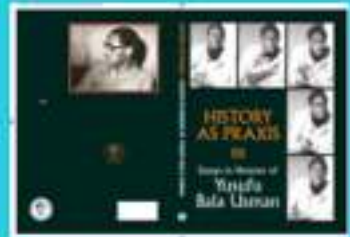




# END OF YEAR REPORT

2024



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 CARRY OVER BUSINESS FROM 2023 .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.0 PUBLICATIONS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.1 PUBLICATION FOR YBU'S 20<sup>TH</sup> MEMORIAL .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3.0 RESEARCH ON LAND GRABBING.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4.0 FILM PROJECT .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5.0 RECONSTITUTION OF THE <i>NIGERIAN HISTORY SINCE INDEPENDENCE PROJECT</i>...</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6.0 SECURITY ISSUES AND FOREST MAPPING .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7.0 LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION PLAN FOR THE KANO TO MARADI RAILWAY LINE...</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8.0 REPRESENTATION AT NUT EVENT ON KATSINA .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9.0 LIBRARY .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10.0 ARCHIVES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>11.0 REORGANISATION OF WEBSITE .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>12.0 FACILITIES.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>13.0 PURCHASE OF BICYCLES FOR STAFF .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>14.0 DEATHS OF BELOVED COLLEAGUES .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>15.0 CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>8</b>

## 2024 END OF YEAR REPORT

This past year has been a difficult one for everyone In Nigeria. The removal of the subsidy on petroleum products, along with other harsh economic policies, and the ensuing level of inflation in everyday items that has resulted, has made life difficult and sometimes even impossible for most families. The vast majority of Nigerians are struggling to exist at even the most minimal level, unable to afford basic foodstuffs and prohibitive transport fares.

Despite the gloomy outlook, the Institute has managed to keep on working and we have achieved a good measure of success, despite all obstacles, and towards the end of the year we were fortunate to see one of our major projects come to fruition, promising a more hopeful situation for us in 2025.

### CARRY OVER BUSINESS FROM 2023

We began the year by concluding a project that began in December 2023, when Attahiru and I attended a Conference in honour of our Chairman, noted historian Dr. Olusegun Osoba, in Ijebu Ode.

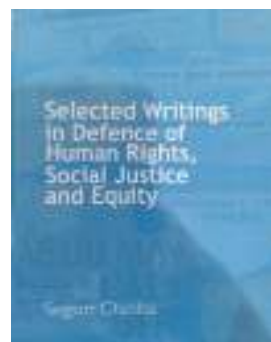


We participated in the Conference, and afterwards visited Dr. Osoba in his residence. He was unable to attend the conference in person because of health issues. Dr Osoba will celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January.



*Attahiru Usman and Dr. Segun Osoba*

I presented a paper at one of the sessions, “Partners in the Struggle for the Liberation of Nigeria: Segun Osoba and Bala Usman”. The Conference proceedings will be published soon. Meanwhile, Dr. Osoba’s writings for the popular press were collected in a publication that was launched at the Conference. We had spent considerable time proofreading the manuscript before it went to press.



For several years we had wanted to publish all of Dr. Osoba’s writings but had been unable to obtain a complete set. Fortunately, some diligent work by postgraduate students and some former students of Osoba who are now Professors in the U.S., managed to locate all of his historical writings and they have been compiled in a volume which has just been published. It was edited by Akanmu Adebayo and Olutayo Adesina and will be published by OAU University Press. We spent several months proofreading the papers in preparation for publication. This book will be an important source of historical writings from a historian committed to utilising history to promote changes in society and will be a lasting legacy for the Chairman of our Institute.

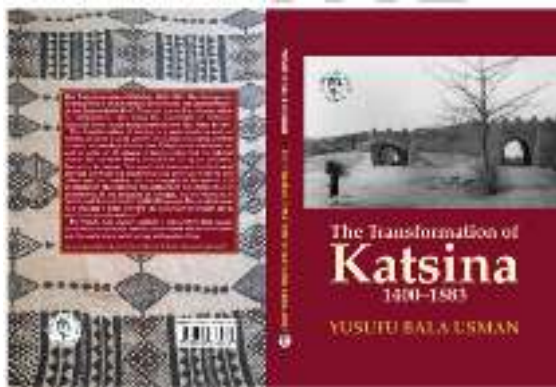


*Collected writings of Samuel Olusegun Osoba*

## PUBLICATIONS

We spent several months on the preparation of a new printing of *The Transformation of Katsina 1400-1883: The Emergence and Overthrow of the Sarauta System and the Establishment of the Emirate*. This iconic work of history was Bala Usman's Ph.D. Thesis, completed in 1974, and published by A.B.U. Press in 1981. The copyright was held by ABU Press, but we felt that by rights, the Institute should be the copyright holder. It has been out of print and unavailable for many years. We negotiated the transfer of the copyright to the Institute and set about designing a new look for the publication, with a new cover design and some updated formatting.

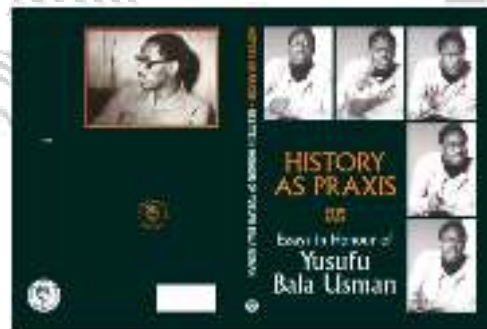
The book was presented for the 19<sup>th</sup> memorial anniversary of Yusufu Bala Usman, and has been accorded wide acclaim for reintroducing this important study to a new generation.



*Transformation of Katsina*

## PUBLICATION FOR YBU'S 20<sup>TH</sup> MEMORIAL

In September 2025, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Bala Usman will be marked by the Institute with various events. We are planning to publish a collection of papers on the topic of Historiography, and have sent out calls for papers that engage seriously with Usman's work and methodology. We expect that this book will be a major contribution that will hopefully carry on his historical legacy. The book is entitled: *History as Praxis: Essays in Honour of Yusufu Bala Usman*. We expect to be able to present the book for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in September. We are also contemplating the holding of a symposium for the occasion, bringing together noted historians to discuss important issues in historical scholarship and society.



*History as Praxis*

## RESEARCH ON LAND GRABBING

For some time (in fact since 2022) we have been working on the idea of a research project on the issue of land grabbing, which we feel is a significant factor in the creation of rural poverty. In our work on *The Face of Poverty in Nigeria*, Adam Higazi and Eggi Umaru Abdullahi had contributed their field notes on the subject in Adamawa and Taraba States, which indicated that the problem was very widespread. In November 2023, the Institute commissioned Adam and Eggi to do further work on the subject in Taraba and Bauchi, and we also engaged with Sani Zorro on his actions in favour of victims of land grabbing in Jigawa State, including



instigating court cases, since he was a Member of the House of Representatives. We also applied to Tetra Tech, an international Development organization, for inclusion In the SPRiNG project, a programme sponsored by the British Office of Foreign and Commonwealth Development. We did not hear anything for some time, but in July we received an invitation to submit a grant proposal, which was accepted and after a period of registration and submission of budgets and workplan, we finally were granted a generous sum which will allow us to carry out the research project, entitled ***Land Governance, Ecology and Insecurity in Northern Nigeria***, for a period of two years.



***Mukhtar Abdulhameed and Abdullahi Mohammed working on the project budget***

To prepare for the activity, we nominated experienced researchers to collect data in the field, and held a one-week meeting of all the researchers at our Institute from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of December, in order to establish the locations to be visited, the methodologies to be employed and the administrative procedures to be followed. We will deploy four research teams of three persons each to Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa and Bauchi states. Each team will include at least one woman. As I am writing, teams have already deployed to Katsina and Bauchi, and are collecting very useful information which indicates that the issue of land grabbing is very widespread and in many cases is changing the face of rural communities as well as drastically affecting the ecology of the areas. We anticipate that this research will be a

significant contribution to the understanding of the drivers of rural poverty affecting both farmers and pastoralists and provide some suggestions about mitigating the situation. It should result in several reports, monographs, a book, and also a documentary film.



***Participants at the meeting***

## **FILM PROJECT**

Although we are continuing to produce books that we believe are important, we realise that many young people hardly read, and their knowledge of Nigerian history is minimal, especially as History as a discipline had been removed from the school curriculum for many years, although it has recently been reinstated. We feel that to reach out to a wider audience we need to utilize platforms that would appeal to a younger audience in order to create an interest in and identification with, the history of the country. We decided to produce a film that would enlighten the general public about the legacy of radical political activities in Nigeria, focusing on the history of the Peoples' Redemption Party (PRP), in which Yusufu Bala Usman was a leading figure. We are partnering in this project with Dr. Saeed Hussaini, of the CDD and IFRA. After winning elections in Kaduna and Kano

States in 1979, PRP governments implemented many policies which endeared them to the common people but which incurred the ire of the ruling party at the Federal level, the NPN. The conflict between them came to a head in 1981, first with the impeachment of the Governor of Kaduna State, Balarabe Musa, and then with the rampage in July in which NPN thugs rioted and destroyed many government institutions in Kano and brutally assassinated Dr. Bala Mohammed, the charismatic Political Advisor to Abubakar Rimi, the Kano Governor. We decided to produce a film on these events, with a focus on the murder of Bala Mohammed. We enlisted noted film maker Saddik Tafawa Balewa to guide this project. The production of this film will be a lengthy process. At present we have begun the collection of various documentary footage of the event from media houses and other sources, determining eye witnesses to be interviewed, and sourcing documents, photographs and other material that will be used to compile the documentary. Funds also need to be sourced for this expensive project, and technical experts need to be identified to carry out different aspects of the film production. We will continue our work on this project during 2025 and see how far we can go towards its fruition.

### **RECONSTITUTION OF THE NIGERIAN HISTORY SINCE INDEPENDENCE PROJECT**

In June 1980, President Shehu Shagari constituted this project, bringing together noted historians from all over the country with the aim of collecting and publishing primary source material to write the history of Nigeria since 1960. Bala Usman was one of the participants. The Committee published 13 volumes of different topics in Nigerian history, with the hope of publishing others. The mandate of the Committee expired and since then nothing has been done by way of enriching Nigerian history; in fact, it was removed from the school curriculum. We wrote a *Concept Note on the Reconstitution of the Panel* in which we noted:

*The prolong absence of History at foundational levels of our education, where the values of patriotism and national ideology are primarily inculcated in the young ones, has deprived many Nigerians of the opportunity to learn the history of their nation, resulting in the rise of a new generation of ahistorical citizens. This has also created incentives for the use and abuse of history to further divide the nation along ethnic, religious, regional and sectional lines. In fact, the Nigerian state is increasingly losing control of the official custody of historical consciousness and knowledge in the country while some unpatriotic groups fill the void with divisive narratives.*

We proposed that the President reconstitutes the Panel in order to bring the narrative of Nigerian history up to date, from 1975 to 2000. This note was sent to the Presidency through the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, in the hopes that the issue would be acted on. However, so far nothing has been heard about it, although we are still hoping that perhaps when other issues are settled the Government will find time to consider our suggestion.



*Nigeria Since Independence*

### **SECURITY ISSUES AND FOREST MAPPING**

It seems that our Institute has been an incubator for various projects which eventually develop a life of their own. In 2021 we initiated the Zaria



Afforestation Project, aimed at planting trees in the Zaria metropolitan area. After operating the programme for two years, it was registered in 2023 as an independent NGO with the name of Afforesting Zaria Initiative. Likewise, in the past year we began to develop a programme designed to mitigate insecurity in the northwestern part of the country by utilizing funds derived from the sale of carbon credits to create new economic opportunities for those living in the dangerous forest areas of the zone. We commissioned a GIS expert to map all of the forest areas in the zone and proposed a pilot project in one area: the Baturiya forest in Jigawa State. It became apparent that this project would require more resources -- financial and technical -- than were available to the Institute. Some members of the Institute then incorporated a company, CA2 Carbon Assets, to continue with the work. The company has made enormous progress in developing programmes to mitigate effects of climate change through carbon sequestration and create opportunities for the communities involved.

### **LIVELIHOOD RESTORATION PLAN FOR THE KANO TO MARADI RAILWAY LINE**

We continued to be involved in the Kano to Maradi Rail Line project for which we had done a Social Impact Assessment in 2021. Construction of the railway is ongoing, but there are some issues that remain to be sorted out. One of these is the Resettlement Action Plan, an important component of which is the Livelihood



Restoration Plan (LRP). We made significant input on a questionnaire to be administered to individuals impacted by the rail line to assess their preferences on the livelihoods they would prefer to adopt if their present income earning activities were to be disrupted by the rail construction. The questionnaires were

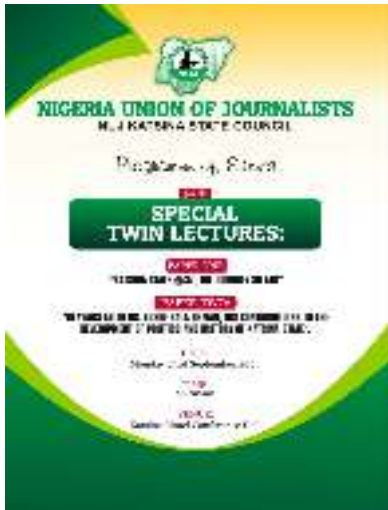
administered, and our resident data analyst, Mukhtar Abdulhameed, did a detailed report on the findings which should provide important information to the agencies responsible for implementing the programme.



*Institute staff Administering a Questionnaire*

### **REPRESENTATION AT NUJ EVENT ON KATSINA**

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Katsina Branch, held two lectures to celebrate the creation of Katsina State. One lecture was on "Katsina State @37 the Journey so far". The second lecture was on "19 years after Dr. Yusufu Bala Usman: His Contributions to the Development of Politics and History of Katsina State." The Institute was represented by Ibrahim Sani Dabai, whose remarks created quite a stir in the audience of senior government officials and emirate title holders when he castigated the governments of the state for neglecting education, health, and other policies that would benefit the common people of the state.



*Sani Ibrahim Dabai, (in white) Representing the Institute*

## **LIBRARY**

Our Library continues to grow through purchases of numerous books as well as donations. We have developed a procedure for applying for membership to access the library resources by registering on our website. Once the revised website is functional this process will be available. We have also hired a second librarian who will aid us in implementing the procedure and ensure that the library will be able to serve users until evening. Meanwhile, the library is still available to users who may come and register in person. There are many new accessions that are being catalogued and will soon be on the shelves.

## **ARCHIVES** Report by Abdullahi Mohammed

During the year under review the activities of the archive has been sustained to give access and sustainability based on the following activities:

1. Detailed Profiling of File Content as against the previous Cluster File Naming Approach. Throughout the reporting year, significant progress was made in improving the accessibility and organization of archival materials. Instead of relying on the cluster file naming approach, files were meticulously analyzed, and detailed profiles were created for each. This new system offers:

- Comprehensive descriptions for each file, improving searchability.
- Enhanced accuracy in categorizing and cross-referencing materials.
- A standardized naming convention aligned with archival best practices.
- This activity has significantly boosted the efficiency of archival processes and improved user experience for researchers accessing the files.

## 2. Hosting Files on the Archives of Nigerian Radicalism Platform

In collaboration with the CDD and IFRA, Nigeria initiative, a batch of digitized files were successfully hosted on the Archives of Nigerian Radicalism website:

(<https://archivesofnigerianleft.ng>). This project focused on making valuable historical documents more accessible to the public.

## 3. Secured Funding for Digitization of the YBU Collection

Efforts to expand the archival repository were bolstered by securing funding from CDD for digitizing a new batch of materials in the YBU collection. This funding facilitated:

- The engagement of skilled personnel for cataloging and digitization tasks.
- Preservation of fragile and deteriorating documents through professional techniques.

This initiative ensures that critical parts of the YBU collection remain accessible for future generations while safeguarding them against physical deterioration.



#### 4. Establishment of a Multimedia Digitization Unit

A major milestone of the year was the establishment of a Multimedia Digitization Unit, dedicated to converting outdated formats into modern, accessible digital forms. This unit is now equipped to handle:

- Conversion of old video cassettes into compact CDs and digital video files.
- Conversion of audio cassette tapes into MP3 formats.
- Restoration and enhancement of multimedia files to improve their quality.
- The unit will ensure that these materials remain usable and relevant in the digital age.

The achievements of this year have laid a solid foundation for further progress in archival management and digitization. This underscores a steadfast commitment to preserving historical resources and enhancing their utility for research and education, which is in tandem with the Institute's objectives of preserving the legacies of late Dr. Yusufu Bala Usman.

#### REORGANISATION OF WEBSITE

We are presently in the process of reorganizing our website and giving it a new look, as well as adding many functions that will reflect our expanded range of activities, including registering for library membership and online payments for our books and services. The new site should be functional early in 2025.

#### FACILITIES

Throughout the year we have been expanding the functionality of our building's facilities. We acquired a projector and screen for presentations in the Conference Hall, fully activated our solar power system so that we now have access to 24 hours electricity, and a fully functional borehole. We were donated a STARLINK system for

internet access, so we are now able to be on line all the time. These have made us more productive as we don't have to face daily problems of lack of electricity, water or internet connections. We have set up a project office with a full-time officer (Mahmud Ibrahim) to keep up with the many requirements of administering the SPRING project.

#### PURCHASE OF BICYCLES FOR STAFF

To help alleviate the transport problems of our junior staff, we purchased bicycles for them so they could avoid having to pay the steep costs of transportation as a result of the removal of the petrol subsidy. This has greatly aided them in getting around for their official duties and their personal use.

#### DEATHS OF BELOVED COLLEAGUES

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of April, **Dr. George Amale Kwanashie**, passed away. His death was very painful to us, as he had been a very close friend and colleague for many years. He was also the colleague that was closest to Bala Usman. They had worked together on numerous projects, and he was the co-editor of our recently published book *The Historian and Society*. Many of us attended his funeral at Koton Karfe and we did our best to support his family. Our Tribute to him was widely shared.





**Bitrus James**, a longtime staff of the Institute, died on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November. Bitrus was a beloved staff who had worked in various capacities since he was hired by Bala Usman over 30 years ago. He was a hard worker who did many different tasks and was always ready to put in his best no matter when he was called to do so. We are missing his presence very much.

## CONCLUSION

As can be seen from this report, in 2024 we have sowed the seeds of projects that will carry on into 2025. We certainly have our work cut out for us. We hope that we will be able to complete some of them and make progress on others. We are encouraged to see that the Institute is expanding its work into new areas, as well as taking on new challenges that will enable us to grow and make a positive impact on society. We anticipate that 2025 will be a productive year for us, despite the difficulties that Nigeria is currently facing. As we all know, "The Struggle Continues."

We wish all of our collaborators, our supporters and everyone else a very happy and hopefully peaceful New Year.

**Norma Perchonock, Director**

