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

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Propositions

1. Amsterdam Jews experienced a remarkable rise in socioeconomic status from the 1870s onward.
2. The rapid expansion of the diamond industry, the foremost ethnic niche of Amsterdam Jews, was a key driver of their improved living standards.
3. Jewish occupational advancements were sustained through investments in education, increasing societal integration, and a growing class of Jewish employers.
4. The institutions in and around the diamond industry—most notably the *Algemene Nederlandse Diamantbewerkerbond*—facilitated the uplifting of Jewish workers and encouraged investments in education and culture.
5. Women played an active role in the diamond industry, specialising in higher positions and earning equal wages to men while achieving the highest rates of upward intergenerational mobility in the industry.
6. Social mobility and integration among Jews were not inherently linked; each could—and did—occur independently of the other.
7. Discrepancies in the social backgrounds of intermarrying Jewish-Gentile couples point to discrimination against Jews on the marriage market that are consistent with first-person accounts of discrimination in the labour market.
8. Scholars should not limit their focus to integration indicators, but also examine the conditions under which it occurred.
9. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are complementary in the field of history and can be combined effectively in a life course approach.
10. Systematic application and analysis of the sources underpinning Dutch economic, social, and demographic history can yield a richer and more nuanced account of the history of Dutch Jews.
11. The distinctiveness of Jewish given names and surnames enables precise identification of ethno-religious backgrounds in historical Amsterdam.
12. In light of rising antisemitism, a greater understanding of the lives and trajectories of pre-war Jews is more urgent than ever.