Abstract:

The creation of the Centre in Oslo was a result of a year-long process concerning the liquidation of the Norwegian Jews’ economical status during the Second World War. All Jews in Norway has their property seized by the state. Though some of the assets were returned to those who survived, the Jewish community as a whole did not receive proper compensation after the war.

In March 1997 a state commission delivered its report concluding that the historical and moral debts must be settled. The Centre is financed from part of the settlement. The decision was related to a strongly felt wish to establish a nation-wide centre for competence in studies of Holocaust but also the situation of religious minorities in the Norwegian society.

The Centre started its activities in February 2002, the library was established in 2004.

During the process an opportunity occurred to move into a building that during the World War II was the residence of the Norwegian collaborator and Nazi-leader, Vidkun Quisling. Since January 2005 the Centre is accommodated in the newly renovated building. The main opening will take place in August 2006, when the Holocaust-exhibition is to open. Then the education and information activities, exhibitions and conferences will take place in a fixed programme.

The research activities as well as library work are now mostly connected to the production of the exhibition. The library is cooperating in obtaining documents, items and stories. Those will be a part of the future archives of the Centre.

Apart from Holocaust and religious minorities the library’s collection is concentrated around subjects connected to genocide, religion and human rights. There is research being done in order to securing relevant private archives, documents and recording oral history. An important task is obtaining the up-to-date information on possible conflicts. Besides carrying out research, the center wants to be able to express opinions and speak out when the norms of civilized behavior are being threatened.