Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

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

Kok, J.

Citation
Kok, J. (2025, September 18). *Social mobility and integration of Amsterdam Jews: the ethnic niche of the diamond industry, 1850-1940*. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4261316

Version:	Publisher's Version
License:	Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden
Downloaded from:	https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4261316

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

4

Bright Prospects or Dull Realities? Occupational Following and Intergenerational Mobility

> "But there is still another group of intellectuals and artists, who owe gratitude to the union and rightfully do not withhold their appreciation. *These are the sons and daughters of diamond workers*, who were able to enjoy an academic education, since the union had paid [their parents] sufficiently to afford such an education." (Emphasis mine)
>
> — Henri Polak[1]

4.1 Introduction

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, working-class parents faced a challenging decision when their children completed compulsory primary schooling. If they had the necessary funds, parents could send their academically gifted children to secondary schools and beyond. Pupils that were less promising, or those whose parents did not have the capital to afford their continued education, had to start working to contribute to the household income. Henri Polak, who later became senator for the main Socialist party and president of the ANDB, was one of these gifted but unlucky pupils. With eleven children, his father Mozes (1839-1903) believed he could not afford further education for Henri, the eldest child. Thus, Henri started working from the age of 13.[2] Thousands of other Jewish and Gentile families faced these same decisions regarding children's future careers in nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Amsterdam.[3]

Mozes, the descendant of generations of illiterate Jewish peddlers, had been the first to learn a trade in his patrilineage.[4] He had begun working in the Amsterdam diamond industry as a diamond polisher a decade before the *Cape Time* period brought unparalleled wealth to incumbents of this industry. Despite the high wages paid in the diamond industry, when Henri turned 13 in 1881, Mozes was unable to pay for his continued education *and* feed his eleven children. Mozes pushed his son to follow in his

[1] Henri Polak, *Weekblad* 02-11-1934, "Overpeinzingen."
[2] Bloemgarten, "Henri Polak," 1993, 20–21.
[3] Joop Voet, the son of a Jewish diamond worker, mentions a similar story about his father: "My father was a diamond worker. He was an intelligent man, but when he completed primary schooling at the age of 12, his schooltime was finished. Then there were two options: or you studied, becoming a doctor or lawyer—but there was no money for this—or you learned a trade. And for Jews that trade was very often the diamond trade." Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 49.
[4] Bloemgarten, "Henri Polak," 1993, 19.

footsteps and become a brilliant polisher like himself.[5] Henri, who had seen the "black-smeared, hollering and screaming polishers," preferred the company of the "dignified" cutters, and was trained by his uncle Ben, a diamond cutter, instead.[6]

It were particularly Jewish families who faced the dilemma of sending their children to school or into the diamond industry which, around the turn of the twentieth century, was the largest employer of Amsterdam Jews.[7] High poverty rates throughout the nineteenth century required many Jewish sons and daughters to contribute to the family income from a young age. Concurrently, the lack of historical guild restrictions and a robust international network enabled Jews to secure and retain prominent positions within the diamond industry and, in later years, within labour organisations associated with it. Yet, despite detailed discussions on the diamond industry and its union,[8] there is still much unknown about the intergenerational social and occupational mobility of these workers and their offspring. Some elements we *do* already know. Throughout the nineteenth century, there was a significant influx of Jewish and Gentile families entering the diamond industry, while many other sons and daughters followed family members who were already in the trade into the same occupation. Furthermore, since 1920, when Antwerp became the world's primary production hub for cut-and-polished diamonds, diamond workers' children had a growing tendency to forgo entry into the industry in favour of other careers. This chapter will provide new knowledge on Jewish and Gentile intergenerational mobility in and around the diamond industry and union in Amsterdam. It will contribute through using new and larger datasets, supplemented with qualitative evidence, and examine unexplored dimensions of diamond workers' and their offspring's social origins and destinations within or outside this crucial ethno-religious niche.

Even when children followed their parents into the diamond industry, their destination was not always identical. Numerous sons and daughters of diamond workers pursued other specialisations. For instance, while Henri Polak had followed his father into the same industry, he received training for a more advanced and esteemed position. Following parents was common among the offspring of diamond workers, especially in comparison to the offspring of other skilled workers. In fact, after 1904 only sons and daughters of diamond workers, as well as their employers' *protégés*, were 'officially' allowed to join, although in practice apprentices varied more in social backgrounds as we shall see later in this chapter. Apprentices following their parents into the industry had become increasingly common after the opening of the first steam-powered factories and following the *Cape Time* boom but declined in frequency in the 1890s.[9] In the early twentieth century even fewer children followed their parents, even after the ANDB apprenticeship stop ended in 1904.[10] Nonetheless, most new entrants in the

[5] Bloemgarten, "Henri Polak," 1993, 20.

[6] Ibid., 20-1.

[7] Hofmeester, "Shifting Trajectories of Diamond Processing," 43–44; Van Zanten, "Eenige demografische gegevens over de joden te Amsterdam," 9.

[8] See the discussion in this dissertation in Chapter 3 and Heertje, *De diamantbewerkers*; Van Tijn, "De Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkersbond"; Van Tijn, *Amsterdam en diamant*; Hofmeester, *Een schitterende erfenis*.

[9] See Chapter 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 for a discussion on the introduction of the steam-powered factories and the *Cape Time* boom.

[10] The *Leerlingbesluit* actively blocked the entry of prospective apprentices between 1897 and 1904. For a discussion, see Chapter 3.4.

diamond industry continued to originate from diamond worker families. As president of the ANDB, Henri Polak worked hard to educate not only the workers, but also the workers' children.[11] Many children of these workers were believed to have surpassed their parents in social standing and education by the 1930s with many attaining secondary and even tertiary education.[12] Consequently, numerous sons and daughters found themselves in more steady, white-collar occupations. While this is partially true, this story masks the experiences of sons and daughters who did not climb the social ladder, instead falling back in positions common among Jewish and Gentile workers discussed in Chapter 2. It is therefore important to analyse trends across the entire industry, rather than focus primarily on anecdotal success cases, to understand the direction and magnitude of Jewish and Gentile sons' and daughters' mobility.

This chapter is divided into two parts, each studying a different facet of intergenerational mobility in the diamond industry. First, using a large dataset of father-son linked marriage certificates, it explores the intergenerational occupational and class mobility of diamond workers' sons. General trends are split into Jewish and Gentile sons to unravel the differential entry into and exit out of the diamond industry. By comparing the sons of diamond workers with sons from different social backgrounds, these trends give a strong indication of specific developments in the diamond industry and differences between Jews and Gentiles more generally. Second, since standardised occupational titles such as 'diamond worker' may mask more detailed developments in micro-mobility, I employ ANDB apprenticeship cards, which provide information on both apprentice and parent, to study intra-industry mobility. Apprenticeship cards cover more detailed individual information on a subset of children that all joined the industry. More notably, it allows us to include women in the analysis. As we will see, many daughters followed their parents into the industry and attained occupational upgrading in the process. While few marriage certificates listed women as working—correctly or incorrectly[13]—all female apprentices were recorded as being in training for gainful employment in the diamond industry. Apprenticeship cards therefore provide an optimal opportunity to compare across both ethno-religious background *and* gender. A third facet of intergenerational mobility, education, is examined in Chapter 8. Since both the apprenticeship cards and marriage certificates do not report any information about formal schooling—diamond industry apprenticeships can be considered vocational schooling but were rarely listed as such—additional sources are needed to incorporate education into our story. For this reason, I analyse conscription records between 1919 and 1940 for diamond workers' sons present in our life course data. These records

[11] Bloemgarten, "Henri Polak," 1993, 500–502; Hofmeester, "The Amsterdam Diamond 'Marketplace' and the Jewish Experience," 67–68.

[12] Salomon Mok, *Weekblad* 16-11-1934, "Een woord van dank."

[13] The absence of women's occupations on marriage certificates has been explained through different arguments. Some have argued that it was the spread of a 'housewife' social norm, where it was seen as more respectable to have a wife who could focus on homemaking. However, the extremely low percentage of marrying women listed with an occupation in Amsterdam—less than 10 percent—between 1890 and 1929—suggests that women were being underrecorded. Comparing occupational information from diamond workers' marriage certificates and their union records shows that over half of brides were inaccuretely listed without an occupation. Frans van Poppel, Hendrik van Dalen, and Evelien Walhout, "Diffusion of a Social Norm: Tracing the Emergence of the Housewife in the Netherlands, 1812-1922," *The Economic History Review* 62.1 (2009): 99–127; Corinne Boter, "The Emergence of the Dutch Housewife Revised. How Shifts in Local Labour Market Structures Shaped Dutch Unmarried Women's Labour Force Participation, 1812–1929," *Historical Life Course Studies* 10 (2021): 130–34.

reported educational attainment and current occupation for all 19-year-old men at the time of their mandatory health check-up. This allows us to look at the role of education in intergenerational mobility, as well as study the intergenerational mobility for one additional generation.

To get a better understanding of the occupational possibilities for the sons and daughters of diamond workers, I first discuss the different pathways children took and overall trends of intergenerational mobility for the Dutch population at that time. Next, I look at the larger trends dating back to 1850 using the marriage certificates. Once I have outlined the long-term trends, I focus on the diamond workers who followed, analysing intra-industry mobility through apprenticeship cards. Then, after a brief discussion of educational options in the early twentieth century, I will discuss the different educational attainment of Jewish and Gentile sons by the occupational background of their fathers.

4.2 Pathways of Intergenerational Mobility

4.2.1 *Overall trends*

Earlier research has shown that the nineteenth-century Netherlands was a country of limited intergenerational mobility. In the first half of the nineteenth century in Zeeland, the significance of fathers' characteristics on their children's occupational outcomes increased, but in the second half of the century, marked by rapid modernisation and industrialisation, this importance declined.[14] A more recent dissertation supported these findings after incorporating additional provinces and found that family connections beyond the father also mattered.[15] The weakening importance of fathers' characteristics suggests an increase in intergenerational mobility and a growing focus on achievement over ascription; that is, one's own achievements became more important than one's social background.[16] However, while absolute mobility, the direct comparison of class status between father and son, may have been increasing, comparing their relative positions in the class distribution, or relative mobility, was lower than in other European countries.[17] While sons generally fared better than their fathers due to structural labour market improvements, those with fathers in the lower ends of the class distribution often stayed at the bottom themselves. However, much of this 'closedness'—the inability of sons from lower classes to break through a class ceiling—is explained by the prominence of farmers, who were completely absent in Amsterdam.[18] Yet, an earlier analysis of the 'openness' of Amsterdam's upper classes in the second half of the nineteenth century showed no signs of increasing mobility.[19] This scenario was likely quite different for Amsterdam Jews. Their historical exclusion by guilds and other institutions until their political emancipation had economic consequences lasting well

[14] Richard Zijdeman, "Like My Father before Me: Intergenerational Occupational Status Transfer during Industrialization (Zeeland, 1811–1915)," *Continuity and Change* 24.3 (2009): 455–86.
[15] Knigge, "Sources of Sibling Similarity," 122–23.
[16] David Treiman, "Industrialization and Social Stratification," *Sociological Inquiry* 40.2 (1970): 207–34.
[17] Maas and Van Leeuwen, "Toward Open Societies?"
[18] Ibid., 865.
[19] Marco van Leeuwen and Ineke Maas, "Log-Linear Analysis of Changes in Mobility Patterns: Some Models with an Application to the Amsterdam Upper Classes in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 24 (1991): 66–79.

into the nineteenth century.[20] As these disadvantages disappeared and Jewish integration into Dutch society accelerated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their mobility rates likely moved up quicker than those of the overall population.[21] In the United States, Russian Jews and other immigrants arriving with disadvantaged backgrounds often performed better in subsequent generations by moving to places with more opportunities for upward mobility; large urban locations, similar to Amsterdam.[22] In Amsterdam, the Jewish presence in the diamond industry contributed significantly to this story. Between 1854 and 1884, Jews went from under-represented to over-represented among the Amsterdam electorate, largely due to the upward mobility of many Jews through the diamond industry.[23] Moreover, the limited research on the relationship between Jews' integration and career achievements suggest that greater integration between 1870 and 1940 may have led to better career outcomes.[24] Additional research using data covering longer time periods and incorporating different segments of the Jewish and non-Jewish population is needed to fully understand the social mobility trends of Amsterdam and Dutch Jews in a longitudinal and comparative perspective.

4.2.2 Trends in the diamond industry

The career options for the sons and daughters of diamond workers were, historically, rather limited. Traditionally, sons followed their fathers into the same industry, sometimes continuing lineages spanning multiple generations in 'the trade.' These lineages could have specialised in the same skills within the industry, or experienced gradual steps upwards along the industry's hierarchy. Saul (Paul) de Groot (1899-1999) was one example of taking the same position. Although his father, a brilliant polisher in Antwerp, earned enough to send his bookish son to secondary school, he feared Saul would be unable to find work in an intellectual field as an outsider—being Dutch and Jewish in Antwerp—and instead placed him in an apprenticeship in the diamond industry at the age of 13.[25] Upgraders included Henri Polak, who made the step from brilliant polisher to cutter and the accomplished brilliant cutter Suze Frank (1907-1988), who made the same step.[26] Fortunate and studious descendants may have been able to continue their education, rather than start working at the age of 13 or 14, allowing them to enter white-collar occupations with greater ease. Siegfried van Praag (1899-2002) and Jacques Presser (1899-1970) are two additional examples. Their fathers had started their careers as diamond workers and moved up to positions as small-scale diamond merchants. Their sons enjoyed university education, became office workers, and later educators. Historian of the diamond industry, Henri Heertje (1913-1943), followed a

[20] Lucassen, "Joodse Nederlanders 1796-1940," 14–15.
[21] For a background on the growing integration of Amsterdam Jews, see Tammes and Scholten, "Assimilation of Ethnic-Religious Minorities in the Netherlands." In preliminary work with Kees Mandemakers I find that relative upward intergenerational mobility among Jews increased quicker than among Gentiles in late-nineteenth-century Amsterdam; in alignment with their increasing integration.
[22] Ran Abramitzky, Leah Boustan, and Santiago Pérez, "Intergenerational Mobility of Immigrants in the United States over Two Centuries," *American Economic Review* 111.2 (2021): 580–608.
[23] De Vries, "De joodse elite in Amsterdam," 87–88.
[24] Tammes, "'Hack, Pack, Sack'"; Van der Veen, "Novel Opportunities, Perpetual Barriers," 81–82.
[25] Stutje, *De man die de weg wees*, 24.
[26] Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 53–54; see also Suze Frank's life story: https://diamantbewerkers.nl/en/levensverhalen/suze-frank.

similar path, although his father Meijer Heertje (1888-1945) had not made the jump to diamond merchant.[27] All three were able to attend secondary and higher education. While not all sons became academics, like Jacques Presser and Henri Heertje, or writers with university degrees, like Siegfried van Praag, many of them were able to attend secondary education and get safe and healthy white-collar jobs. Another pathway for success was through the arts. Part of the 'uplifting' of the union had been to advance the diamond workers culturally.[28] Notable offspring of diamond workers in this category include the cartoonist Elias (Eli) Smalhout,[29] illustrator Frederika (Fré) Cohen (1903-1943), the author Israël Querido (1872-1932) and writer-publisher Emanuel Querido (1871-1943), painter Salomon (Sal) Meijer (1877-1965), comedian Eduard Jacobs (1867-1914), singer Joseph (Jef) Judels (1871-1942), and violinist Jo Juda (1909-1985). Sports were also encouraged by the union and diamond workers' children exceeded here too.[30]

Other children were less fortunate. Without the opportunity for additional education, success in cultural fields, or following their parents into the diamond industry, this group frequently had to rely on semi-skilled or unskilled manual work. Jewish workers were generally at a disadvantage here since most of the skilled workers in their community were active in the diamond trade, creating few ties to other industries. Without education or ties in other industries, in less fortunate times these sons and daughters were forced to take any gainful employment to supplement the household income. The early death of a parent, not uncommon at this time, could significantly disrupt possibilities for upward mobility.[31] Jacob Valensa's (1889-1942) father, David (1855-1897), had been a diamond worker through the *Cape Time* but unable to keep his amassed fortunes. When he died in 1897, his young sons needed to find work quickly. When Jacob was old enough, he took odd jobs as a day labourer. Others in his position may have reverted back to occupations more common among earlier generations, such as peddling on the streets of Amsterdam, thereby reversing the positive influence on social positions the diamond industry may have had on these families, including the high incomes and access to the ANDB library.[32] Yet another group may have voluntarily left the intergenerational lineage of diamond workers for other skilled work, even when their parents had enough wealth to send them to further education. Jules Schelvis (1921-2016) knew from a young age that he wanted to work in the printing industry, yet his

[27] Meijer left the diamond industry in 1922 following prolonged unemployment. He then became a commercial traveller selling sponges. ANDB archive ARCH00210.9432 648-649; Gezinskaart Meijer Heertje (05-04-1888).

[28] Heertje, *De diamantbewerkers*, 172; De Jong Edz., *Van ruw tot geslepen*; Hofmeester, "The Impact of the Diamond Industry," 58–61.

[29] Elias' son Bob Smalhout (1927-2015) became a professor in anaesthesiology after the war, indicating that intergenerational mobility could move from cultural to academic over generations.

[30] Isidore Goudeket (1883-1943) was diamond-working gymnast who participated in the 1908 London Olympics. See Erik Brouwer, *Spartacus: de familiegeschiedenis van twee joodse olympiërs* (Amsterdam, 2009). Two other gymnasts who attended the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam and came from the diamond workers' milieu were Elias Hijman Melkman (1903-1942) and Israel Wijnschenk (1895-1943). Salomon (Salo) Landau (1903-1944) was a diamond worker with a talent for chess; in 1936 he became Dutch chess champion. Eliazer (Leo) van der Kar (1913-1992) was not a professional athlete himself—although he did compete at a national level as a runner—but an entrepreneur from a diamond-working family who started one of the largest sporting goods enterprises in the Netherlands.

[31] Rosenbaum-Feldbrügge's dissertation goes into detail on the adverse effects of young parental deaths during this period. Matthias Rosenbaum-Feldbrügge, "Dealing with Demographic Stress in Childhood: Parental Death and the Transition to Adulthood in the Netherlands, 1850-1952" (PhD diss., Radboud University, 2019).

[32] See Chapter 3 for the intergenerational benefits of working in the diamond industry.

diamond-working father made sure he first continued his education before commencing his career.[33]

In summary, the children of diamond workers could realistically maintain their forefathers' status or move in either downward or upward directions. However, the relatively high wages paid to diamond workers in time of prosperity and the continued encouragement to engage with cultural and intellectual life, pushed many of their sons and daughters into the arts and sciences. Strong ties with political movements enabled civic careers, which were also important for women.[34] Overall, it is therefore plausible to expect that Jewish diamond workers saw upward mobility frequently, either within or outside the industry, and in greater degrees than Jews and Gentiles originating from other social backgrounds.

4.3 Broad Trends in Intergenerational Mobility

Over time, the occupational choices made by the descendants of diamond workers varied. While prosperous times for the industry brought more wealth, incentivising both following into the industry and investments in education, poor times may have spurred more downward mobility. To understand these changing rates in following into the same occupation as one's parents on the one hand, and being mobile on the other, I examine marriage certificates linking fathers and sons.[35] In short, I compare sons' occupations on marriage certificates with those of their fathers, evaluating occupations at similar points—i.e. the time of marriage for each man—and summarising the connections per decade of the groom's marriage. By using the names of the grooms and their parents, I establish the ethno-religious backgrounds of the grooms' families, enabling a comparison between Jewish and Gentile grooms.[36] Marriages included in the analyses are limited to grooms aged 18 to 39, who married in 'larger'[37] Amsterdam, and where both father and son had valid occupations on their respective marriage certificates. Next to our sample of lapidary fathers, three comparison groups are constructed where the father had a different social status: semi-skilled and unskilled workers ("Lower skilled"), skilled workers excluding diamond workers ("Skilled workers"), and the entire Amsterdam population ("All"). To minimise the number of comparisons, semi-skilled and unskilled workers are clustered[38] and lower and higher white-collar workers are excluded since their trends are visible from the difference between the entire Amsterdam population and the groups of manual workers. We compare the father's social class, as measured by HISCLASS,[39] with the social class of their sons. Sons either had a higher social class (upward mobility), a lower social class

[33] Schelvis, *Een jeugd in Amsterdam*, 83.

[34] For the presence of Jewish women in Dutch labour movements at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, see Karin Hofmeester, "Roosje Vos, Sani Prijes, Alida de Jong, and the Others, Jewish Women Workers and the Labor Movement as a Vehicle on the Road to Modernity," in *Dutch Jewry in a Cultural Maelstrom, 1880-1940*, ed. Judith Frishman (Amsterdam, 2007), 155–67; Jansz, "Betje Lazarus (1870-1933)"; Van der Veen, ""Je had als vrouw al een achterstand"."

[35] A description of the linking process and dataset is provided in Chapter 1.

[36] This methodology is explained in-depth in Appendix A.

[37] Including Zaandam, Weesp, and Watergraafsmeer.

[38] I have chosen to cluster unskilled and semi-skilled workers, rather than semi-skilled and skilled workers—as is common when using HISCLASS—to separate skilled workers from the rest. This facilitates comparisons between diamond workers and other skilled workers without the inclusion of semi-skilled workers.

[39] See Chapter 1.4 for a discussion.

(downward mobility), or the same social class (immobility). In the last case, occupational titles—standardised using the HISCO scheme—could be the exact same, for instance when both son and father were diamond workers, or could have been different, e.g. when the father was a diamond worker but the son worked in another skilled occupation. I therefore distinguish between father-son pairs who have the same HISCLASS but varying HISCOs *and* those who have the same HISCLASS and HISCO codes.

In the next subsection we will look at various aspects of intergenerational mobility. The figures, each consisting of three panels, compare trends within and between ethno-religious groups and social class backgrounds, placing the sons of Jewish and Gentile diamond workers at the centre of these comparisons. Together, they not only show how Jews' intergenerational mobility differed from Gentiles' mobility, but it will also highlight how this was stratified by social class. By distinguishing diamond workers from other skilled workers we can tell whether the diamond industry was special in its mobility trends, or whether it saw the same developments as other skilled workers. These comparisons are only possible using large longitudinal datasets, such as the Amsterdam marriage certificates included in LINKS, and innovative techniques to identify Jews and Gentiles, such as the *Jewish Name Index* approach.[40]

4.3.1 *Trends in absolute class mobility*

Before contrasting diamond workers' sons trajectories with those of sons with other social backgrounds, we first need to establish their own trends. I therefore plot rates of upward (green line), downward (red), and immobility—either same social class (black) or exact occupation (grey)—for diamond workers' sons in Figure 4.1. Rates are calculated for ten-year marriage cohorts of sons, e.g. 1870-1879. Panel A presents rates for all sons of diamond workers, regardless of whether grooms were identified as Jewish or Gentile. Panels B and C show the same rates for only Jewish (B) and Gentile (C) sons.

The figure displays important trends and differences between groups. For instance, the share of occupational following among all diamond workers' sons was rising quickly between 1870 and 1889, seen by the rising grey line in panel A. This period was characterised by a significant expansion of the diamond industry, discussed in detail in Chapter 3, during which the number of workers increased from 1500 to 10,000. While fathers had already been likely to train their sons in the same occupation, evidenced by following rates of over 40 percent prior to 1870, this following rate now rose to nearly 80 percent. High wages during this time incentivised parents to send their children into the same careers. However, after the 1890s occupational following declined steadily, dropping from 70 percent to below 20 percent in the early 1930s. Not occupying the same profession as their fathers, these sons were increasingly mobile in both up- and downward directions, although upward mobility (green) outweighed downward mobility (red) during this period. The growing share of upward mobility, seen in the increasing green line since the 1890-1899 period, suggests that diamond workers had been able to send their children off to better futures. Since our social class categorisation only ranks lower and higher-white collar work above skilled labour, these upwardly-mobile sons ventured into white-collar occupations. Indeed, a growing share of sons worked as office clerks and commercial travellers, two occupational titles that masked

[40] The Figures in Chapter 4.3 are based on 196,301 father-son linked marriages. For a discussion on marriage certificates, see Chapter 1.4.3. More information on the *Jewish Name Index* can be found in Appendix A.

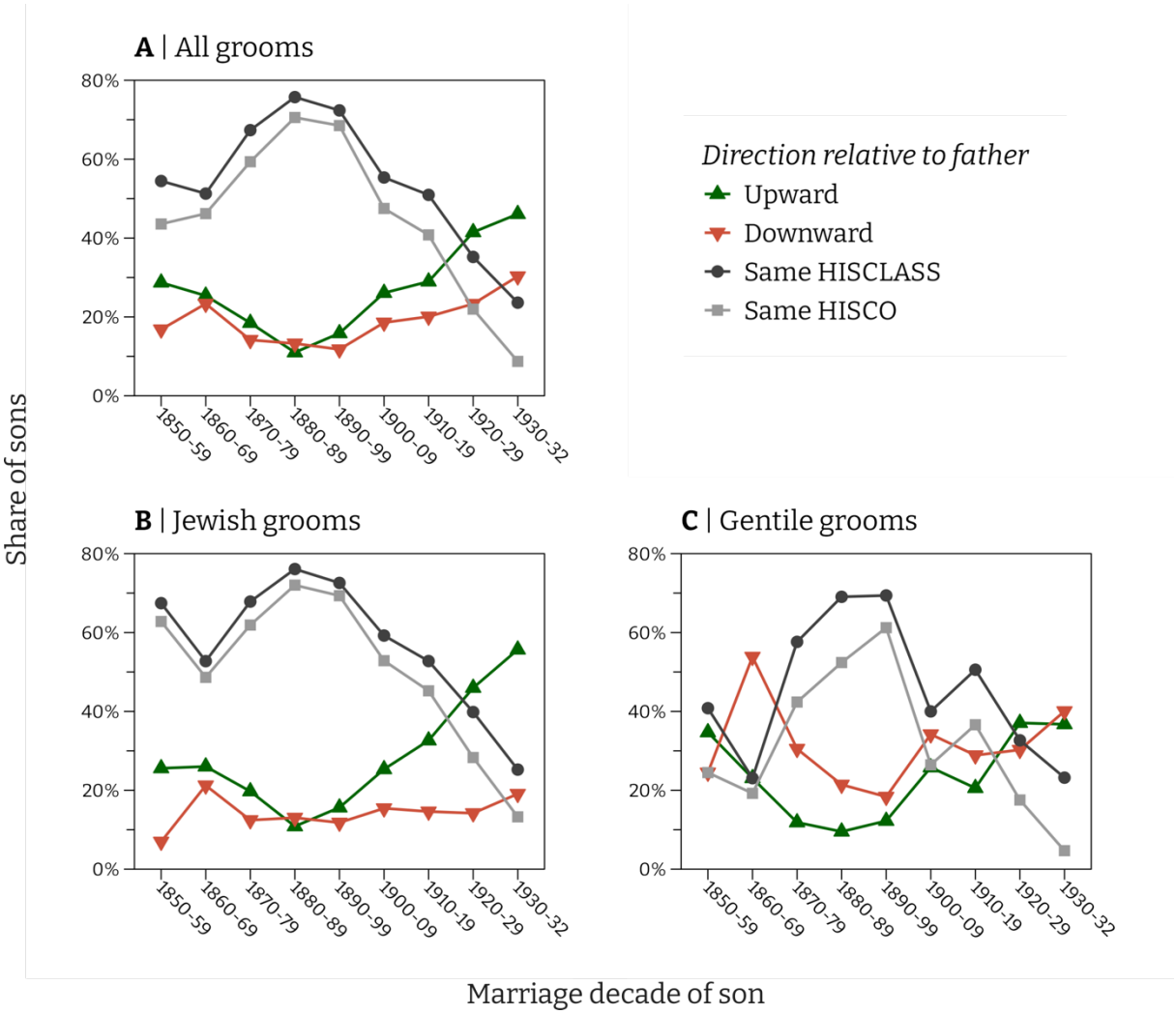

FIGURE 4.1 Intergenerational mobility of diamond workers' sons by ethno-religious background and fathers' social class, 1850-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Linked Civil Registry, Netherlands – marriages only" 2020 release; https://hdl.handle.net/10622/MR4GPS; and JNI approach.
Note: panel A includes all men who married in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and were listed with a valid occupation; panels B and C use only those who were identified as either Jewish or Gentile, respectively.

large socioeconomic variance within them but could be considered to offer a more stable future than the deteriorating post-1920 diamond industry. However, increasing downward class mobility—the red line—suggests that this was not possible for everyone. When the industry reached its capacity around the turn of the century, which led the union to introduce a temporary halt on apprentices, some sons (and daughters) had to accept lower positions when further education was not a viable choice. The decreasing likelihood of following in the 1920s, coinciding with the collapse of the Amsterdam diamond industry, implies that mobility was not always a choice, as the diamond industry lost its appeal compared to the nineteenth century.

Comparing Jewish and Gentile sons of diamond workers (panels B and C) reveals differences in these trends based on the family's ethno-religious background. Although there were few Gentile sons of diamond workers before 1870—most Gentiles entered the

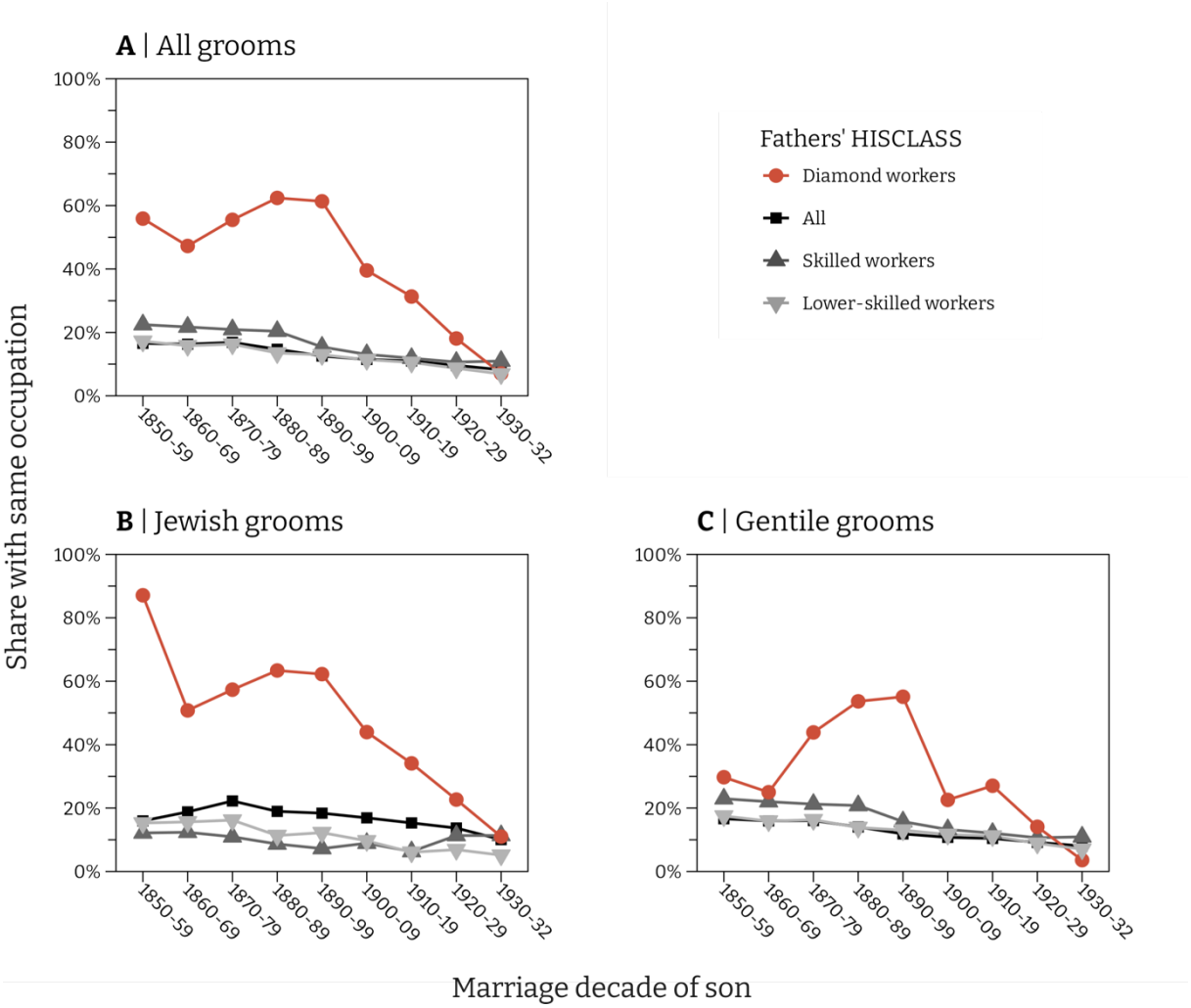

FIGURE 4.2 Occupational following by ethno-religious background and fathers' social class, 1812-1940.

Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Linked Civil Registry, Netherlands – marriages only," 2020 release; and JNI approach.

Note: panel A includes all men who married in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and were listed with a valid occupation; panels B and C use only those who were identified as either Jewish or Gentile, respectively. Diamond workers are excluded from Skilled workers.

industry during the late 1870s and 1880s—the comparisons from 1870 onwards provide worthwhile information. First, Jews were slightly more likely to continue following their fathers into the diamond industry. This was already true prior to 1870, when Jews had following rates upward of 50 percent, but continued to hold throughout the entire period. Jews held higher positions in the industry and had fewer outside options, which contributed to this trend.[41] We also notice a trend towards more upward mobility among Jewish sons than among Gentile sons since 1890. In the 1920s, almost 50 percent of Jewish diamond workers' sons had a higher social class than their fathers, and less than 20 percent had a lower social class. For Gentiles, downward mobility (30%) was closer

[41] Based on their limited occupational diversification; see Tammes, "'Hack, Pack, Sack.'"

to upward mobility (37%). Thus, it appears that Jewish sons of diamond workers were more successful in seizing opportunities in the twentieth century than their Gentile peers. However, we cannot directly determine whether this is due to Jews' higher wages, greater motivation for education, or other factors.[42]

Figure 4.1 compared the rates of upward, downward, and immobility among sons of Jewish diamond workers to those of Gentile diamond workers. Figures 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 will examine each of these directions of mobility, adding comparisons to sons with other social backgrounds within each group. In Figure 4.2 we see that the 'direct following rates' of diamond workers' sons were considerably higher than those of sons from other social backgrounds. A son is considered to 'follow' if, at the time of their respective marriages, the father and son worked in the same occupation. The diamond industry was known as an occupation where family ties were important; at times, direct family connections were prerequisites to entry.[43] While most workers remained in the same class as their fathers, a minority followed into the same occupational group. Such 'direct following' became less common throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century; for the overall Amsterdam population (black squares in panel A) it fell from 15 percent in the 1850s to 7 percent in the early 1930s. Thus, the average Amsterdam son increasingly started working in occupations dissimilar from their father. Here, too, we observe small but important differences between Jews and Gentiles. Among Gentile sons (panel C), those with skilled fathers were most likely to 'follow' their fathers, although less than a quarter did. Jewish sons (panel B) of skilled workers not in the diamond industry followed their fathers even less frequently. Thus, Gentiles appear to have been in a better position to transfer their skilled (artisan) work to their children, which allowed them to build greater familiarity with skilled trades over generations. Nonetheless, both Jewish and Gentile sons were unlikely to follow 'directly' into the same occupation in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and in the diamond industry rates after 1890 were similar across groups. The same became true for diamond workers' sons, who by 1930-1932 had similar or lower following rates than their peers.

Figure 4.3 focuses on upward mobility. Naturally, sons of lower-skilled fathers—the grey line—positioned at the bottom of the social hierarchy, had more opportunities for upward class mobility than other sons. High occupational following in the late nineteenth century meant that sons of diamond workers rarely experienced upward mobility; nearly all sons of diamond workers became diamond workers. Upward class mobility increased for diamond workers' sons in the 1890s. As the industry reached its limit around the turn of the century, following rates among diamond workers decreased. At the same time, the introduction of the ANDB potentially catalysed upward mobility. In the 1880s, diamond workers' sons were less likely than sons of skilled workers to achieve a higher social class than their fathers; by the 1920s and early 1930s diamond workers' sons were much more likely to do so. Again, an important difference between Jewish and Gentile sons is evident. This pattern is particularly pronounced for Jewish sons of diamond workers. Their rates of upward mobility outpaced those of Jewish skilled workers since the 1900-1909 period. They also outpaced Gentile diamond workers' sons, who exhibited patterns worse or identical to Gentile skilled workers' sons.

[42] The discussion at in Chapter 8 suggests that higher educational levels of sons is a reasonable explanation.
[43] Such rules were implemented by the various trade movements in the industry; whether these rules were followed is less known. Several contemporaries commented on the closedness of the industry for those without family connections; see Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 48–51.

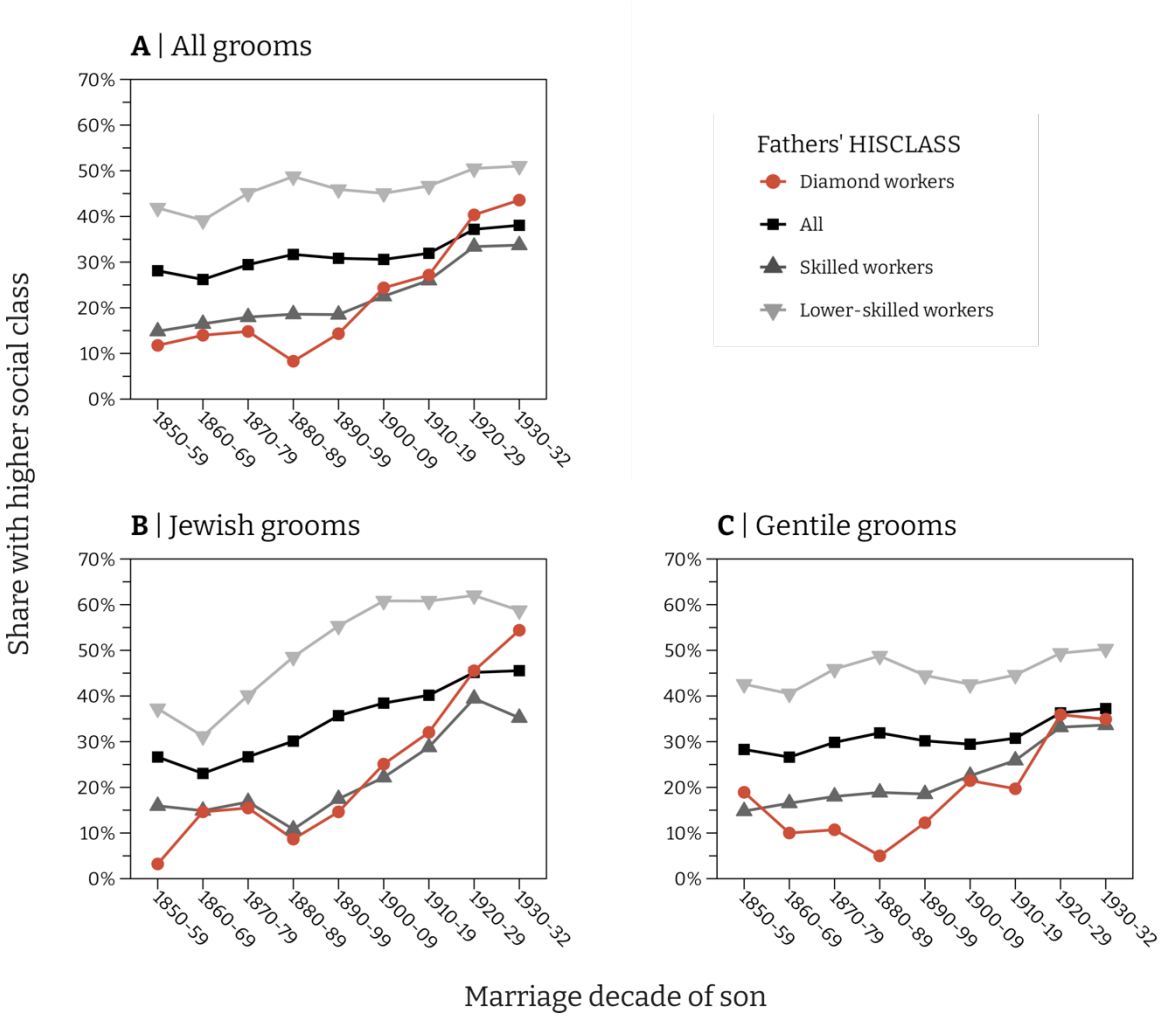

FIGURE 4.3 Upward mobility by religious background and fathers' social class, 1850-1932
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Linked Civil Registry, Netherlands – marriages only" 2020 release and JNI approach.
Note: panel A includes all men who married in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and were listed with a valid occupation; panels B and C use only those who were identified as either Jewish or Gentile, respectively. Diamond workers are excluded from Skilled workers.

Seemingly, the diamond industry was a unique vehicle for upward mobility for Jewish diamond workers' sons, whereas it was just another industry for Gentiles. While Jews knew work in the diamond industry as 'the trade,' the same connotations were not present for Gentiles.[44] Moreover, we also note a more general trend when looking at the other sons from each ethno-religious background. The rate at which Jewish sons achieved upward class mobility started rising much faster than the Gentile pattern since the 1880s, regardless of class background. During this time, the *Cape Time* introduced new wealth into the Jewish community.[45] It also marks a period during which improvements in their social position and societal integration was accelerating.[46] Jewish

[44] Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 48–51.
[45] Heertje, *De diamantbewerkers*, 37.
[46] For a discussion, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation or Blom and Cahen, "Joodse Nederlanders."

fathers increasingly had experienced general education and were less likely to follow Jewish traditions, such as observing the Sabbath, which improved the possibilities for occupational diversification for their sons. While many Jewish sons faced similar limited occupational options as their fathers had until the 1850s, from the 1880s onwards—mostly for sons born since the 1860s—Jewish intergenerational class upgrading occurred at much greater rates than in the overall Amsterdam population. These sons increasingly moved to new professions, including the expanding sector of office work,[47] with stable employment and safer working conditions.

Figure 4.4 examines trends in downward mobility. As a general trend, downward mobility for the average Amsterdammer was considerable. Between 1850 and 1932, between 30 and 40 percent of all grooms moved down relative to their fathers. These percentages are roughly equal to the share of upward mobility, suggesting that, on average, Amsterdam was rather stable in its mobility. Lower-skilled workers, who could hardly move down, and diamond workers, who disproportionately followed their fathers, initially saw the least downward mobility. However, in the twentieth century the downward mobility rates of diamond workers increased and equalised with the rates of other skilled workers. When comparing Jews and Gentiles, we see that this was predominantly the result of downwardly mobile Gentiles. While Jewish diamond workers' sons saw an increase in downward mobility up to 20 percent in 1930-1932, for Gentile diamond workers' sons this was 40 percent. We also see that Gentiles had higher rates of downward mobility on average. Upward and downward mobility remained on equal footing for Gentile sons of diamond workers and increases in either direction often followed from a decline in occupational following. Such absolute class mobility was stimulated by industrialisation and modernisation, which changed the occupational structure of Amsterdam and complicated having the same occupation or social class as one's parents. Gentiles also had more a more diverse occupational structure and were spread more evenly across all social classes than Jews. Thus, the step from skilled work to lower-skilled work, for instance in carpentry, was easier for Gentiles than Jews. For Jews, socioeconomic conditions were changing more drastically from one generation to the next. When forced to take up a career different from their fathers, they often chose positions in trade. In the past, this would predominantly have been peddling, but in the late nineteenth century this was more frequently as merchants or commercial travellers and agents.

[47] Knotter, *Economische transformatie*, 58–59.

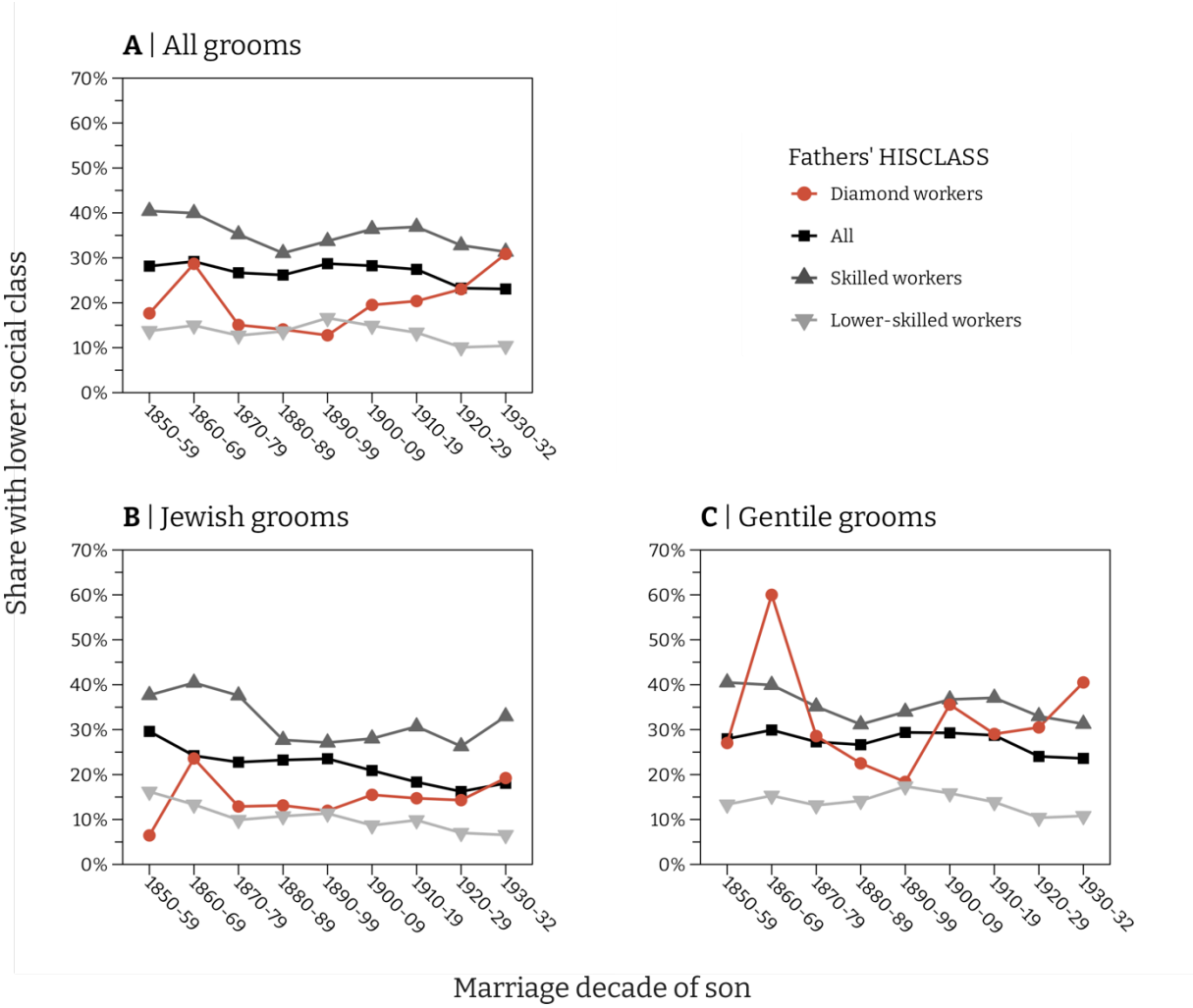

FIGURE 4.4 Downward mobility by religious background and fathers' social class, 1850-1932.
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Linked Civil Registry, Netherlands – marriages only" 2020 release; and JNI approach.
Note: panel A includes all men who married in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and were listed with a valid occupation; panels B and C use only those who were identified as either Jewish or Gentile, respectively. Diamond workers are excluded from Skilled workers. Downward mobility for Lower-skilled workers comprises the Semi-skilled fathers within this group.

Lastly, Figure 4.5 shows the percentage of sons from each group who achieved an 'elite' or upper-class position based on HISCLASS scores.[48] This select group, including doctors, lawyers, and factory owners, comprised 3 to 4 percent of Amsterdam's grooms from 1850 to 1932, with many being direct descendants of those already in those positions. In many cases, these sons completed university education or were uniquely successful in business. In the second half of the nineteenth century, less than 2 percent of diamond workers' sons achieved such positions. This is not entirely surprising given their tendency to follow their fathers into the diamond industry. However, comparing

[48] For a discussion on a wider Jewish 'elite,' see Van der Veen, "Novel Opportunities, Perpetual Barriers," 16–21.

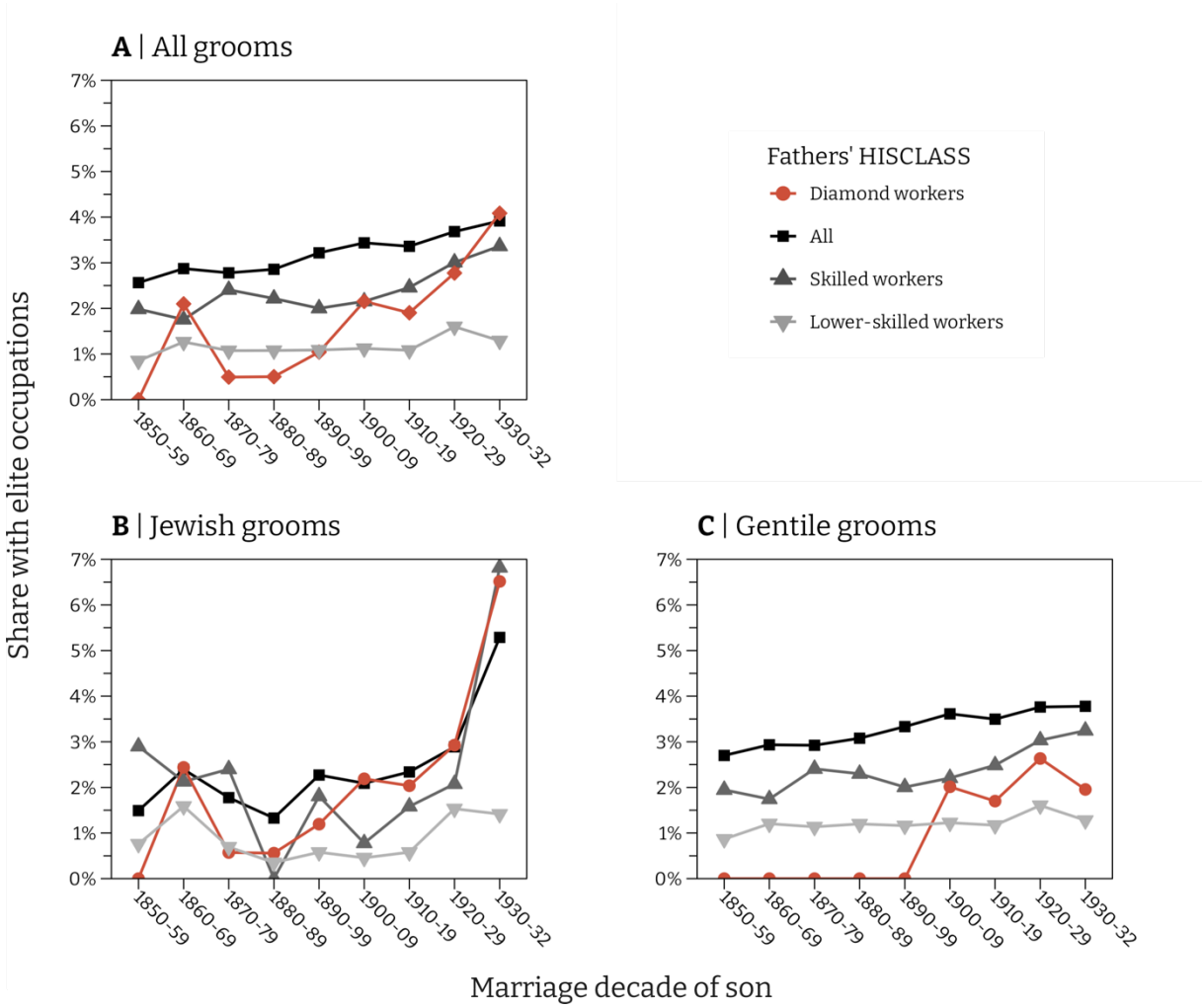

FIGURE 4.5 Share of sons with upper-class occupations, 1812-1932
Source: author's calculations using LINKS "Linked Civil Registry, Netherlands – marriages only" 2020 release; and JNI approach.
Note: panel A includes all men who married in Amsterdam between the ages of 18 and 39 and were listed with a valid occupation; panels B and C use only those who were identified as either Jewish or Gentile, respectively. Diamond workers are excluded from Skilled workers. 'Elite occupations' are defined as having a 12-tiered HISCLASS of 1 ("Higher managers and professionals") or 2 ("Higher professionals or professionals").

diamond workers' sons and other skilled workers' sons directly reveals that, until the 1930s, diamond workers' sons were less likely to reach these high positions, even though they surpassed the rates of upward mobility of the latter since 1890. As was the case for upward mobility in Figure 4.3, the increasing trend (or 'catch up') is likely explained by rising incomes during the *Cape Time* period and increased motivation to invest in children's education when the union formed. However, the lower percentage throughout every decade in the period suggests that something may have blocked diamond workers from obtaining an elite status. While at first discrimination against Jews and Jewish diamond workers may sound like a plausible explanation, this was decidedly not the case: the panels showing trends for Jewish and Gentile grooms (panels B and C) illustrate the exact opposite. Gentile diamond workers' sons were much less likely than the average Gentile son, or the average Gentile skilled workers' sons, to achieve such elite positions.

Meanwhile, Jewish diamond workers' sons always had a higher or equal chance of making it to the highest social class when compared with Jewish skilled workers' sons. However, the black lines in panels B and C indicate that, until the 1930s, the average Jewish groom was much less likely to attain an elite position than the average non-Jewish groom. Some of this may be explained by discrimination in elite positions. Another, important factor could be that due to Jews' overrepresentation in trade, many Jewish merchants and shopkeepers, who could economically be considered among the top of Amsterdam's stratification, were not counted to this elite social class. Unfortunately, without income data we cannot distinguish between wealthy and poor merchants, nor can we observe changes in the composition of top income earners.[49] Nonetheless, within the Jewish community, sons of diamond workers and other skilled workers seem to be among the groups that broke through a glass ceiling in the decade before World War II, while Jewish sons of lower-skilled fathers did not experience the same successes.

4.3.2 *Intergenerational trends summarised*

For the entire Jewish community and for each class background we see increasing rates of upward class mobility over time. In the two decades before World War II, Jews, regardless of their class background, showed a higher likelihood of upward mobility and a lower likelihood of downward mobility compared to their fathers in the early stages of their careers. However, this does not necessarily translate to higher positions at the end of their careers; a topic explored in Chapter 6 on career mobility. In the 1930s, Jewish sons of upper-working and middle-class fathers were also more likely to obtain 'elite' positions. There is little suggestion that Jewish fathers were, on average, wealthier than the average Gentile father at this time. In fact, the discussion regarding the position of Jews up to World War II has centred around their relative poverty, rather than their relative prosperity.[50] If wealth cannot be used as an explanator for the greater upward mobility rates among Jews, another reason must be found. Two characteristics widely ascribed to Jewish populations across the Diaspora may have contributed: (*i*) a greater emphasis on *lernen* ('learning') and *lehren* ('teaching');[51] and (*ii*) higher rates of self-employment and entrepreneurship.[52] Though education was not given as a reason for higher rates of upward intergenerational mobility of Russian-Jewish immigrants by Abramitzky and co-authors,[53] several other researchers have identified it as a crucial factor in explaining the rapid economic ascent of European and American Jews.[54] That

[49] De Vries has shown with their study of the Amsterdam electorate that Jews were increasingly becoming top earners at the end of the nineteenth century. De Vries, *Electoraat en elite*.
[50] For discussions on the relative poverty of Jews, see Van Leeuwen, "Arme Amsterdamse joden"; Hofmeester, "'Als ik niet voor mijzelf ben…'"; Leydesdorff, *Het Joodse proletariaat*.
[51] Mozes Heiman Gans, *Memorboek. Platenatlas van het leven der joden in Nederland van de middeleeuwen tot 1940* (Utrecht, 1971), 387; Paul Burstein, "Jewish Educational and Economic Success in the United States: A Search for Explanations," *Sociological Perspectives* 50.2 (2007): 209–28.
[52] Kruijt, "Het Jodendom in de Nederlandse samenleving," 215–18; Godley, *Jewish Immigrant Entrepreneurship*; Burstein, "Jewish Educational and Economic Success."
[53] Abramitzky, Boustan, and Pérez, "Intergenerational Mobility of Immigrants."
[54] Studies include but are not limited to Jerold Auerbach, "From Rags to Robes: The Legal Profession, Social Mobility and the American Jewish Experience," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 66.2 (1976): 249–84; Stephen Steinberg, "The Rise of the Jewish Professional: Case Studies of Intergenerational Mobility," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 9.4 (1986): 502–13; Jean-Paul Carvalho, Mark Koyama, and Michael Sacks, "Education, Identity, and Community: Lessons from Jewish Emancipation," *Public Choice* 171 (2017): 119–43.

the Jewish concept of *lernen* spurred Jews' human capital attainment beyond those of others was most boldly argued for by economic historians Botticini and Eckstein, who made the argument that the fall of the Temple in 70 CE made Jews value learning more.[55] They believed this to have a long-run effect and still be visible in the twentieth century;[56] however, empirical evidence has been mixed.[57]

Mendelsohn, who studied the Jewish occupational niche of the rag trade in the U.K. and U.S., found that intergenerational transmission of skills as well as greater academic achievements allowed for faster intergenerational occupational upgrading.[58] However, the smaller workplaces in New York facilitated upward mobility through entrepreneurship more than in London, where factories were larger on average and barriers to entrepreneurship were larger. Similarly, Amsterdam diamond factories were large and becoming an employer in this industry was difficult, especially after the union banned smaller 'own work makers' to operate. Whereas Jewish sons of rag traders in the U.S. were more likely to continue in a self-employed or employer fashion, and the same sons continued at a smaller scale with less upgrading in the U.K., Amsterdam diamond workers instead invested more in other careers, including academic ones, to avoid intergenerational stagnation in the diamond industry. With the general trends towards higher education among Jews—they were over-represented among Dutch university-educated men and women in 1930[59]—Jews increasingly left behind the desperate economic conditions common among their (grand)parents. These forces appear to have been even stronger among the sons (and likely daughters) of Jewish diamond workers; despite their lower rates of integration as was discussed in Chapter 1 and will be discussed in Chapters 5, 6, and 7, which indicate that Jewish diamond workers were less likely to intermarry and disaffiliate from Judaism but were pioneers in moving to neighbourhoods with fewer Jewish residents.

4.4 Micro-mobility within the diamond industry

Until now, we have looked at flows in and out of the industry, taking as starting point a father who had, at the time of his marriage, worked in the diamond industry. Here, we switch our perspective: while the share of diamond workers' sons who also went into the diamond industry was declining rapidly since the end of the nineteenth century, as we saw in Figure 4.2, the share of diamond workers' fathers that had also worked in the diamond industry was actually increasing, as we have already seen in Chapter 3. Although the diamond industry had been an important vehicle for upward mobility of the Jewish and Gentile working classes in the 1870s and 1880s, it started closing off in the 1890s. This began with a complete halt on apprenticeships from 1897 to 1904,

[55] Botticini and Eckstein, *The Chosen Few*, 73–75.
[56] Ibid., 268-73.
[57] For instance, Spitzer argued that Jews in the Pale of Settlement had similar rates of educational attainment as non-Jews wherever they lived, and Becker and Cinnirella found no higher education levels for cities where many Jews lived in Prussia. Abramitzky and Halaburda found higher education levels of Jews than non-Jews in interwar Poland, but this effect was driven by Jews more commonly living in areas with higher levels of education. Yannay Spitzer, "Pale in Comparison: Jews as a Rural Service Minority" (CEPR, 2020); Sascha Becker and Francesco Cinnirella, "Prussia Disaggregated: The Demography of Its Universe of Localities in 1871," *Journal of Demographic Economics* 86.3 (2020): 259–90; Ran Abramitzky and Hanna Halaburda, "Were Jews in Interwar Poland More Educated?," *Journal of Demographic Economics* 86.3 (2020): 291–304.
[58] Mendelsohn, *The Rag Race*, 224.
[59] Volkstelling 1930, Chapter 4, Table 3, 166-167.

followed by stricter apprenticeship placements. Simultaneously, the industry's fluctuating nature transformed into one where upward mobility was no longer assured. In the twentieth century, wages considerably dropped compared to the *Cape Time*, which had incentivised thousands to join the industry. Gradually, alternative options, such as the growing office work sector, became more appealing for parents to send their talented children to. No longer did everyone want their child to enter the diamond industry regardless of their personal connections to the industry. Thus, in a time where fewer and fewer sons followed their fathers into the diamond industry, those who *did enter* the diamond industry were almost exclusively the children of diamond workers. This did not necessarily imply stagnation over generations, as the industry was home to a range of specialisations, each with distinct differences in social status, income levels, and working conditions. Sons and daughters could follow their parents into the industry but work in completely different positions, both better or worse. However, they were constrained in doing so by the demands of the ANDB and the *Algemene Juweliers Vereniging* ('General Jewellers' Association', AJV), the union of diamond industry employers.[60] We will focus on the differences in the parent-child transitions *within* the industry by gender and ethno-religious background, but first we will first discuss the recorded characteristics of apprentices' and their parents.

4.4.1 *Apprentices' parents*

The apprenticeship cards contain information that tell us about their parents' work situations. Thus, to get an idea of who these parents were, I turn to the complete collection of apprenticeship cards issued between 1904 and 1940 and described in Chapter 1.4. A few adjustments are needed to get a proper overview. First, I remove apprenticeships that commenced after 1940 since they fall outside of the period studied in this dissertation. I further exclude roughly 300 apprentices placed as *protégés* of AJV members. These employers were allowed to have one or two apprentices in the industry to learn the ins and outs of the business before becoming diamond traders.[61] These apprentices rarely intended to work as diamond workers after their apprenticeships concluded and few of their cards provided information on their parents; listing the AJV member instead. Moreover, I evaluated parents' employment situations on the cards only if a name of a parent was recorded. This information could be one of the following: works in the diamond industry including their specialisation; works in another occupation; experienced a workplace injury or illness; deceased; or no information was given. The detailed information available on the parents of apprentices highlights the immense control the union had over the industry and its labour market.[62]

How often these different categories occurred on the apprenticeship cards by gender and ethno-religious background is presented in Figure 4.6. The columns show the percentage of parents that were not also listed as a diamond worker, which was by far the most prevalent. Slightly more than three quarters of apprentices' parents worked as diamond workers, ranging between 75 percent for male Jewish apprentices' parents to

[60] In 1926, for the first time since the 1920-crisis, hundreds of new apprentices could enter the industry. Due to the need for polishers, 278 out of 288 new apprentices were specialised in this section. See *Jaarverslag 1926*, 21-22. With less demand for setters, who were increasingly getting replaced by machinery, opportunities for intra-industry downward mobility were also on the decline.
[61] Schijf, "De leerlingen van de ANDB," 70–71.
[62] Hofmeester, "The Impact of the Diamond Industry," 53.

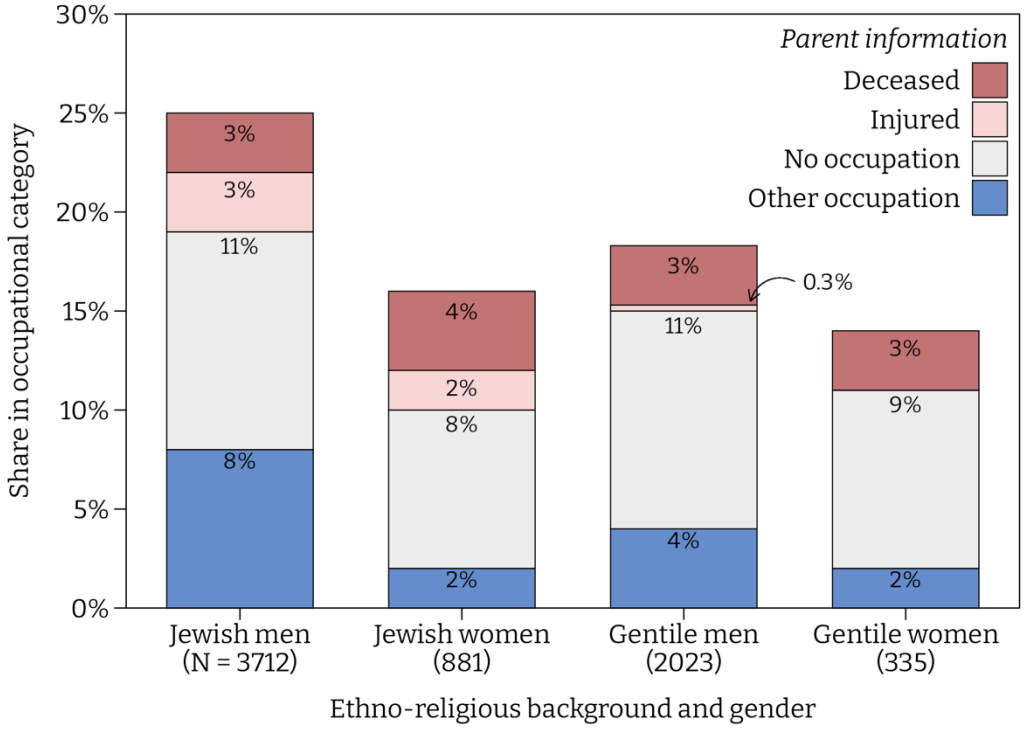

FIGURE 4.6 Occupational information of apprentices' parents by gender and ethno-religious background.
Source: author's calculations using "ANDB Apprentice Cards," release 2019; and JNI approach.
Note: bars only show parents who were not working as diamond workers; all remaining parents were diamond workers. For instance, in the first column (Jewish men), 75 percent of parents worked as diamond workers. Total count by group given in parentheses underneath x-axis.

86 percent for Gentile women.[63] The fact that Jewish men more commonly had parents without a background in the diamond industry, relative to Gentiles, is indicative of either the fact that Jews had more access to extended family in the industry—like in Henri Polak's case, whose uncle enabled him to enter the cutting specialisation—or were interested in entering the diamond industry even when they did not have direct family connections. Owing to the significantly higher representation of Jews in the diamond industry, Jews could depend on a more extensive network of indirect kin employed in the diamond industry. Furthermore, Jewish orphanages were tools to increase the share of skilled workers among Amsterdam Jews.[64] Since most Jewish skilled workers in Amsterdam worked in the diamond industry, it was an easy choice to train them for this occupation. This continued a centuries-old tradition of sending Jewish orphans to the diamond industry.[65] However, we do not observe an over-representation of Jewish

[63] The difference between 100% and the sum of all other occupational categories in Figure 4.6.
[64] Sonnenberg-Stern, *Emancipation & Poverty*, 149–50.
[65] Sephardic Jews had trained both Ashkenazi and Sephardic orphans as diamond workers already from the seventeenth century. See Bernfeld, *Poverty and Welfare among the Portuguese Jews*, 100–106; The Diamantslijperij Maatschappij and other firms had started funds for orphaned diamond workers' offspring since the 1840s; Mozes Barents, *Het Onderling Diamantslijpers Weduwen- en Weezenfonds (1848-1916): een stuk maatschappelijk werk uit de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1927); Although these funds were often non-

orphans in Figure 4.6, likely due to the fact that orphans commonly did not have their parents' names listed on the apprenticeship cards and were therefore excluded from the calculations.

That male Jewish apprentices were twice as likely to have had a father with a non-diamond-worker occupation than male Gentile apprentices, illustrates that, for Jews, the diamond industry remained an option for some children whose parents were not involved in the diamond industry, whereas for Gentiles, the diamond industry was predominantly confined to the offspring of diamond workers. The listed occupations varied significantly based on ethno-religious background. Among Gentiles, occupations often included other (semi-)skilled work like carpenters, plasterers, and painters (not in art). In the case of Jewish fathers, employment was more frequently associated with respectable trading positions, such as diamond merchants, or commerce at a lower status, such as peddlers. For Jews, semi-skilled labour was found in the form of disc sanders, an auxiliary occupation to the diamond industry,[66] and cigar makers. The status of these occupations are weakly correlated with the positions held by the apprentices within the industry. Apprentices undergoing training in higher specialisations tended to have fathers with higher positions outside of the industry. However, the limited sample sizes make it challenging to draw conclusive relationships in any direction.

4.4.2 *Completion of apprenticeships*

Not all individuals who commenced an apprenticeship successfully completed these, but this does not impact our current analysis, as our focus is on the entry into specializations rather than the outcomes. A more detailed discussion on the career trajectories of apprenticeship dropouts is provided in Chapter 6 on career mobility. On average, girls were more inclined to complete their apprenticeship and did so in less time. This can be attributed to the over-representation of women among cutters, where apprenticeship fees were typically paid upfront, in contrast to the additional year of labour at the end of apprenticeships common for polishers and setters to pay off their apprenticeship debt. When we compare the young men and women within the same specialisations, they took approximately the same time to finish. Differences by ethno-religious background were also limited.

However, while girls took the same amount of time to finalise their apprenticeships, they more frequently completed their apprenticeships. One possibility is that they were better apprentices. After all, barriers to entry remained higher for women than for men, meaning only the most talented girls—or those with the best-connected parents—would be accepted. Alternatively, as many other well-paying occupations were closed for girls, and the diamond industry being one of few they could enter, boys had more outside options to choose from and could switch careers more easily while still at the stage of apprentice. For girls, the most common alternatives were to become seamstresses or maids, who earned significantly less than diamond cutters and were therefore less attractive options. For instance, the aforementioned Suze Frank worked as a seamstress

denominational, separate endeavours in the Jewish community boosted their numbers. For example, 16 out of 43 orphans moving out of the Dutch Israelite Orphanage between 1836 and 1850 were trained in the diamond industry; Heertje, *De diamantbewerkers*, 28; Gentile orphans were, in turn, pushed to other occupations more commonly performed by Gentiles; Nelleke Bakker, Jan Noordman, and Marjoke Rietveld-Van Wingerden, *Vijf eeuwen opvoeden in Nederland: idee en praktijk 1500-2000* (Assen, 2006).

[66] Metz, *Diamantgracht*, 148–49.

and as a clerk in the paper industry before retraining as a brilliant cutter. She felt that both occupations paid poorly relative to the diamond industry.[67]

4.4.3 *Parent-child matrices*

Next, we limit ourselves to apprentices whose parents were also listed with a specialisation in the diamond industry; constituting a majority of apprentices at 75.8 percent. This yields 5124 parent-child combinations where both were engaged in the diamond industry. Note, however, that I am not limiting the sample to those who completed the apprenticeships. The emphasis here is on examining the placements, not the outcomes, of the apprenticeships. Each parent and child held one of nine specialisations. Parent-child combinations can therefore be presented in 9-by-9 ordered matrices where each cell counts the number of occurrences for these combinations. Figure 4.7 shows these matrices by gender and ethno-religious background. Parents' specialisations are listed horizontally on the X-axis; those of apprentices vertically on the Y-axis. Each axis is ordered by rank in the position of the hierarchy described in Table 3.2, with cleavers at the top and rose setters at the bottom of this hierarchy. Running diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right of each diagram, we observe 'specialisation following:' both parent and child were engaged in the same specialization. For instance, the top-left cell shows the number of parent-child combinations where both the parent and the child worked as a cleaver. While this combination occurred 25 times for Jewish sons and 12 times for Jewish daughters, it only occurred three times for Gentile sons and once for Gentile daughters. All cases to the left of the diagonal show cases of downward mobility—these apprentices held a lower position in the industry than their parents—and to the right of the diagonal we see upward mobility. The total number of parents and children in each specialisation are listed in the uncoloured sum at the end of the axes; for parents this is the sum of the column, for apprentices the sum of the row. For example, we can see that 61 of the Jewish sons' parents were specialised as cleavers, compared with only four of Gentile sons' parents. The darkness of the red colour indicates, per column, the share of apprentices with that cell's specialisation.

The first trend evident in Figure 4.7 for men is the high occurrence of following along the diagonal. Particularly the combination where both parent and apprentice were brilliant polishers, the exact middle point of the matrices, is highly prevalent, constituting nearly 40 percent of Jewish men's and 46 percent of Gentile men's combinations.[68] Since the position of brilliant polisher was so common, for both Jews and Gentiles we see that it was not rare for fathers in higher positions, such as brilliant cutters, to have children who apprenticed as brilliant polishers. This is reflected by the red horizontal lines starting at brilliant polisher; regardless of parents' position, in nearly all cases their sons were most likely to go into brilliant polishing. However, the Jewish sons of brilliant polishers rarely became setters—only 54 out of 1199 (4.5%) brilliant polishers' sons were either brilliant or rose setter apprentices[69]—compared with 217 out of 1010 (21.5%) of Gentile sons.[70] The same pattern is seen for rose polishers'

[67] For her life story, see https://diamantbewerkers.nl/en/levensverhalen/suze-frank.
[68] 983 / 2526 = 38.9%; 720 / 1569 = 45.9%.
[69] 36 + 18 = 54.
[70] 198 + 19 = 217.

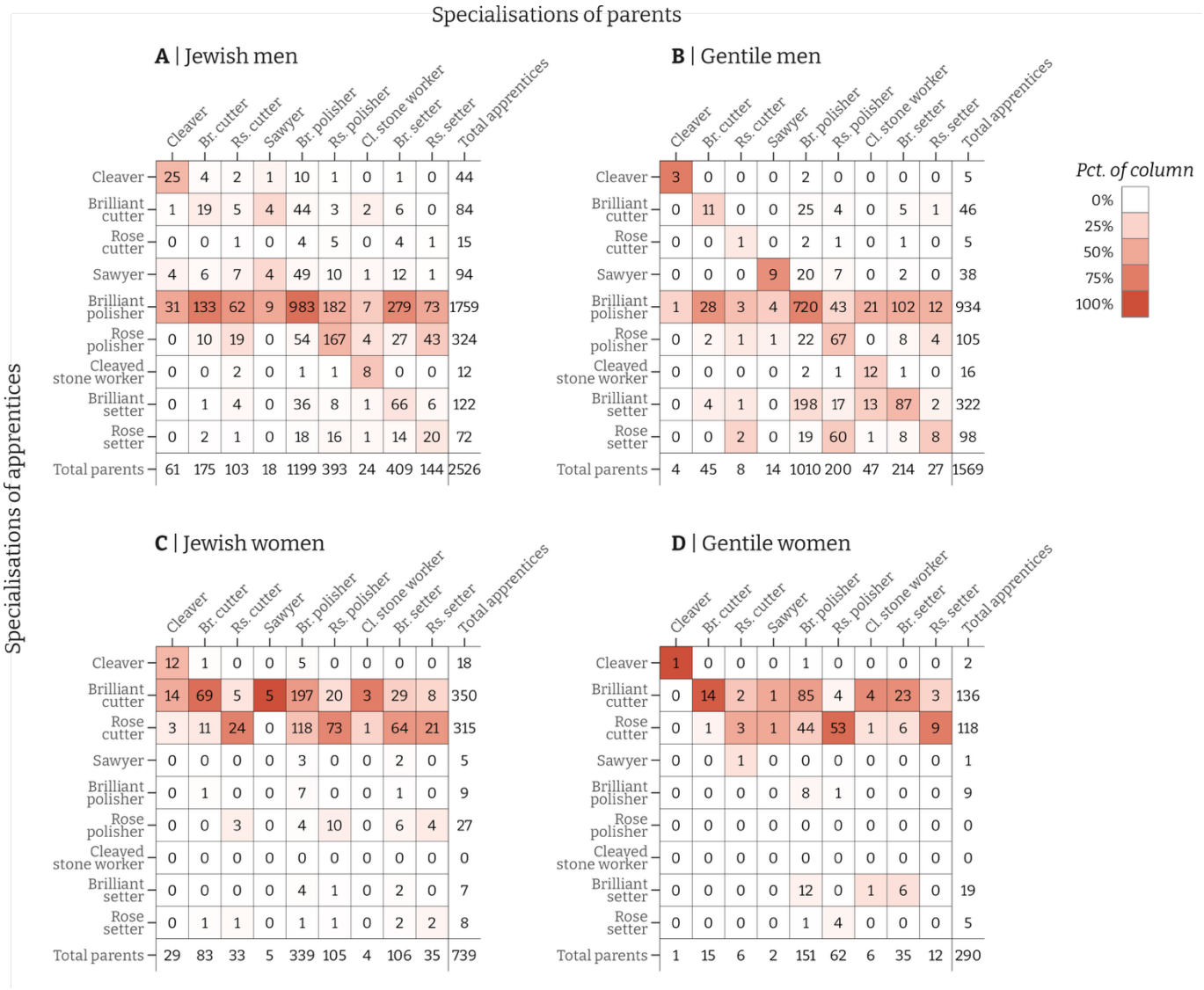

FIGURE 4.7 Intra-industry mobility by gender and ethno-religious background, 1904-1940
Source: author's calculations using "ANDB Apprentice Cards," release 2019; and JNI approach.

sons, although here Gentile sons are more likely to end up as rose setters rather than brilliant setters. In general, Jewish men exhibited higher rates of intra-industry upward mobility compared to downward mobility, while Gentile men were more prone to downward intra-industry mobility than upward.

A distinctive pattern is observed for sawyers, a relatively recent specialization with limited parental involvement. Many apprentices became sawyers, a specialisation that could be used as a significant jump. While most sawyers had been the sons of brilliant polishers, Jewish sawyer apprentices saw a greater spread in the specialisations held by their parents. After 1920, we see more Gentile fathers that worked as sawyers have their sons follow them as sawyers. A handful of women were also trained as sawyers, but never the daughters of sawyers.

Women had entirely different patterns. Since women worked almost exclusively as brilliant and rose cutters, and, to a lesser extent, as cleavers, few of them are seen in lower positions. Consequently, any parent employed in the diamond industry and

planning to send their daughter into the diamond industry had only one choice: sending them to an *atelier* to be a cutter or a cleaver. Daughters of diamond workers therefore saw much higher rates of intra-industry upward mobility, with close to zero daughters experiencing downward mobility.

Table 4.1 summarises the matrices into the shares of each group following or changing positions within the industry and separates the latter into those where the apprentices have higher and lower positions than their parent(s). It also splits the period in half—taking as a break point the crisis that started in 1920—to examine temporal changes. Over the entire period, we see that Gentile men were more likely to have the same position as their parents compared with Jewish men, but Jewish men followed their parents more than Gentile women. For the women, this can be explained by the greater numbers of Jewish women in the industry, which allowed female apprentices to follow mothers, and the higher percentage of Jewish fathers among cutters than Gentile fathers. For the men, the difference arises from their varying in up- and downward mobility patterns. When parent and apprentice had different specialisations, Jewish sons more frequently had higher positions than their parent, whereas Gentile men more commonly moved down. Most apprentices started before 1920. After 1920, the ANDB recruited more brilliant polishers to replace the workers who had left; cutting was increasingly outsourced to Antwerp. As a result, opportunities for upward mobility increased for Gentile sons of lower positioned diamond workers, while they decreased for sons of higher-positioned Jews. This is reflected in the higher rates of upward mobility among Gentile men.

Mothers

Parents were not exclusively fathers; a small yet noteworthy number were mothers. On apprenticeship cards where the 'father or mother' field was entered, 160 mothers were counted, versus 4176 fathers.[71] In most cases, these women were rose cutters. Women were not exclusively listed for female apprentices. In fact, mothers were evenly distributed as parents of both male and female apprentices. Given the nature of the specialisations, nearly all girls 'followed' their mothers into cutting—daughters of female brilliant cutters always went into brilliant cutting; daughters of rose cutters in either rose and brilliants with a preference for the former—whereas boys rarely followed their mothers into cutting. Instead, sons of female cutters disproportionately apprenticed in polishing, the most common position in the industry. While male apprentices rarely moved up from their mothers' positions, their downward mobility was limited as few sons of female cutters became setters.

[71] Based on this share (3.69%) we would expect a total of 284 mothers on 7695 apprenticeship cards.

TABLE 4.1 Intra-industry mobility of diamond worker apprentices by gender, religion, and period

	Male apprentices		Female apprentices	
	Jewish	Gentile	Jewish	Gentile
A | *Entire period: 1904-1940*				
No. of apprentices	2526	1569	739	290
Same specialisation	51.2%	58.5%	17.1%	11.0%
Different specialisation	48.8%	41.5%	82.9%	89.0%
Upward (rel. parent)	31.3%	16.8%	76.6%	82.1%
Downward	17.5%	24.7%	6.4%	6.9%
B | *Pre-crisis: 1904-1919*				
No. of apprentices	1953	1340	540	250
Same	51.5%	57.7%	16.7%	11.6%
Different	48.5%	42.3%	83.3%	88.4%
Upward	29.6%	14.3%	76.3%	80.4%
Downward	18.9%	28.1%	7.0%	8.0%
C | *Post-crisis: 1920-1940*				
No. of apprentices	558	212	192	38
Same	49.8%	63.7%	18.8%	7.9%
Different	50.2%	36.3%	81.2%	92.1%
Upward	37.6%	32.5%	76.6%	92.1%
Downward	12.5%	3.7%	4.7%	0.0%

Source: author's calculations using "ANDB Apprentice Cards," release 2019; and JNI approach.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter looked at rates of occupational following and mobility for sons and daughters of diamond workers from the mid-nineteenth century until the 1930s. It showed that occupational following was a common pattern of status attainment, not only among diamond workers, but also throughout the rest of the Amsterdam population. This differs from the experiences of Jews in The Hague, who more frequently started at the bottom of the occupational distribution.[72] However, with the exception of the 1930s, rates of occupational following were much higher among sons of diamond workers than sons of other skilled workers. During the final decades of the period studied, sons of Jewish diamond workers exhibited higher rates of intergenerational upward mobility compared to the sons of other Jewish skilled workers. Meanwhile, sons of Gentile diamond workers did not achieve the same rates of upward mobility. Thus, the sons of Jewish diamond workers were characterised by exceptional rates of upward mobility, both within the Jewish community and Amsterdam as a whole.

A similar trend is seen among occupational followers in the diamond industry. While Jewish sons and daughters were able to advance their positions within the diamond industry over generations, male Gentile diamond workers often found themselves in worse positions than their parents and Jewish counterparts. Jewish and Gentile women experienced upward intra-industry mobility especially frequently. Whereas men could, on paper, work in any position in the industry, women virtually only worked as cleavers

[72] Van Poppel, Liefbroer, and Schellekens, "Religion and Social Mobility," 265–66.

or cutters, employed outside of the factories. These same occupations were among the highest skilled and best-paid in the industry. Thus, no matter which specialisation the girls' fathers worked in, if the girls entered the industry, they could only end up in the higher echelons of the hierarchy.

Thus, whether sons or daughters followed their parents into the diamond industry or pursued separate careers, Jews attained higher positions than their parents more commonly than Gentiles. The historical position of Jews in the diamond industry explains their higher status within the industry's hierarchy. Through their occupational concentration, Jewish workers had stronger familial and social networks in the industry. Also of great importance was the influence of the union. Union leaders urged workers to educate themselves and their children. The achievements of the ANDB, including the first European eight-hour working day in 1911 and stabilised incomes, made such investments in education a real possibility. Many workers were therefore encouraged to invest in their children's education. Jews may have been especially willing to listen to this message. They admired the union president, Henri Polak, whose influence on the Jewish workers led to his nickname "rabbi of the diamond workers."[73] Jews also made up a majority of the union, providing them with stronger and larger networks amongst the members. Moreover, while Jews considered working in the diamond industry as a point of pride,[74] for Gentiles, who often had similar career opportunities in other forms of skilled labour, the pro-education messaging of the union may not have had the same impact. Lastly, Jews held higher positions in the diamond industry, which often granted them better financial positions to invest in children's education.

Competition from the Antwerp diamond centre drastically altered patterns of intergenerational mobility. As diamond work became harder to attain in Amsterdam, occupational following diminished. While the industry had attracted many talented sons up to this point, as evidenced by the frequency of white-collar Jewish fathers sending their sons into diamond work until 1900, the period afterward saw an increasing trend toward the recruitment of apprentices from lower social backgrounds. At the same time, fathers who would have sent their children to the diamond industry in the past, now pushed them to find more stable employment in the long run. After 1920, it was increasingly the sons and daughters of diamond workers at the bottom of the industry's hierarchy, as well as those with parents who struggled to provide education for their children, who joined the diamond industry. Although the restructuring of the industry that followed after 1920 favoured Gentile apprentices, who could become polishers more easily, it had an especially negative impact on women. Daughters increasingly lost access to an occupation that offered them high-status employment with equal wages to men. While men could switch to new careers or direct their sons to other occupations, women often had to rely on traditional employment that had been common among Jewish women for centuries, such as seamstresses and maids. However, as Chapter 6 will show, Jewish daughters of ANDB members also benefitted from increased investments in education, with successive cohorts of Jewish women achieving higher-status positions early in their careers. The next chapter will first discuss the possibilities for marriage to change intergenerational patterns.

[73] Jaap Meijer, *Het verdwenen Ghetto. Wandelingen door de Amsterdamse Jodenbuurt* (Amsterdam, 1978), 134–35.
[74] Bregstein and Bloemgarten, *Herinnering aan Joods Amsterdam*, 48–51.