The Rev. Dr James Parkes (1894-1981) formally created The Parkes Library in 1961 with the aim of providing: a centre for research by non-Jewish and Jewish scholars and students... into the whole field of relations between Judaism and other religions. James Parkes was an extraordinary person; a volatile non-conformist, a creative force and a person who confronted antisemitism head-on. He demanded a world in which it was safe to be a Jew. The Parkes Institute is a community of scholars, curators, librarians, students, Friends of Parkes and activists, whose work is based around the rich resource of the library and archive. Through our research, publications, teaching and conservation work we provide a world-class centre for studies of Jewish/non-Jewish relations throughout the ages; the experience of minorities and outsiders and the examination of the power of prejudice from antiquity to the contemporary world.

**Transmigrancy**

From the late 19th century, Southampton rivalled Liverpool as the main centre of transmigrancy in Britain. It was big business for shipping companies, railway companies and the ports themselves. Tens of thousands of immigrants passed through, staying up to two weeks before continuing their journeys and would have been a common sight in Southampton before 1914. Many were European Jews. From Southampton they moved on - North America, South America and South Africa amongst other destinations. There were many such Jews on board the Titanic never to make it to the 'golden medina' of America.

**Seafaring Jews**

A "mock trial", organized in 1938 by members of the German-speaking Jewish Community in Palestine, discussed the "lack of seafaring" among the Jews in Palestine – at the same time the city of Tel-Aviv was creating its own port. The Parkes Institute is developing a new project on Jewish seafaring which starts with a one day conference on 26 October 2009.

**Port Jews**

The Parkes AHRC Port Jews research project (2001-2005) which identified the “Port Jew” (in contrast to the “Court Jew” and their role in history) as a distinctive character who was active and self-conscious in a broad network of economic and cultural relations across Europe; studied cosmopolitan port cities and their Jewish communities in Early Modern and Modern History. The Parkes Institute is opening this research to a transnational perspective to study Jewish communities in Mumbai, Shanghai, Cape Town and Buenos Aires.

**IMPACT**


Joachim Schlör is working with Ingo Haar in Vienna, Leo Lucassen in Leiden and Carl Henrik Carlsson in Uppsala on a joint research project "Migration and Integration". The comparative study analyses "Jewish Spaces" in port cities such as Amsterdam, Antwerp, Oslo, London, and Southampton.

The Parkes Institute has carried out extensive dialogue at a public level with regards to diversity, tolerance and intolerance all of which have been played out on a spectacular level in maritime settings.

**Events:**

Conference: “Jewish Families and Migration”, January 2009, Cape Town; in which maritime themes were strongly represented. From this another international gathering will be held in 2011 in conjunction with local heritage bodies in the city of Cape Town, on the concept of the “archive” and migration with maritime themes being of central significance.