

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-12435-5 - Ethnicity and Nationalism in Post-Imperial Britain
Harry Goulbourne
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Harry Goulbourne's theme is how post-imperial Britain has come to define the national community in terms of ethnic affinity, instead of a traditional multi-ethnic/multi-racial understanding of the nation. He argues that the continuing 'reception-experience' of non-white groups in post-war Britain not only arose out of an ethnic perception of the British nation by the indigenous population, as expressed through state action, but has also, in turn, encouraged an equally ethnic awakening or mobilization among non-white minorities. The result is a failure to construct a common national ground or sense of community by all those claiming a formal British identity.

Goulbourne draws upon a diverse literature, including race relations, politics, and history. His two case studies of the Khalistan question in the Punjab and democracy in Guyana are examples of how exilic politics may affect Britain's ethnic minorities, partly or as a result of the experience of exclusion from British society.

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Comparative ethnic and race relations series

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Comparative ethnic and race relations

Published for the Centre of Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick

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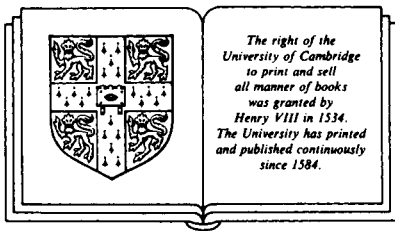
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HARRY GOULBOURNE



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For Hugh and Neil in hope

The Earthians

I had a dream last night
it was a beautiful dream
unlike the American dream
mine was a simple earthian one.

I travelled from land to land
without a passport,
I worked in fields and factories
without a work-permit
I was never called a nigger
a wop, wog, spick or a greasy Greek
I was never put in jail
kicked out or deported
for being an African or an Asian
an Arab or Jew
a Greek or a Turk
a Chinese or Vietnamese
Russian or American.

There were no frontiers in my dream
no barriers or nationalism.

Instead only one land
one country, one nation
one continent, one planet,
the planet earth,
no chosen race,
the Earthians instead.

I woke up and heard the sad news
about Ireland and Vietnam
Cyprus and Ethiopia
Africa and the Middle East
Brixton and Tottenham . . .

Alas, my dream seemed impossible
so naive and childish.

Childish?

George Eugeniou

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