



**ORGANIZATION OF  
AFRICAN UNITY**

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**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE  
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Secretariat  
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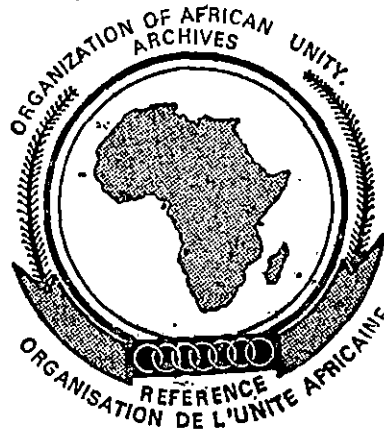
Twenty-fifth Ordinary Session

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CENTRE FOR LINGUISTIC AND HISTORICAL STUDIES  
BY ORAL TRADITION OF NIAMEY



CENTRE FOR LINGUISTIC AND HISTORICAL STUDIES  
BY ORAL TRADITION OF NIAMEY

In pursuance of Resolution CM/Res.322(XXII) adopted by the OAU Council of Ministers, meeting in its Twenty-Second Ordinary Session in Kampala, Uganda, from 1st to 4 April 1974, it was decided to incorporate the Regional Centre for Documentation by Oral Tradition (CRDTO) into the framework of the Organization of African Unity. In place of CRDTO, there was established an OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition whose aim, under OAU guidance, is to continue the work hitherto performed by the old CRDTO, while at the same time developing and enhancing our cultural heritage through a more extensive use of our languages and a better understanding of our history.

The activities of the OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition are the following:

a) Establishment

After the premises housing the new centre had been formally handed over to the General Secretariat by the Government of Niger, the next task was to absorb the executive staff of the old CRDTO and set up the administrative and financial structures appertaining to this Centre.

b) Role of the Centre

The OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition then had to define its objectives, which were enumerated as follows:

- to foster co-operation between national Research Centres by co-ordinating their activities in the Linguistic and Historical field,
- to facilitate the movement of research-workers from one OAU Member-State to another at sub-regional level to help implement scientific research programmes,

.../...

- to help equip national Centres with adequate technical facilities,
- to ensure the training of appropriate personnel (transcribers, audio-visual technicians),
- to develop methods for the collection, study, conservation, preservation and diffusion of oral tradition,
- to centralize audio-visual recordings and documentation of oral tradition compiled by national Research Centres in order to facilitate mutual co-operation and co-ordination,
- to organize, singly or in conjunction with national Research Centres, symposia and seminars on specific subjects. With regard to publication, the OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition should:
- assist national research centres to assemble their records,
- circulate bulletin to foster exchange of information between national research centres,
- produce text-books on history, African-language textbooks, dictionaries, grammar-books and various other works in African languages.

c) Achievements:

The main achievements of the OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies may be summarized as follows:

1. Publications:

- inventory and structuration of the Documentation Centre
- publications:
  - La Tradition Historique
  - Denkyira
  - Les Peuls du Mandingues
  - Les moeurs et les civilisations des peuples des grands lacs Africains

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## 2. Co-operation with Research Centres

- co-operation with the Human Sciences Research Institute (IRSH) of Niamey within the framework of the scheme entitled "Lexicon of Hausa Scientific and Technical Terms",
- participation in the seminar on Oral Tradition in Abidjan for the coordination of research problems connected with oral tradition,
- co-operation with IRSH, the Literacy Department of Niger, and the Research Centres of Nigeria with a view to bringing out trilingual dictionary in Hausa, French and English.

## 3. Reception of thesis

Designed as a principal Thesis Centre, the OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition received Dr. Yusuf Baba Usman of Hamadou Bello University (Nigeria), who submitted his thesis on the transformation of the Katsina.

## 4. Financial Assistance

The OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition received US \$9,000 worth of financial assistance from UNESCO, but the granting of this assistance is tied in with a co-operation agreement to be entered into between the OAU General Secretariat and UNESCO concerning the OAU Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition.



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# Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition in Niamey

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