This was produced for ENGL 477/877, Advanced Topics in Digital Humanities, at UNL. It is the second of three explorations of the *One More Voice* project in order to continue planning the contours of and refining the dataset for the class’s final project.

OMV Exploration 2: Small Data Set

**Introduction:**

Christianity remains the overarching theme I want to explore within this colonial world, though I have started to more concretely break it down into different aspects of sub-themes. Each of the works selected sheds light on how Christianity is used, generally either as a rhetorical tool or an aspect of identity.

The obvious route when discussing Christianity and colonialism is how the colonizers use it to create “us” and “them” to provide justification for the imperial project as well as sharpen their own distinct and supposedly superior cultural identities. “Civilizing” and “Christianizing” become rhetorically and intellectually linked. There is some of that here, sometimes explicitly such as in the narratives of Mary Prince where slaveholders use Christianity to encourage docile behavior in enslaved persons. Much of this is more implicit though, such as the letters by various Indian schoolchildren who write of how thankful they are for Christianity and its accompanying educational opportunities, helping to shore up moral justification for the colonization of India. What I am more interested in, however, is how Christianity gets used by the colonized peoples, as either a tool of compliance or resistance.

The angle of compliance is generally easier to see. Notably, within my sources are multiple examples of Native Christian clergymen, such as the Reverends Tiyo Soga, Matiu Taupaki, and Henry Boston, all of whom proclaim how great the coming of European styled civilization is in one way or another. Tiyo Soga and Matiu Taupaki are very explicit about how great it is that older cultural mores are being left behind in favor Christian practices. But what is most interesting is seeing the perks of this compliance. All three of these men have risen high by accommodation, winning for themselves authority, education, prestige, and other perks within the colonial framework.

Sometimes harder to see is the resistance, and part of that is because it seems accommodation can at times be resistance, sometimes compliance. A notable example here are the letters sent by Semane Setlhoko Khama. By sprinkling his appeals with overtures that suggest friendship, compliance, and shared Christian faith, Khama leverages the British against the Boers to try and secure land and resources for his people. Similarly, Mary Prince’s tales tell us that even as Christianity was invoked to justify slavery, enslaved people turned the rhetoric against slave holders to create resilient identities. Some even take it a step further, such as Edward Wilmot Blyden, who proposes how to use Christianity as part of a pan-African identity to rebuff European attempts at intruding into and supplanting African cultures.

**Themes:**

1. Culture: How Christianity was used to epitomize European culture and denigrate colonized cultures, but also how culture adapted to this incursion.
2. Control: Christianity was often used as a mean of exerting control, adding regimentation to days, forcing observance of certain rituals, etc.
3. Resistance: How Christian rhetoric and ideas could be used to challenge colonial systems and provide comfort to colonized people.
4. Accommodation: Christianity could be internalized, becoming part of the colonized persons identity, but could also be used as a way of advancing oneself within rather than against colonial systems.
5. Civilization: Christianity and “Civilization” became self-referential to one another, with Christian practices being a way to measure how “civilized” a people were or weren’t, both by colonizers and the colonized.

**Bibliography:**

1. Edward Wilmot Blyden. *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race*. London: W.B. Whittingham & Co., 1888.
2. Mary Prince. [*The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave; The Narrative of Asa-Asa, a Captured African*](https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/prince/prince.html)*.* London; Edinburgh: F. Westley and A.H. Davis; Waugh & Innes, 1831.
3. Anonymous, [L. Nicholson], and Nathaniel Henry Boston. “Henry Boston, African Native Pastor: ‘A Brief Sketch of the Life and Death of the Late Rev. Henry Boston, First Native Minister of the Bullom Mission. By His Son.’” 1874. Edited by Kenneth C. Crowell and Cassie Fletcher. In “BIPOC Voices,” *One More Voice*, solidarity edition; Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education (COVE), 2022. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/bipoc-voices/digital-editions-amd/liv_026037_HTML.html>.
4. Semane Setlhoko Khama. “Letter to A.M. Chirgwin” (5 December 1934). Heather F. Ball, Adrian S. Wisnicki, eds. *One More Voice*, site launch edition, 2020. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/transcriptions/liv_020024_TEI.html>.
5. Sechele I, Samuel Edwards, William Thompson, Anonymous, and William F. Webb. “Statement and Attestations; ‘Statement of Sechele, Paramount Chief of the Bakwaina’; ‘The Attack on Sechele’.” May 7, 1853; May 11, 1853; April 21, 1853; April 30, 1853; December 1, 1852. In Justin D. Livingstone, Mary Borgo Ton, and Adrian S. Wisnicki, eds., One More Voice, site launch edition, 2020. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/transcriptions/liv_020021_TEI.html>.
6. Anonymous and Tiyo Soga. “‘Jubilee of the Venerable Patriarch Brownlee’.” January 17, 1867; February 14, 1867. In Joanne Ruth Davis, Anne Martin, and Adrian S. Wisnicki, eds., One More Voice, site launch edition, 2020. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/transcriptions/liv_020022_TEI.html>.
7. Anonymous, Chenjee, Tooloosee, and Lutchmee. “India. Native Female Education.” 1849. Edited by Trevor Bleick, Kenneth C. Crowell, and Kasey Peters. In “BIPOC Voices,” *One More Voice*, solidarity edition; Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education (COVE), 2022. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/bipoc-voices/digital-editions-soas/liv_025029_HTML.html>.
8. Anonymous, and Matiu Taupaki. “Gleanings from Recent Letters. Letter from a Maori Clergyman.” 1874.Edited by Kenneth C. Crowell and Cassie Fletcher. In “BIPOC Voices,” *One More Voice*, solidarity edition; Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education (COVE), 2022. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/bipoc-voices/digital-editions-amd/liv_026034_HTML.html>.
9. Anonymous, and Jagadishwar Bhattachargya. “Trials of Converts in India.” 1853. Edited by Kenneth C. Crowell, Cassie Fletcher, and Jocelyn Spoor. In “BIPOC Voices,” *One More Voice*, solidarity edition; Collaborative Organization for Virtual Education (COVE), 2022. <https://onemorevoice.org/html/bipoc-voices/digital-editions-amd/liv_026024_HTML.html>.