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## THE ETHNIC AND SOCIAL DIVISION OF A WORLD CITY: THE CASE OF LONDON

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The aim of this paper is the analysis of distribution of ethnic and social groups in Greater London in the end of the XX century.

In order to analyse the social and ethnic structuration of a metropolitan space as complex as that of London, five questions have been asked:

- i) How are the different social and ethnic groups distributed in Greater London (GL)?
- ii) Does the decline of population of GL concern the whole population or only particular social groups?
- iii) Is the diminution of population density of GL accompanied by a diminution in residential segregation or, in the contrary, by an increase of social division?
- iv) Is ethnic membership or individuals' social status the more important factor for the division of intra-urban space?
- v) How do social and ethnic variables interact?

**Key Words:** Greater London, Residential Segregation, Ethnic Group, Social Group, Social Polarisation.

### 1. Introduction

For the first time, the questionnaire used in the 1991 Census of Population of Great Britain included a specific question on ethnicity. This required respondents to indicate which ethnic group individual members of their household belonging to. Despite the advancement of numerous critiques, this type of question is very important for understanding demographic structure - and particularly the degree of socio-ethnic division at national, regional and local levels - and for the formulation of planning policies which are sensitive to socio-ethnic differentiation.

The data so obtained is used here to describe the socio-ethnic structuring of Greater London (Figure 1). By virtue of the wealth of information available, London offers a rare opportunity for this analysis.

In later years, important research has been undertaken on urban depopulation and deconcentration of activities in large urban regions (HALL and HAY 1973; BERRY 1976; DREWETT et al. 1976; VINING and KONTULY 1978; CHESHIRE and HAY 1986; HAMNETT and RANDOLPH 1982; and HALL 1989). Nevertheless, the new social structuralization of the metropolitan space of London does not in itself constitute a substantive field of research.

The majority of specialists agree that suburbanisation processes have affected Greater London and the principal metropolitan areas of Great Britain (GLASS 1963;

DICKINSON 1964; DONNISON 1967; MOINDROT 1968; CHALINE 1971; DENNIS 1986; FAINSTEIN et al 1992).

A strong trend in population deconcentration in the London area is also evident. From Figure 2 we can see that the population of Greater London has decreased since 1941. The "Inner City" started its decline in 1921, and after a decade of stability and another of weak revival, since 1951 it started a period of continuous decline. The outer metropolitan area recorded strong growth from 1891 to 1941. Since 1951, the population of both inner and outer London have decreased, although the decrease in the outer metropolitan area has been less pronounced.

One can postulate that there is a connection between the qualitative and the quantitative transformations of the population of Greater London and their spatial distribution in intra-metropolitan space. The intra-metropolitan distribution of the population is of more significance for urban geography than the simple study of deconcentration. From this point of view, in order to understand the social structuration of a metropolitan area as complex as that of London, it is necessary to try to answer at least 5 important questions:

- i) Does the decline of the population of Greater London concern the whole population or only any particular social groups ?
- ii) How are the different social and ethnic groups distributed in intra-metropolitan space ?
- iii) Is the diminution of the population and density of Greater London accompanied by a diminution in residential segregation or, on the contrary, by an increase of social division ?
- iv) Is the ethnic membership or individuals' social status the most important factor for the division of intra-urban space ?
- v) How do social and ethnic variables interact ?

In order to answer these questions, one has to undertake an analytic and synthetic study of the location patterns of ethnic and social groups in Greater London.

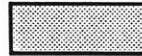
## **2. Problematic and Hypothesis**

Segregation is a relevant category of the social sciences and notably of urban geography. This is because is linked to a multiplicity of other complex questions concerning the structuration of space. A particular concern is the relationship between social classes and social space, i.e. the space/society dialectic. Indeed, from the end of the 19th century the social sciences have manifested a strong interest - explicit or implicit - in the spatial configuration of social phenomena. Such a concern has produced means by which to comprehend the complex relationship between the spatial distribution of social groups and the phenomena which determine their social morphology. But the social sciences' interest in the topic of

Figure 1 The Boroughs of Inner and Outer London

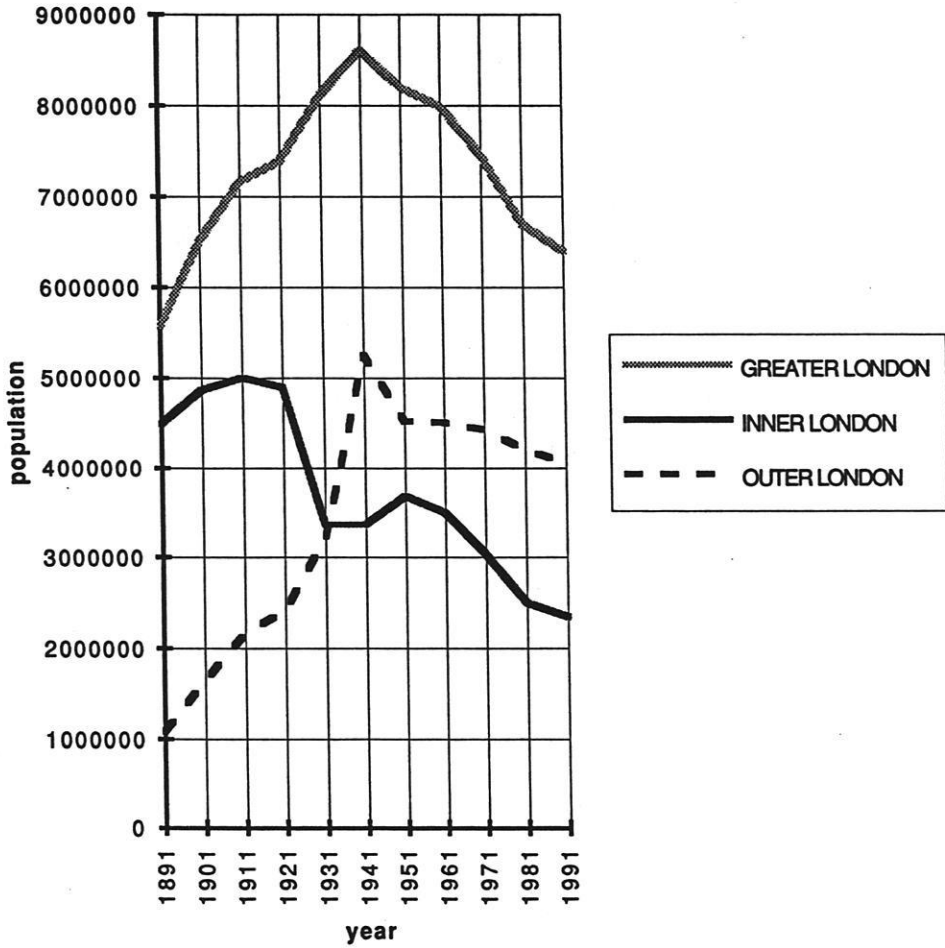


**Inner London**



- |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>CL</b> City of London      | <b>KC</b> Kensington & Chelsea |
| <b>CW</b> City of Westminster | <b>La</b> Lambeth              |
| <b>Ca</b> Camden              | <b>Lh</b> Lewisham             |
| <b>GW</b> Greenwich           | <b>Nh</b> Newham               |
| <b>Ha</b> Hammersmith         | <b>Sw</b> Southwark            |
| <b>Hc</b> Hackney             | <b>TH</b> Tower Hamlets        |
| <b>Hg</b> Haringey            | <b>Ww</b> Wandsworth           |
| <b>Is</b> Islington           |                                |

Figure 2 Greater London 1891 - 1991: Evolution of the Population



segregation has not been continuous. Indeed a literature review on the subject shows that while segregation constituted an important field of theoretical and empirical research during the 1920s, 1950s and 1960s; it was seldom commented upon in the 1970s and 1980s (PARK et al 1925; DUNCAN and DUNCAN 1955; and CHOMBART DE LAWE 1964).

Yet, during these later years, evidence of mounting tension and riots in the Inner City indicated that the problems associated with segregation were far from being resolved.

According to post-modern theories, strong social divisions do not exist in the post-industrial societies. But in the present phase of urbanisation, even if the spatial forms of segregation are not always the same as in the past, a social discrimination of lower income groups persists. This hypothesis is not only verified by personal direct observations of metropolitan space in Turin, Milan, Glasgow, Barcelona and London; it is also confirmed by such others as KANTROWITZ (1973) with reference to New York.

In order to judge, one must give a definition of the term 'segregation'. The specialist literature points to a minimal definition, however, this is neither definitive nor universally accepted.

A social group is segregated when it is not in position to benefit from the range of conditions which constitute the social system to which it belongs. Among those conditions, two have incontestable socio-geographic importance:

- a) the position of individuals in the process of production; and
- b) their residential location.

### 3. The Measurement of Segregation

The synthetic indices that we have chosen are the index of segregation and the index of dissimilarity.

The index of segregation (IS) gives a measure of the differentiation of one social group in relation to the total of other social groups:

$$IS = 1/2 \sum_{i=1}^n |x_i - y_i| \cdot 100 \quad (1)$$

where:

- $x_i$  represents the percentage of the x social group in the i-th area,
- $y_i$  the percentage of all the other social groups in the i-th area, and
- n is the number of areas considered.

The values of the index of segregation ranges from 0 to 100, which respectively represent perfect distribution (social-mix) and maximum segregation of the social groups analysed.

The index of dissimilarity (ID) gives a measure of the compatibility or incompatibility of two social groups' residential location. The values of the index range from 0 to 100, which respectively represent perfect similarity and extreme dissimilarity.

$$ID = 1/2 \sum_{i=1}^n |x_i - z_i| \cdot 100 \quad (2)$$

where:

- $x_i$  represents the percentage of the x social group in the i-th area,
- $z_i$  the percentage of the z social groups in the i-th area, and
- $n$  is the number of areas considered.

The analytic indices are the ones which measure the relative concentration of a social or ethnic group in metropolitan subunits (in this case boroughs). In the following analysis Location Quotients (LQ) have been used:

$$LQ = x_i / X_j \quad (3)$$

where:

- LQ** represents the relative concentration of a social group x in an area
- $x_i$  is the percentage of a social group within the i-th area, and
- $X_j$  is the percentage of the same group within the wider metropolitan area (Greater London).

The values of LQs are all positive:

- $LQ < 1$  relative underrepresentation of the social group in a zone,
- $LQ = 1$  the representation of a social group in an area is equal to the metropolitan average, and
- $LQ > 1$  relative over-representation of a social group in a zone.

#### 4. The Types of Data

The data taken from the Census of Population for England, as published by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys. The areal subunits are the boroughs of London. The total area analysed is that of Greater London, which is comprised of 33 boroughs. Greater London is divided between 12 Inner London boroughs and 20 Outer London boroughs. The population of the individual boroughs varies between 132,996 residents (in Kingston-upon-Thames) and 313,510 residents (in Croydon). At the time of the 1991 Population Census, the City had a total population of 4,142 residents. The boroughs are sub-divided into wards, which are themselves subdivided into Enumeration Districts (ED). The data on the ethnic and social composition of Greater London is available at borough (data on those variables at ward and ED-level has subsequently been made available. Comparable data on social groups of the population is available for 1981 and 1991, while data on ethnic groups is only available for 1991.



The data are published after a survey conducted every ten years in 1981 and 1991. The population of London is subdivided into 11 different ethnic groups: Whites, Black Africans, Black Caribbeans, Other Blacks, Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Chinese, Other Asians, Others, Irish (born in Ireland). However in order to facilitate the reading of tables, the results of the analysis of a number of ethnic groups have been excluded, namely: Other Asians, Other Blacks, and Others. These groups have also been excluded by virtue of their representing strong heterogeneous associations. For the analysis of the division of different social classes in space one has to consider six social groups according to their position in the social hierarchy: Professional, Managerial, Skilled Non-Manual, Skilled Manual, Partly Skilled and Unskilled.

### 5. The Ethnic Division of Greater London

On observing Table 1 -which summarises the indices of segregation for ethnic groups according to their location in Greater London- one can see that the Asians exhibit the highest degree of segregation. The Bangladeshis constitute the ethnic group with the highest value on the segregation index (56.47), although proportionally they constitute the smallest ethnic group in the study area (1.23%, 85,738 residents). The Pakistanis and Indians recorded segregation indices of over 40. The Blacks have a segregation index between 32 and 35. While the least segregated groups are the Chinese, Irish and Whites (16.34, 16.95 and 24.52 respectively).

This demonstrates that in Greater London, ethnic segregation at borough-level is independent of the quantity of the population groups analysed, Whites exceed 5 million, the Chinese are 94 times less numerous than the Whites and the Irish 4.5 times more numerous than the Chinese.

Table 1 The Concentration of Ethnic Groups in Greater London, 1991

ETHNIC GROUP	SEGREGATION INDEX	POPULATION	POP. G.L. (%)
White	24.52	5,333,580	76.80
Irish	17.64	256,470	3.69
Black Caribbean	36.18	299,968	4.32
Black African	32.14	163,635	2.36
Indian	41.40	347,120	5.00
Pakistani	40.23	87,816	1.26
Bangladeshi	56.47	85,738	1.23
Chinese	16.48	56,579	0.81



## 6. The Social Division of Greater London

One notes therefore a strong ethnic division of the metropolitan space of London. But it is wrong to think that ethnic division is the most important phenomenon, and that the individual ethnic groups analysed are homogeneous. Neither the 5.5 million Whites nor the 50,000 Chinese belong to the same social class, nor do they compete with the same resources in the employment or housing markets of the capital of Great Britain. The weak values of the index of segregation for Whites, Chinese and Irish suggests that there are other types of division of these groups, for example social class division.

In analysing the social division of Greater London, one considers 6 social groups: Professionals, Managers, Skilled Non Manual, Skilled Manual, Partly Skilled and Unskilled. These groups are comparable between the 1981 and 1991 population censuses.

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Table 2 Segregation Indices of Social Groups in Greater London, 1981 and 1991

<b>Social Groups</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>
Professional	34.71	44.76
Managerial	22.65	26.14
Skilled Non Manual	10.51	15.61
Skilled Manual	14.47	30.48
Partly Skilled	22.43	33.80
Unskilled	36.30	47.72

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In 1991, the most segregated social groups were situated at either end of the social hierarchy, namely Unskilled workers and Professionals. The most weakly segregated group comprised Skilled Non Manual workers.

From Table 2 and Figure 3, one can see the evolution of the indices of segregation of social groups in Greater London between 1981 and 1991. One notes a general increase in segregation across all social groups. The 1991 index for Skilled workers has more than doubled since 1981, and that for Professionals and Unskilled workers has increased by more than 10 points in a single decade. And this has occurred in a decade where the supporters of the 'weak thought' and post-modern sociology, are convinced that the ethnic and social class division of metropolitan space has finished (BERRY 1976, SAUNDERS 1980, BAGNASCO 1986). The increase in segregation is very easily visible from Figure 2. If one takes account of the processes of invasion, succession and gentrification which affect the populations of large metropolitan areas, the increase in segregation is greater than that represented by the results of the foregoing analysis. In addition, one has to consider

Figure 3 Greater London 1981 - 1991: Segregation Indices by Social Group

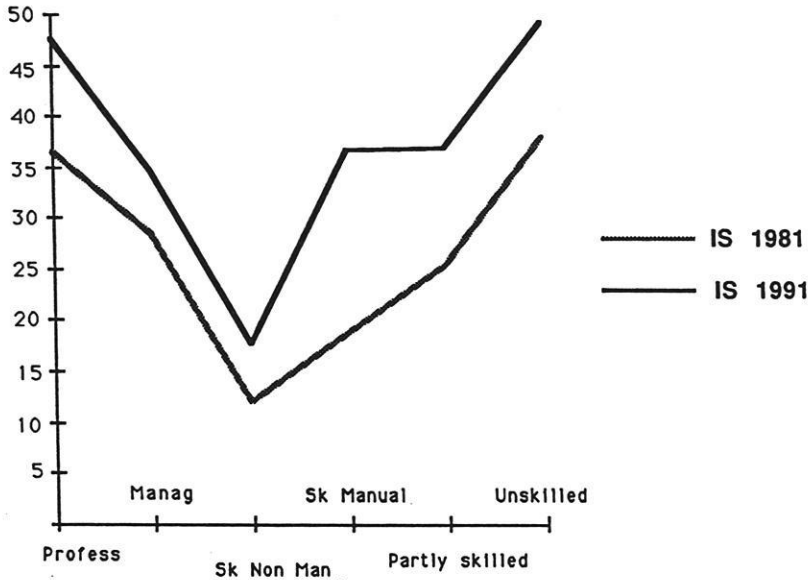
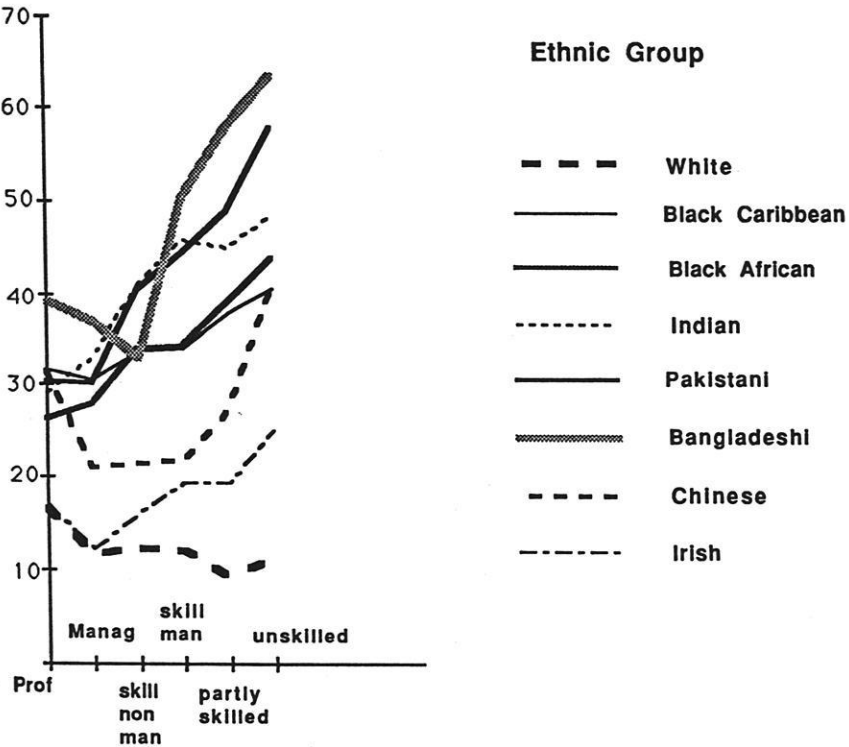


Figure 4 Greater London 1991: Segregation Indices of Social Groups by Ethnicity



that the level of the borough is not the most appropriate for analysing the social division of space. This is because in terms of dimension it represents a territory with a population equivalent to that of a medium-sized city. If we have at our disposal data on the ethnic and social subdivision arranged at the level of wards or 'Enumeration Districts' the values of segregation would be found to be higher. This hypothesis is confirmed by an analysis of 10 boroughs using ward-level data.

## 7. Ethnic and Social Division

By means of the analysis of the ethnic and social division of space in Greater London, we note that certain ethnic and certain social groups are more concentrated than others. Next, it is necessary to try to answer the following question: Is the division of space in Greater London based on the ethnic or the social division of space? In other words, do either ethnic or social class origins prevail in residential behaviour?

For neither the analysis of individual social groups nor individual ethnic groups pretends to be capable of revealing metropolitan spatial divisions. A social group is not homogeneous from the ethnic and/or cultural point of view, nor is an ethnic group homogeneous from a socio-economic perspective. Nor is either group homogeneous at levels of education, residential consumption or other forms of spatial behaviour. However, ethnic and social class memberships are, closely linked. It is useful to try to understand the interaction of these two variables, and their relative importance in the residential location strategies of households.

With the data available on Greater London, one can analyse the division of residential space at borough level, across ethnic and social class variables. Thus one obtained 48 analytic groups (6 social classes for 8 ethnic groups), (Table 3).

In general, White social classes are the most dispersed; with their indices of segregation ranging from 9 (Partly Skilled workers) to 17 (Professionals); Among the Unskilled workers, Bangladeshis are the most segregated group (64). The segregation indices of Partly Skilled Pakistanis and Skilled Manual Bangladeshis are strong (58). The Irish and the Chinese (with the exception of the Professionals) are the least segregated after the Whites.

Indians and Pakistanis record fairly close indices of segregation (except for the Unskilled workers). The level of segregation of Indian social groups is generally weaker than that of Pakistanis, except for the Managers and the Skilled Non-Manual workers. Generally, the distribution of the Chinese social classes is more dispersed than that of other Asian groups (Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Indians).

Figure 4 illustrates the segregation indices of different ethnic groups by social class. One can see that the Chinese social classes form an almost perfect 'U-shape' (the segregation indices are at their strongest at the top and bottom of the social hierarchy, and the weakest in the intermediate classes). The curve of the Irish social classes is similar to that of the Chinese, but less regular. The Whites have a weak

Table 3 Indices of Segregation by Social Class and Ethnic Group, Greater London 1991

	White	Black Caribb.	Black African	Indian	Pakist.	Bangl.	Chinese	Irish
Profess	17	31	26	29	30	39	32	17
Manag.	12	30	28	33	30	37	21	12
SkNonM	12	33	34	41	40	33	21	16
Sk.Man	12	33	34	46	44	50	22	19
Part. Sk.	9	37	39	45	49	58	27	19
Unskill	11	40	44	49	58	64	41	25

differentiation, with the exception of the pronounced "auto-segregation" of professionals. For the other groups, there is an inverse correlation between their position in the social hierarchy and the value of their index of segregation: the highest social class have the weakest degree of segregation, and vice versa.

The fact that the highest concentrations occur in the Asian lower social classes, provides evidence of the emergence of an ethnic working class. Social and ethnic segmentation is not a simple reflection of the labour market and/or the residential market in intra-metropolitan space; it is also a reflection of the sense of belonging to a group (the phenomenon of "ethnic union" within different Asian Groups). A comparison of the weak concentration of the White working class social groups with other ethnic working class groups, suggests different types of segregation based on the employment market. The Asians work in a network of small enterprises generally located in their "community zone" or "ecological zone". The owners of these enterprises recruit their personnel from their own ethnic communities. In contrast, the White working classes are employed by the large manufacturing industries which have drastically reduced their number during the 1980s.

The analysis of the dissimilarity indices is rather complex and difficult to synthesize because it is composed of a matrix comprising 48x48 variables, resulting in 2304 values. Figure 5 is a representation of the residential locational incompatibility between the different social classes comprising each ethnic group. The apices of the hexagon represent the six social classes analysed (Professionals, Managerials, Skilled Non-Manual, Skilled Manual, Partly Skilled and Unskilled workers). The thickness of the lines expresses the degree of residential differentiation between two social groups of the same ethnicity.

Figure 5 shows:

- a) a strong polarisation between the upper and the lower ends of the social class hierarchy across all the ethnic groups analysed;
- b) social class polarisation is most strong among Asians from the Indian sub-continent, which also comprise the most segregated ethnic groups;

Figure 5 Greater London 1991: Dissimilarity Indices within the Social Hierarchy by Ethnic Group

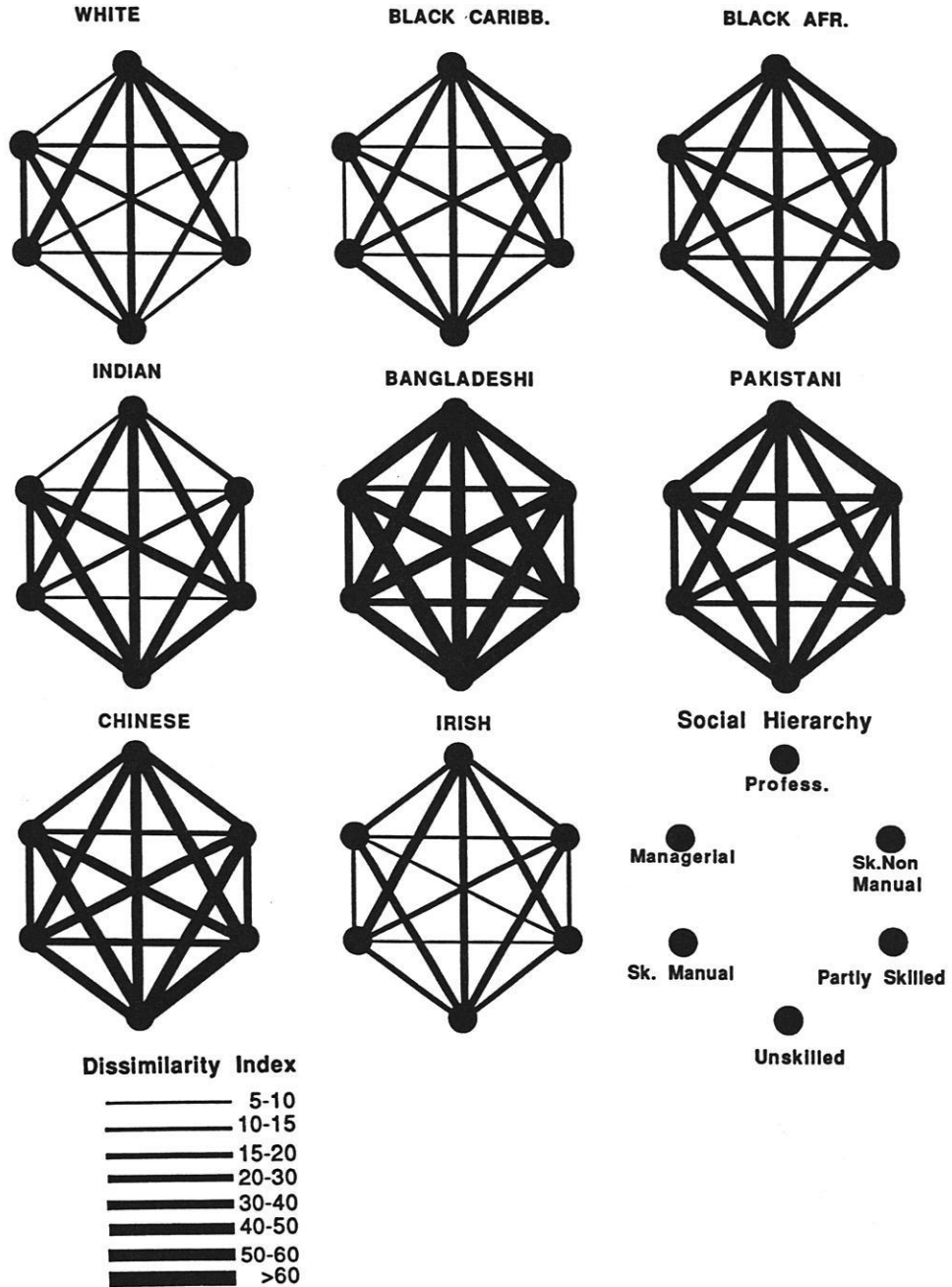
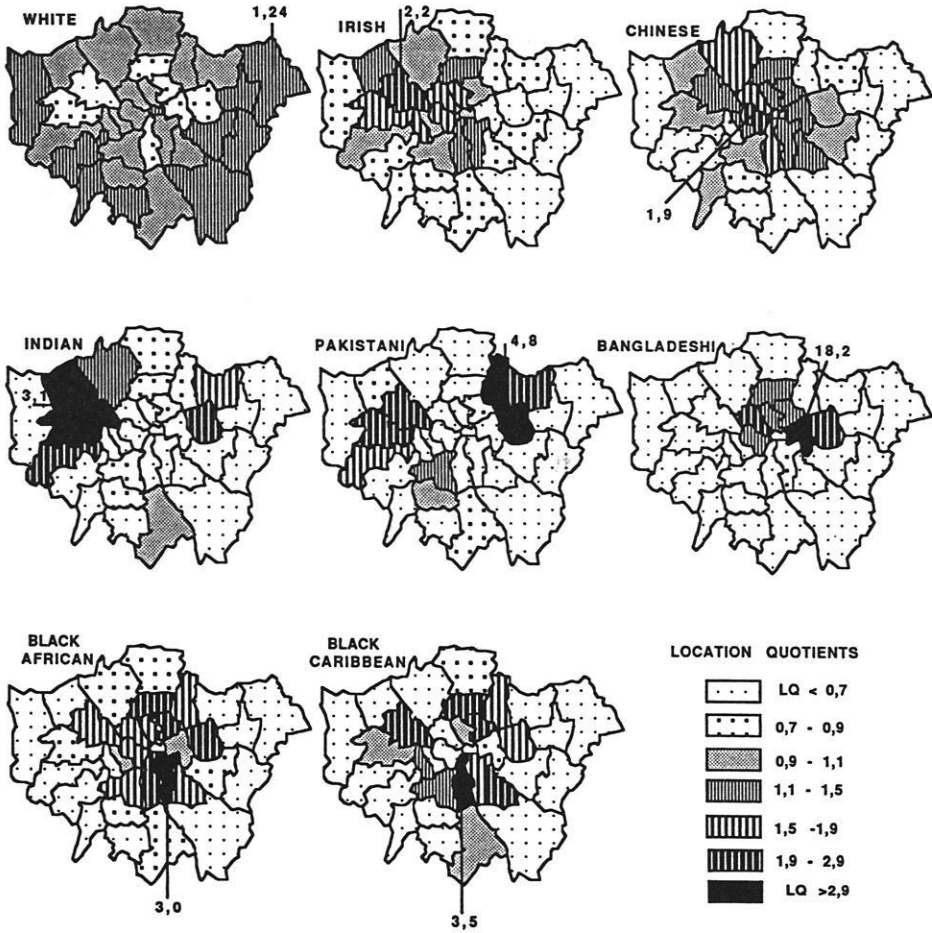


Figure 6 Greater London 1991: Location Quotient (LQ) by Ethnic Group



- c) in absolute terms the highest degrees of residential differentiation occur between the 'working classes' and Managers/Professionals; and
- d) the indices of dissimilarity between the upper layers of the social hierarchy are very weak, with the lowest values occurring between the Professionals and the Managers.

The indices of segregation and dissimilarity commented upon up to now, have been calculated using very broad territorial subdivisions. As such, they remain synthetic and spatial (implicit spatiality) and are not valid for allowing comparisons between precise spatial units. One can assess the spatiality of social differentiation using LQ analysis. By so doing, one can observe in Figure 6 -which shows the LQs of ethnic groups in 1991- that the Whites are concentrated in the City and in the Outer London boroughs (east, south and west), and in the Inner London boroughs where residences are being 'gentrified'. LQs for Whites in these boroughs are all above 1.2 (Figure 6).

The other ethnic groups forming veritable ethnic islands are the Irish in Brent and the Chinese in Westminster, where they are twice as concentrated as in the other boroughs comprising the metropolitan area. The Chinese have two types of residential behaviour. The first represents a strong concentration of Chinese in an area of London known as "China Town". The second mirrors a dispersed pattern of Chinese restaurants and laundries situated along the many 'High Streets' of the 'urban villages' which constitute Greater London.

The concentrations of Indians in Brent and Enfield, Black Caribbeans in Lambeth, and Black Africans in Southwark, are more than three times as strong as the average. Finally, the concentrations of Pakistanis in Waltham Forest (4 times greater than the average) and Bangladeshis in Tower Hamlets (18.5 times) are far greater than those of the other ethnic groups.

The general decrease of the working classes (Skilled Manual and Non-Manual workers) and the increase of the middle-upper classes in the areas examined, were not sufficient to reduce the high levels of social polarisation. The different locations of the social classes situated at either end of the social hierarchy, by ethnic groups. The Professionals of the most segregated ethnic groups have different residential locations to other members of their own ethnic group. These groups of Professionals are either located in "suburban" boroughs adjacent to the borough in which their own group is most concentrated (Indians, Pakistanis, Blacks, Bangladeshis and Chinese), or in boroughs remote from the borough in which their own ethnic group is most concentrated (Irish and Whites).

## 9. Conclusions

In a world city like London at the end of the 20th century - in a phase of population decline, suburbanisation, de-industrialisation and tertiarisation, we can see strong social and ethnic polarisation of the intra-metropolitan space. We can also see a



general increase in residential segregation across all social groups. For all ethnic groups values of the segregation indices of Unskilled Manual workers and Professionals are the highest. Despite the similarity of these segregation indices, there are two distinct patterns. First, the Partly Skilled and Unskilled workers are concentrated in the rented sector, particularly in the Inner City. Second, the Professional classes are concentrated in the more expensive areas of owner-occupied housing. These two patterns reflect segregation and auto-segregation respectively. The segregation indices of Skilled Non-Manual and Skilled Manual workers are the weakest.

The results confirm a hypothesis derived from earlier work (PETSIMERIS 1987), in which it is suggested that segregation is not a characteristic exclusive to the 'Fordist city', rather it is also to be found in 'post-Fordist' cities.

Segregation processes evolve over a 10 to 30 period, during which they develop through three stages: birth, development and maturity. During their evolution, there is a progressive substitution of lower income groups by higher income groups. The metamorphosis of a 'working class' area of the Inner City is not immediate, rather it occurs over a period of years. The completion of gentrification occurs after a period of transition, characterised by social-mix and a consequent decrease in the index of segregation. Greater London shows a contrasting trend whereby decreases in total population and blue collar workers and increases in higher income groups and social-mix (both determined by gentrification) are coincident with increasing segregation and social polarisation.

Segregation at borough level in Greater London should be seen as an increase in relative concentration, rather than the emergence of starkly contrasting absolute differences. This phenomenon is not without economic and functional consequences for the future structuration of space. Intra-urban space should not be considered as less important than inter-urban space; rather it should be viewed in the context of local and international transformations, and inter-urban competition.

Gentrification is also the consequence of the restructuring of the labour and residential markets. In the absence of empirical evidence, it is not possible to examine trends in ethnic and ethnic/social segregation in Greater London. However, evidence of increasing social segregation clearly falsifies post-modern theories of weak segregation in cities of the 'post-Fordist' era.

It is particularly noteworthy that segregation is apparent at the broad geographic level of boroughs.

The foregoing analysis has drawn upon evidence for Greater London. The extent to which the phenomena herein described characterise other cities, must await comparative studies in Great Britain and the collection of comparable data for the cities of Continental Europe.

The social geography of European metropolises must be revised, since neither post-modern theories nor the model of 'Fordist cities' correspond with the empirical evidence. At the very least post modern theories of weak segregation must be verified by empirical research.

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