The actual processes of literary transfer from European nations to their colonies during twentieth century are seldom studied and poorly understood. One clear point of access, though, is through the Literature Bureau, an agency designed to serve the literary and educational needs of the newly literate. The Literature Bureau's programme was to encourage writing and reading in ways appropriate to local conditions. In other words, it was intended to be flexible, responsive, and creative. Although many such Bureaus existed, this essay will draw mainly on the examples of two: the East African Literature Bureau (EALB) and the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Literature Bureau.

The literary connections between Africa and PNG were generated by literary decolonization. Many of the literary change agents who arrived in PNG in the late 1960s had flown there directly from decolonizing East and West Africa. In fact, the University of Papua New Guinea, the PNG missions, and the various government departments were replete with "African hands" from all disciplines. The literary change agents themselves were thoroughly versed in the methods colonial institutions employed in transferring European-style literary systems.

In the case of PNG, the transfer of decolonizing experience from Africa was effected by the presence and influence of two men: Charles Granston Richards, who had been the founding Director of the EALB, and Bruce Roberts, who had experience in both
Central Africa and with the Literature Bureau of the South Pacific Commission. Richards and Roberts knew each other and were consulted respectively in the transfer of literature to PNG. Roberts served as an advisor to the establishment of the colonial administration's Literature Bureau and Richards as an advisor to the establishment of the Christian Training Centre, a mission-funded literary agency that worked closely with the Literature Bureau.

The literary institutions that both Richards and Roberts directed owed their existence to shifts in educational and political philosophy in England. The notion of a Literature Bureau as a method of decolonization dates from the Depression years of the twentieth century. However, its philosophical roots are clearly grounded in Matthew Arnold's proposal for cultural education as a means of social change and control. Indeed there are distinct parallels between the economic and social upheavals of the depression in England during the 1870s and the later worldwide Depression of the 1930s. Massive unemployment, civil unrest, strikes, demands for suffrage, the failure of capitalism -- all of these factors contributed to social and political instability.

In Matthew Arnold's England and in colonial Africa, Depression was accompanied by rapid changes to the class structure. In the late nineteenth century the power of the aristocracy was collapsing, an event that privileged the middle class and offered unheard of opportunities to the working class. In pre-World War II Africa, indigenous leaders had begun to demand political independence. University-educated Africans were in line to succeed colonial administrators, but close behind them were labour leaders and others demanding immediate change and a share in the new order. In
both situations, politicians and administrators imagined catastrophe should an angry, "uncivilized" class gain access to power.

Whether the process was called "civilizing," or "assimilating," Matthew Arnold believed education was the key to a stable social order. Furthermore, he felt that one of its chief agents should be literature. In Arnold's opinion, the best examples of literary culture should form the basis of the free, secular and compulsory education of the masses. The success of Arnold's scheme for state-controlled education in England is well known. However, the application of his scheme to Africa and elsewhere must be understood through the unique filter of colonialism. Education in the colonies, for example, was seldom free, secular, or compulsory. It was largely in the hands of the Christian missions and largely available to those who could pay.

One obvious goal of Arnold's educational scheme was assimilation. It was a concerted measure to implant the values of the former ruling class in the minds of the rising middle class. In colonial Africa, the original "civilizing" or "humanizing" use of literature in education was translated to accommodate a decolonizing ideology. In 1950, G.H. Wilson described the operation of the Literature Bureau of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland as a means of enabling African society to adjust to "modern" conditions. "So our policy of selling books is directly a part of our whole policy of bringing Africans, with their cultural contribution, into world affairs, and bringing world affairs to them" (63). His thoughts are echoed by Rupert East who wrote that the publications from his bureau in Northern Nigeria should represent "what is best in European and African thought" (74).
The colonial filter operated on other ideological fronts as well. Christian control of education added a "Christianizing" function to the "humanizing," or "civilizing" functions of literature vaunted a half century earlier. The missions thus had a vested interest in maintaining close ties with the newly-formed Literature Bureaus. Indeed the strong presence of missionaries in African Literature Bureaus can be seen as a natural adjunct to their existing role in colonial education. As political independence approached, the ideology shifted again to one of nationalism (and its successor, self-help). In this last situation, reading and writing transferred from a Christian duty to a civic duty. Good citizens were well-informed readers, and good writers served their country. In 1968, the English Department of Makerere University College urged its literature students to write when they were at home on vacation instead of wasting their time on frivolous pursuits. The Literature Bureau joined in this campaign reminding the students of the urgent task of writing the books needed in Africa (1969 *EALB Annual Report*: 90). The plan was extended to Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. By the next year, the Bureau had been flooded with manuscripts by university students and the Tanzanian office was about to publish an anthology of prose and poetry. This process was acted out so often in Africa that it became a model for other parts of the Empire. Jack Lahui, the first indigenous Director of the PNG Literature Bureau, has told me that the Australian Administration encouraged the first generation of university students to write, partly as a means of avoiding more destructive displays of their anti-colonial anger, and partly as a means of generating feelings of national unity in a country where such sentiments were foreign.
But the concept of the Literature Bureau was shaped by more than nineteenth century educational philosophy. Its foundations were just as deeply rooted in the "civilizing" mission of the Christian churches themselves. For much of the first half of the twentieth century, African missions were committed to two strategies. The first was the translation of the Bible into as many languages as possible, coupled with a corresponding education for literacy. These activities led the missions to establish translation bureaus, to co-operate on textbook and literature committees, to produce quantities of literacy primers and other materials. The second strategy was the indigenization of the African churches. Long before secular authorities had ceded real administrative control to Africans, many churches had done so. They had thus created a class of leaders whose knowledge and power in colonial society derived largely from their ability to read. Consequently, these men often became Africa's first writers in indigenous languages.

Translation and indigenization had created a real "need" for indigenous literatures, a need colonial authorities were hard-pressed to fill. However, the translation bureaus, literature committees, and distribution networks already established by the missions seemed as though they might form the basis of a self-sufficient book trade in Africa. Accordingly, from the mid-1930s onward, colonial Departments of Education joined with existing groups interested in literature to establish numbers of Literature Bureaus. By the mid-1950s, there were 7 Commonwealth Literature Bureaus in East and West Africa as well as several others in the Congo, Sudan, South Africa, Liberia, and elsewhere.
The Literature Bureau was conceived of as a transitional agency which would facilitate the transfer of a viable literary system to the colony. The problem was understood in economic terms; i.e., once the means of production and distribution had been achieved, and enough consumers of literature created, the system would largely look after itself. For instance, in a 1959 Unesco report, Bruce Roberts made a direct link between economics and book culture. In his opinion, economic development required a literate population which in turn relied on a healthy publishing industry.

This marriage of economic development and cultural production typifies the operations of all Literature Bureaus. Since the first of the Colonial Development Acts in 1929, Britain had been trying to inject life into its own economy by lending money to develop the colonies. However, the Treasury had only agreed to the loans if the money were not wasted on education. As the failure of development based on economics alone became obvious during the 1930s, the Colonial Office grudgingly established the Social Services Department in 1938 and then the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. It was out of this Fund that the EALB was formed with a 5 year seed grant of £99,000. Like the Directors of other administration-run Literature Bureaus, C.G. Richards was under considerable pressure to develop revenue-producing projects immediately within the Bureau itself and then within the community at large. The watchword was sell, sell, sell. Literature Bureau publications were not free. The feeling was that if people had an investment in the publications, they would be valued, read, and kept. At the same time Literature Bureau Directors had continually to balance these short-term expediency measures against their long-term goals, never knowing how long their temporary
agencies would be needed or financed. But, for as long as these Bureaus existed, they were to be as financially self-sufficient as possible.

The architects of the African Bureaus were very conscious of their pioneering nature. That is, the Bureaus were to be established where no western-style literary system existed. However, this pioneering role carried with it the seeds of paradox. Since the Bureaus were at the same time creating and co-ordinating literary activity in the colony, they might themselves become so expert as to fulfill all roles necessary to a system, thus usurping indigenous literary development. In a 1959 Unesco report, Bruce Roberts warned that the Literature Bureau was to inspire and encourage, to provide informed advice, and to give technical and financial assistance; but it was not to become the system itself (96).

Roberts' caveat was an important one. It marked the Literature Bureau as a mediator and distinguished its operations from those of the literary systems it was trying to foster. The caveat also highlights the amorphous nature of the Literature Bureau. It took on a wide range of shapes in different colonies as it responded to local needs. The EALB, for instance, was known for its prodigious book production, while the PNG Literature Bureau published only one book on its own, but orchestrated years of highly successful annual national literature competitions.

Paradox is perhaps a hallmark of the colonial Literature Bureau. For example, because of its mediating role and in spite of its obvious participation in assimilation, Bruce Roberts and others saw the Literature Bureau as a value-neutral change agency. In Robert's view, the Literature Bureau was at its most effective if seen to be operating at
arm's length from its original mission, or administration funding sources. Rupert East of the Literature Bureau at Zaria in Northern Nigeria agreed. His agency (the forerunner of the well-known Gaskiya Corporation) had developed from a translation bureau for Hausa school texts. During the war, the Literature Bureau began a newspaper in Hausa, which became enormously successful. Although, the paper was aimed at a Muslim audience, East was proud of the fact that both Muslim and Christian readers trusted the fairness of its reporting. This despite the fact that the European and African editors filtered and summarized both foreign and domestic news (73).

Nevertheless, Literature Bureau Directors were very conscious of their impact on language development and on literary style. Only those languages for which reliable orthographies had been produced were chosen for use in publication. It was for this reason that the EALB, for instance, chose to begin publishing in Swahili, Luganda, Gang-Dholuo, and Kikuya.

Then there were questions of the linguistic register chosen for indigenous languages, the representation of English, and so on. Rupert East, for example, has written that *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*, the newspaper published by the Literature Bureau at Zaria used a colloquial level of Hausa. Its editors were conscientious in their management of orthography and style. In fact, East claimed that the literary style invented for Hausa by editor Malam Abubakar was "imitated by writers all over Northern Nigeria" (73). Although Europeans complained because they had difficulty reading a Hausa language that was not pidginized, East maintained that the popularity of the paper among Africans
was precisely due to its use of an indigenous language. So popular was this newspaper that its circulation trebled in its first two years of operation from 5,000 to 15,000.

The willingness of Africans to read in their own languages was certainly not news to Charles Richards at the EALB. As soon as the Bureau was established in 1948, Richards set out to publish a popular periodical in Swahili, Luganda and English. The magazine would, he hoped, combat "inter-racial animosity and distrust, conveying at the same time information and instruction in a popular and even entertaining form" (1947: 25). *Tazama* appeared in 1952. Each issue contained a serialized story, a correspondance column, a woman's page, graded English lessons, articles by Africans, and an illustrated feature article. *Tazama* represented what was to be Richards' policy at the Bureau: a high quality product using local resources, published at a low price. By 1958 it had been sold to a local publisher as a viable concern.

Charles Richards saw his work at the EALB as dividing into three areas: producing/distributing books, assisting authors, and providing library resources. Although successful, East Africa's first organized library service was the most difficult of all the sections to develop. Original plans had called for three regional stable collections that would circulate books through rural branches. However, the capital funding for these libraries never materialized and Richards was forced to improvize. What he developed was a unique and very well received system of travelling book boxes. By 1961, over 200 of these were in circulation, making over 113,000 loans that year. In addition, Richards organized a postal library service, which was especially useful in Kenya during the Mau
Mau revolt when the book boxes could not be circulated safely. The library service reverted to the three national governments in 1965.

But, as successful as its library service was, the EALB will probably be remembered for its phenomenal success in publishing and distributing books. With its own imprint, the Eagle Press, and in co-publishing ventures with various domestic and foreign houses, the EALB quickly developed an impressive booklist. Two years after its founding, the Bureau had a general literature list of 224 titles. By 1961, Richards could report that the EALB had published an average of "a book each week for 13 years in one or other of 28 East African languages or English" (1961: 238). Within its first decade, the Bureau had sold over two million books, mostly in vernaculars.

After its first 13 years of operation, the Bureau was self-financing in its publications, except for the salaries of its four staff. This prodigious output had been achieved by using local vernacular literature committees for author recruitment and editing. The Bureau's substantial orders were placed in the hands of local printshops. To assist in selling these books, the Bureau engaged the help of existing outlets. The Dar es Salaam Bookshop, for example, set up 50 stores in the marketplaces of outlying towns and villages as a means of distributing EALB publications. In short, the EALB was fulfilling its mandate of facilitating the book trade instead of becoming the book trade. But, as the years passed and its own expertise and facilities improved, this "temporary" change agency took on the stance of a permanent player in the literary system it was supposed to advise and encourage.
The change is most perceptible in the EALBs attitude toward creative writing. When functional literacy was its main focus, the Bureau had published primers, simple histories, biographies, educational texts. It had placed little emphasis on the quality of the writing elicited from Africans and more on the quantity. Creative writing competitions had been held from time to time with occasional results. For instance, a Makerere undergraduate named J.N. Ngugi had won the novel competition in 1962 with a manuscript called "The Black Messiah." However, when the Bureau formed a Creative Writers Committee in 1967 to review the Literature Competition entries that year, the verdict was that the literary standards were low. The Bureau was beginning to shift itself away from the traditional decolonizing role it had first adopted and move into another, more permanent manifestation.

The change is quite clear in 1967 when the Bureau began to receive a series of grants from foreign governments that would enable it to print its own materials at a central printing plant. The annual reports from the next three years positively crow about the results. For twenty years, the EALB had supported and nurtured the East African printing industry with a steady flow of substantial print runs (e.g. 100,000 in the case of Swahili primers). Now, in one fell swoop, the new Director could boast of "the leap from small saddle-stitched literacy readers to hardcased volumes of scholarly materials that command international attention" (Annual Report 1970: 100). Gross sales doubled and overseas sales rose by 700%.

The Bureau was besieged by African scientific and literary scholars to take over the high quality printing they needed for their publications. The time had come for the
EALB itself to become an African publishing house. It began extensive translations of European and American classics into Swahili as a means of "developing" that language and introducing African readers to world literature. For the EALB, the mediating was over.

In the late 1960s in PNG, the climate for a Literature Bureau was very different from that in post-war East Africa. Colonialism had been very recent and had barely penetrated the steep mountain valleys. Over 860 languages were spoken among just under 3 million people and no lingua franca had official status. Many of the functions performed by the Literature Bureaus in Africa had already been filled by other agencies. Translating and producing functional literacy materials was in the competent hands of a mission agency: the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL). An extensive library service already existed and was considered one of the best in the South Pacific. Active mission presses like the Lutheran Kristen Pres were producing school texts in English, Pidgin, and in some vernaculars. In 1968, the newly formed University of PNG was beginning to offer creative writing classes.

However, these activities had only recently begun and the literacy rate was therefore still very low. The Australian Administration, which had been apathetic in the extreme toward native education and social services, had been roundly chastised by the United Nations for its lack of development policy. Consequently, the Administration had begun late, and without much enthusiasm, to prepare its colony for independence. It left adult education largely in the hands of the missions, but was willing to consider a temporary Literature Bureau. In 1968, at the urging of SIL missionaries, the Kristen Pres
and others, and with the advice of Bruce Roberts, the Administration established the PNG Literature Bureau.

This latecomer to the decolonizing world was to suffer from many handicaps throughout its ten year history. Most serious of these was the Bureau's obvious connection to the Administration, as a programme of the Department of Information and Extension Services. Underfunding and political meddling were to be the bane of every one of the Bureau's four Directors. Just as troublesome was the language question. The missionaries had wanted the Bureau to foster an indigenous vernacular literature using New Guinea Pidgin, but the Administration would not budge from its English-only stance. Since other mediating agencies were already fulfilling roles that traditionally fell to African Literature Bureaus, the PNG Bureau was left with little to do. In the end, its first Director, Louis Johnson, was told to establish a quarterly journal for writers and develop an indigenous literature in English as best he could.

The most serious institutional result of the Administration's ambivalence was that the missionaries withdrew from active participation in the Bureau. In Africa, Literature Bureaus had always drawn heavily on the ideological commitment, the organizational strength, and the informational networks of the missions. In PNG, the missions put out a call for C.G. Richards, the now-retired Director of the EALB to advise them on forming their own agency. The result, in 1970, was the Christian Training Centre at Nobonob, directed by journalist Glen Bays, who had directed for many years a similar centre in Zambia. Bays set about a vigourous publishing schedule that included a business arrangement with Kristen Pres.
So, within two years of its inception, the PNG Literature Bureau had lost what should have been its natural audience (those who spoke and read Pidgin), lost the most skilled literacy agency in the country (the SIL), and the only viable indigenous publishing concern (the Kristen Pres). A somewhat inauspicious beginning.

Despite its many encumbrances, the PNG Literature Bureau did manage to popularize the notion of writing through national literature competitions. The enthusiasm of its second and third Directors, Don Maynard and Roger Boschman, led the Bureau into co-operative projects with numerous agencies. Writers training courses with both the mission- and university-based literary systems and several joint publications with the Creative Centre for the Arts and the Institute for Papua New Guinea Studies stand out as high points of their successive ventures.

The Bureau's journal, at first called New Guinea Writing and then Papua New Guinea Writing, was the most informative and supportive journal for writers ever to be published in PNG. It routinely included practical advice on matters of copyright and style. It several times tried to foster a national writers' society. It regularly published a correspondance column. But its most interesting section was the centre page feature article. Here could be found interviews with PNG playwrights, poets, actors, and novelists. Here, too, were interviews with and articles about the East and West African writers who regularly visited the country as guests of the University or as conference participants. PNGW’s centre page reported as well on the study tours and conference participation by PNG writers in Africa. The Literature Bureau was clearly presenting African writers and texts as models for PNG.
The national literature competitions, originally sponsored by an individual, were taken over by the Literature Bureau in 1969 and are still run annually by the National Research Institute. There are prizes for every educational and age range, from elementary school to adult; for every genre from poetry, to short story, novel, and drama; and for both English and Pidgin languages. Participation rates are legendary with dozens of novels and hundreds of poems submitted each year. Taban lo Liyong, who at various times had worked both with the EALB and as Chair of the UPNG Department of English, served as a judge on these Competitions while he was in the country during the mid 1970s. Like the Creative Writers Committee in East Africa, Liyong had found more enthusiasm than quality in the submissions.

Unlike its predecessor in East Africa, the PNG Literature Bureau did not survive its mediating, transitional role to become an autonomous player in the burgeoning literary system. The Australian Administration saw the Literature Bureau purely as a temporary means to an end. It was funded, like all other cultural entities until 1978 (three years after Independence). With the fading of national unity as a political theme, the Literature Bureau was allowed to lapse quietly into a succession of other institutions, finally coming to rest as a section of the National Research Institute, where its chief activity is the continuation of the Literature Competitions.

Clearly the Literature Bureau itself is yet another manifestation of the systems of mediation that developed in the decolonizing world. An array of supposedly temporary structures were set in place as a means of demonstrating, or transferring, a western-style cultural system to colonized people. All of the actant roles of a literary system were
demonstrated by foreign change agents. Westerners served as writers, by translating and adapting western literature. Some of them even wrote texts themselves taking on indigenous pseudonyms.

Westerners served as editors, teachers and critics of the new literatures, all the while training the colonized to replace them in these functions. Native editors worked side by side with western editors as assistants at journals like *Tazama* and *PNGW* until they were allowed to slip into the editorial chair themselves. It was somewhat more difficult to develop a sense of western-style analytical criticism. In the South Pacific, this role is still filled almost exclusive by foreigners. In Africa, the role has only recently been transferred. But in the early days, European change agents were willing, even here, to masquerade as native in order to demonstrate the role. The multiple pseudonyms of Ulli Beier in Nigeria and in PNG come to mind.

Readership was somewhat more problematic to demonstrate. Europeans had long consumed colonial travel stories and exotica and many, who were conditioned by this tradition (or who were of a liberal democratic frame of mind), eagerly consumed the new "indigenous" literary product. However, it was more difficult to persuade the colonized to read than it was to persuade them to write. Only when the product was written in an indigenous language on topics that affected their daily lives did the target audience of this mediating system respond in numbers. C.G. Richards noted that the East African bookmobiles sold far more educational books than any other kind. Rupert East witnessed the extraordinary success of an indigenous newspaper. In PNG newspapers and comic strips in Pidgin have had equally strong reception.
The fourth role of the literary system (as postulated by Schmidt), that of publishing and distribution, was frequently demonstrated by the colonial Literature Bureau. But here again, the success of the Bureau in developing a book trade varied according to local conditions. The prevalence of small presses and print shops in East Africa, for instance, has no parallel in PNG. Instead, the publishing and distribution role of the "literary" system in PNG is dominated by travelling drama troupes, the radio, and the newspaper.

Perhaps the most visible and best organized institutional body in the colonial mediating literary system, the Literature Bureau provides a fruitful site for investigations of literary transfer. It can indicate which features of the originating systems were selected for transfer. It can clarify mechanisms of transfer in specifically colonial situations. It can certainly document the effects of attempted transfer on existing indigenous systems and outline the results.
WORKS CITED


ENDNOTES

i. The author gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided her in her research by the Ralph Steinhauer Doctoral Scholarship, the Killam Doctoral Scholarship, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Doctoral Scholarship.

ii. See my dissertation for an outline of these literary relations as they affected the creation of western-style literary systems in Papua New Guinea.

iii. Connell's work on Arnold's influence in educational thought is useful as background material to the later transfer of British institutions to African colonies.

iv. East and Wilson provide focused discussions on two particular bureaus. Lewis reports on the activity in the West Africa region, which meant Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, and Nigeria. His report contains useful cross-over information for the Gaskiya Corporation discussed by East. Milburn and Aje should be read for information about the operations of Literature Bureaus in general throughout Africa. The article, "World-Wide Task" extends the discussion to other parts of the Empire.

v. Constantine's overview of the period between the two World Wars supplies political and economic context for the development of literary institutions in Africa during this time.

vi. The Annual Reports of the East African Literature Bureau are detailed enough to supply not only the administrative details of the Bureau, but extensive lists of publications as well. The 1947 proposal by Richards for the formation of the Bureau is an interesting benchmark document against which to gauge its subsequent activities. In addition, Richards has summarized the operations of the Bureau in his 1961 article.

vii. Depending on the editor, this advice was either well received by contributors, or occasioned bitter rejoinders. The letters column of PNGW from 1975 onward documents the declining authority of the journal's first (and last) indigenous editor. See my dissertation for a full examination of the history of this journal's history.
viii. See Schmidt for a discussion of the four actant roles of a western-style literary system. In the study of overt attempts to transfer literary systems from Europe to Africa and elsewhere, it is useful to consult those European theories that try to describe western systems. Inevitably, the application of European theories of literary system proves difficult outside of Europe. The comparison between what was supposed to be transferred and what actually resulted is therefore a fertile area for theoretical investigation.

ix. See Wren for a discussion of the African pseudonyms used by Beier. In PNG, he wrote plays under the name of "Lovori."