Social mobility and integration of Amsterdam Jews: the ethnic niche of the diamond industry, 1850-1940

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Amsterdam and Her Jews

"The Jews of Amsterdam enjoyed, within the context of those times,
a great deal of tolerance which was at the essence of the city.
From refugees they became guests, from guests, citizens."

— Meyer Sluyser[1]

"...I feel like a Dutchman through and through;
A Dutchman among the Dutch, yet also Jewish among the Jews."

—Henri Polak[2]

2.1 Introduction

During the Dutch 'Golden Age,' Amsterdam became one of the most prosperous cities on earth as the capital of the first modern economy and a global network city.[3] Thousands of migrants and religious refugees came to Amsterdam for political and economic reasons.[4] However, in the post-'Golden Age' era, Amsterdam's economy frequently stagnated. In fact, during the first half of the nineteenth century, Amsterdam was in an economic slump and lagged behind other European capitals in terms of industrialisation.[5] The city did not offer the same economic opportunities it had offered in the seventeenth century when a third of its inhabitants was born abroad.[6] This changed in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Dutch economy, and particularly Amsterdam's, revived and flourished. Amsterdam's population grew rapidly and the city had to expand its borders repeatedly.

Amsterdam was where most Dutch Jews lived.[7] In the sixteenth and seventeenth century they settled in one part of the city, which became known as the *Jodenbuurt* ('Jewish Quarter'), where they remained clustered until the late nineteenth century.[8] The Amsterdam Jewish community, or communities rather, displayed great diversity. Wealthy Sephardim, 'Portuguese Jews'—Jews from the Iberian Peninsula—used their networks to provide important international trade nodes.[9] The more numerous and

[1] Meyer Sluyser, *Hun lach klinkt zo ver...* (Utrecht, 1959), 10.
[2] Quoted in Salvador Bloemgarten, "Henri Polak: jood en Nederlander," *Groniek* 115 (1991): 37.
[3] Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure, and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500-1815* (Cambridge, 1997).
[4] Leo Lucassen and Jan Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam, 1550-2021* (Amsterdam, 2021), 28.
[5] Jan Luiten van Zanden, *De industrialisatie in Amsterdam 1825-1914* (Bergen, 1987), 11.
[6] Lucassen and Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam*, 23, 102–3.
[7] Boekman, *Demografie van de Joden in Nederland*, 33–34.
[8] Van Engelsdorp Gastelaars, Vijgen, and Wagenaar, "Jewish Amsterdam 1600-1940."
[9] Jonathan Israel, "Sephardic Immigration into the Dutch Republic, 1595-1672," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 23 (1989): 45–53.

relatively poorer Ashkenazim—'High-German Jews' and later 'Dutch Israelites' from Germany and Central and Eastern Europe—were more commonly involved in lower levels of commerce.[10] Both communities were struck hard by the economic decline of Amsterdam's economy and trade position. Guild exclusion had made them dependent on commerce more than any other group in the Netherlands.[11] The stagnant economic growth and declining positioning of Amsterdam in international trade meant that Jewish political emancipation in 1796 initially had little impact on the economic lives of most Amsterdam Jews.[12] Later on, in the nineteenth century and twentieth century, Jews would make significant and often disproportionate impact on the city in all domains of life.

This chapter will examine the changing economic and social lives of Amsterdam's residents with a particular focus on her Jews. I will first provide a general overview of the occupational structure, demographics, and religious diversity in Amsterdam. Then, I will switch attention to the Jews and their specific demographic and economic structure and experiences in Amsterdam. Key in this chapter will also be Jews' integration into mainstream society. The discussion of general trends in Amsterdam combined with Jews' specific experiences provide an overview of the opportunity structure in which Amsterdam Jews, including the diamond workers, lived and worked. A discussion about diamond workers' lives and work is presented in Chapter 3. The current chapter will help us place the debate addressed in Chapter 1.3, in which opposing strands of scholarship have remarked on Jews' integration. It will also help us contextualise the analyses in Chapters 4 through 8.

2.2 Life and work in Amsterdam

2.2.1 *Population growth and religious diversity*

In 1500, Amsterdam was a small city in Holland with a population of roughly 10,000. Most inhabitants were Dutch-born as few immigrants had yet come from outside the County of Holland.[13] Amsterdam's population grew throughout the sixteenth century as the grain trade with countries around the Baltic sea increased.[14] The city became more religiously diverse when Holland joined the Revolt against Catholic Spain in 1578. Thousands of religious refugees, particularly from the southern Low Countries, saw this as a signal of Holland's tolerance. Immigration flows accelerated after people who joined the Revolt in Antwerp blocked access to the sea in 1585. This strengthened Amsterdam's already strong economic position by making it the main harbour in the North Sea region and soon all of the Atlantic Sea. Many immigrants were merchants, including a significant number of Sephardic Jews. Most merchants initially arrived with little capital but with strong trading networks, although some disembarked with significant wealth.[15] Newcomers came from all over Europe, including Jews from Spain and Portugal. They

[10] Jonathan Israel, "De Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden tot omstreeks 1750: demografie en economische activiteit," in *De Geschiedenis van de Joden in Nederland*, ed. Hans Blom et al. (Amsterdam, 2017), 98–130.
[11] Lucassen, "Joodse Nederlanders 1796-1940," 14.
[12] Sonnenberg-Stern, *Emancipation & Poverty*, 92.
[13] Lucassen and Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam*, 21.
[14] Milja van Tielhof, *The 'Mother' of All Trades': The Baltic Grain Trade in Amsterdam from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Century* (Leiden, 2002).
[15] Lucassen and Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam*, 26; see also Oscar Gelderblom, *Zuid-Nederlandse kooplieden en de opkomst van de Amsterdamse stapelmarkt (1578-1630)* (Hilversum, 2000).

were joined by Ashkenazi Jews who arrived in large numbers during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).[16] At the end of the seventeenth century, over ten thousand Huguenots chose to emigrate from newly-minted Catholic France. Thus, by the turn of the seventeenth century Amsterdam was a city full of diverse groups of immigrants with varying national backgrounds and religious beliefs.

From the sixteenth until the mid-eighteenth century, Amsterdam was one of Europe's most important trading hubs. The grain trade, known as the *Moedernegotie* ('Mother of all trade'), enabled Amsterdam to be a staple market. Goods were imported to Amsterdam and stored there and processed (like sugar) before being exported across Europe. Much of the manufacturing of goods that arrived from overseas and colonial trade, such as sugar and tobacco, occurred in Amsterdam. These industries needed workers. Additional labour demand was created by high mortality rates in urban centres like Amsterdam.[17] Immigrants largely filled this demand, particularly in occupations related to the manufacturing of clothing and the construction industry.[18] Amsterdam's religious diversity further stimulated the printing industry. During the seventeenth and early eighteenth century Amsterdam was the world's prime printing hub. The religious tolerance of Holland allowed nearly anything to be printed without censorship. Hundreds of Jewish books were published in Hebrew, Yiddish, Portuguese, and Spanish, alongside many publications by the French Huguenots.[19]

During the eighteenth century most of the descendants of seventeenth-century immigrants would become indistinguishable from the mainstream Dutch-Protestant population.[20] The largest exception were the Jews. Except for small Black and Asian communities that existed in Amsterdam, the Jews stood out as the most distinct of the Amsterdam's immigrants.[21] They were also on the receiving end of most dis-crimination.[22] Economic decline and worsening trade relations made Amsterdam a less attractive destination for immigrants, while those who arrived earlier increasingly moved away. In the eighteenth century, after centuries of growth, the population of Amsterdam shrunk from over 200,000 inhabitants in 1700 to 180,000 in 1814.[23]

[16] Yosef Kaplan, "Amsterdam and Ashkenazic Migration in the Seventeenth Century," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 23 (1989): 22–44.
[17] Leo Lucassen, "To Amsterdam: Migrations Past and Present," in *New York and Amsterdam: Immigration and the New Urban Landscape*, ed. Nancy Foner (New York, 2014), 57.
[18] Jan Luiten van Zanden, *The Rise and Decline of Holland's Economy: Merchant Capitalism and the Labour Market* (Manchester, 1993), 45–48.
[19] Harm Den Boer, "Amsterdam as 'Locus' of Iberian Printing in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History*, ed. Yosef Kaplan (Leiden, 2008), 87–110; Graham Gibbs, "The Role of the Dutch Republic as the Intellectual Entrepôt of Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review* 86.3 (1971): 323–49.
[20] Lucassen and Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam*, 42.
[21] Ibid., 38-39.
[22] Ibid., 43.
[23] Huibert Nusteling, *Welvaart en werkgelegenheid in Amsterdam, 1540-1860: een relaas over demografie, economie en sociale politiek van een wereldstad* (Amsterdam, 1985), 50–51.

2.2.2 *Occupational structure*

During the Dutch 'Golden Age,' Amsterdam was *the* hub for global trade flows. Roughly everyone profited from this, including workers, as indicated by their relatively high real wages. [24] However, Amsterdam's economy deteriorated in the second half of the eighteenth century.[25] England and France surpassed Holland in terms of military power and international commerce. Amsterdam, which relied heavily on overseas trade, suddenly saw its employment opportunities dwindle.[26] The French Period (1795-1813) further depreciated Amsterdam's economy.

The economy continued to struggle until roughly 1860. Guilds had excluded Jews but had also constrained Gentiles' ability to learn skilled trades. Thus, a majority of Amsterdam's mid-nineteenth-century population were unskilled or semi-skilled workers. [27] The new Kingdom of the Netherlands was a late industrialiser and Amsterdam was no exception.[28] Particularly important for industry was the trade and processing of colonial goods such as cocoa, sugar, coffee, tobacco, and diamonds. The sugar refineries were among the first to industrialise in Amsterdam. Jews hardly worked in this sector;[29] they more frequently manufactured cut diamonds or prepared cigars.[30] It were these two industries that saw periods of growth during the otherwise poor economic decades in the first half of the nineteenth century. This growth was pushed by the expansion of the supply side. The *Cultuurstelsel* ('Cultivation System') in Java—taxation in the form of export crops in the Dutch Indies—brought more Java-grown tobacco into Amsterdam, [31] whereas the diamond industry benefited from diamond deposit discoveries in Brazil in the 1840s and especially in South Africa in the 1860s.[32]

More significant changes can be seen when we examine the occupational censuses. These were conducted in 1809 and every ten years since 1849. The share of workers employed in each of Amsterdam's major industries are shown in Table 2.1. Between 1809 and 1920 the number of industrial labourers nearly quadrupled from roughly 30,200 to 118,800 workers. The largest nineteenth-century sector, the clothing and cleaning industries, were on the decline for most of the century. Large subsections, like the cobblers, struggled to compete with cheaper shoes produced in Brabant and Germany.[33] The leather processing industry struggled for the same reasons. As a whole, clothing production saw growth again from the end of the nineteenth century when ready-to-wear clothing became more widely produced and consumed. [34] This is a clothing subsector Jews entered in larger numbers.[35] Metal processing was on the rise throughout

[24] Robert Allen, "The Great Divergence in European Wages and Prices from the Middle Ages to the First World War," *Explorations in Economic History* 38 (2001): 411–47.
[25] Lucassen and Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam*, 102–3.
[26] Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford, 1995), 1079–87.
[27] Marco van Leeuwen, *The Logic of Charity* (London, 2000), 15.
[28] Van Zanden, *De industrialisatie in Amsterdam*.
[29] They were, however, frequently the owners of such sugar refineries. Herbert Bloom, *The Economic Activities of the Jews of Amsterdam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Williamsport, 1937), 36–40.
[30] Bloom, *The Economic Activities of the Jews*, 40–44, 61–64.
[31] Ulbe Bosma, "The Cultivation System (1830-1870) and Its Private Entrepreneurs on Colonial Java," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 38.2 (2007): 275–91.
[32] Karin Hofmeester, "Shifting Trajectories of Diamond Processing: From India to Europe and Back, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth," *Journal of Global History* 8.1 (2013): 42–44.
[33] Knotter, *Economische transformatie*, 215.
[34] Ibid., 147.
[35] Hofmeester, "'Als ik niet voor mijzelf ben…,'" 48–49.

the entire century. This sector primarily included the factories that produced machinery for other factories as well as the shipbuilding industry. Its growth was an important factor in, and result of, Amsterdam's growing industrialisation.[36]

TABLE 2.1 The share of employment in Amsterdam per industrial sector, 1806-1920.

	Year of census						
Industry	1806	1849	1859	1889	1899	1909	1920
Clothing and cleaning	31.9	27.8	23.8	17.7	19.2	20.3	21.3
Metal processing	6.6	9.5	12.1	12.2	14.2	15.1	19.2
Construction industry	19.4	20.1	20.3	22.0	19.3	17.7	16.1
Food and luxury production	12.4	14.4	14.5	14.1	16.8	16.8	14.3
Diamond industry[a]	1.9	3.2	4.1	16.5	12.8	10.5	9.0
Wood, cork, and straw processing	6.1	7.1	7.7	5.4	4.8	5.0	4.4
Graphic industry	3.2	3.4	4.2	4.3	4.1	4.8	4.4
Chemical industry	1.7	1.4	1.3	0.6	1.6	1.9	3.0
Lighting; gas and electricity[b]	0.8	0.6	0.5	1.0	1.2	2.5	3.1
Leather processing	6.7	7.3	6.5	4.6	4.0	3.2	2.5
Paper processing	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.2	1.6	2.0
Textile industry	2.8	0.9	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5
Shipbuilding[c]	6.2	4.1	4.7				
Total (in %)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N (in thousands)	30.2	30.7	38.4	63.0	80.0	97.2	118.8
Industry as percentage of total working population							
1. Excluding domestic services and labourers	53.3	53.7	57.1				
2. Including domestic services and labourers		42.8	46.9	41.0	45.4	42.8	39.8

Source: Van Zanden, *De industrialisatie van Amsterdam 1825-1914*, (1987): 80.
Note: [a] Including pottery, glass, and lime processing (less than 1 percent); [b] Up to and including 1859: lighting, oil, fat, and soap production; from 1889 onwards utility companies; [c] Included in metal processing since 1889.

The diamond industry was clearly unique in its growth pattern. It grew from employing less than 2 percent of all industrial workers in 1806 to employing one in six in 1889. At this point it was the third-largest industrial sector in Amsterdam, following clothing and cleaning and the construction industry. From then onwards the relative share of the diamond industry declined as the number of workers in this industry remained fixed at roughly 10,000 despite continuous population growth. Nonetheless, it remained the fifth-largest industrial sector until 1920. After 1920 the industry declined rapidly due to the competition from Antwerp's diamond centre.

Another, more micro approach to understanding shifts in the occupational structure is to use nominal historical research. In his 1991 dissertation, Ad Knotter utilised conscription records of 19 and 20-year-old men to estimate the changing occupational

[36] Van Zanden, *De industrialisatie in Amsterdam*, 96–97.

structure of Amsterdam men between 1830 and 1900.[37] The Amsterdam marriage certificates enable a similar approach. Using marriage certificates from 1830 up to 1932, we can use grooms' occupations at the time of their marriage as an indicator of which industries were growing or on the decline. Rather than look at 19-year-olds, we will look at 18-to-39-year olds, men in relatively early stages of their careers marrying for the first time. Additional data allows me to also state accurately within marriage certificates which grooms and brides were Jewish and who were Gentiles.[38] Occupational differences between Jews and non-Jews will be discussed in more detail further in this chapter. In this next subsection we will observe how the occupational structure changed for all Amsterdam men.

Changing social classes

As we saw, early-nineteenth-century Amsterdam was mostly comprised of unskilled and low-skilled workers. We see this reflected in Figure 2.1, which shows the percentage of grooms across five social classes. Until mid-century, half of all grooms worked as unskilled (Panel E) or semi-skilled workers (D). The improvement in the economic conditions in Amsterdam are reflected in the changes in all social classes since roughly 1860. Unskilled workers are on the decline, dropping from 30 percent of all grooms in the period 1860-1864 to 16 percent in 1925-1929. These men were increasingly getting absorbed in skilled work (C) and as lower professionals and managers (B) in the expanding office sector. Similarly, at the tail end of the period, men who would in the past have become skilled workers were now also increasingly moving into work as lower professionals in commerce, in service, or in the growing government apparatus. Since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Amsterdam was increasingly becoming a city of services.

The occupational upgrading of Amsterdam's young men can also be seen when looking at the plotted average occupational scores of all Amsterdam grooms (panel F). From 1830 until 1860 a clear downward trend is shown. This coincides with the worsening economic conditions in Amsterdam. From 1860 onwards, the average occupational score is increasing continuously with two exceptions; the economic crisis in 1889-1890 and the start of World War I in 1914. While 1860 is seen as the point at which Amsterdam's economy recovered from a century-long decline, the period of growth in the occupational scores coincides with the expansion of most industries, in particular the expansion of the diamond industry.

Main changing occupational groups

At a large scale, we have now seen opportunities in Amsterdam's industries were improving. The diamond industry and ready-to-wear clothing branches changed the opportunity structure for both native Amsterdammers and immigrants. But which occupations were changing the most?

[37] Knotter, *Economische transformatie*.
[38] Discussed in Appendix A.

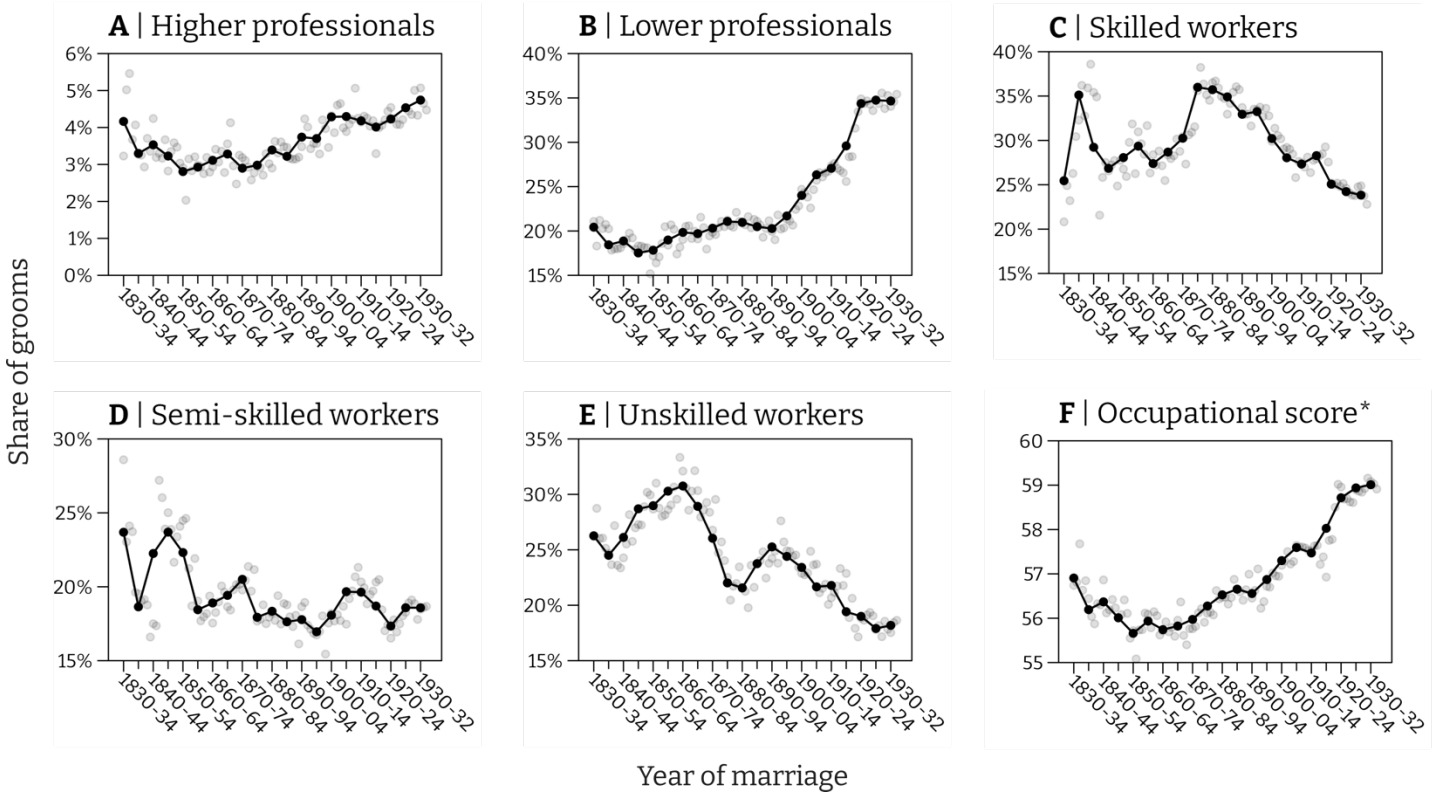

FIGURE 2.1 The share of grooms per social class and average HISCAM-score, Amsterdam 1830-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Cleaned Civil Registry" 2022 release; https://hdl.handle.net/10622/ON0SRY.
Note: the sample is limited to men marrying in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and listed with a valid occupation; * y-axis is average occupational score (HISCAM); dark points and thick line represent five-year average (e.g. 1830-1834), grey points yearly values.

Using the marriage certificates, we can observe trends in the share of grooms reporting work in each occupational group. 20 HISCO minor groups, the first two digits of the HISCO code (see Section 1.4.4), counted at least 2 percent of all Amsterdam grooms in a given 5-year period. The trends between 1850 and 1932 are reported for each of these 20 occupational groups in Appendix B. Some occupational groups employed roughly the same share of Amsterdam's men over time, while others were either on the decline or on the rise. The two most notable increases are shown in Figure 2.2 below. The diamond industry (Panel B), which had only been the listed occupation for 3 percent of men before 1870, rose to employing 9 percent of men in the 1880s and 1890s. At that point the industry had reached its full capacity. Subsequently, the share of men working in this industry at the time of their marriage dropped rapidly, falling to 1 percent in the early 1930s. The other large growth is seen in the group of office workers. This was a relatively small group in 1850, being the profession for 2 percent of Amsterdam men, but was the occupation for one in eight men during the 1920s.

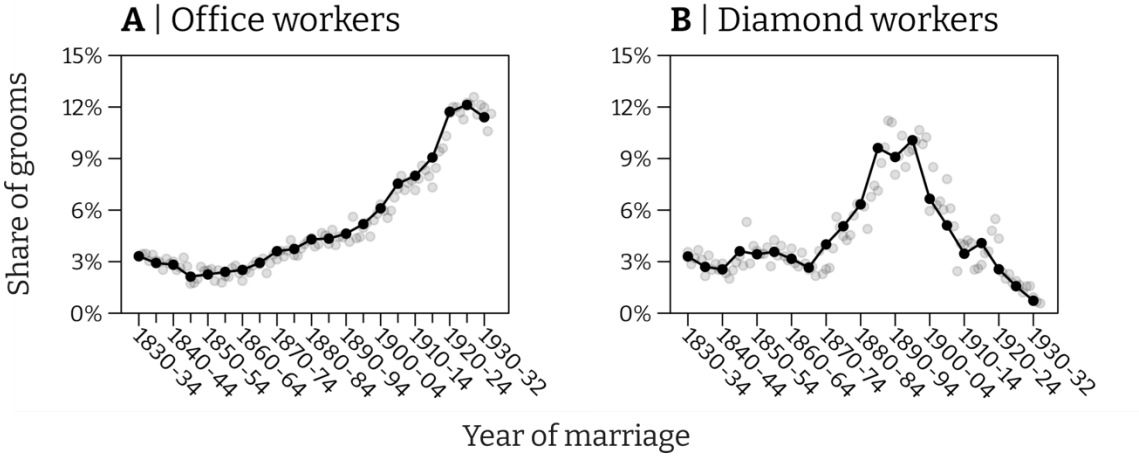

FIGURE 2.2 The share of grooms occupied in two rapidly changing occupations, Amsterdam 1830-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Cleaned Civil Registry" 2022 release.
Note: the sample is limited to men marrying in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and listed with a valid occupation; dark points and thick line represent five-year average (e.g. 1830-1834), grey points yearly values.

Overall, we see a widening of opportunities in Amsterdam. A variety of industrial occupations became more common in the nineteenth century, with the diamond industry at the forefront. Then, in the twentieth century, industrial and unskilled work was rapidly on the decline in favour of office and service work. To understand to what extent Jews were able to profit from these changes, we will now return to the eighteenth century to discuss how Amsterdam Jews' lives and occupational structure changed over time.

2.3 Jewish Emancipation and Legacies of Discrimination

The first Sephardic Jews to permanently settle in Amsterdam arrived at the start of the 'Golden Age' around 1600. The Ashkenazim arrived in the mid-seventeenth century and in larger numbers, especially in the first half of the eighteenth century.[39] The two groups were about the same size right before the turn of the eighteenth century but the Ashkenazim outnumbered the Sephardim nearly five times by 1750.[40] Both communities were struck hard by the economic decline at the end of the eighteenth century. Particularly the Ashkenazim, arriving more recently and with less wealth and trading connections, suffered economically. Guild exclusion forced them to take up one of few available occupations, especially petty trade.[41] During this time, Jews were denied full citizenship in the Dutch Republic, including Amsterdam, and primarily seen as urban members of a 'Jewish Nation.'

This changed in 1795 during the Batavian Republic when the pro-*Patriotten* association *Felix Libertate* was founded with the goal to emancipate the Jews.[42] Members were primarily

[39] Israel, "De Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden tot omstreeks 1750," 102–7, 115.
[40] Ibid., 115.
[41] Lucassen, "Joodse Nederlanders 1796-1940," 38.
[42] Irene Zwiep, "De naties worden burgers. Joods leven in de Lage Landen in de schaduw van de Verlichting (1750-1814)," in *Geschiedenis van de Joden in Nederland*, ed. Johan Blom et al. (Amsterdam, 2017), 204.

of Ashkenazi origin, although one-third of members were non-Jews. The leaders of this organisation had struggled to win over the traditional Jewish leaders. The rabbis wanted to keep things as they had been before. Nonetheless, Felix Libertate succeeded in getting a vote for Jewish emancipation in 1796. The *Decreet over den Gelykstaat der Joden met alle andere Burgers* ('Decree for the Emancipation of Jews with all other Citizens') was accepted in the 'First National Meeting'[43] later that year. No longer was there a formal basis to exclude Jews from public office, voting rights, or limit their settlement across the country. Soon after, Hermannus Leonard Bromet (1724-1812) and Hartog de Hartog Lémon (1755-1823), co-founders of Felix Libertate, became the first Jewish parliamentarians. While the decree was accepted unanimously, numerous speakers questioned the double loyalty of Jews.[44] Other points of complaint raised were the economic competition that would be offered by Jews if they were to enter mainstream occupations. Nonetheless, on paper the emancipation provided Jews, as well as Catholics and other religious minority groups, with equal rights. After the decree had been accepted, members of the Felix Libertate asked for the statutes of the Jewish community to be revised. The *parnassiem*, leaders of the Jewish community, refused. The disagreement led to a temporary split of the Ashkenazi community into the traditional *Alte Kille* ('old community') and the progressive *Neie Kille* ('new community') in 1808.[45] The divide is symbolic for the divide in the community; not all Jews were in favour of emancipation.

Until then, Dutch-Jewish communities had always been independently governed; hence the 'Jewish Nations.' This had allowed them to act autonomously with regards to social care and legal and religious matters related to the 'citizens of the Jewish Nation.' Lodewijk Napoleon, the new ruler of the Kingdom of Holland, aimed to end this dichotomy. In 1808 this led to the *Opperconsistorie* ('Supreme Consistory'), a new Jewish governing body following the lead of the French *Consistoire Central* formed earlier that year. This *Opperconsistorie* had to govern the country's Jews; the new governors were predominantly enlightened and progressive Jews, led by Jonas Daniël Meijer (1780-1834). Napoleon merged the two Ashkenazi communities and gave preferential positions and treatment to the leaders of the *Neie Kille*. This was aimed at getting rid of the poverty connected to the Dutch Jews, as well as to aid their integration into new Dutch society. In 1810, when the Kingdom of Holland was merged with France, the *Opperconsistorie* was replaced with the *Consistoire Central.*

Willem Frederik of Orange, the next ruler of Holland since 1813, needed to deal with the divide created in the Jewish community and find a replacement for the *Opperconsistorie* and *Consistoire Central*. Traditional Jewish leaders wanted to return to pre-Emancipation conditions; enlightened leaders wanted to continue building on their newly acquired rights. Willem Frederik supported the latter group and established the new *Israëlitisch kerkgenootschap* ('Israelite Church Community') with the same governing structure as the Protestant churches. The 'Israelite church,' like the other churches, fell under the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The government was therefore able to push for and implement enlightened policies regarding religion directly. Both the *Alte* and *Neie Kille* as well as the Sephardic community were now merged into one.[46] This new community was moderately Orthodox but its' leaders had as goal to fully incorporate

[43] This was a temporary parliament in 1796 until 1797.
[44] Zwiep, "De naties worden burgers," 203.
[45] Tirtsah Levie Bernfeld and Bart Wallet, *Canon van 700 jaar Joods Nederland* (Zutphen, 2023), 109.
[46] Wallet, "'Godsdienstzin, beschaving en arbeidzaamheid,'" 228–31.

Jews into Dutch society. They aimed for Jews to build a new identity where Jews were Jewish *and* Dutch, as well as patriotic. While this new structure came under pressure through a new constitution in 1848, which separated church and state, a new structure was not introduced until 1870.

2.4 Jewish Population Dynamics in Amsterdam From the 18th Century Onwards

In the first half of the eighteenth century, the population of Jews in Amsterdam had grown considerably. Since the mid-eighteenth century, the Amsterdam-Jewish community was the largest relative representation of Jews in a Western European city. Roughly half of all Dutch Jews lived in Amsterdam. From the moment of Jewish emancipation in 1796 until 1941, the Amsterdam population quadrupled from roughly 200,000 to nearly 800,000 inhabitants. Jews continuously comprised between 8 and 12 percent of that population (Table 2.2).

The first development to note is a decline in the percentage of Jews in Amsterdam in the first half of the nineteenth century. Since the emancipation abolished limitations on Jewish settlement across the country, Jews could now legally settle anywhere they pleased. Economic hardships in Amsterdam motivated nearly 20 percent of the Amsterdam-Jewish population to emigrate to other places in *de Mediene* ('the countryside' in Dutch Yiddish)[47] between 1796 and 1859. There they often acted as commercial middlemen, supplying goods produced in urban centres to rural localities and selling products from the countryside in the cities. This would also help Jews build newer economic niches later on.[48] These rural Jewish communities required Jewish butchers and bakers for 'traditional food' according to Jewish dietary laws, as well as Jewish educators. During the same period, Amsterdam Jews also moved to Britain, the United States, and the Dutch colonies.[49] Here they generally continued their industrial work as cigar makers or diamond cutters. However, economic progress in Amsterdam as well as expanding train networks, which increased connectivity between urban and rural centres, eliminated the viability of such middlemen positions.[50] In the second half of the nineteenth century, most Jews who had left for the countryside or England, or their offspring, returned to Amsterdam. The growth of the diamond industry may have been another pull factor, but only after 1870. By 1920, the Amsterdam-Jewish community was larger in relative terms than it had been a century earlier.

[47] In this *Mediene* was used more generally to mean the hinterland of a place, such as 'Zwolle and its mediene.' See Ibid., 225.
[48] Henriëtte Boas, "Joden en de Nederlandse textielindustrie," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 25.1 (1991): 83–90.
[49] Wallet, "'Godsdienstzin, beschaving en arbeidzaamheid,'" 226; Robert Swierenga, *The Forerunners: Dutch Jewry in the North American Diaspora* (Detroit, 1994), 41–42.
[50] Kruijt, "Het Jodendom in de Nederlandse samenleving," 203–4.

TABLE 2.2 The total and Jewish populations of Amsterdam, 1795-1941

Year	Amsterdam population	Jews in Amsterdam	Jews as % of Amsterdam population	Ashkenazi Jews as % of Amsterdam Jews	Jews in the Netherlands	Amsterdam Jews as % of Dutch Jews
1795	221,000	25,000	11.31		*40,000*	*62.50*
1809	201,714	21,441	10.63			54.15
1840	223,114	23,176	10.39		52,245	44.36
1849	224,035	25,156	11.23	89.1	58,626	43.08
1859	243,304	26,725	10.98	89.9	63,790	41.89
1869	264,694	29,952	11.32	89.3	68,003	44.04
1879	317,011	40,318	12.72	91.8	81,693	49.36
1889	408,061	54,479	13.35	91.7	97,324	55.97
1899	510,853	59,065	11.56	91.7	103,988	56.41
1909	566,131	60,970	10.77	92.1	106,409	57.30
1920	647,427	67,249	10.39	92.8	115,223	58.36
1930	757,386	65,523	8.65	93.1	111,917	58.55
1941	800,541	79,497	9.93		*140,000*	56.78

Source: Volkstellingen 1795-1930; Gemeentelijst 1941; Boekman, *Demografie van de Joden* (1936): 17; Michman, Beem, and Michman, *Pinkas* (1985): 284.
Note: numbers in *italics* are estimates.

The increasing share of Ashkenazim amid the Amsterdam Jews between 1849 and 1889 suggests that these migration flows to and from the *Mediene* were dominated by Ashkenazi Jews. The Ashkenazim also more generally settled outside of Amsterdam. While the Sephardim comprised 5 percent of Dutch Jews nationally, their share of Amsterdam Jews in the mid-nineteenth century exceeded 10 percent. As most Ashkenazi Jews returned to Amsterdam from their temporary rural residences across the country, their percentage rose again to 93 percent by 1930. Since the end of the nineteenth century, marriages between Sephardim and Ashkenazim saw the Sephardim's share drop even further.[51]

2.4.1 *Pioneers in demographic changes*

In historical research, Jews have been described as pioneers of several demographic patterns.[52] Before the first demographic transition—a period of rapid mortality and fertility decline[53]—Jews married at relatively early ages and had larger families than

[51] Boekman, *Demografie van de Joden in Nederland*, 21, 65–66.
[52] Livi-Bacci Massimo, "Social-Group Forerunners of Fertility Control in Europe," in *The Decline of Fertility in Europe*, ed. Susan Cotts Watkins (Princeton, 1986), 182–200.
[53] For a discussion of fertility decline during the first demographic transition in the Netherlands, see Hilde Bras, "Structural and Diffusion Effects in the Dutch Fertility Transition, 1870-1940," *Demographic Research* 30 (2014): 151–186.

Gentiles.[54] Their marriages showcased stronger connections with family[55] and Jewish mothers were known to breastfeed more frequently and for longer periods,[56] a phenomenon that has been used to explain lower Jewish infant mortality despite higher levels of population density and residential deprivation in Jewish neighbourhoods.[57] Although conclusions regarding Dutch Jews' pioneering status in the first demographic transition are mixed, it is clear that Jews underwent some of the most intense changes over time. After the transition, which occurred sometime during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Jews were more likely to remain unmarried, married at older ages when they did—compared with both earlier generations of Jews and the average Gentile—had smaller families, and showed greater increases in birth spacing and earlier birth stopping.[58] These trends were especially pronounced for more integrated Jews.[59]

High life expectancy and low levels of childbirth caused the Jewish population, which was older due to their migration patterns in earlier centuries, to become even older on average.[60] The Jewish population was also skewed towards a greater number of women. Since intermarriage rates indicate that Jewish women were less likely to out-marry than Jewish men, Jewish women instead remained unmarried more frequently.[61] These women were therefore in greater need for work to sustain themselves and their aging parents. How this affected their career chances and (co-)residential trajectories will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

2.4.2 *German and Eastern European Jews*

International Jewish migrants and refugees more clearly preferred urban centres. While the autochthonous Jewish community in Amsterdam could have made it an attractive location for Jewish newcomers, other large European cities offered more appealing opportunities. Thus, few Eastern European Jews settled in Amsterdam after the 1881 pogroms in the Pale of Settlement.[62] While many Jews passed through the Netherlands, most of them were on route to the United States, Great Britain, or Latin America. These

[54] Jona Schellekens and Frans van Poppel, "Religious Differentials in Marital Fertility in The Hague (Netherlands) 1860–1909," *Population Studies* 60.1 (2006): 23–38.
[55] Frans van Poppel and Marloes Schoonheim, "Measuring Cultural Differences between Religions Using Network Data. An Example Based on Nineteenth-Century Dutch Marriage Certificates," *Annales de Démographie Historique* 109.1 (2005): 173–97.
[56] Abraham Israëls, "De sterfte der kinderen in de drie eerste jaren des levens te Amsterdam, in de jaren 1850-1859," *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde* 6 (1862): 289–99; Herman Pinkhof, "Onderzoek naar de kindersterfte onder de geneeskundig bedeelden te Amsterdam," *Nederlandsch Tijdschrift voor Geneeskunde* 51 (1907): 1174–83.
[57] Peter Ekamper and Frans van Poppel, "Infant Mortality in Mid - 19th Century Amsterdam: Religion, Social Class, and Space," *Population, Space and Place* 25.4 (2019): 1–21; Tim Riswick, Sanne Muurling, and Katalin Buzasi, "Exploring the Mortality Advantage of Jewish Neighbourhoods in Mid-19th Century Amsterdam," *Demographic Research* 46 (2022): 723–36.
[58] Jan Van Bavel and Jan Kok, "Birth Spacing in the Netherlands. The Effects of Family Composition, Occupation and Religion on Birth Intervals, 1820–1885," *European Journal of Population* 20 (2004): 119–40.
[59] Peter Tammes and Frans van Poppel, "The Impact of Assimilation on the Family Structure of Jews in Amsterdam, 1880–1940," *Journal of Family History* 37.4 (2012): 395–416.
[60] Boekman, *Demografie van de Joden in Nederland*, 43–44.
[61] Jan Kok has argued that Jews were not more but less prone to celibacy. However, this of course depends on the local marriage market. See Kok, "Church Affiliation and Life Course Transitions," 71–72.
[62] Karin Hofmeester, "De immigratie van Oost-Europese joden in Amsterdam: omvang, aard en vestiging," in *Oostjoodse Passanten en Blijvers. Aankomst, opvang, transmigratie en vestiging van Joden uit Rusland in Amsterdam en Rotterdam, 1882-1914*, ed. Peter Tammes (Amsterdam, 2013), 51–72.

Jews predominantly travelled through Amsterdam and Rotterdam.[63] Dutch Jews established charitable organisations to help pay for their ongoing passages. Although small communities of Eastern European Jews formed in Amsterdam, they remained largely removed from the Amsterdam Jews. Eastern European Jewish newcomers were less acculturated, more Orthodox, and struggled to communicate due to the language barrier.[64] Between 1880 and 1914, an estimated 1200 Eastern European Jews settled in Amsterdam,[65] whereas the native Jewish community exceeded 60,000.

The end of this period marked the start of new Jewish international inflows. Belgian refugees, including many Jews, fled to the Netherlands during the First World War. Their temporary settlements were predominantly located in Scheveningen on the west coast of the Netherlands.[66] Among the refugees were a large number of diamond workers who started their own diamond industry in the coastal city. In the 1930s more German Jews arrived. Overall, however, the Amsterdam Jews were largely unaffected by these new migrant groups. Although their arrival raised new questions regarding their identification as Jews, interactions between native and refugee Jews were limited.

Other than refugees, Jews also arrived in Amsterdam seeking economic opportunities. Like German Jews, albeit in much smaller numbers than in earlier centuries, throughout the nineteenth century. The wealthier newcomers among them contributed considerably to the modernisation of the Amsterdam economy. Later in this chapter we will see how several German Jews became important employers of Amsterdam Jews in department stores and fashion houses.

2.5 Continuity and Change in the Jewish Occupational Structure

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Amsterdam Jews' occupational structure was constrained by guild exclusion and lack of social ties in most industrial sectors. Jews therefore worked predominantly as merchants and traders or as peddlers.[67] Industrial work was limited to segments without guild interference, notably the processing of goods imported from colonial trade. Most importantly, these included the diamond and tobacco industries. Few Jews worked in the manufacturing process of sugar or cotton,[68] the latter being only a minor industry in Amsterdam. In the graphic industry, which was fuelled by the religious diversity of Amsterdam, Jews also excelled internationally. Nonetheless, these industries offered only limited employment to Jews. Far more often Jewish men and women worked as porters or carters, generally at the docks.[69] This occupational profile continued for at least another half century—except for several periods of booms and crises in the manufacturing of tobacco and diamonds which

[63] Peter Tammes, "Aankomst en opvang van Oostjoden in Amsterdam en Rotterdam," in *Oostjoodse Passanten en Blijvers. Aankomst, opvang, transmigratie en vestiging van Joden uit Rusland in Amsterdam en Rotterdam, 1882-1914*, ed. Peter Tammes (Amsterdam, 2013), 15–50.
[64] Eastern European Jews primarily spoke Yiddish, while Amsterdam Jews had largely replaced Yiddish with Dutch in the first half of the nineteenth century.
[65] Hofmeester, "De immigratie van Oost-Europese joden in Amsterdam," 55–57.
[66] For a discussion on Jewish life and Belgian diamond workers in Scheveningen, see Wim Willems and Hanneke Verbeek, *Hier woonden wij: hoe een stad zijn joodse verleden herontdekt* (Amsterdam, 2015).
[67] Lionel Kochan, *The Making of Western Jewry, 1600-1819* (Basingstoke, 2004), 149.
[68] Bloom, *The Economic Activities of the Jews*, 33–36, 36–40.
[69] These numbers should be considered carefully, since half of all relief-drawing Jews reported in this source were considered 'elderly,' 'ill,' or 'infirm.' It is unclear how many of the employed Jews belonged to these categories. See Van Leeuwen, *The Logic of Charity*, 107–12.

caused fluctuations in their labour forces—despite the emancipation of Jews and the abolition of guilds.[70]

During the first half of the nineteenth century, repeated calls came for enabling artisanal work for Jews.[71] In 1825, the *Nederlands Israëlitisch Armbestuur* ('Dutch Israelite Poor Relief Board') was introduced to curb the power of the *parnassijns* and to further the economic conditions of the Jews.[72] Jews in dire poverty were sent to the 'Colonies of Charity,' rural areas where Jews could learn agriculture or a 'useful' occupation, or to Suriname.[73] In 1849 the *Maatschappij tot Nut der Israëlieten in Nederland* ('Society for the Public Welfare of Jews') was established in Amsterdam, based on a similar society founded in 1784 but which had excluded Jews from becoming members. The Jewish *Maatschappij tot Nut* had as goal to improve schooling, 'civilisation,' and social mobility of Jews.[74] They helped Jewish children to be placed with Gentile craftsmen. The Amsterdam section was, however, less successful than the one in The Hague. Jews who learned trades that had not been considered Jewish before were used as a symbol that Jewish economic and social integration was possible. However, their number remained numerically insignificant.

2.5.1 *Occupations, social classes, and occupational scores of Jewish grooms since 1820*

To get a better grasp of the exact changes that occurred and their timing, we now turn to longitudinal occupational changes of Jews and Gentiles. These changes over time can be observed through the marriage certificates. We have already seen how they can show the changing occupational structure and social classes of Amsterdam. Now we will split grooms into Jews and Gentiles based on their and their parents' given names and surnames.[75] This will enable us to study the changing occupational scores, classes, and specific occupational titles by ethno-religious group.

Jewish occupational changes

The occupational upgrading of Amsterdam Jews in the nineteenth and early twentieth century was a story consisting of multiple parts. First, it required replacing unskilled work with higher-status manual labour. This occurred in the decades around the mid-nineteenth century when Jews increasingly found work as tobacco or diamond workers. The *Bahía hausse* (1845-1855) and *Cape Time* (1870-1876) periods first allowed hundreds and then thousands of Jews to enter the high-paying occupation of diamond worker. However, the share of grooms working in the diamond industry declined since 1900. This was the direct result of a temporary ban on apprenticeships implemented by the ANDB. The other significant industrial activity for Jews was the tobacco industry. This industry

[70] Sonnenberg-Stern, *Emancipation & Poverty*, 164.
[71] These calls had already started in the seventeenth century. In 1642, the Sephardic organization Avodat Chesed aimed to help Ashkenazim learn a trade; Yosef Kaplan, "De joden in de Republiek tot omstreeks 1750: religieus, cultureel en sociaal leven," in *De Geschiedenis van de Joden in Nederland*, ed. Hans Blom et al. (Amsterdam, 2017), 138–39.
[72] Marco van Leeuwen, "Arme Amsterdamse joden en de strijd om hun integratie aan het begin van de negentiende eeuw," in *De Gelykstaat der Joden*, ed. Hetty Berg (Amsterdam, 1996), 55–66.
[73] Wallet, "'Godsdienstzin, beschaving en arbeidzaamheid,'" 226, 253.
[74] Ibid., 253.
[75] For a discussion of this data, see Chapter 1.4 (Data) and Appendix A.

grew since 1830 after the import of raw tobacco increased from Java.[76] In 1850, nearly one in ten Jews worked in the tobacco industry and slightly more than one in five worked in diamonds. Since the 1870s, the tobacco industry became a good backup position for diamond workers in times of unemployment or if they could not find work in the diamond industry due to a lack of connections.[77]

Figure 2.3 illustrates how the growth in the number of Jewish tobacco and diamond workers coincided with the decline in the two most important unskilled occupations Jews worked in: carters and peddlers. The tobacco and diamond industries allowed Jews, who would in an alternative timeline have worked as unskilled workers, to gain employment in a skilled occupation. Although a quarter of the Jewish poor had reported to work as carters in 1809,[78] by the 1870s virtually no young Jewish men reported working in this occupation anymore. Peddlers never disappeared completely but saw a massive reduction from the beginning of the 1820s, when one in five Jewish grooms worked as a peddler, up to 1870, when only one in thirty Jews peddled for a living. However, this is not the entire story, because the changes seen among carters and peddlers was partially a semantic one; we see much smaller declines, and even small increases, for porters and Jewish day labourers.[79]

After 1900 the share of Jewish grooms that worked in the diamond industry saw a drastic decline. In the 1880s and 1890s over 40 percent of marrying Jewish men had worked in this industry. In the early 1930s only 5 percent did. This shift meant that other economic sectors were increasingly attracting Jewish men in the twentieth century. Figure 2.4 depicts four occupations that were on the rise among Jewish men at the end of the nineteenth century. Jews had always worked as merchants, but the share of Jewish merchants had declined during the growth of the diamond industry. From the 1890s onwards, Jews were increasingly listed as merchants again. More unique to the Jews was the occupation of 'commercial traveller.' This can be seen as an upgrading of the middlemen positions Jews had occupied since the start of the nineteenth century. These men travelled to other cities to sell products, generally for the growing number of firms in Amsterdam, but often at their own costs.[80] The related occupation 'commercial representatives' or 'commissionaires' saw a similar but less dramatic growth among Jews. They travelled to represent companies in other cities.

[76] This was the result of the Cultuurstelsel, see Bosma, "The Cultivation System."
[77] Knotter, *Economische transformatie*, 190.
[78] Van Leeuwen, *The Logic of Charity*, 111.
[79] See Figure B2 in Appendix B for the overall group of Jewish unskilled workers. See Figure B1 in Appendix B for the figures for each (important) occupational title.
[80] Bob Reinalda, "Bedienden georganiseerd. Ontstaan en ontwikkeling van de vakbeweging van handels- en kantoorbedienden in Nederland van het eerste begin tot in de Tweede Wereldoorlog" (PhD diss., Groningen University, 1981), 136–39.

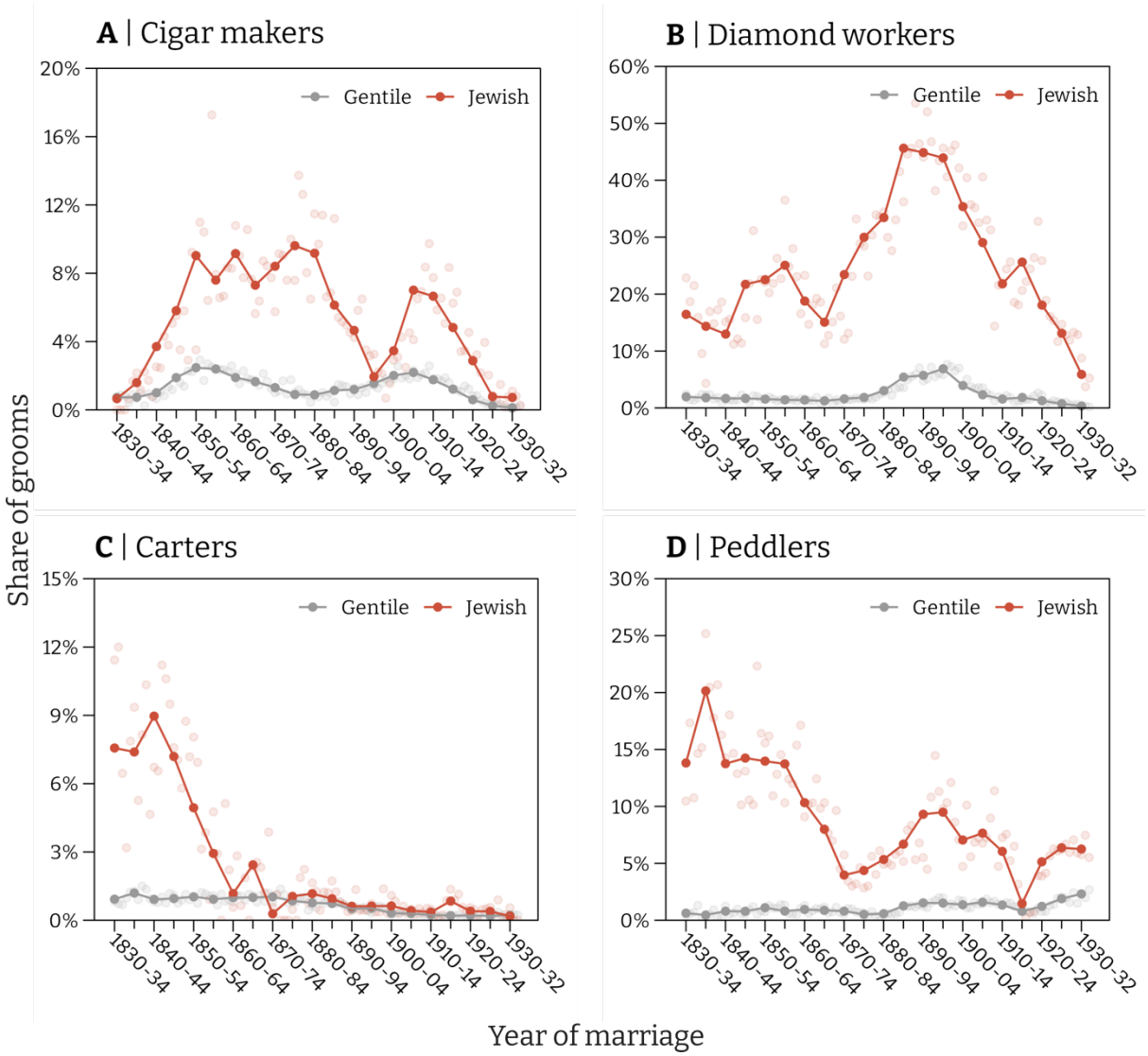

FIGURE 2.3 The share of Jewish and Gentile grooms occupied as cigar makers, diamond workers, carters, and peddlers, Amsterdam 1830-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Cleaned Civil Registry" 2022 release and JNI approach.
Note: the sample is limited to men, identified as either Jew or Gentile, marrying in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and listed with a valid occupation; dark points and thick line represent five-year average (e.g. 1830-1834), transparent points yearly values. The scale of the y-axis varies by panel.

Lower in the class distribution we find department store employees and tailors. Warehouse clerks' tasks are hard to define and range from stocking inventory and shelves to being a salesperson in a shop or department store. Initially not an occupation that Jews were overrepresented in, the result of few large Jewish employers in Amsterdam, this became an occupation that a larger percentage of Jews than Gentiles were found in the twentieth century. The rapid increase since the 1890s can be explained by the growing number of Jewish-owned stores. Several of these large stores were targeted towards clothing. Confection clothing was on the rise and Jews were able to obtain a large share of the employment in this industry. Jews were especially

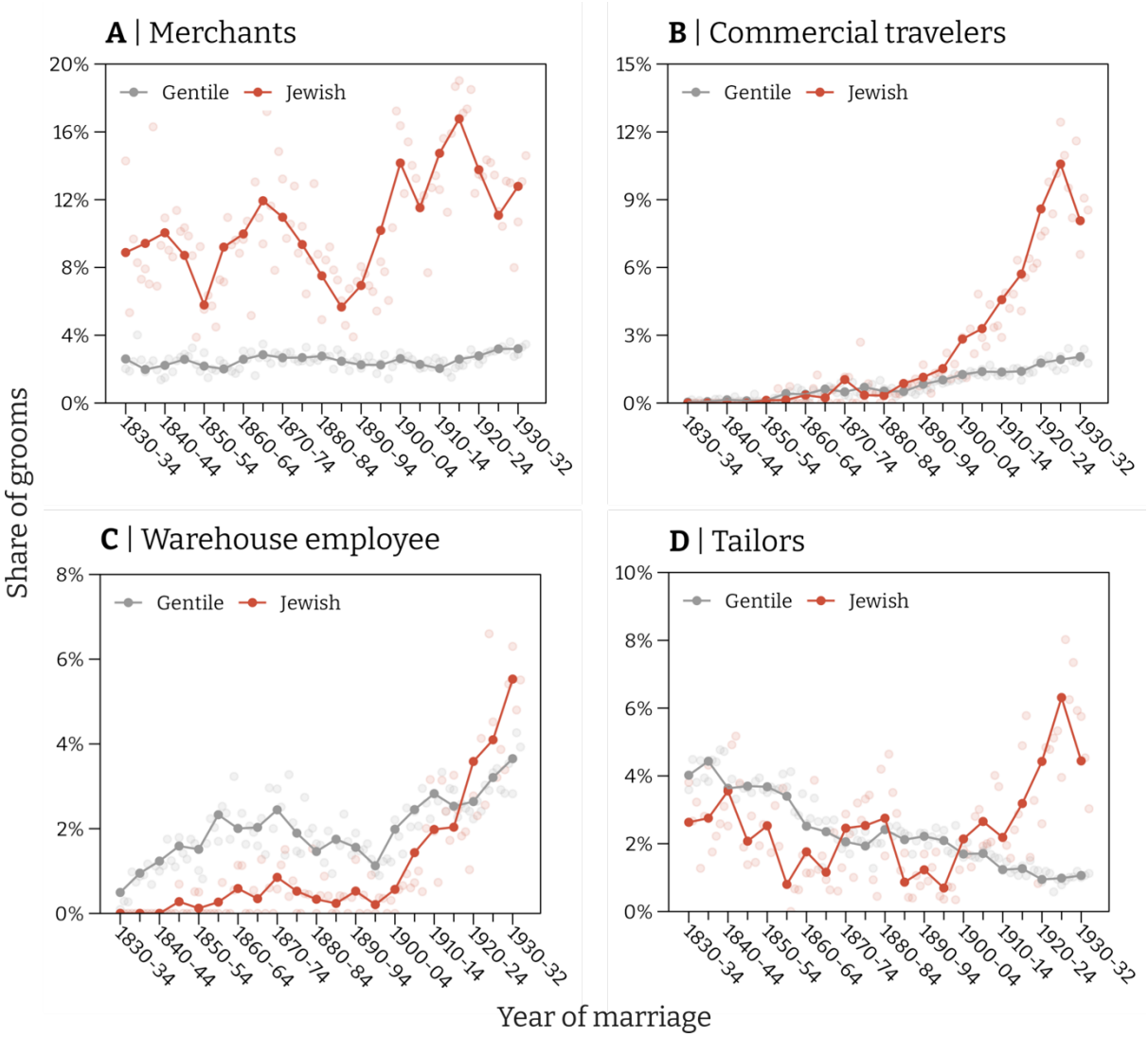

FIGURE 2.4 The share of Jewish and Gentile grooms occupied as merchants, commercial travellers, warehouse employees, and tailors, 1830-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Cleaned Civil Registry" 2022 release and JNI approach.
Note: the sample is limited to men, identified as either Jew or Gentile, marrying in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and listed with a valid occupation; dark points and thick line represent five-year average (e.g. 1830-1834), transparent points yearly values. The scale of the y-axis varies by panel.

concentrated in the production of fur clothing, underwear, hats and caps, and ready-to-wear garments for both men and women.[81]

Occupational upgrading in the Jewish community moved along different lines and evolved over generations. Whereas generations of men growing into adulthood in the nineteenth century increasingly entered the Jewish (semi-)skilled niches of tobacco and diamonds, subsequent generations of young men in the twentieth century increasingly found better work in commerce, such as commercial travellers and agents, while also widening their occupational distribution by entering new subsegments of occupational

[81] Based on the occupational census of 1930. Within the category 'clothing and sanitation' Jews were over-represented in virtually all segments.

groups they had before been underrepresented in. This occurred in the clothing branch, among upholsterers, but also the production of wooden frames, among butchers and bakers, and in upper-class positions such as lawyers, doctors, journalists and teachers.[82] Jews became less dependent on specific niches and became distributed more and represented better across the entire social stratification.

Changing occupational scores

The occupational scores allow us to put a numeric value on the average occupational status of Jews and Gentiles. This is helpful to summarise economic changes within a group over time in a single measure. More specific changes in social classes and in specific occupations will be discussed later. The evolution of the occupational scores for Jews (in red) and Gentiles (grey) are shown in Figure 2.5. Until 1850, the average occupational scores were roughly equal. After a brief peak in the mid-1850s we observe a sustained growth of Jews' status from 1870 onwards. Both this peak and the period of growth are the result of the expansion of the diamond industry, as we will see later on. Based on this figure, it appears that Jews, who had been an economically disadvantaged minority group throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, obtained higher average positions in society since 1860.

Others have assumed that Jews' economic conditions continued to be worse on average than those of Gentiles.[83] However, much of this is based on the quality of housing and misguided percentages of relief-drawing, rather than actual incomes.[84] Although the quality of housing was indeed lower among Jews until the twentieth century, this had much to do with their hesitation to leave behind the Jewish Quarter than their economic position.[85] Another potential issue may be the overrepresentation of Jews among merchants. Positions in trade are volatile both between individuals and within persons' lifetimes.[86] Therefore, one could argue that if Jews were generally on the lower end of the traders' income distribution, them being given the average score for traders would mean we are overestimating their average occupational scores.[87] A similar volatility exists in the diamond industry, since diamond workers were often unemployed due to recurrent crises. Diamond workers consistently earned the highest incomes of all skilled workers in Amsterdam when they worked, but their annual working hours varied significantly.[88] However, Jews overtaking Gentiles in terms of occupational scores is not

[82] Jewish teachers had largely disappeared when religious poor schools were closed in favour of non-denominational public schools in 1857.
[83] Leydesdorff, *Het Joodse proletariaat*, 217–22.
[84] Hofmeester has shown that Jews' economic relief-drawing was frequently overestimated by historians. Hofmeester, "'Als ik niet voor mijzelf ben…,'" 30–33.
[85] More on this discussion in Chapter 7. See also Leydesdorff, *Het Joodse proletariaat*, 141–42.
[86] The volatility of merchants' social position has been mentioned before in the case of The Hague, see Van Poppel, Liefbroer, and Schellekens, "Religion and Social Mobility," 266–67; Paping and Pawlowski have suggested that the occupational titles "merchant" and "peddler" were often synonymous in Groningen, despite differences in corresponding social positions. See Richard Paping and Jacek Pawlowski, "Success or Failure in the City? Social Mobility and Rural-Urban Migration in Nineteenth- and Early-Twentieth-Century Groningen, the Netherlands," *Historical Life Course Studies* 6.1 (2018): 76.
[87] In The Hague, Jewish traders generally ran relatively small enterprises but were also represented in the top ranks of merchants. Van Poppel, Liefbroer, and Schellekens, "Religion and Social Mobility," 257–58.
[88] Van Zanden shows that daily wages in the diamond industry were still the highest in 1816 after taking into account the prolonged periods of unemployment in the diamond industry. In 1906, daily wages in the diamond industry before incorporating unemployment was double the Amsterdam average. Van Zanden, *De industrialisatie in Amsterdam*, 90.

the result of overestimating scores in occupations where Jews were overrepresented. Lowering occupational scores for diamond workers, merchants, shopkeepers, *and* commercial travellers—four main occupations of Amsterdam Jews—only moves the timing of Jews' scores exceeding Gentiles to the future; but the overtaking took place prior to 1940 regardless.[89]

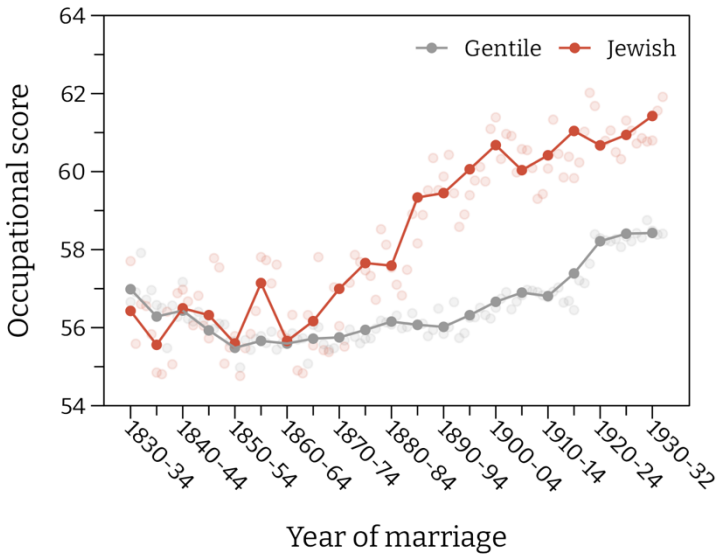

FIGURE 2.5 Occupational scores of Jews and Gentiles in Amsterdam, 1830-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Cleaned Civil Registry" 2022 release and JNI approach.
Note: the sample is limited to men, identified as either Jew or Gentile, marrying in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and listed with a valid occupation; in total 27,967 Jewish grooms and 237,078 Gentile grooms; points and thick line represent five-year average (e.g. 1830-1834), thin lines yearly values.

Although we do not have data on individual or collective incomes, the timing presented in Figure 2.5 is supported by the work of Boudien de Vries.[90] In 1854, Jews were significantly underrepresented among the Amsterdam electorate. Voting rights depended on how much one paid in taxes; only between 6 and 7 percent of Amsterdam men ages 23 and over belonged to the electorate in the nineteenth century. In 1854, Jews comprised 8.6 percent of the electorate.[91] This was 22 percent less than expected based on their population size. By 1884, their share in the electorate had risen to 17.6 percent, 31 percent more than expected based on the number of Jews in Amsterdam. The diamond industry was an important factor in this reversal. Roughly one quarter of all Jews in the 1884 electorate worked in either the manufacturing or trade of diamonds.[92] Over half of them were Jews with no prior family connections among the electorate. Besides the diamond trade, Jews were increasingly successful in the textile and tobacco trade.

[89] These results are shown in Figures B1, B2, and B3 in Appendix B, along with a discussion of the lowered occupational scores.
[90] Boudien De Vries, *Electoraat en elite: sociale structuur en sociale mobiliteit in Amsterdam, 1850-1895* (Amsterdam, 1986).
[91] Ibid., 54, 113.
[92] De Vries, "De joodse elite in Amsterdam," 84.

Additionally, German-Jewish entrepreneurs were a growing group of the Jewish electorate. They stimulated further growth in the Amsterdam economy, particularly in banking and retail.

Overall, therefore, I am confident to state that the average Jewish man was able to improve their economic and social position considerably between the 1860s and 1930s.

New Jewish employers

The diversification of Amsterdam Jews' occupations were not entirely the result of greater integration. Even in the twentieth century Jews complained about hiring discrimination.[93] One important change was a growing number of large Jewish-owned business that could hire Jews in various occupations and at all levels of the corporate ladder. Many of these firms were started by Jews born outside of Amsterdam, oftentimes in Germany.[94] De Bijenkorf, a luxury department store that hired many Jews,[95] was opened by the Jewish businessman Simon Philip Goudsmit (1845-1889) who was born in Oud-Beijerland near Rotterdam. Fashion house Hirsch & Cie was started by two German-born Jews in 1882.[96] Maison de Bonneterie was opened by the German-Jewish Joseph Cohen (1860-1924). The graphic company Joachimstal was opened by two German-born Jewish brothers in 1867.[97] Fashion house Gerzon, another important employer of Jewish tailors and seamstresses, was started in 1889 by two Jewish brothers from Groningen. Both brothers had started their careers gaining experience in the field as commercial travellers before starting their firm. The textile company De Vries Van Buuren & Co. was another large Jewish employer and has been mentioned as a marriage market for Jewish employees.[98] It is an exception to the rule: the company was started in 1830 by an Amsterdam Jew. Another exception was the textile company Hollandia-Kattenburg. Jacob (Jacques) Kattenburg (1877-1947) was a successful Amsterdam-born Jewish tailor. In 1909 he started Hollandia-Kattenburg which specialised in producing rain clothing using 'gummi.' The Lippman, Rosenthal & Co. bank opened in 1859 and was a collaboration between an Amsterdam and a German-born Jew.

Many other, smaller firms were started by Amsterdam-born Jews. Besides being successful Jewish entrepreneurs themselves, their combined successes enabled large segments of the Jewish population to get hired in more mainstream occupations, who often struggled to find work due to observance of the Sabbath or labour market discrimination.[99]

[93] Leydesdorff, *Het Joodse proletariaat*, 242–43, 256–57, 315; For instance, Karel Polak and Elizabeth Stodel-Van de Kar commented it was difficult to find work where you could be free on the Sabbath. Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 44–45.
[94] Boas, "Joden en de Nederlandse textielindustrie."
[95] Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 46–47.
[96] Femke Knoop, *Hirsch & Cie Amsterdam (1882-1976). Haute couture op het Leidseplein* (Hilversum, 2018).
[97] Bart Wallet, Gerben Post, and Talma Joachimsthal, *Joachimsthal. Familie en firma 1823-1945* (Zwolle, 2023).
[98] Elizabeth Stodel-Van de Kar shared that De Vries van Buuren was "[a] very Jewish firm and a type of marriage market for girls at the same time, since the majority of girls who worked there married [male employees] of De Vries van Buuren." Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 44.
[99] Leydesdorff, *Het Joodse proletariaat*, 242–243, 256–257, 315; Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 44–45.

ILLUSTRATION 2.1 Four important Jewish employers, 1870-1940.

Source: (*a*) De Bijenkorf ca. 1915, postcard, Stadsarchief Amsterdam 10137#353; (*b*) Maison de Bonneterie ca. 1912, postcard, winkelstories.-com/bonnet02.html; (*c*) Hirsch & Cie ca. 1882, postcard, Stadsarchief Amsterdam 10194#2706; (*d*) Hollandia Kattenburg, etched by Willem Wenckebach (1860-1937), year unknown, Stadsarchief Amsterdam 10097#2507.

A | De Bijenkorf

B | Maison de Bonneterie

C | Hirsch & Cie

D | Hollandia-Kattenburg

2.5.2 *Summary*

The gradual occupational upgrading of Jews can best be summarised in four periods. These periods, which contain approximately the same number of marriages, are shown in Figure 2.6. In the first period, between 1830 and 1869, 40 percent of Jewish grooms worked as unskilled workers (red triangle), compared with 26 percent of Gentiles. Jews were roughly equally represented among lower professionals (green circle)—those in services, office work, and in commerce—and among higher managers and professionals (blue cross). Roughly a quarter of Jews worked as skilled workers (yellow square), particularly in the diamond industry or in the processing and packaging of tobacco. In the next period from 1870 up to 1899, the Jewish share of grooms in skilled work increased to 42 percent. The increase came at the expense of unskilled, which dropped from 40 to 25 percent. This next generation of Jews replaced employment as porters, carters, and peddlers with the occupations in the diamond industry. Unskilled work continued to decrease in the Jewish community; in the first two decades of the twentieth century it fell to 15 percent. Occupational upgrading now increasingly occurred towards service work and new occupations in trade, including office work and commercial travelling. While skilled work was still the most common social class for this cohorts'

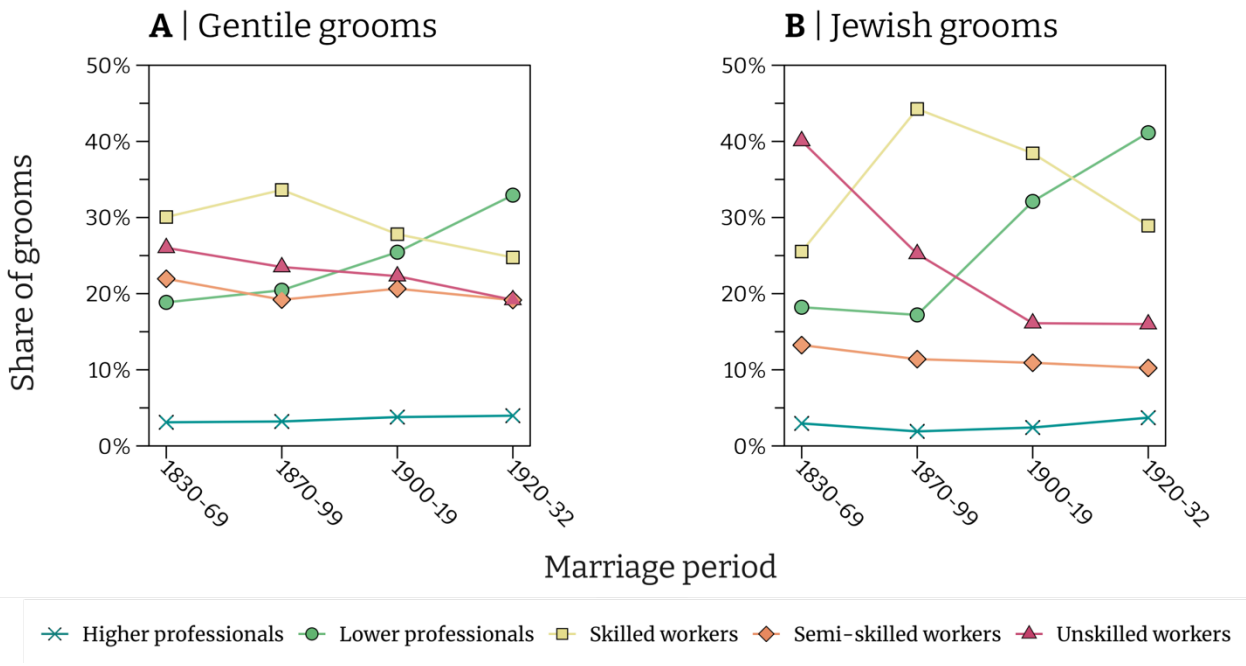

FIGURE 2.6 The share of Jewish and Gentile grooms per social class in four periods, 1830-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Cleaned Civil Registry" 2022 release and JNI approach.
Note: the sample is limited to men, identified as either Jew or Gentile, marrying in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and listed with a valid occupation; in total 26,611 Jewish grooms and 225,928 Gentile grooms.

Jews, the gap between skilled work and lower professionals had nearly completely diminished. The final period, from 1920 until 1932, shows a further decrease in the share of Jewish skilled workers. Work in offices, in trade, and in services were now by far the most common types of employment for young Jewish men. The smaller dispersion of the shapes for Gentiles over time indicates that changes in their occupational distribution were much less drastic for non-Jews. While Gentiles only adapted to changes in the economy slowly, Jews readjusted much quicker. The occupations of Jews therefore largely reflected the changes in the Amsterdam economy more immediately. When the economy industrialised, so did the Jews. Then, when Amsterdam turned to services, the Jews followed. This second transition was based on Jews using new opportunities in schooling to continue their gradual social class upgrading. The next section will discuss what these opportunities looked like and to what extent Jews made use of them.

2.6 Educational Opportunities and Structure

In the seventeenth and eighteenth century, limited evidence suggests that Jews were more frequently illiterate than men and women in other religious denominations.[100] Moreover, while not all school-aged children attended primary school in early-nineteenth-century Amsterdam, the share of Jewish children attending is presumed to be lower than average.[101] Combined, this trend suggests that Jews had worse educational attainment than Gentiles in the first half of the nineteenth century. This goes against the historical narrative that Jews had higher literacy and human capital attainment rates.[102] Nonetheless, Jews were able to equalise and overtake Gentiles in terms of educational attainment by the 1930s. Non-denominational public schooling was an important development in this regard, offering non-religious and higher quality schooling than earlier options, while also stimulating Jews' social integration. Their educational successes were a precursor to, and paved the way for, Jews to continue their upward trend of intergenerational mobility going into the twentieth century.

2.6.1 *Primary education*

Already in the beginning of the nineteenth century, schools and schooling were important tools to help integrate Amsterdam Jews. Until mid-century, each religious denomination operated their own poor schools. Nearly all Amsterdam residents attended the public poor schools, while middle and upper-class Jews and non-Jews attended private schools or were taught privately at home.[103] Dodde estimates that Amsterdam counted 32 Jewish schools in 1811 educating over 600 Jewish pupils.[104] These schools were of particularly bad quality.[105] Schools of the Sephardim, fewer in numbers, were historically of much higher quality.[106]

Until then, Jewish education was the responsibility of the Jewish community, leaving them complete autonomy regarding the material taught and the language of instruction. In schools intended for Ashkenazi children, the language was generally Yiddish. This changed, formally but not yet in practice, in 1814. To integrate the Jewish youth, Jewish

[100] The education historian Nantko Dodde estimated that in 1680, 68 percent of Jewish grooms and 70 percent of non-Jewish grooms were able to sign their name on their marriage bann. Jewish women only did so in 10 percent of cases, compared with 44 percent of Gentile brides. For 1780, Nantko Dodde estimates higher literacy rates for Jews: 84% for men and 31% for women. Nantko Dodde, *Joods onderwijs: een geschiedenis over het tijdvak 1200 tot 2000* (The Hague, 2009), 17; in samples of marriage banns between 1755 and 1810, 65.3% of Jewish grooms and 38.3% of Jewish brides placed a signature, a common measure for literacy, on the certificate. In the same period, 88.1% and 70.2% of Lutheran grooms and brides; 84.3% and 67.6% of Dutch Reformed grooms and brides placed a signature; 82.0% and 60.4% of Roman Catholic grooms and brides placed a signature. See René van Weeren and Tine de Moor, *Ja, ik wil! Verliefd, verloofd, getrouwd in Amsterdam, 1580-1810* (Amsterdam, 2019).

[101] Bart Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders: de integratie van de joden in Nederland 1814-1851* (Amsterdam, 2007), 138.

[102] For historical overviews of this debate, see Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, "From Farmers to Merchants, Conversions and Diaspora: Human Capital and Jewish History," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 5.5 (2007): 885–926; Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, *The Chosen Few: How Education Shaped Jewish History, 70-1492* (Princeton, 2015); Sascha Becker, Jared Rubin, and Ludger Woessmann, "Religion in Economic History: A Survey," *The Handbook of Historical Economics*, 2021, 585–639.

[103] Van Tijn, *Twintig jaren Amsterdam*, 141.

[104] Dodde, *Joods onderwijs*, 34.

[105] Ibid., 52.

[106] Marjoke Rietveld-van Wingerden, "Van segregatie tot integratie. Joods onderwijs in Nederland (1800-1940)," in *School en cultuur. Eenheid en verscheidenheid in de geschiedenis van het Belgische en Nederlandse onderwijs*, ed. Nelleke Bakker, Marjoke Rietveld-van Wingerden, and Jeffrey Tyssens (Assen, 2005), 56–57.

poor schools were expected to stop teaching in Yiddish and instead teach in either Dutch or Hebrew. Additionally, Jewish schools had to include societal courses on top of their predominantly religious education.

Since then, primary schools were split along three lines. The denominational poor schools, private schools for the middle and upper classes, and 'special' religious schools that offered additional religious schooling outside of regular school hours.[107] While a new law in 1817, aimed at aligning Jewish education with the national structure, formally enforced the Dutch or Hebrew language in Jewish poor schools, it was informally condoned until 1835.[108] The lack of Dutch-language schoolbooks and teachers who spoke Dutch—most Jewish teachers came from Germany and Poland and did not master the Dutch language—required attention first. Around 1835 the Jewish inspector Samuel Israël Mulder (1792-1862), one of the highest authorities on Jewish education,[109] travelled around the country to ensure Yiddish was no longer used.[110] If Yiddish was spoken at a school, a threat was issued to revoke the school's subsidies. By 1850 more or less all Amsterdam-Jewish pupils spoke Dutch fluently, albeit with a 'Yiddish accent.' Only in Amsterdam was it possible to receive societal and religious education in the same schools.[111]

In 1848, a new constitution was enacted in the Netherlands. It explicitly separated church and state and avoided state-interference in religious matters. Consequently, the education of the poor masses, which until now had taken place in denominational schools run by religious communities, was to be offered in public non-denominational schools. This was decided in a new 1857 law enforced in 1861. From then onwards the state, and no longer the church communities, were responsible for public primary education. Denominational schools lost their subsidies but could continue on private funding. Few Jewish poor schools in Amsterdam continued to exist. Samuel Sarphati (1813-1866) funded one of these schools until it turned into a 'special' religious school, limited to extra-curricular Jewish education, in 1870.

This 1857 law was met with resistance from several angles. Orthodox Protestants contested that public education offered by the state would not be religious enough.[112] They hoped that Jews would aid them in their protests. The public schools were meant to teach 'Christian virtues,' which Orthodox Protestants hoped would upset Jews. However, few Jews saw a problem with the change or the phrasing.[113] Financially, supporting their own schools to continue the religious aspects was seen as a problem. In favour of the new law was the pro-integration attitude which had been imprinted top-down on Jews, as well as the considerably low standard of education at Jewish schools.[114] If Jews were to receive the same education as Christian children, they were expected to

[107] Rietveld-van Wingerden, "Van segregatie tot integratie," 59.
[108] Wallet, "End of the Jargon-Scandal," 338–39.
[109] Dodde, *Joods onderwijs*, 54–55.
[110] Wallet, *Nieuwe Nederlanders*, 139.
[111] Renate Fuks-Mansfeld, "Onderwijs en nationale identiteit van de joden in Nederland in de tijd van hun acculturatie," in *De eenheid & de delen. Zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland, 1850-1900*, ed. Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage (Amsterdam, 1996), 148.
[112] Karin Hofmeester, "'Een teeder en belangrijk punt'. Opinies over openbaar onderwijs in joodse kring, 1857-1898," in *De eenheid & de delen. Zuilvorming, onderwijs en natievorming in Nederland, 1850-1900*, ed. Henk te Velde and Hans Verhage (Amsterdam, 1996), 157.
[113] Ibid., 158.
[114] Rietveld-van Wingerden, "Van segregatie tot integratie," 62; see also Van Tijn, *Twintig jaren Amsterdam*, 290.

have better chances at finding work in the mainstream economy, too. Jewish schools that offered societal *and* religious education became rare; nearly all of them closed within years of the law and only three remained in the Netherlands in 1915.[115] Many Jewish private schools in Amsterdam continued to be of low quality.[116] The *Talmud Torah* continued to offer decent education for free but was mostly attended by Orthodox Jews.[117] Herman Elte (1846-1925) opened the Herman Elteschool, a private primary school offering both societal and religion education, after he was rejected for a public school job for wanting free on Sabbath.[118] It became so popular that it had to split in 1929, creating the Palacheschool, the third Jewish private school that existed prior to 1940.

In order to continue the Jewish religious education, specific religious schools were opened.[119] These schools offered religious education, such as Hebrew and Jewish prayers, outside of regular school hours. The expansion of public schooling hours over time pushed the Jewish religious schools further to the margins. The student bodies of these schools decreased continuously.[120] A small reversal was seen since 1920, when Dutch 'Pillarisation' had been well on its way and 'special' denominational religious schools were able to get state subsidies again. Several new Jewish schools were opened then.

2.6.2 *Secondary and university education*

Unlike Jewish primary schools, which could and did exist through private or state funding before and after 1857, no general Jewish secondary school existed in Amsterdam until the twentieth century. Only the 'Nederlands Israëlitisch Seminarium' (NIS) could be counted as Jewish secondary education. In the eighteenth century, when Jews had limited occupational options and opportunities for secondary education were sparse, smart Jewish boys were trained to become rabbis. In order to receive the proper training they were sent to Germany or Poland. Most rabbis in Amsterdam were of non-Dutch origins. In order to produce native rabbis, in 1814 the NIS was founded by royal decree.[121] The NIS taught both religious and societal courses. All Dutch rabbis from across the country were to be trained in Amsterdam. It succeeded in this regard: virtually all Dutch rabbis were educated in Amsterdam by the end of the nineteenth century. In the latter half of the nineteenth century the NIS added a gymnasium, a form of higher secondary schooling, which provided its students entry to university education. More generally, the NIS offered three levels of 'religious educator' training. The lowest of the three was the most popular.[122]

We know less about Jewish advancements in more mainstream forms of secondary schooling. In the pre-World War II era, few pupils completed more than the mandatory years of primary schooling. Until 1863, the only form of secondary education available were the *gymnasiums*. The Secondary School Act of 1863 added the *Hogere Burgerschool* (HBS). In contrast to the gymnasiums, the HBS offered more modern curricula. Graduates of either type of school were granted access to university.

[115] Rietveld-van Wingerden, "Van segregatie tot integratie," 63.
[116] Ibid., 64.
[117] Ibid., 65.
[118] Ibid., 67.
[119] Nantko Dodde, "Joods onderwijs in Nederland 1815-1940," in *Het Gelykstaat der Joden*, ed. Hetty Berg (Amsterdam, 1996), 74–75.
[120] Dodde, "Joods onderwijs in Nederland," 76–77.
[121] The school had already existed since 1714 as *Beth Hamidrasj Ets Haim*, founded by the Chief Rabbi Arjeh Leib.
[122] Meijer, *Hoge hoeden, lage standaarden*, 31.

Illustration 2.2 Boys' class of the Herman Elteschool, Amsterdam 1910.
Source: Joods Cultureel Kwartier #F000384.
Note: The man on the left is Lodewijk Hartog Sarlouis (1884-1942), son of a diamond worker and graduate of the *Nederlands Israëlitisch Seminarium*. In 1936 he became chief rabbi of Amsterdam. Next to him stands Herman Elte (1846-1925), the founder of the school.

Data at the national level suggest that Jews were overrepresented among secondary school students by a factor of 2.5 relative to their population share in 1880, and a factor of nearly 3 in 1920.[123] Figures for Rotterdam around 1880 suggest an even larger overrepresentation.[124] Only in Amsterdam, where the population of Jewish children was large enough, did segments of the Jewish community strive for a Jewish HBS.[125] School absenteeism of children observing the Sabbath were given as a particular reason for this; back then, schools continued on Saturdays, the Jewish rest day. Orthodox Jews also complained about the declining religiosity of Jews that attended the public HBS.[126] Eventually, it took until 1928 to open a Jewish HBS in Amsterdam. It only became a realistic option after state subsidies reopened to religious education in 1920.

The Jewish enlightenment of the eighteenth century had opened pathways for women's education. In the twentieth century, Jewish women outpaced Gentile women in terms of educational attainment more than Jewish men did Gentile men. Despite the coeducational nature of primary education, women were initially not allowed to attend the HBS. They could, however, attend secondary education in *Middelbare Meisjesscholen* ('secondary girls' schools') since 1867. Women's religious education was also more

[123] Mandemakers, "Gymnasiaal en middelbaar onderwijs," 615.
[124] Marjoke Rietveld-Van Wingerden, "A Dangerous Age? Secondary Education and Moral-Religious Training: The Case History of Dutch Jewish Secondary Education 1880-1940," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 24.1 (2003): 29.
[125] Ibid., 32.
[126] Idem.

limited. Jewish girls more frequently attended extracurricular non-Jewish courses in knitting and needlework.[127] Nonetheless, Jewish women became overrepresented among female intellectual pioneers.[128] Jewish women also received more vocational education on average, regardless of class background.[129] Many Jewish women became secular or religious teachers in the last half of the nineteenth century.

With higher levels of secondary education, Jews were also more able to obtain university educations. For instance, the first Dutch woman to obtain a university degree was the Jewish woman Aletta Jacobs (1854-1929) in Groningen in 1871. Jews had a harder time obtaining positions in the universities, instead focusing on applied careers as lawyers or doctors.[130] In Amsterdam, higher education was offered at the *Atheneum Illustre*. Until it became recognised as an official university in 1877, many students attended university education here but concluded their studies elsewhere, commonly at Leiden University. Nonetheless, numerous Jews obtained degrees at the *Illustre*. Samuel Senior Coronel (1827-1892), a public health specialist who wrote several articles about the conditions of the diamond workers in the 1860s, was one of the graduates of the *Atheneum Illustre*; as was the 1911 Nobel Peace Prize winner Tobias Michael Carel Asser (1838-1913).[131] In 1930, when the government included the attainment of university education in the census, Jews were overrepresented significantly. Jews made up roughly 1.5 percent of the country's population, but 2.5 percent of male university graduates and 3.8 percent of female university graduates.[132] Their study directions differed somewhat. Jews more frequently studied medicine, specifically dentistry, and law or commercial sciences.

2.7 Social, Cultural, and Political Life

2.7.1 *Politics*

Jews were able to actively enter political life since their emancipation in 1796. Two members of the Felix Libertate did so immediately: Hermannus Leonard Bromet (1724-1812) and Hartog de Hartog Lémon (1755-1823) became the first Jewish members of the Lower House.[133] After their departure, it took until the mid-nineteenth century for a new Jewish member of the Lower House to arrive. Since then, Jewish representation in the Lower House was roughly equal to their population share.[134] In 1940, Jews were even overrepresented with eight out of 150 seats. Jews were politically active through two main political streams. Initially, Jews were predominantly progressively Liberal, while

[127] Marjoke Rietveld-van Wingerden and Nelleke Bakker, "Education and the Emancipation of Jewish Girls in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Netherlands," *History of Education Quarterly* 44.2 (2004): 210.
[128] Ibid., 214.
[129] Ibid., 214-215.
[130] For a discussion, see Hannah van den Ende, "'Vergeet niet dat je arts bent': Joodse artsen in Nederland 1940-1945" (PhD diss., Maastricht University, 2015).
[131] Johan Westenberg, "Tobias Michael Carel Asser (1838-1913). Een pragmatisch jurist," in *Een brandpunt van geleerdheid in de hoofdstad. De Universiteit van Amsterdam rond 1900 in vijftien portretten*, ed. Hans Blom (Hilversum, 1992), 53–76.
[132] Volkstelling 1930, Chapter 4, Table 3, pp. 166-167: "Aantal mannelijke en vrouwelijke academisch gegradueerden der onderscheidene kerkelijke gezindten per honderd mannelijke en vrouwelijke gegradueerden van elke studierichting."
[133] Zwiep, "De naties worden burgers," 205.
[134] Karin Hofmeester, "Jewish Parliamentary Representatives in the Netherlands: Crossing Borders, Encountering Boundaries?," in *Borders and Boundaries in and around Dutch Jewish History*, ed. Judith Frishman et al. (Amsterdam, 2011), 66.

later on Jews, especially those from working-class backgrounds, aligned with Social Democratic ideologies. To a lesser extent Jews were active in more extreme political streams, such as Communism. [135] Whether Liberal or Social Democratic, Jewish politicians were at the forefront of Jewish integration. Several had married non-Jewish spouses and few were buried in Jewish burial sites when they passed.[136]

The success of Socialism among the Jews was felt most strongly in Amsterdam.[137] In neighbourhoods with many Jewish residents, the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDAP) virtually always won. The Socialist movement moved in tandem with the ANDB. In no other occupational group could one find stronger support for the Social Democrats than among the diamond workers. [138]Jewish diamond workers were well-represented among successful SDAP politicians.[139] Henri Polak (1868-1943), the president of the ANDB, was also a Member of Parliament. Salomon de Miranda (1875-1942) had been a diamond worker and became an alderman for the SDAP in Amsterdam. Emanuel Boekman (1889-1940), another SDAP alderman, was the son of a diamond worker. When in 1933 four out of six aldermen were Jewish, albeit for three different parties, complaints were aired by Gentiles.[140] Since the late nineteenth century, Jews were evidently active and successful in both national and Amsterdam's local politics.

2.7.2 *Residential segregation*

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Jews moved into the islands Vlooienburg, Marken, Uilenburg, and Rapenburg. This neighbourhood became known as the *Jodenbuurt* ('Jewish Quarter'). Until the mid-nineteenth century, all of Jewish life took place here; only a small minority of Jews lived outside of this area. The Jewish Quarter, incorporating districts C, P, Q, R, and S in Map 7.1 in Chapter 7, spread out with the Weesperstraat and new canals built in the nineteenth century (district W). Since the 1860s, Jews increasingly moved to the Plantage (V) and De Pijp; although the latter was initially limited to diamond workers. In subsequent decades, Jews more frequently moved to newer neighbourhoods to the East and South of this part of Amsterdam. Between 1850 and 1930, the segregation of Jews declined by one-third. [141] These neighbourhoods in East and South varied distinctly in their composition and the rate at which Jews became the dominant culture. For instance, Jews who were more strongly aligned with the Socialist movement lived predominantly in Amsterdam East. These differences are discussed in-depth in Chapter 7.

[135] See for example the Jewish diamond worker and co-founder of the Dutch Communist Party, Paul (Saul) de Groot. Jan Willem Stutje, *De man die de weg wees: leven en werk van Paul de Groot 1899-1986* (Amsterdam, 2000).
[136] Hofmeester, "Jewish Parliamentary Representatives," 67–68.
[137] Gans, "De kleine verschillen," 48–51.
[138] Paul van Horssen and Dick Rietveld, "Socialisten in Amsterdam 1878-1898. Een sociaal profiel van de SDB- en SDAP-aanhang," *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 16 (1990): 387–406.
[139] Veldhuizen, "De partij," 60–65.
[140] Salomon Kleerekoper, "Het joodse proletariaat in het Amsterdam van de eerste helft van de twintigste eeuw en zijn leiders," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 3.2 (1969): 227.
[141] Peter Tammes, "Residential Segregation of Jews in Amsterdam on the Eve of the Shoah," *Continuity and Change* 26.2 (2011): 243–70.

2.7.3 *Religious life and Jewish culture*

Until the mid-nineteenth century, the largely Orthodox community of Amsterdam Jews had maintained Jewish traditions, including observing the Sabbath and attending the Synagogue. In the second half of the nineteenth century, increasing debates arose regarding the religious nature of the Jewish community and the increasing share of Jewish men who stopped observing the Sabbath for economic reasons. Influential here were the 1857 Education Law, which saw Jewish children attending non-denominational public primary schooling and thus connecting with non-Jewish children at a never-before seen pace; as well as the *Verzuiling* ('Pillarisation'). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Dutch society was increasingly based around four 'pillars' of vertical affiliation. Orthodox Protestants and Roman Catholics founded respective pillars which encompassed most social organisations, institutions and politics.[142] Jews never formed such a pillar.[143] Consequently, lacking similar clubs and institutions while aiming to fully participate in social and political life, Jews increasingly aligned with the Socialist and Liberal pillars instead.[144] This fostered secular ideologies present in both pillars. It also led to stronger engagement with organisations that had significant Jewish memberships, such as the ANDB and the SDAP. Jews, and especially Jewish diamond workers, therefore received the 'civilising' messages from these entities more intensely.[145] Another factor was economic; the diamond industry paid such high wages that it became highly profitable to work on Saturdays.[146] Van Tijn believed these were the most important factors for Amsterdam-Jews' integration. In some cases, not observing the Sabbath for practical and economic reasons could lead to further reduction in traditions when met with adversity from the community.[147]

The combined Jewish leadership of Orthodox Jewish rabbis and secularised Liberal Jewish elites gradually led to declining religious observance. Abraham Carel Wertheim (1832-1897), the most notable of the Liberal Jewish elites, stated that the Jewish community "has to be Orthodox or not at all" despite his own non-Orthodoxy. His lack of following the Jewish traditions and large wealth gap with the overall Jewish population increasingly created a divide between the poor Jewish masses and the Jewish leadership. Thus, since the mid-nineteenth century, Amsterdam's Jews started a process of secularisation. This accelerated at the end of the century as the *Verzuiling* continued to push through. While Protestants and Catholics had their own pillars they could use to keep the strength of their religion intact, Jews lacked such pillars. A discussion regarding the absence of a Jewish pillar can be found elsewhere.[148] Importantly, however, Jews aligned themselves with either of the two different pillars: the Liberals or Socialists. Whichever the Jews chose, secularisation was a part of it.

[142] Schöffer, "The Jews in the Netherlands," 86–87.
[143] Hans Knippenberg, "Assimilating Jews in Dutch nation-building: the missing 'pillar,'" *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 93.2 (2002): 203.
[144] Daalder, "Dutch Jews in a Segmented Society," 55, 57; Knippenberg, "Assimilating Jews in Dutch nation-building," 203.
[145] Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 149–63; Hofmeester, "'Als ik niet voor mijzelf ben...,'" 110–11.
[146] Van Tijn, *Twintig jaren Amsterdam*, 228.
[147] Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 165–68.
[148] Daalder, "Dutch Jews in a Segmented Society"; Knippenberg, "Assimilating Jews in Dutch nation-building."

The declining religiosity of Amsterdam Jews was reflected in their declining Synagogue attendance and new Synagogue building. Instead, Amsterdam Jews who kept their faith often practiced their faith in smaller *hevra* synagogues located in a person's attic or above a business.[149] Only in the twentieth century, when Jewish residential mobility accelerated, and especially in the 1920s, new Synagogues were built.

2.7.4 *Integration*

Although religious secularisation became increasingly visible in the loss of traditions and lowering Synagogue attendance, these developments are hard to measure quantitatively, which is helpful if we want to observe changes over time. We therefore need indicators of integration and declining religiosity. In *Leaving the Jewish Fold*, Endelman lists conversion, religious disaffiliation, and intermarriage as three forms of 'radical assimilation.'[150] While conversion was extremely rare among Dutch Jews, with less than 1 percent of Jews choosing this route, religious disaffiliation and intermarriage were more common. Although few Jews married Gentile spouses in the nineteenth century, intermarriage rates increased rapidly in the twentieth century. The changing intermarriage rates and the characteristics of intermarrying Jews and Gentiles are discussed in Chapter 5. Below we will look at religious disaffiliation and, in particular, how it differed by age and social class.

Religious denominations were reported for all Amsterdam Jews in the 1941 'municipal list' of Amsterdam. [151] Table 2.3 presents the distribution of Jewish disaffiliation—measured as stating a religious membership other than the Dutch or Portuguese Israelite communities—by social class and age for the (predominantly male) heads of households.[152] Out of 18,539 household heads, 9 percent had disaffiliated from their Synagogues. To separate heads of households by social class I took a random sample of 10 percent (1854 entries). After cleaning the occupational titles we are left with 1814 household heads with valid occupations. I split these into five social classes as discussed in Chapter 1.4 and distinguish between heads born in the nineteenth and those born in the twentieth century.

There were clear class differences in disaffiliation by social class. Nearly one in three higher managers and professionals had disaffiliated in 1941. This was three times more frequent than the average. Lower professionals and managers also had above average disaffiliation rates, but with a percentage of 11.2 they were much closer to the average than higher professionals. Skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers were much closer together; for them, approximately 6 percent disaffiliated. However, there are also age differences. Within the group of lower professionals that did not work in trade, older men were much more likely to be disaffiliated than younger men. Since these were mostly office workers, a plausible explanation may be that Jewish office workers felt a greater incentive to disaffiliate prior to 1920. This mirrors experiences of discrimination told by Siegfried van Praag and Jacques Presser, discussed in Section 4.5 of this

[149] Saskia Coenen Snyder, *Building a Public Judaism: Synagogues and Jewish Identity in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge, Mass., 2012), 153–54.
[150] Todd Endelman, *Leaving the Jewish Fold: Conversion and Radical Assimilation in Modern Jewish History* (Princeton, 2015).
[151] See Chapter 1.4 for a discussion.
[152] The sample is limited to the heads of households since these their information was most likely to be recorded accurately. Moreover, their occupations were listed, enabling a division by social class.

dissertation. The age differences among diamond workers tell a different story. While among 'older' diamond workers 7.1 percent had disaffiliated, none of the 31 'younger' diamond workers had done so by 1941. This is likely explained by the changing selection into the diamond industry. Those who witnessed the successes of the union were most strongly aligned with Socialism. Meanwhile, those who joined the diamond industry after 1920 and stayed there until 1941 were more frequently Jews with lower levels of educational attainment who could not find work outside of the Jewish economy. Hence, they turned to the deteriorating diamond industry.

Lastly, we see an uptick in disaffiliation in the unskilled group. This is explained by lower shares of peddlers, who were among the least likely to disaffiliate, and a larger number of department store employees in the younger group. Employees of department stores in both the young and old groups were more likely to disaffiliate; perhaps because they were more closely exposed to the mainstream economy through Gentile clientele.

TABLE 2.3 Religious disaffiliation of Jewish heads of households by social class and cohort, Amsterdam 1941

	Older men Age 42-64 (Born 1877-1899)		**Younger men** Age 20-41 (Born 1900-1921)		**All men** Age 20-64 (Born 1877-1921)	
Social class	*N*	Disaff. (%)	*N*	Disaff. (%)	*N*	Disaff. (%)
Higher professionals	75	32.0%	38	28.9%	113	31.0%
Lower professionals	486	10.7%	407	11.8%	893	11.2%
Excl. trade	*95*	*20.0%*	*134*	*11.9%*	*229*	*15.3%*
Only trade	*391*	*8.4%*	*273*	*11.7%*	*664*	*9.8%*
Skilled workers	193	7.3%	139	5.0%	332	6.3%
Excl. diamond workers	*95*	*7.4%*	*108*	*6.5%*	*203*	*6.9%*
Only diamond workers	*98*	*7.1%*	*31*	*0.0%*	*129*	*5.4%*
Semi-skilled workers	121	7.4%	148	4.7%	269	6.0%
Unskilled workers	121	3.3%	86	10.5%	207	6.3%
Total (sample)	996	10.3%	818	10.0%	1814	10.2%
Total (all hh. heads)	10,183	9.1%	8356	8.8%	18,539	9.0%

Source: author's calculations using the 1941 'municipal list' of Amsterdam.
Note: disaffiliation measured as having either no religious affiliation or a non-Jewish affiliation. Italics indicate subgroup of social class.

Overall, Table 2.3 reflects the stratified story of Jewish integration in the twentieth century. Jews in elite social positions were highly integrated into Dutch high society, intermarrying often and denouncing their Jewish faith explicitly. Whether they did so for economic reasons, or disaffiliation was a result of their upward mobility, remains unclear.[153] New research suggests both scenarios happened and could interact with one another. For the rest of Amsterdam's Jewish social stratification, such explicit 'radical

[153] Van der Veen, "Novel Opportunities, Perpetual Barriers," 131–33, 268–69.

assimilation' was rarely needed for their careers. Nonetheless, a growing divide could be seen in the twentieth century. Jews in new, modern careers, increasingly getting exposed to Gentiles through work and residence, were more likely to disaffiliate—and, as we shall see in Chapter 5, to enter interfaith marriages. It is important to note that these measures can only tell part of the story. For each Jew who decided to go through the bureaucratic effort to report their disaffiliation to the local government, many others may have identified as equally secular but have considered the benefits of disaffiliating too marginal to follow through with disaffiliation. In contrast, disaffiliation or intermarriage did not always imply the loss of Jewish self-identification; and especially so for how Jews were perceived by others. Differences in radical assimilation by occupations and social classes does, however, suggest that integration was commonly associated with more modern ways of thinking, higher levels of education, and greater exposure to Gentiles; developments that were increasingly characterizing Jews in twentieth-century Amsterdam.

2.8 Amsterdam: An Atypical Jewish Centre

Taken altogether, Amsterdam was a unique city and Jewish centre in the nineteenth century. Dutch Jews politically emancipated at the end of the eighteenth century. At that moment, Jews comprised approximately 10 percent of the Amsterdam population, the largest relative representation of Jews in Western Europe. Despite their economically backward position compared to, for instance, French and German Jews at the time,[154] emancipation did little to improve the economic situation of Dutch Jews over the next half-century.[155] In the next 100 years, however, Dutch and Amsterdam Jews saw great strides in their processes of integration and upward mobility. These patterns were evident in all facets of life, lending more credibility to the accounts by Blom and Cahen,[156] and Lucassen and Lucassen,[157] than to those by Leydesdorff.[158] But which factors were most important for these gains, and how did these factors compare to other Jewish centres? Three main differences can be identified.

One, Amsterdam Jews were autochthonous and learned the host language before economic opportunities opened up to them. For a long time after their initial settlement, Jews did not speak Dutch, and when they did, it did not immediately translate to better socioeconomic chances. However, knowledge of Dutch was a key prerequisite to benefiting from the economic growth that ensued since the mid-nineteenth century. Relatively early arrival and adaptation of the local language made Dutch Jews acculturate more gradually than Jews in other European cities. Across Europe, Jewish newcomers faced greater pressures to acculturate quickly, spurring antisemitism. In Vienna, for instance, Jews acculturated rapidly in the nineteenth century as a result.[159] Early adaptation of the language also helped Jews join and create non-denominational societies in the nineteenth century.

Two, Amsterdam Jews had access to a profitable, skilled occupational niche. While occupational niches are not uncommon in Jews' histories across the globe, the diamond

[154] Birnbaum and Katznelson, "Emancipation and the Liberal Offer."
[155] Sonnenberg-Stern, *Emancipation & Poverty*.
[156] Blom and Cahen, "Joodse Nederlanders."
[157] Lucassen and Lucassen, *Migratie als DNA van Amsterdam*.
[158] Leydesdorff, "The Veil of History"; Leydesdorff, *Het Joodse proletariaat*.
[159] Marsha Rozenblit, *The Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity* (New York, 1984), 195–96.

industry was a particularly strong one. Unlike the production of textiles, where Jewish families progress through intergenerational upgrading of a business and taking up auxiliary occupations,[160] booms in the diamond industry brought immediate wealth to the hands of Jewish labourers. Moreover, although working in the diamond industry had the same volatility as working in trade at times, it aided in the erasure of Jewish stereotypes as peddlers and traders.[161] The diamond industry also offered plenty of employment. At its peak, roughly 7,000 Jewish workers were gainfully employed here. Due to their proficiency in the Dutch language and culture, the Jewish diamond workers were able to create an alliance with Gentile workers, unlike Jews in other centres like Paris and London, where Jews formed Jewish labour unions.[162] This helped Jews gain further political and societal participation.

Three, Amsterdam attracted few foreign Jews at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth century.[163] This partially highlights the limited opportunity structure in Amsterdam. In Berlin, Paris, and Brussels, Eastern European Jews settled in far greater numbers due to better economic opportunities.[164] For Amsterdam Jews, this avoided problems of association with a more distinct, less acculturated Jewish group. Amsterdam Jews therefore did not have to accelerate their pace of acculturation and integration. It also relates to the lacking culture of Zionism in the Netherlands, where Social Democratic politics held the tight grip on the Amsterdam Jewish community.[165]

In short, Amsterdam Jews were able to continue on their own path, undisturbed by coerced acculturation and changing group dynamics. They were also fortunate enough to have access to an occupational niche that created wealth and opportunities, as well as societal participation, for thousands of Jewish families.

[160] As discussed for the garment industries in London and New York. Mendelsohn, *The Rag Race*.
[161] For a discussion of such stereotypes in the European context, see Penslar, *Shylock's Children*.
[162] Hofmeester, "'Als ik niet voor mijzelf ben...,'" 342–43.
[163] Hofmeester, "De immigratie van Oost-Europese joden in Amsterdam."
[164] Tobias Brinkmann, "From Hinterberlin to Berlin: Jewish Migrants from Eastern Europe in Berlin before and after 1918," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 7.3 (2008): 339–55; Nancy Green, *The Pletzl of Paris: Jewish Immigrant Workers in the Belle Epoque* (New York, 1986); Frank Caestecker and Torsten Feys, "East European Jewish Migrants and Settlers in Belgium, 1880–1914: A Transatlantic Perspective," *East European Jewish Affairs* 40.3 (2010): 261–84.
[165] Gans, "De kleine verschillen," 13, 31–32; see also Lidwina Giebels, "De Zionistische beweging in Nederland, 1899-1941" (PhD diss., Nijmegen University, 1975).