below***

.....

**(b) Mixed**

- white and black Caribbean
- white and black African
- white and Asian
- Any other Mixed background

***Please write in below***

.....

**(c) Asian or Asian British**

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Any other Asian background

***Please write in below***

.....

**(d) black or black British**

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other black background

***Please write in below***

.....

**(e) Chinese or Other ethnic group**

- Chinese
- Any Other

***Please write in below***

.....

Source: Office of National Statistics, 2001.

**Appendix 3: Ethnic group question, Scotland, census of 2001**

What is your ethnic group? Choose one section from (a) to (e) then tick the appropriate box to indicate Your cultural background

**(a) White**

- Scottish
- Other British
- Irish
- Any other white background

**Please write in below**

.....

**(b) Mixed**

- Any mixed background

**Please write in below**

.....

**(c) Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British**

- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

**Please write in below**

.....

**(d) Black, Black Scottish or black British**

- Caribbean
- African
- Any other black background

**Please write in below**

.....

**(e) Other ethnic background**

**Please write in below**

.....

Source: Census News, No. 44: 28.

**Appendix 4: The CRE's recommended pattern of ethnic monitoring,  
England and Wales, 2003**

Choose ONE section from A to E, then tick the appropriate box to indicate your background.

**A White**

British  
English  
Scottish  
Welsh

Other, please write in

Irish

Any other white background, please write in

**B Mixed**

white and black Caribbean  
white and black African  
white and Asian

Any other Mixed background, please write in

**C Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh**

Indian  
Pakistani  
Bangladeshi

Any other Asian background, please write in

**D Black, black British, black English, black Scottish, or black Welsh**

Caribbean  
African

Any other black background, please write in

**E Chinese, Chinese British, Chinese English, Chinese Scottish, Chinese Welsh, or Other ethnic group**

Chinese

Any other background, please write in

Source: Commission for Racial Equality, 2003.

**Appendix 5: The CRE's recommended pattern of ethnic monitoring,  
Scotland, 2003**

**Choose ONE section from A to E, then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background.**

**A White**

Scottish

Other British:

English

Welsh

Other, please write in

Irish

Any other white background, please write in

**B Mixed**

Any Mixed background, please write in

**C Asian, Asian Scottish, Asian English, Asian Welsh, or other Asian British**

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Any other Asian background, please write in

**D Black, black Scottish, black English, black Welsh, or other black British**

Caribbean

African

Any other black background, please write in

**E Other ethnic background**

Any other background, please write in.

Source: Commission for Racial Equality, 2003.