SOCIAL AND ETHNIC SEGREGATION IN EUROPE: LEVELS, CAUSES, AND EFFECTS

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ABSTRACT: *The measurement of segregation, the understanding of its drivers, and the effects of segregation are three interrelated issues that receive ample attention on both sides of the Atlantic. The comparative study of these subjects in Europe is not an easy task because the continent is highly fragmented and diversified. This regards the types of welfare state, but also the multitude of urban histories. Consequently, there is a lack of uniform information. Nevertheless, this paper makes an attempt to sketch the variety of ethnic and social segregation within Europe, using a large number of sources. It is shown that generally segregation levels in Europe are more moderate compared to what we can find in American cities, but these differences are not absolute. The paper also links the levels of segregation with a range of potential explanations and provides a window on European research focusing on effects of segregation.*

Ethnic and social segregation appear to receive continuous scholarly and political attention on both sides of the Atlantic. In particular, the potential effects of spatial inequality have received ample attention in recent years. This, among other things, is reflected in specific studies and policies aimed at mixing the neighborhood population in cities in Europe (Atkinson & Kintrea, 2001; Jacquier, 2001; Kearns, 2002) and studies and policies that focus on *Moving to Opportunity* in the US (Briggs, 1997; Galster & Zobel, 1998; Goetz, 2002; Rosenbaum, 1995). Those who express their worries about high levels of segregation and concentrated poverty often assume that this will reduce opportunities in society, or in other words, that it will result in incomplete participation in society, both in terms of labor market participation and in the fields of education, politics, and culture.

Although some efforts have been made to describe spatial patterns of inequality, sometimes even understand them, in North America (Massey & Denton, 1993; Jargowsky, 1997, 2003) and Europe (Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998; Peach, 1999) only a few studies try to bring together the experiences from both sides of the Atlantic, and equally few make an effort to understand the differences (Burgers & Musterd, 2002; Wacquant, 1993). As far as the potential effects of segregation are concerned we have only began to compare the experiences on both sides of the Atlantic (Briggs, 2003;

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Friedrichs, Galster, & Musterd, 2003; Galster, 2002). In an effort to contribute to the wider understanding of segregation and its effects, I focus on Europe and give some clues to the following questions:

- What can we say about the levels of racial spatial segregation and economic spatial segregation in Western European cities?
- If these levels differ from US levels, what reasons could be suggested for that?
- What are the consequences? Does spatial segregation reproduce inequality and separation?

LEVELS OF RACIAL SPATIAL SEGREGATION AND ECONOMIC SPATIAL SEGREGATION IN WESTERN EUROPEAN CITIES

Generally, levels of segregation, both ethnic and racial segregation and socio-economic segregation are lower in cities in European countries than in cities in the US. We also find a relatively larger mix of various population categories and this holds for the population, which recently immigrated to European cities. Most so-called ethnic concentrations in neighborhoods are actually very mixed in terms of the countries of origin. By implication, only a few mono-ethnic areas can be found; furthermore if we do find concentrations, the size of the concentrations will generally be lower. These assertions can be illustrated on the basis of several research projects, which have been carried out in Europe. Over the past decade I was, in collaboration with many colleagues, involved in half a dozen of these studies in which segregation played an important role. I use these to illustrate the levels of social and ethnic inequality. Data were derived from projects such as "Urban Segregation and the Welfare State" in which a large number of cities were dealt with by various authors from countries on both sides of the Atlantic (Musterd & Ostendorf, 1998); "Multi-Ethnic Metropolis" in which we compared levels of ethnic segregation in eight European cities and Toronto (Musterd, Ostendorf, & Breebaart, 1998); "Undivided Cities" where six European cities were studied (Musterd, Priemus, & Van Kempen, 1999); and "Ethnic Segregation and the Welfare State," a study in which over 20 cities in various welfare state contexts were compared (Domburg-De Rooij & Musterd, 2002). Other studies, which have been carried out and that focused on Europe, have helped to fill the gaps in knowledge (Droogleever, Musterd, & Ostendorf, 1998; Kesteloot, Van Weesep, & White, 1997; Van Kempen & Özüekren, 1998). Following a brief yet essential discussion on some methodological issues related to comparative research on segregation, I deal with ethnic segregation first and subsequently with the more complicated social segregation.

Methodological Issues: Concepts and Comparisons

Spatial inequality can be measured in various ways. Measures of isolation, unevenness, concentration, clustering, and centralization have been applied in the past (see Massey & Denton, 1993). I have, for this occasion, focused on unevenness, applying the index of segregation following Duncan and Duncan (1955) and Peach (1996). The index runs from 0–100, reflecting situations ranging from no segregation until total segregation. I clarify my use of concepts because such use related to ethnic and social segregation also differs between countries.

With ethnic segregation I imply the spatial separation of population categories that are characterized by different countries of origin. In Europe the use of the concept *ethnic group*, or *ethnic minority population*, or *foreigner* usually relates to those who have roots in

culturally relatively different countries, often in so-called non- or late-industrialized countries and/or former colonies. Different cities in Europe have attracted people from different countries and, therefore, a wide variety of ethnic minorities can be distinguished. For example, Paris has received large numbers of immigrants from Algeria and other North African countries but also huge numbers of Portuguese immigrants. London has two very large groups of ethnic minorities labeled as blacks (approximately 8% of the Greater London population) and (with a similar percentage) immigrants from the Indian Continent (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi). These ethnic minority groups can also be found in other large English cities. In Dutch cities, guest workers from Turkey and Morocco and immigrants from former colonies in the Caribbean are dominant. In Brussels, Belgium, Moroccans are by far the largest category of immigrants. In German cities, such as Frankfurt, however, Turks and migrants from former Yugoslavia are dominant. Some Scandinavian cities, such as Stockholm, have opened their doors widely to various refugee populations, coming from countries such as Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Chile. We should take into consideration that in these different spatial contexts race and ethnicity are socially constructed in very different ways. In Amsterdam, for example, approximately 12% of the population is of Surinamese or Antillean origin and half of them have African roots. These African *Amsterdammers*, however, are regarded culturally closer to the white Dutch, compared to many recent non-Black immigrants from Morocco and Turkey. The differences are also reflected in the definitions of ethnicity we had to apply. There is no uniform standard available across the countries. Some definitions are based on nationality, others on country of origin, and again others on self-identification.

With social segregation I refer to the spatial separation of the population according to their social or socio-economic position. A comparison between cities in these terms is even more difficult than comparing ethnic categories. In Europe, it is again impossible to use one standard for the spatial levels of socio-economic inequality. Various indicators of poverty had to be used. The results of the comparison, therefore, should be viewed with caution, even more so than with the ethnic data.

Apart from these conceptual problems there are also other issues that require attention such as the area divisions (city, metropolitan area) and the time points of measurement. These can all vary for different cities and they will have an impact upon the indexes we use. The comparison, therefore, has to be regarded as an indication of possible differences. The scale of the neighborhood within the city or metropolitan area, which is the unit of observation for the calculation of the index values, also impacts the values. The use of smaller units normally will result in higher index scores. This can be illustrated with data for the city of Amsterdam. Data are available for 111 neighborhood combinations, 369 neighborhoods, and 1216 grid cells. Calculation of the values for the index of segregation on each of these levels shows that the index regarding eight different ethnic categories increases on average two points when shifting from 111 units to 369 units. The index for Surinamese rises from 35 to 36; for Turks from 40 to 42, and for Moroccans from 38 to 42. The index increases another 2.9 points on average when shifting from 369 units to 1216 units. On that level the index for Surinamese, Turks, and Moroccans is 38, 45, and 45 respectively (Van Daalen, Deurloo, & Musterd, 1995). Figure 1 also includes data for UK cities at the enumeration district level (on average 500 inhabitants) and at ward level (on average 10,000 people). In short, we can state that there are unit-effects; however, these are rather moderate in cities like Amsterdam and not very high in cities like London and Birmingham. In this study an effort has been made to apply small units and to use units that are as comparable as possible. That objective was more or less reached for cities in the

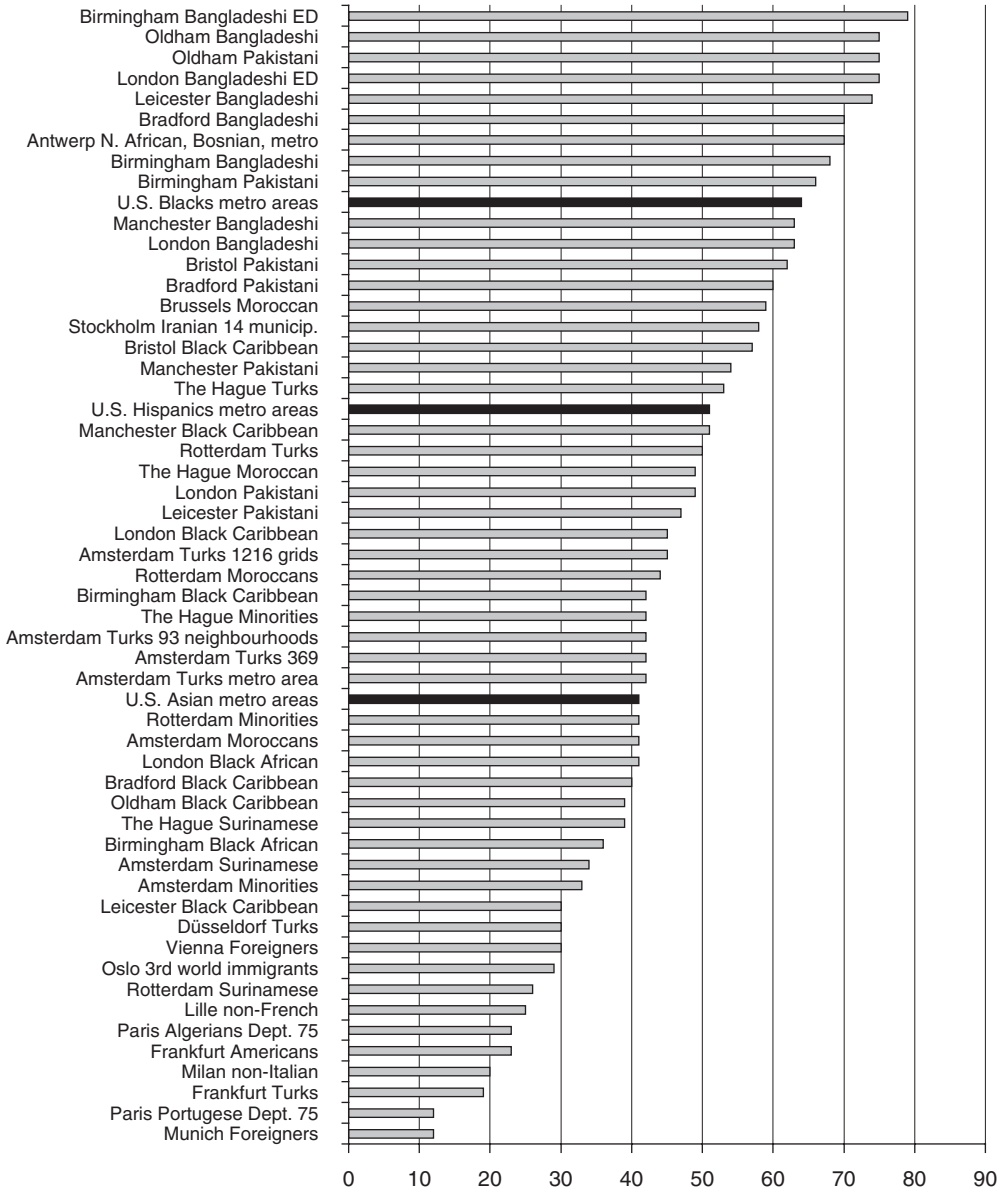

FIGURE 1

Index of Segregation, Ethnic Minorities

Note. Black bars = US data (average over all metropolitan areas with at least 10 tracts and 3% or 20,000 of the population category shown). ED = Enumeration districts. Metro = Metropolitan area.

Sources. Andersson, 1998; Brevik, 2001; Domburg & Musterd, 2002; Fassmann & Reeger, 2001; Iceland et al., 2002; Musterd et al., 1998; Peach, 1996; Petsimeris, 1998.

UK, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. The ward level, the neighborhood combination, and the *Ortsteile* unit appear to be roughly comparable. However, for some cities, such as Stockholm and Paris, only larger units were available.

Ethnic Segregation

Notwithstanding the methodological problems just mentioned, the data on the levels of segregation that is presented for a number of cities across Europe (Figure 1) do provide useful information. The figures should not be read as hard quantitative data, as there only seems to be sufficient evidence to interpret the data as indications for qualitative differences. With that in mind, we can say that German cities tend to have relatively low levels of ethnic segregation (around 20), followed closely by cities like Oslo and Vienna. Obviously, these cities in one way or another have been able to disperse immigrant populations across the city. French cities also show low index values but here we should take into account the impact of the larger neighborhood units that were applied. Dutch cities follow those with the lowest scores and typically show segregation levels around 40. They are accompanied by some British cities as far as the segregation patterns of Black Africans and Black Caribbean is concerned. According to Peach (1999) these Blacks follow a melting pot trajectory of integration. Above average levels of segregation can be found in Brussels, Antwerp, and Rotterdam (all with regard to Turks and North Africans), and in some but not all, British cities with regard to Pakistani and Bangladeshi. In cities such as Oldham and Bradford, these population categories tend to be much more segregated from the rest of the population when compared to the other immigrant categories and other cities. In these other settings, these populations have a clear 'within-group' orientation and do not seem to follow a melting pot model of integration. I later give some tentative explanations for these differences.

The suggestion given by Peach that Blacks in UK cities seem to follow a melting pot model of integration may also be valid for the Surinamese population in Dutch cities who make up approximately 10% of the city population. About a third of the Surinamese population is of Black African origin; however, approximately a third is labeled Hindustani, while 15% is from Java (Indonesia). Unlike the situation in many large American cities, where the majority of Blacks live in concentrated areas or ghettoes, which are almost entirely inhabited by Blacks (in cities such as Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Washington, Baltimore, etc.), the concentrations of Surinamese in Amsterdam are much smaller and, in fact, also much less Surinamese. Figures 2, 3 and 4 reveal that the vast majority of Surinamese in Amsterdam do not live in a Surinamese concentration area. In Figure 2, areas are shown in which the share of Amsterdammers from Surinamese background is higher than two standard deviations above the mean (higher than 19%). We calculated the average share of Surinamese in these concentrations as 33%; 39% of all Surinamese in Amsterdam lived in these concentrations (in 2004). If we apply a somewhat stronger criterion of at least four standard deviations above the mean (at least 28%), the concentrations logically become a bit more Surinamese (Figure 3); however, only 31% of all Surinamese are living in these areas. If we apply a stronger criterion of at least 50% Surinamese in an area, we can show that only 3% of all Surinamese in Amsterdam are living there (Figure 4). Sometimes Dutch politicians express a fear for the development of black ghettoes. The information we provided clarifies that such fear is unrelated to the reality of the spatial orientation of the population category involved.

Usually, American cities show higher levels of ethnic segregation compared to the general levels we encounter in European cities. This is certainly true if we include the Black population. That population has, however, a somewhat unique position due to the US history of slavery. So what happens if we leave the Black population out and focus the attention on other dominant population categories–namely those who immigrated to American and European cities over the past three or four decades? Then it can be noticed

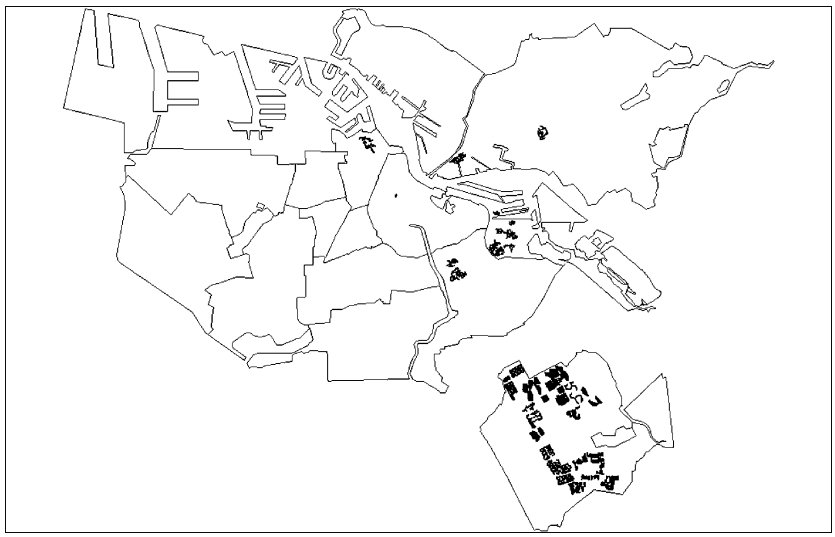

FIGURE 2

Concentrations of Surinamese in Amsterdam, 2004

Note. Designated areas show the concentration of Surinamese as two standard deviations above the mean, which implies greater than 19% of the total population. In these concentrations 33% of the population is Surinamese; 39% of all Surinamese are living in these concentrations.

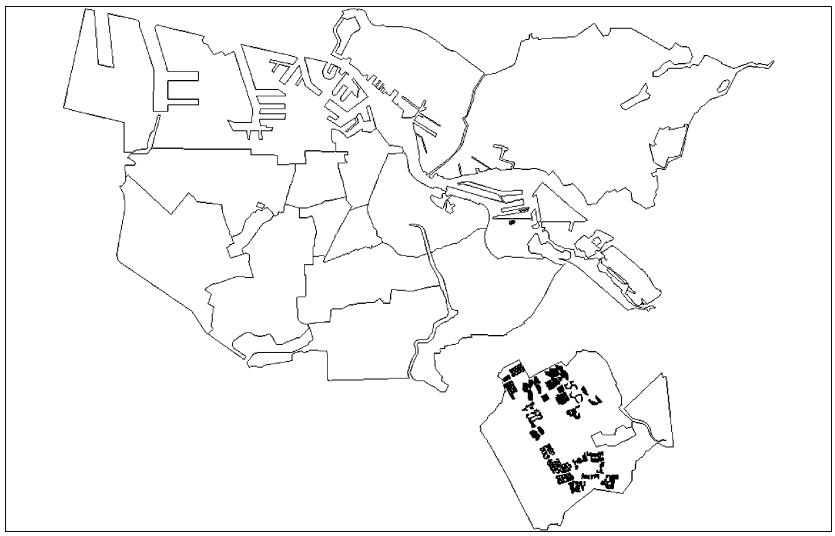

FIGURE 3

Stronger Concentrations of Surinamese in Amsterdam, 2004

Note. Designated areas show the concentration of Surinamese as four standard deviations above the mean, which implies greater than 28% of the total population. In these concentrations 38% of the population is Surinamese; 31% of all Surinamese are living in these concentrations.

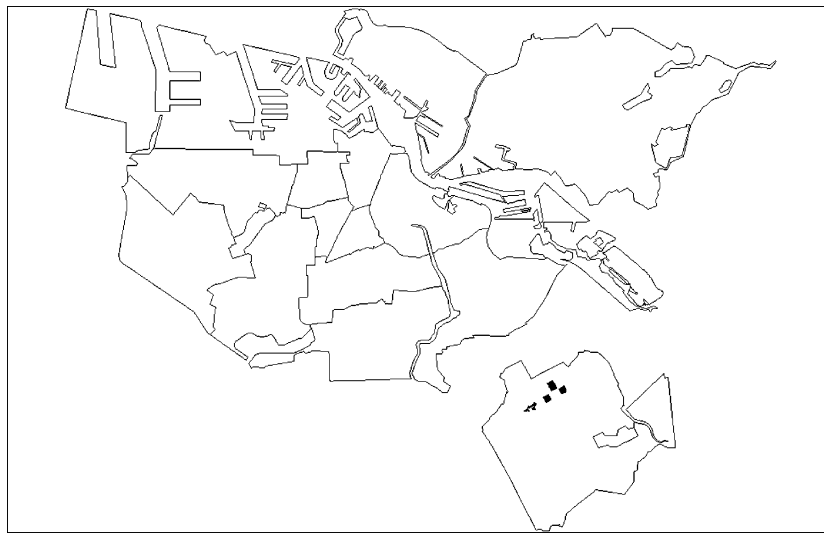

FIGURE 4

Strong Concentrations of Surinamese in Amsterdam, 2004

Note. Designated areas show the concentration of Surinamese when greater than 50% of the total population. In these concentrations 57% of the population is Surinamese; 3% of all Surinamese are living in these concentrations

that the levels of segregation in US cities do not differ that much from some of the levels in cities in the UK and a few cities in continental Europe. We draw this conclusion when we compare the information presented in Figure 1 with recent information on average levels of spatial inequality for all metropolitan areas in the US (for the year 2000) with regard to Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, relative to non-Hispanic Whites. On a *0* to *100* scale these values are 64, 51, and 41, respectively (Iceland et al., 2002). However, in most continental European cities, the levels of segregation are still clearly lower.

Because there are no systematic data on segregation in European cities, we have to rely on individual studies to make inferences about the dynamics of ethnic segregation. Fairly comparable data is available for Dutch, British, and German cities. Table 1 shows some relevant figures. From this data we can cautiously conclude that there is not a great

TABLE 1

Index of Segregation

	1983	1993	1998
Amsterdam, Turks	36	41	42
Amsterdam, Moroccans	35	39	41
Rotterdam, Turks	51	54	50
Rotterdam, Moroccans	50	50	44
Cologne, Turks	34	34	33
Cologne, Yugoslavian	25	25	26
London, Black Caribbean	56	41	

Note. Data for Cologne 1984, 1989, 1994; London 1961, 1991.
Sources. Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, n.d.; Friedrichs, 1998; Peach, 1999;

dynamic in these Dutch and German cities, whereas a decreasing level of segregation can be shown for Blacks in London. In comparison, levels of segregation of Asians and Hispanics in US cities were also stable between 1980 and 2000. The average level of segregation of Blacks dropped from 73 to 64 (Iceland, Weinberg, & Steinmetz, 2002). See Table 1.

In short, this selective overview allows for a cautious conclusion that levels of ethnic segregation tend to be higher in the US compared to Europe. However, if we omit the Black population, the differences are much smaller than perhaps expected and in some European cities they even are comparable with US metropolitan area averages. The differences between cities within Europe seem to be associated with the type of state, city, and group. Segregation levels appear to be higher in the UK and Belgium and low in Germany, France, and Austria. Within a country we find high levels in some cities (Oldham and Bradford in the UK) and lower levels in other cities (Leicester and London). Also between population categories, the differences are significant. We found high levels of segregation of Bangladeshi in UK cities, and much lower levels for Blacks in UK cities.

Socio-Economic Segregation

The analysis of socio-economic segregation is constrained by similar methodological problems as with ethnic segregation. However, some indications from the figures are strong enough to allow for preliminary conclusions. The more or less comparable figures are taken together in Figure 5. From that graph we conclude that in most European cities

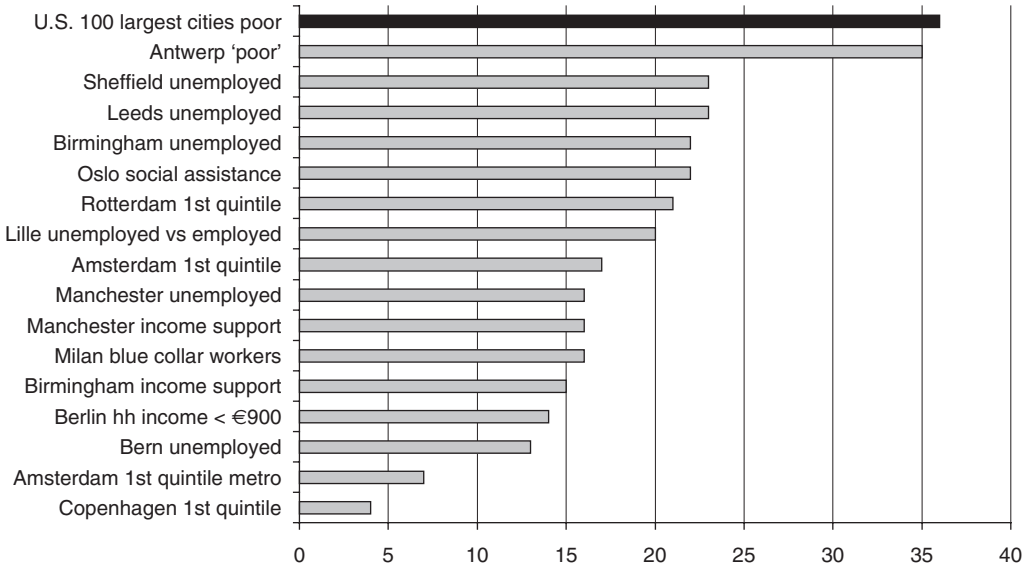

FIGURE 5

Index of Segregation, Socio-Economic Levels

Note. Black bar = US data (average over all metropolitan areas with at least 10 tracts and 3% or 20,000 of the population category shown).

Sources. Abramson, Tobin, & Van der Groot, 1995; Brevik, 2001; Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, n.d.; Kruythoff & Baart, 1998; National Statistics, n.d.; Petsimeris, 1998.

we investigated, the poor are not severely segregated from the rest of the population. Segregation levels are low, which implies the existence of many socially mixed neighborhoods. The only exceptions were low-income households in British cities and the city of Antwerp (as far as the cities we investigated are concerned). But even these cities do not reach the high levels of segregation that can be found in many American cities.

In general, these findings indicate that in Europe the poor are not detached from the middle classes. In fact, we can conclude that those who have been able to gain more affluence are much more separated from the rest of the population compared to those who are not affluent. In Rotterdam, the segregation index for those in the highest income quintile was 27; for those in the lowest quintile, it was 21. In Amsterdam, these figures were 27 and 17. In Copenhagen, the top income decile showed an index of 26; the lowest decile showed an index of 4. In Milan, the segregation index for professionals reached 24 points; the opposite, blue collar workers, were less separated from the rest of the urban population (Index of Segregation: 16). Over 20 years ago, Kuttner (1984) argued that continental Europe had succeeded in keeping the poor and the middle classes within one system, whereas the United States had not. As far as the changes in these patterns are concerned, the few data available again do not reveal strong increases of the low levels of spatial inequality. The city-suburb ratio for the large Dutch cities in terms of average income, for example, shows an almost stable figure for over four decades (Musterd & Ostendorf, 2003).

As with ethnic segregation, understanding the different levels of socio-economic segregation between cities within Europe requires a multilevel approach. There are state level differences: lower levels of segregation in Denmark and the Netherlands (for poor households) and higher levels for Belgium. There are also differences between cities within one state: unemployed people are less segregated spatially in Manchester compared to Leeds. Group differences are also evident: those who have higher social class positions are more segregated than those who have lower positions. Finally, it can be noted that there is much social mix in many European cities.

CAUSES OF DIFFERENT DEGREES OF SPATIAL SEGREGATION: SOME EXPLORATIONS

Ethnic and social spatial inequalities cannot be understood in a one-dimensional way. Ethnic segregation has socio-economic components, but these components only partially contribute to the understanding of ethnic segregation as Peach (1999) showed us for London. He determined that social class only accounted for 8% of the segregation of Blacks. Social class explained 10% of the segregation of Bangladeshi (Peach, 1999). Obviously in the UK situation there are relatively poor and relatively rich Bangladeshi and Pakistani who live in the same neighborhoods. The findings of Peach clarify that we also need to consider other (cultural and historical) backgrounds. A decade before Peach presented his findings, Galster (1988, 1989) came to a similar conclusion in a pithy debate with Clark (1988, 1989) on residential segregation in American cities. Galster convincingly argued that the social position of households was just one factor contributing less than 10% to the explanation of ethnic segregation. He argued that many dimensions impacted (ethnic) segregation simultaneously and that factors were mutually related. Apart from the factors mentioned above, housing market discrimination, access to information on housing, and accessibility of jobs were regarded to be highly important. Recently, Dawkins (2004) reconfirmed the importance of these factors.

In Europe, these dimensions will also play their part. However, their relative weight will not be the same as those found in US State interventions. This observation applies to many spheres of life, including a more widespread provision of social housing. Also, the availability of more extensive public transport systems will reduce the impact of factors such as housing market discrimination and accessibility of jobs. Yet, many questions still require an answer to obtain a better understanding of segregation. These questions regard the impact of differences between immigrants in terms of the country of origin and in terms of the time of entering the country (e.g., how did the housing market and labor market function upon arrival?). Segregation may also be influenced by the immigrants' level of reliance on internal support systems and the efforts made to continue the expression of one's original cultural identity. Language differences will be relevant in that respect. Also, political attitudes towards immigrants are important, and European countries tend to differ very much from each other in that respect. The strong efforts of France to assimilate immigrants as soon as possible can serve as one example. This is accomplished by not addressing immigrants as separate categories, and by supporting assimilation as a strategic objective. A slightly different situation can be found in Germany where politicians first thought that the guest workers would return to the country of origin after the job was done but then understood that most of them would stay in Germany. A fierce integration policy was the logical follow up, including some dispersal policies. In the Netherlands, for a long period of time a multicultural or pluralist model of integration was dominant, allowing for some autonomy of immigrants in certain fields. This may have contributed to differences in terms of inward orientation of various immigrant categories with higher scores for Moroccans and lower scores for Surinamese, while both show rather similar levels of segregation. However, recently a serious debate challenged the value of such a policy. Today, there are more efforts to mix the population and to target a more forced assimilation and integration, but again slightly different from the French assimilation type of integration. Some now apply the label *inter-cultural policy*. According to that model, immigrants should be regarded as permanent; they are more or less allowed to stay different, but their otherness should not be overemphasized (as was done with the multi-cultural model) (Alexander, 2003). In Belgium, until recently immigrants did not have any voting rights, not even at the local level. This is one factor that produced a sharper division between immigrants and citizens who had these rights. Another very important factor for relatively high levels of segregation is the functioning of the housing market (Kesteloot & Van der Haegen, 1997). Belgian cities have rather small shares of social housing compared to many other European cities. A residual rental sector and a partly marginal owner-occupier sector function as resorts for the guest worker immigrant population.

In current policies in Europe, efforts to mix the population are popular. For example, in France, a recent law on "solidarité et renouvellement urbain" (solidarity and urban renewal) forces each municipality to adjust the housing stock towards one that includes a certain share of social housing. The policy tries to avoid large concentrations of poorer households and, for that matter, immigrant households. Debates on mixed housing policies can also be found elsewhere, in Sweden, UK, The Netherlands, and Finland (Andersson & Musterd, in press). I have the impression that the debates are most lively in countries and cities that show surprisingly low levels of spatial inequalities. There also seems to be an increasingly cautious attitude towards pluralist models of integration in many European countries. The attention now tends to be focused on speeding up assimilation and integration.

Economic and socio-economic processes and structures are still important for understanding at least part of the differences between countries regarding the spatial patterns of

different population categories (ethnic and particularly social). In many European countries, for example, problems have risen because the guest workers, who had been hired in the latter days of the Fordist economy, became unemployed. Their skills did not fit the new economic requirements and many, especially the elderly, dropped out of the labor force. This implied a reduction of integration opportunities via the labor market. This line of reasoning roughly follows the ideas that Wilson (1987) and Sassen (1991) expressed more than a decade ago. But we have to go beyond that (see Burgers & Musterd, 2002). In general, the difference in bargaining power is a very important factor. This power, however, is also related to the type of welfare model that is applied in a certain country. Some states (Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Finland) are still redistributing wealth. This is done in various ways: (1) through a progressive income tax system; (2) through redistribution of taxes over municipalities inversely proportional to the wealth of the municipality; (3) through extensive benefit systems that are applied in case of disablement, illness, unemployment, old age pensions, etceteras. Also, individual rent subsidies and other housing subsidies are often provided when a person has insufficient income to pay for housing costs. And the health and school systems are also often organized in such a way that a low income does not prohibit access to the services at a high level.

These redistribution policies are reflected in the Gini coefficients, which tell us something about the income inequality in a country (see Figure 6). Income inequality is clearly highest in the US followed by the UK and Italy, with a gap between France and the rest. Burtless and Jencks (2003) underline these differences. They show that the top 10% / bottom 10% ratio of the income distribution was 5.6 in the US, 3.5 in France, and 2.6 in Sweden. The upper two deciles in the US earn 50% of total income; in the Netherlands the richest 20% earned approximately 37% of total income. After-tax differences will even be

FIGURE 6

Income Inequality, Gini-Coefficients
Source. Smeeding & Grodner, 2000.

larger because highly redistributing states, such as Sweden and the Netherlands have very high and progressive tax rates.

In short, it is suggested that many segregation levels, ethnic and social, may at least partly be understood by addressing the cultural, economic, and political differences. Ethnic segregation levels seem to be lower where cultural differences between the categories are smaller. Social segregation levels tend to be higher in manufacturing cities and those currently struggling with economic restructuring. Cities like Rotterdam, Antwerp, Leeds, and Bradford may serve as examples in Europe; cities like Milwaukee, Cleveland, Buffalo, and Detroit may be the US counterparts. And in general, segregation levels are lower where welfare state models are characterized by strong redistribution regimes and more moderate social inequality.

However, these dimensions do not tell the whole story. Belgium, for example, has a low level of income inequality if we consider its Gini coefficients. It also has a so-called strong welfare state, with a lot of redistribution. Belgian cities also house relatively poor guest workers, just as Germany and the Netherlands do. Still, cities like Antwerp and Brussels show us fairly high levels of ethnic and social inequality. To get to a fuller understanding of this situation, we have to dig deeper in the building blocks of the welfare model. This will then show that the housing market is a big exception in the Belgian welfare state model, as we have shown. In fact, the housing market is almost completely free-market oriented with very few control mechanisms.

Trying to understand urban inequality through economic restructuring and globalization processes only is not enough. These processes also occur in Europe where inequality levels are much lower than in the US. I suggest considering at least three additional dimensions: (1) the deeply rooted cultural factors, which are associated with language, religion and associated institutions and support systems and discriminatory factors; (2) the historically grown social, ethnic, and economic structures that provide certain paths for development seem to be relevant; and (3) the way the welfare state has been shaped.

THE EFFECTS: DOES SPATIAL SEGREGATION REPRODUCE INEQUALITY AND SEPARATION?

One of the most critical reasons for paying attention to segregation lies in the question of what are the impacts of variations in segregation levels. Many American researchers of urban social issues share the view that high-poverty neighborhoods are potentially stimulating negative outcomes. It is expected that these neighborhoods lack positive role models. Children are exposed to crime, gangs, drugs, and other negative influences. The deprivation of such neighborhoods exacerbates the problems of having low income. For this reason, the understanding of how the environment affects individuals and possibly limits their opportunities has become an important field of research (Ellen & Turner, 1997; Galster, 2002; Galster & Killen, 1995; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Rosenbaum, 1995; Sampson, Morenoff, & Gannon-Rowley, 2002).

As can be shown through the types of policy responses in European countries (tenure mix policies, allocation policies), there is also a widespread belief that high levels of segregation are related to low levels of participation in society, even though this belief may be challenged (see Musterd, 2003). This idea of a link between segregation and participation is applied to both the ethnic-cultural and the social domain. The hypothesis is that segregation harms full participation in society and that the ethnic and social composition of someone's residential environment has clear impacts upon the opportunities of individuals living in these concentrations (cf. Friedrichs & Blasius, 2003, Van

Beckhoven & Van Kempen, 2003). The core of the European debate on neighborhood effects differs from the US debates on the impact of racial/ethnic segregation. Violence, gang, and drug related crime appear to play a major role in the US debates. Although some European researchers like Friedrichs & Blasius (2003) examine deviant behavior, most research is more focused on social mobility perspectives than on crime and law related issues (cf. Andersson, 2001).

At first glance, one might conclude that there is not much need for this kind of response in the European context because the levels of segregation and, therefore, the levels of concentration of poverty are simply sufficiently low already. The moderate levels of segregation will automatically imply that negative socialization processes have less chance. Concentrations of poverty are small, and if there are concentrations of poverty, these concentrations are only relatively poor. In short, there would be sufficient opportunities to meet other role models and to get in touch with the rest of the urban society.

This, however, is obviously not enough to stop politicians from spending huge amounts of time and money on the development of anti-poverty-neighborhood policies. In Europe this type of policy is often addressed as mixed neighborhood policy. Actually, it is not that strange to focus on mixed neighborhood policies, even in the context of moderate social and ethnic spatial inequalities. The reason is that there still are relative differences, and while they might be small, relative differences may still exert their effects. Moreover, it must be noted that unlike the US experience, in which poverty concentrations increased between 1970 and 1990 (Jargowsky, 1997) but decreased in the 1990s (Jargowsky, 2003), these processes are not evident in Europe. On the contrary, there is a feeling that problems have increased. At least politicians believe in it, and not surprisingly, several European researchers also got involved in this arena (see Atkinson & Kintrea, 2001; Farwick, 2002; Friedrichs, Galster, & Musterd, 2003).

However, findings in Europe are somewhat fragmented because the type of research that should be done cannot be carried out across Europe. Large-scale longitudinal research, which is required to test impacts over time, was possible in only a few countries, particularly in The Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland. In these contexts, several millions of households could be followed individually in their careers, controlling for relevant variables that should be controlled for when searching for neighborhood effects. On the basis of research in the Netherlands, we concluded that the social environment has only a modest influence on the social mobility of households with a weak economic position. The chance of a household living purely on welfare benefits at the beginning of the study period to escape the welfare trap was barely dependent on the number of similarly challenged households in the immediate vicinity (Musterd, Ostendorf, & Vos, 2003). This should, however, not be interpreted as a definitive statement that the social environment has no impact on individuals. On the contrary, there may be a serious effect that could have been neutralized as a result of the area-based policy interventions, which target concentrations of poverty with special programs. We should also notice that on the basis of other research, the conclusion could be drawn that population categories that are equally segregated in the city, turn out to show very different levels of integration in the labor market and in education, in particular.

In Sweden, however, consistent neighborhood effects were found, even after controls for relevant individual and household dimensions (Musterd & Andersson, 2003). The only exceptions were connected to individuals. These anomalies were regarded as having an unstable relationship with the labor market, and were showing an improvement in the educational attainment level during economic downturns. These individuals could

frequently find a job, even during downturns, and the social environment they lived in did not seem to matter much.

In most of the analyses that were carried out, we found a threshold at which the linear relation was clearly broken. In Sweden that threshold can be found in neighborhoods in which the unemployment rate is around 16%. From that level onward, the probability of staying in unemployed does not increase. We have argued that this may be related to the capacities of the welfare state, i.e., labor market policies and the competence of specific employment offices. However, further research is needed to explain this outcome.

The peculiar thing from these analyses (both are summarized in Figure 7) is that the outcomes in Sweden are different from those encountered in the Netherlands. In the Netherlands, the association between environment and social mobility disappeared when household type or the urban/non-urban context were controlled. That did not happen in Sweden. A simple explanation cannot be provided. Both Sweden and the Netherlands have to be labeled as strong welfare states in which state intervention in social spheres is rather well developed. Yet, there may be crucial circumstances that differ. Perhaps the Dutch authorities have been able to intervene more efficiently in the more vulnerable areas compared to what the Swedish authorities could do. Another hypothesis is that the more urban and densely populated Dutch society offers fewer obstacles for commuting. Spatial mismatch, i.e., spatial barriers to get unemployed people in contact with work opportunities, might explain some of the differences. We should also keep in mind that the Swedish society has been much more egalitarian than any other society in Europe for a very long time. Only recently have inequalities grown. This may also have led to a relatively strong labeling and stigmatization reaction in the Swedish context. Moreover, many immigrants are recent arrivals. Part of them may still have problems accessing the welfare state benefits and provisions. Some of them may also prefer a greater reliance on their own population category.

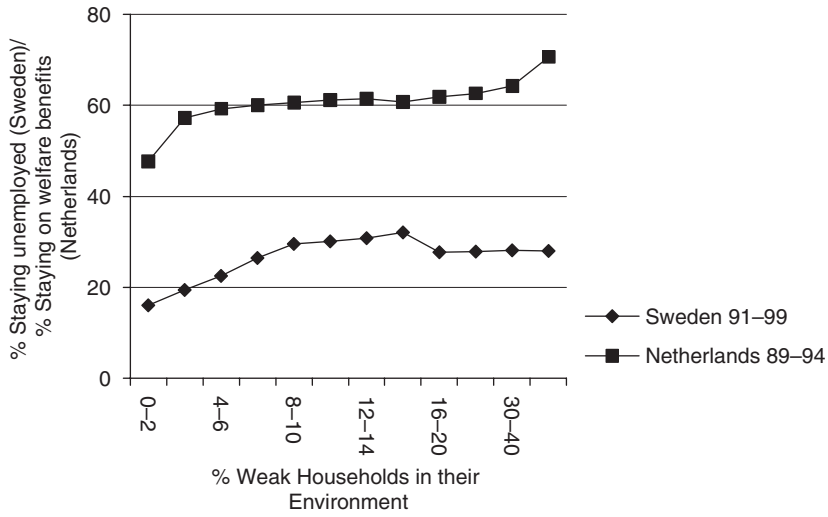

FIGURE 7

Neighborhood Effects in Sweden and the Netherlands
Sources. Andersson & Musterd, in press; Musterd et al., 2003.

CONCLUSIONS

In this article I presented material to support the ideas about more modest ethnic and social spatial segregation in Europe compared to the American situation. I have also shown that it is quite difficult to produce such a comparison. This is mainly due to the fact that Europe is highly fragmented in different states, with different welfare regimes, different economies, and different histories. This fragmentation is mirrored in the research world. Therefore, the findings from this endeavor are only indicative. It can be argued that ethnic and social spatial inequalities are more moderate in the European context. However, there are also big differences within Europe. Various explanations were suggested varying from the impact of the welfare state, via the specific historical paths that have been followed in different cities, to differences in the cultural realm.

Differences in terms of social inequality were partly held responsible for the different socio-economic and for some of the ethnic patterns. However, social inequality is an inadequate key-variable for the exploration of ethnic segregation. Peach (1999) illustrates that point for the UK, and the Galster versus Clark debate in the late 1980s illustrates that issue for the US.

Social inequality seems to have a stronger association with social spatial segregation. Yet, this is not a one-to-one relationship either. Over the 1990s, social inequality in the US rose as Burtless and Jencks (2003) recently noticed; yet social segregation decreased over the same time period. Moreover, we also showed that a low Gini coefficient is not a sufficient condition for a low level of segregation in the European context. Italian cities are characterized by relatively low levels of social segregation, while income inequality is rather high. The organization of the Italian welfare state, the Mediterranean type, seems to be relevant to understand this contradiction. Family networks, mutual care, and the role of various local institutions possibly keep the social strata together. Historical legacies play a big role in understanding these patterns, because, especially in the North of Italy, (extended) family networks do not play a significant role.

With regard to the potential effects of segregation, the European picture is far from clear. First, it should be recognized that the research world has still a long way to go. Only a few research projects have been carried out in which adequate data were available to allow for in depth analyses, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Therefore, it is difficult to argue about segregation or neighborhood effects in European cities. But even when data are available and where we find a relatively strong neighborhood effect, the policy response should not necessarily be directed at the neighborhoods with poverty concentrations only. Effects in certain environments need not be caused by the neighborhood (its housing stock or social composition). Societies (states), cities, neighborhoods, and citizens are interrelated systems and policy responses to neighborhood problems, therefore, should take these various units and levels into account simultaneously: (1) the welfare state at the national level; (2) the labor market, and economy at the regional and global levels (3) the social networks, socialization, and stigmatization processes at the local levels; and, (4) personal characteristics at the individual level. All probably play a role in understanding what is happening at the very local level. A strong focus on one policy solution or on segregation levels only, therefore, does not seem to be the proper response to locally developing problems.

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