

Building on an active year

by *Kate Dargis*

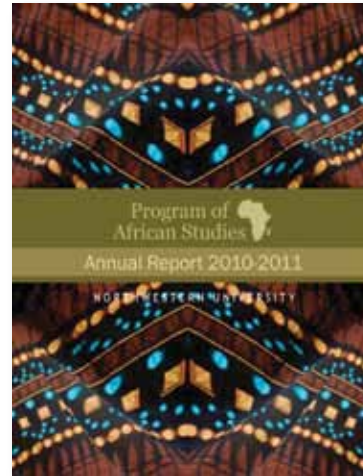
As PAS plans another year of activities to support the research of Northwestern's Africanist faculty and students, we feel it is important to reflect on 2010–11's full record of successes—programming and conferences, visiting scholars, new working groups and partnerships, and the addition of many working papers and special publications.

Our *2010–11 Annual Report* documents the growth of our adjunct major in African studies, the progress of our working groups, the establishment of new groups for the upcoming year, the activities of the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought in Africa (ISITA), the publication of the study results of the Research Alliance to Combat HIV/AIDS in Africa (REACH), our partnerships both inside and outside the University, and the quality of event programming produced for our community.

Highlights of 2010–11 included the visit and lecture by alumna Johnnetta Cole, director of the Smithsonian Institute's Museum of African Art. We also welcomed quite a few writers, including Tracy Kidder, Abdulrazak Gurnah, Doreen Baingana, Benjamin Kwakye, Bayo Ojikutu, and James Kilgore. The Public Health in Africa lecture series was also a huge success, bringing together the large constituency of Northwestern interested in the future of public health. Speakers included Robert Bailey (epidemiology, Illinois at Chicago), Carolyn Baer (Center

for Global Health, Feinberg School of Medicine), Kathryn Mathers (anthropology, Duke), Jean Hunleth (anthropology, Northwestern), Claire Wendland (anthropology, Wisconsin), Joseph Okeibunor (sociology/anthropology, Nigeria; Fulbright Scholar, Harvard), and Paula Gremley (Mwangaza Inc.).

PAS also hosted a number of conferences relating to important developments and ongoing issues on the continent. In the wake of the revolution in Egypt, we



You may request a copy of PAS's annual report by e-mailing african-studies@northwestern.edu, or read it online at www.northwestern.edu/african-studies. We hope you take time to learn about PAS's accomplishments and the initiatives on which we are building. Please share the report with colleagues and students.

cosponsored "After Tahrir: Egypt's Ongoing Social Transformation," a daylong workshop organized by graduate student Rahma Baalavar that brought together experts and key witnesses to the events. The "Teaching Africa" symposium, organized by undergraduate student Lydia Hsu, focused on high school and undergraduate education. "Bridging Publishing Markets in African Studies: An International Workshop" was held in conjunction with NU Press and funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation. Another conference celebrated the life and work of scholar Boubacar Boris Diop, with readings and paper presentations. The Oral History and Performance as Social Action for African Studies (OPASA) two-day workshop brought together oral historians from Maine and Montreal to share their work with diaspora communities and performance as a form of activism.

The upcoming year looks to be just as exciting. We are pleased that faculty members Rachel Riedl (political science) and Ivy Wilson (English) have joined the PAS executive committee. The seminar room at PAS has been newly repainted and upgraded, and art displays are being built for African art donated to PAS.

We look forward to seeing new faces and hearing about the new research coming out of our community. This issue of *PAS News* highlights some of what you can expect in fall 2011.

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ISITA seminar draws together Chicago-area Islam and Africa specialists

About once a quarter, a group of professors, students, and others who share interests in Islam and Africa gather in the PAS conference room for lively discussion of a colleague's pre-circulated paper. Several people from Northwestern have been regular participants in these meetings of the Chicago-Area Islam and Africa Seminar, established by the Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought in Africa in 2006.

The works discussed might range from a first-year graduate student's paper to a dissertation chapter to a draft of a journal article. Topics have included an analysis of an Arabic treatise on slavery in West Africa, a paper about archaeological evidence of exchange between West Africa and Egypt, and a book prospectus on the history of Islam in Africa.

Northwestern participants have included faculty members Muhammad Sani Umar (religion and ISITA), Robert Launay (anthropology), Rudolph Ware (now Michigan), and Ruediger Seesemann (now Bayreuth) and affiliates Charles Stewart (ISITA) and Kenneth Vaux (Garrett Evangelical). Graduate students also participate actively.

Coming from other area universities are Ralph Austen and Choukri Heddouchi (Chicago), Kim Searcy (Loyola), Babacar



Mbengue (DePaul), Pap Aly Dramé (Dominican), and Ismael Musa Montana (Northern Illinois). Montana (pictured [left] with Muhammad al-Munir Gibrill) drives almost four hours round-trip to attend.

"The seminar is a perfect platform for staying in tune with discussions

and debates central to my work and issues in the field," he said.

Visiting scholars with PAS or ISITA, including Paulo Farias (Birmingham), Knut Vikor (Bergen), Eloi Ficquet (EHESS, Paris), and Marta Garcia Novo (CCHS-CSIC, Madrid), have also made presentations to the seminar.

A meeting last spring featured a dissertation chapter by ISITA visiting scholar Muhammad al-Munir Gibrill, a PhD student in Arabic language at Indiana University. Gibrill's paper was a close reading of a poem by Alhaj Umar Karchi (1858–1934), a Muslim scholar from the region of present-day Nigeria and Ghana, that describes the moment of encounter between Africans and Europeans and details the damage inflicted by colonial intervention.

"Gibrill's approach—grounding his reading and analysis of the poem in postcolonial theory and literary discourse—revealed important methodological and empirical gaps in our knowledge of African history," said Montana, who attended the seminar. "Using poems composed in *ajami* and Arabic, Gibrill's paper reconstructed histories of African responses to European colonialism through the lens of Umar Karchi."

"The seminar and ISITA events in general provide a cornerstone for collaborative research with like-minded specialists and an interdisciplinary group of scholars working on various aspects of Muslim Africa."

—Ismael Musa Montana

In the discussion, Gibrill stressed the importance of poetry by sub-Saharan African authors in Arabic. "It has been underrated by Arabic language scholars," he observed, "because it sometimes lacks the schemes of classical Arabic writing. Yet this misses the point that the poets are bringing African thought to the form." He also noted that overlooking literature in Arabic or in African languages in Arabic script limits historical understanding of African responses to colonial rule and appreciation of the genres that gave expression to them.

The Chicago-Area Islam and Africa Seminar is open to the public. To receive news of upcoming meetings, e-mail ISITA assistant director Rebecca Shereikis at r-shereikis@northwestern.edu.

Farewell to Ruediger Seesemann

PAS and ISITA fondly bid farewell to Ruediger Seesemann (religion), who has accepted a position as professor of Islamic studies at the University of Bayreuth, Germany.

Since arriving at Northwestern in January 2005, the specialist in Islam in sub-Saharan Africa has been an energetic, collegial member of the PAS and ISITA communities, while excelling in teaching, advising, and his own scholarship.

Seesemann has played a key role in articulating an intellectual agenda for ISITA and raising new funds to support it. In 2005 he and then-colleague Rudolph Ware (now Michigan) developed “Constituting Bodies of Islamic Knowledge,” a successful proposal to the Ford Foundation that is now in its second three-year funding cycle. As part of this grant, Seesemann directs a research project concerned with literature produced by members of the Tijaniyya Sufi order, Africa’s largest Sufi order. The result of the project will be an encyclopedia of Tijani authors and their works, to be published by Brill in the Arabic Literature of Africa series.

Preparation of this massive volume has involved collecting data in multiple locales, collaborating with a team of scholars from over 12 countries, and organizing several international working meetings. “Ruediger has made a real effort to reach out to the Tijani



Ruediger Seesemann (front row, left) with participants in a 2007 ISITA conference on Sufi texts

community and include the perspectives of Tijani scholars in the production of the volume,” comments ISITA assistant director Rebecca Sherekis. “This not only enriches the quality of the finished work but also opens up many pathways for dialog between ISITA and Tijani scholars and intellectuals, many of whom have contributed to the volume and eagerly await its publication.”

Another focus of Seesemann’s attention was mentoring.

“Dr. Seesemann is a gifted scholar and a patient, dedicated mentor,” observes Alex Thurston, a PhD student in religion. “From my independent study with him in my first quarter to his thoughtful feedback during my prospectus defense, he has helped shape and inspire my graduate work.”

Seesemann particularly strived to create opportunities for African scholars through ISITA. Hassan Ndzovu of Moi University, Kenya, who was a visiting Mellon postdoctoral fellow at PAS in 2010–11, first met Seesemann in 2003 and views their relationship as crucial to his development as a scholar. “There are times when Ruediger has personally gone far out of his way to assist me and to see that I was successful in my studies,” Ndzovu observes. “I have changed and developed academically. I am not the same person I was in 2003 when I first met him. I would like Ruediger to know that he has contributed to that change in me.” Ndzovu’s revised dissertation, “Religion and Politics: The Politicization of Islam in Kenya,” is being considered by NU Press for publication.

Seesemann’s most recent book, *The Divine Flood: Ibrahim Niasse and the Roots of a 20th-Century Sufi Revival*, was published by Oxford University Press in July 2011.

ISITA and PAS thank Seesemann for his significant contributions and wish him well in his new position.

AfriSem reconvenes

The interdisciplinary seminar AfriSem welcomes graduate students whose research interests involve Africa or Africans, from those finishing their dissertations to first-year students in search of a research direction.

The yearlong seminar focuses on professional training and building a community of intellectual, social, and practical support. Topics will include writing research proposals, applying for grants, publishing articles and books, entering the academic job market, recent trends in African studies, fieldwork of the Panofsky Award winners, new books, the relationship between scholarship and activism, and other ideas that come out of the initial meetings.

AfriSem will meet at PAS from 6 to 7:15 p.m. every other Thursday beginning September 22. Members can count on a light supper and spirited conversation. To join the mailing list, contact PAS assistant director Kate Dargis (k-dargis@northwestern.edu), graduate coordinator Kofi Asante (kofiasante2015@u.northwestern.edu), or faculty coordinator Wendy Griswold (w-griswold@northwestern.edu).



Mellon appointee, Carter/Annan fellows arrive on campus

Fantahun Ayele Ibrahim is the second visiting scholar brought to campus with proceeds from the Global Encounters Mellon grant shared between PAS, the Department of Performance Studies, and Northwestern University Press. Ibrahim (above), from Ethiopia, received his PhD in 2009 from Addis Ababa University and has taught at Bahir Dar University for more than 10 years.

Ibrahim will be at Northwestern until May 2012. He plans to revise his dissertation, "The Ethiopian Army: From Victory to Collapse, 1977–91," for publication as a monograph by NU Press. He will teach a class focusing on the Ethiopian Revolution, the Ethio-Somali war, Ethio-Soviet relations, and the Eritrean war of liberation.

The first Mellon postdoctoral visitor was Hassan Ndzovu of Moi University, Kenya. His revised dissertation on the politicization of Islam in Kenya is being considered by NU Press. The Mellon grant will fund one more postdoctoral appointment, to be announced in winter 2012.

Two new Carter/Annan fellows arrive at PAS this fall. **Nafissatou Sall** (French and Italian) from Senegal will research the social, cultural, and political dimensions of colonialism and postcolonialism represented in Francophone African literature. **Abdeta Beyene** (political science) from Ethiopia will study the microdynamics of Somali politics.

Each year PAS awards Kofi Annan and Gwendolen M. Carter Fellowships to up to two outstanding African students admitted to the Graduate School for disciplinary studies of Africa leading to the PhD. Each fellowship provides three years of support, including full tuition for three years of graduate study, a monthly stipend, and a teaching or research assistantship within the student's department for two additional years.

Graduate students pursue fieldwork, other scholarly projects

With the start of fall quarter, graduate students who did fieldwork in Africa this summer through Panofsky Predissertation Awards are returning to campus: **Andrew Brown** (performance studies) is back from South Africa, **Valerie Freeland** (political science) and **Moses Khisa** (political science) from Uganda, **Nate Mathews** (history) from Oman, **Maavi Norman** (political science) from Liberia and Senegal, **Rachel Vanderpoel** (political science) from

Congo, **Marlous van Waijenburg** (history) and **Chelsie Yount** (anthropology) from Senegal, and **Nikki Yeboah** (performance studies) from Ghana.

Abdoulaye Sounaye (religion) published *La discothèque islamique: CD et DVD au cœur de la Réislamisation Nigérienne* in *Ethnographiques.org*, volume 22, May 2011. He was also awarded a 2011–13 Northwestern University Presidential Fellowship.

Alex Thurston (religion) is in Kano, Nigeria, for dissertation research through June 2012 supported by the Social Science Research Council and the Wenner Gren Foundation. Over the summer Thurston interned with Eurasia Group, a political-risk consulting firm.

Marlous van Waijenburg (history) was invited to be a panelist at two recent meetings. In April she was on the panel “Colonial Legacies in Africa and Asia: Accumulation, Extraction, and Investment Compared” at the Third European Congress on World and Global History at the London School of Economics. In September she was on the panel “Institutions in the Developing World” at the annual conference of the Economic History Association in Boston.

Yordanos Tiruneh (sociology) won the 2011 Martin Levine Best Graduate Student Paper Award from Sociologists AIDS Network, American Sociological Association.

Working groups poised for 2011–12 activities

PAS' Working Group Award, now in its second year, supports faculty and graduate student interdisciplinary groups addressing research issues in African studies. The maximum award per group is \$5,000, and groups are encouraged to seek external grant funding.

Two groups that received awards in the past academic year will begin work this fall. One group that began in 2009–10 continues to be funded.

Oral History and Performance as Social Action Institute for Africana Studies

The OPASA working group has been funded for its initial planning stage. OPASA serves researchers, artists, and community organizers who employ spoken testimony and oral history as a central methodology in examining public dissent, social movements, and human rights activism in Africa and the black diaspora. It is a scholarly resource for those who seek a greater understanding of the methodological techniques and the theoretical underpinnings of spoken testimony and oral history research, analysis, and documentation. Contacts: Kate Dargis (k-dargis@northwestern.edu), D. Soyini Madison (dsmadison@northwestern.edu).

Midwest Working Group in African Political Economy

The Midwest Working Group in African Political Economy (MGAPE) brings together junior faculty and advanced graduate students in political science, economics, and public policy who combine research experience in Africa with training in political economy methods. MGAPE (pronounced em-gah-pay) meets to discuss works-in-progress of regular members and invited guests. MGAPE meetings are built around in-depth discussions of six to eight papers, starting over dinner on Friday and ending after a day of discussion on Saturday. The emphasis is on discussion rather than presentation, and members are encouraged to present work on which they would like feedback. MGAPE is a sister group to the Working Group in African Political Economy (WGAPE) at the University of California, Los Angeles (WGAPE papers are archived at www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/wgape/meeting.html). Contact: Rachel Riedl (r-riedl@northwestern.edu).

Remixing Borders: Transnational Hip-Hop Praxis and Youth Cultures in Africa

This working group addresses hip-hop culture in Africa through the lenses of ethnomusicology and oral archive and as a performance practice and a living history. The group's 2010–11 activities included a series of talks by scholars engaged in fieldwork on hip-hop in Africa, culminating in a May 7–10 “teach-in” titled “Remixing the Art of Social Change.” In the coming year it will continue to explore the theory and practice of hip-hop in African cultural contexts, including the role of hip-hop cultural workers in African civil society, the effects of structural adjustment programs in Africa as expressed through hip-hop lyrics, and the potential for social activism and cultural bridge building through hip-hop culture. Contact: Nate Mathews (NathanielMathews2014@u.northwestern.edu).

Emeriti professors' papers published, launching new series

PAS's new publications series featuring writings by alumni and emeriti professors has been launched in print and online, with papers by Warren L. d'Azevedo (PhD anthropology 1962) and Ivor Wilks, Herskovits Professor Emeritus of African Studies. Both papers can be read at www.northwestern.edu/african-studies/publications/special-publications.html.

The Zogbenya of Gola Sande: Tutelars of a Charter Myth WARREN L. D'AZEVEDO

The following biography was adapted from the Warren L. d'Azevedo Collection, Indiana University.

Warren d'Azevedo is an ethnographer of both the Washoe and the Gola of Liberia. His research interests in both the Great Basin and Africa date back to the 1950s.

An emeritus professor of anthropology at the University of Nevada, Reno, d'Azevedo taught from 1964 to 1988. He is acknowledged as a pioneer in the field of African arts. His seminal work in the 1960s on the place of the artist in society has influenced scholars in anthropology, art history, and museology for the past 45 years. Equally well known in the field of Native American studies, d'Azevedo is the author of numerous publications, including *Straight with the Medicine: Narratives of Washoe Followers of the Tipi Way*, and editor of *Great Basin*, which is volume 11 in the Smithsonian Institution's encyclopedic Handbook of North American Indians.

D'Azevedo's scholarly interests have never been divorced from his action in the world. He founded the University of Nevada's anthropology department and was instrumental in creating the Black Students Organization. He has been an advocate of Native American religious freedom and coordinated field schools for graduate students that were funded by the National Science Foundation. He helped create the Smithsonian Institution's collection of African art. He has been a human rights observer of elections in Liberia after the protracted civil war and an important friend to Liberians forced into exile.

The Zogbenya of Gola Sande conveys the results of d'Azevedo's investigations among the Gola, dealing specifically, as he says, "with the significances of the masked impersonations of supernatural beings whose mysterious identities are dramatized in ritual, but whose possible exposition in sacred myth is rarely alluded to in public discourse and never in the popular lore of legend, proverb, song, or traditional tales."



Ivor Wilks (left) while serving as a second lieutenant, 376 Petrol Platoon, December 25, 1947

A Once and Past Love: Israel 1948, Palestine 1949 IVOR WILKS

The following homage was written by Jeff Rice, senior lecturer in history, PAS executive board member, and college adviser in the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

Over many years, those of us who were close to Ivor Wilks would be presented with what amounted to a samizdat rendering of his "Palestine Diary." We all wanted to read this first-person account of a young anticolonialist juggling his role in the British army with his sympathies for Haganah. Finally, after many years of research and a highly moving return to the scene of the earlier participation, Ivor has created *A Once and Past Love: Israel 1948, Palestine 1949*—a new narrative of the early political and intellectual influences that made him the historian of Africa that he became.

Almost a decade before taking up a position at the University College of the Gold Coast (1953), Ivor was deeply influenced by a generation of intellectuals and writers who had engaged in anticolonial and antifascist activities. These included Frank Thompson (brother of the famed historian E. P. Thompson), who was captured behind enemy lines and executed by the Germans in 1944. Another was Scots poet Hugh MacDiarmid—expelled from the Scottish Communist Party for nationalist deviations and the Scottish Nationalist Party for communist deviations—who came to symbolize the anticolonial struggle of the Celtic Fringe.

After being demobilized from the army in 1948 (after service in Palestine), Ivor went to the University of Bangor (Wales) to study forestry, but after a bizarre set of linguistic

misunderstandings was designated to read philosophy. His days in Bangor included participation in Welsh Nationalist politics and the Welsh Republican Party, a more militant breakaway wing. While at Bangor, Ivor also befriended a Ghanaian, Britton Spio-Garbrah, who was linked to Ghana leader Kwame Nkrumah and whose anticolonialist views Ivor shared.

Graduating in 1951, Ivor pursued a graduate degree in philosophy at Oxford and retained his involvement in Welsh politics. As editor of the Welsh Republican party newspaper, he weighed in sympathetically about what can only be called “acts of terrorism” against the British government and drew attention from the Special Branch. His editorial supporting the bombing of an aqueduct (just four days before Queen Elizabeth was to open a new dam fed by the aqueduct) was denounced by a judge. An investigation was opened and an indictment was expected, but the evidence was deemed insufficient to proceed in court.

At this point Ivor’s Oxford supervisor, Gilbert Ryle, offered him the chance to take up an appointment at the University College of the Gold Coast. There he reconnected with his friend Spio-Garbrah and began his long-term involvement in Nkrumah’s anticolonial politics.

This move to West Africa linked Ivor to his third anti-colonial struggle. An account of his days in Ghana, his role in the development of Ghanaian historiography (which he calls the “decolonization” of West African history), and his interest in the spread of Islamic learning in West Africa remains to be written. However, his friendship with Africanist historian Basil Davidson, who, like Frank Thompson, went behind Nazi lines to participate with Yugoslavian partisans under Tito, dates to this time. Basil and Ivor began what ended up as a more than 50-year friendship and occasional collaboration. Indeed, what I would describe as the nationalist school of African historiography owes much of its origin to this time and place.

Ivor remained in Ghana, moving from lecturer in philosophy to extramural tutor to professor of history, establishing himself as one of the foremost practitioners in the field.

The decade from 1947 through 1957, when Ghana achieved its independence, saw Ivor involved in three anticolonial movements: Palestine/Israel, Wales, and Gold Coast/Ghana. Any effort to understand his intellectual and political evolution must, by terms of the historical analysis he so loves, begin with this manuscript. It is with great pleasure that we offer it at this time.

Justine Cordwell, *continued from back page*

“talking carvings.” A man ushered them into a hut, where noises emanated from the carvings. “My father said it had to be a form of ventriloquism, and [the speaker] said, ‘There’s going to a marriage. It is you two, and there will be three children. The first one will be a girl and next there will be two boys.’ And that’s exactly what happened.”

She and Mr. Cordwell returned to Chicago and wed. He became a city planner and private architect whose projects included Sandburg Village before he opened the Red Lion.

Mrs. Cordwell taught at Northwestern and the City Colleges, and cowrote the books *Fabrics of Culture and Visual Arts: Plastic and Graphic*.

African dignitaries were frequent visitors to the Cordwell home, filled with African and contemporary art and Mies van der Rohe furniture, “a real ’60s house,” her son said.

“She instilled in us a true academic curiosity, which is why I love history today,” her son said. When her children were young, she’d say: “Get away from the TV—today, you’re going to read about Marco Polo, or ‘We’re going to a museum.’”

She dressed in the casual fashion of an academic, but spiced things up with her Yoruba jewelry, her son said.

In the 1970s, Mrs. Cordwell returned to Nigeria, where a woman recognized her and called out: “Thank you for saving my children!”

Decades before, her son said, Mrs. Cordwell had supplied aspirin to the woman, who credited it with breaking a fever that threatened her children’s lives.

Even in her late 80s, Mrs. Cordwell helped curate exhibits on African art and textiles at Northwestern and Loyola Universities. Just this year, she published a paper on Northwestern’s Program of African Studies website. She also donated thousands of photographs from her African sojourn to Northwestern.

“Her work has inspired generations of scholars,” said Christine Mullen Kreamer, chief curator at the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. Mrs. Cordwell had a gift for recognizing *ashe*—a Yoruba term for power and vitality—in an artistic object, she said.

In addition to her son Colin, Mrs. Cordwell is survived by her son, Ian, and four grandchildren. Her daughter, Claire, died before her.

PAS mourns alumna Justine Cordwell

This obituary of Justine Cordwell, who studied for a PhD under Melville Herskovits, was written by Maureen O'Donnell for the Chicago Sun-Times of July 6, 2011. Reprinted with permission.



Justine Cordwell probably could have done what many women did after The War: marry a nice man, settle down, raise a family.

Which she did.

But first she took a little detour.

As a young graduate student in 1948, she went to Nigeria to study and found herself dancing at the wedding fes-

tivities of a king who was about to take his 17th wife. She became a renowned expert on Yoruba art and culture who wrote scholarly papers into her 90s.

In Africa, she fell in love with Englishman John D. Cordwell, a former RAF pilot and prisoner of war who was often credited with being the inspiration for the Donald Pleasence character of “The Forger” in the film *The Great Escape*. They later married, and with her husband, she helped run the old Red Lion pub, a beloved British outpost of good

beer and kidney pie that used to be on Lincoln Avenue. She developed all its recipes.

Her eccentricity matched her adventurousness. When her children brought home a stray dog who carried an infestation of fleas—“It made the locusts plague in the Old Testament look like *A Moment*,” said her son, Colin—she responded to the pestilence, not by bug-bombing the home, but by promptly strapping four flea collars around her own neck.

The funny thing was, it worked, her son said. “But the rest of us were scratching for our lives.”

Mrs. Cordwell, who has been called the “grande dame” of African studies in Chicago, died while reading June 27 at her Lincoln Park home. She was 91.

She was born in Berkeley, California. “She said her father would take her to [San Francisco’s] Chinatown in the ’20s, and you would see all the Chinese in traditional Chinese clothing, and the fog would come in and cut the bay in half,” her son said. “Her wishes are to have her ashes scattered in San Francisco Bay.”

Her family moved to Chicago and she graduated from Lakeview High School in 1938. She studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and at the University of California, Berkeley, and worked on her doctorate at Northwestern University under Melville J. Herskovits, who founded the school’s African studies program.

She won a Rockefeller fellowship for fieldwork in Africa. She arrived in 1948 and stayed for about 18 months. A Caucasian woman traveling by herself was then a rarity in Nigeria, but her art background also set her apart. She approached artists with respect, and she used old Boy Scout tools to fashion carvings of her own that helped her befriend local carvers.

“She had an immediate rapport with the artists she was studying, which the anthropologists who were supervising her didn’t quite have,” said David Easterbrook, curator of the Herskovits Library of African Studies at Northwestern.

At a royal wedding for a monarch taking his 17th wife, he asked her to join his 16 other wives in a dance. She did a little rumba, and the king loved it, she reported.

She developed into an authority on Yoruba culture and art. “She could tell you what village the carving came from and she could even tell you the carver’s name,” her son said.

Justine and John—an architect who was in Nigeria to help design the University of Ibadan—were invited to meet some

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