"Three Arabic Documents of an Enslaved Muslim Scholar, Shaykh Sana See, from the 1860s Panama"

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One of the most striking discoveries in Islamic studies in recent years has been the realization that African Muslims enslaved in the Americas included educated scholars who produced rare and exceptional Arabic documents written under the extraordinary conditions of enslavement. Although this phenomenon had been noticed and briefly discussed in the nineteenth century, it was usually dismissed or treated as a curiosity, but little more. The few Americans who could read Arabic at the time were ill-equipped to understand these documents, and they attributed any difficulties they had in reading them to a faulty knowledge of Arabic on the part of the author. In a recent study of the best-known example of such a writer, Omar ibn Said (1770-1863), we have translated and analyzed the 18 known Arabic documents that he wrote, in the process showing how Omar's writings were misunderstood, dismissed, and neglected by slaveowners and missionary scholars.[1] One of the unexpected findings of our critical edition of the Arabic text was that Omar's writings included previously unrecognized quotations from works of Islamic scholarship, including theology and Sufism dating back to the 9th century AD.

Here we would like to present a similar investigation of a small collection of Arabic documents written by another enslaved scholar, Shaykh Sana See (Sy or Si), who worked on the railroad built by Americans in Panama during the 1860s.[2] Both Sana See and Omar ibn Said were of Fulbe (Fulani) origin, the latter being from Futa Toro, in modern Senegal, while the former was from Futa Jallon, in contemporary Guinea. Thus, both were raised in West African Islamic states with a similar cultural background. Sana See was a recaptured African who was sent to British-controlled Caribbean territories, where he toiled as an indentured laborer. His writing shows several similarities in style to the writings of Omar, but these texts differed in an

[1] Lo and Ernst, *I Cannot Write My Life.*

[2] The first name in nineteenth-century sources is variously spelled as Sena or Sana, and the last name as See, probably the same family name as Sy in Senegal today. We follow the spelling Sana See in line with the Library of Congress.

important way. While Omar ibn Said, who spent nearly half a century enslaved in the Carolinas, addressed all his documents to white enslavers, Sana See formulated his documents as efforts to communicate with a Muslim community. In particular, he wished to teach them some spiritual practices deriving from Sufism. In contrast, Omar seems not to have had access to any such Muslim community. Shaykh Sana See was asked by a white American amateur scholar to write at least one of his documents, but he addressed the documents to a community of Muslim men and, possibly located on the Caribbean Island of Dominica. In what follows, we present the context of the documents of Sana See, together with a complete translation based on our analysis of the Arabic texts, contributing to the small archive of writings by enslaved Muslim scholars.

The Mission of Frederick Hicks

We would never have known of the existence of Shaykh Sana See had it not been for Frederick Hicks, a self-funded Christian missionary. Frederick Hicks (1834-1871) was born into a prominent family in Vermont. He attended Williams College. Upon graduating in 1860, he dedicated himself to being a missionary in Central America, arriving there by May of that year.[3] He traveled to Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, sharing his faith and distributing Bibles. His success as a missionary was uneven; in 1863 he remarked on "the unfavorable appearances as regards the Bible work in Central America, owing to the political agitations in that region."[4] The following year, he was more optimistic, exclaiming that "There probably never was a time more favorable to the spread of the truth than the present." In 1865, he concentrated his Christian work in Panama, where he established a free school for local children and a Sunday school for the children of foreign families. By the time of his departure in 1868, he was disappointed with his results. A long-time resident of Panama commented that Hicks "was an excellent young man, [who] labored as a lay preacher for years, with exemplary zeal; but he said at last that the work of conversion was hopeless."[5]

It was evidently at the Sunday school that Hicks met Sana See. Why the African would sign up for such a class is not clear. But somehow, Hicks was in contact with Theodore Dwight, a leading member and organizer of the American Colonization Society, probably through this network, which enthusiastically supported missionary work among Africans. Dwight was also known as the first

[3] Hicks, "1860: Frederick Hicks to R. D. Douglas."
[4] Hicks, in *Christian World* (September 1863), 132.
[5] Robinson, *Fifty Years at Panama*, 231.

secretary of the American Ethnological Society, its distinguished magazine editor, and a leading missionary. Four documents written by Sana See were sent to Dwight by Hicks, as stated in penciled notes made by Dwight on the documents. One of these has been lost, so just three documents by Sana See survive.

There is no evidence to indicate when Sana See arrived in Panama. Dwight's notes on the manuscripts describe Sana See as "recaptured" twice. This designation refers to anyone enslaved after the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade from 1808 to 1857, who were found on illegal slave ships by British authorities. Although they were technically freed from slavery, these individuals were not released, but were instead deposited in Sierra Leone, the only British colony on the West African coast. In the latter stages of this process, most were then forced to migrate to the Caribbean and work as indentured labor, under conditions not much different from slavery. Tens of thousands of people are estimated to have undergone this experience.[6]

Sana See and Theodore Dwight

Theodore Dwight had been interested in African Muslims since the 1830s, when he conducted extensive interviews with Lamin Kebe (also known as Old Paul), who had been freed after about thirty years of enslavement in the U.S. Dwight interviewed him to create a dictionary for the Soninke language. He was also involved in translating the "Autobiography" of Omar ibn Said. He returned to this passion in the 1860s, attempting to collect Arabic texts and get them translated. As a leader of the American Colonization Society, he was an enthusiastic missionary and a promoter of the gospel among African Muslims. At one point, he described Islam in Africa as the "religion of the false prophet," and claimed that the Qur'an's key attributes of God, along with some of its moral principles, were copied from the Hebrew Scriptures.[7]

Dwight held a much higher opinion of the intellectual capabilities and culture of Africans than most Americans, and he believed that the widespread knowledge of Arabic in Africa made it an ideal medium to conduct Christian missions among Africans. Thus, when Dwight heard from Frederick Hicks about Sana See's Arabic writings, he was keenly interested. After he obtained four documents from Hicks, he persuaded two missionaries, William Thomson and Isaac Bird, to translate one document each.

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[6] Domingo da Silva et al. "The Diaspora."
[7] Dwight, "Condition and Character of Negroes in Africa, p. 83."

One document (originally No. 4, now No. 3 in our reckoning to replace the missing document) bears a date that has led to some confusion. The catalogers at the Library of Congress read the date on Document 3 as "Jan. 18, '54," but as we have established, Frederick Hicks did not reach Central America until 1860, and his role is noted as the source of both Documents 1 and 3. Therefore, it is impossible that the notation reads as 1854; it must be 1864. While Sana See is described as "a laborer on the railroad," It does not mean that he was involved in the construction of the railroad, which was completed in 1855. Dwight describes Document 3 as "the fourth Arabic manuscript received by me from Sheik Sana See," so it is likely that the other documents had been sent by Hicks previously.

Theodore Dwight was eager to have translations made of any documents acquired from Africa. He had previously sent four documents to Isaac Bird (1793-1876), a missionary who had spent thirteen years in Syria; it is not clear which manuscripts these were. Bird acknowledged receipt of them in a letter to Dwight dated April 1, 1862. He evidently included his translation of "the three most interesting manuscripts" with the letter, calling his translations "hasty" and provisional. He blamed the manuscripts for the shortcomings in his translations: "there is a small amount of bad spelling in the manuscripts, a good deal of bad grammar, & a good deal more of bad sense, or no sense at all."[8] He conceded that, if he had been more familiar with the Qur'an, that might have made the task easier. Only one of Bird's translations of Sana See's documents survives, an inadequate version of Document 2.

The following year, Dwight received Document 2 by Sana See, and on the reverse of page 2, he wrote a short note dated 5 June 1863, indicating that he was sending the manuscript to Daniel Bliss (1823-1916), a Christian missionary who had just returned from setting up the institution that would become the American University of Beirut. The note stated, "Since I sent you a notification of the Ethnological Meeting, I have received this manuscript from a friend at Aspinwall [the city now called Colon, in Panama]. It has been written at my request by an African negro, taken by a British ship from a station or vessel – if convenient, please send me a translation." As mentioned above, the translation would be provided by Isaac Bird. What is striking about this exchange is that it shows Dwight in effect commissioning Document 2. Would the same be true of Documents 1 and 3?

Later that month, Dwight received a letter, dated 22 June 1863, from Dr. William Thomson (1833-1918), a physician who had been raised in Syria by missionary parents. In the letter, Thomson apologize for his delay in translating Sana See's Document 1, admitting that he had "some difficulty" in understanding the text. In closing, he writes, "I have thought this afternoon that it might be of interest to get

[8] Isaac Bird, "Isaac Bird Letter [1 April 1862]."

some extended account from him of the part of Africa from which he was taken of the country of his birth and his adventures on the slave ship and have accordingly written him the enclosed letter in Arabic which if you deem proper will you please forward to him." There is no indication that this letter ever reached Sana See.

The fate of Sana See is unknown. But records of the American Ethnological Society in handwritten notes kept by Dwight, show that a plan was under discussion to bring Sana See to America, both to "receive instruction" and to be a living source of information on Africa.

> The educated Fullah, the shiek Sena-See, one of the recaptured slaves in the isthmus, whose four Arabic manuscripts have been exhibited to the Eth. Soc. translated from the classical [Arabic] by Dr. Thomson, is desirous of coming to the U.S. to receive instruction; and a moderate source of money would secure his object and at the same time being within our reach, much information concerning that part of Africa which no white man could hope to obtain, and for which so many explorers have in vain sacrificed labor, danger, and even death.[9]

Unfortunately, we have no further information about Shaykh Sana See.

The Documents and Their Sources

Each of the three documents, all preserved in the Library of Congress, consists of two sheets of modern paper, with Arabic writing on one side. Two of them quote from Arabic devotional texts that may be presumed to have been available to Sana See in the Islamic seminary in Africa where he studied and memorized such works. Notations on the documents in English include brief notes in ink by Theodore Dwight: "Received from Mr. Frederick Hicks, of Panama" (No. 1): "Received from Mr. Fredk. Hicks of Panama. Written by Sena See, a recaptured African, a laborer on the railroad, who attends his S. [Sunday] school" (Document 2); "The fourth Arabic MS. rec'd by me from Sheik Sana-see, a recaptured Mohammedan Negro at Panama" (Document 3). Penciled comments reflect the difficulty that the text posed to the translators; both Documents 2 and 3 have the notation, "unintelligible to Dr. Thomson." Penciled words in Arabic, sometimes followed by a question mark, indicate attempts to read certain words correctly.

The text of Document 1 begins with an invocation of God and blessings on the Prophet Muhammad. It then launches into an account of the litanies for every day of the week, quoting from a devotional Arabic text called *Litanies of the Week*

[9] Dwight, "Ethnology Reports." This note probably dates from 1865, to judge from other loose pages in this file bearing that date.

(*ʾaw-rād al-ʾusbūʿ)* or *Litanies of Osama*. It is based on a story set in tenth-century Persia, of Muhammad ibn Osama, who fell under suspicion of being a *Qarmati* heretic while he was in Isfahan and was imprisoned. One night the Prophet appeared in a dream and instructed him to perform particular prayers, extracted from the Qur'an, on a daily basis: on Friday, praise (*Taḥmīd*); on Saturday, seeking forgiveness (*Istighfār*); on Sunday, glorifying (*Tasbīḥ*); on Monday, trust in God (*Tawakkul*); 0n Tuesday, peace (*Salām*); on Wednesday. "there is no god but God," (*Tahwīl*); on Thursday, supplication (*Duʿāʾ*). After he completed extracting the prayers, but before he finished reciting them, he was freed. The text concludes with an account of the many blessings that will be received by those who carry out these devotions. Manuscripts of this Arabic text are found in libraries such as Berlin.[10] There is also a Persian translation of the text.[11]

Document 2 begins with a brief prayer for knowledge and then announces a quotation from the famed Sufi master `Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (1078-1166), the Baghdadian saint whose order, the Qadiriyya, is found in practically every Muslim land. His epithets are written seemingly in haste, with some repetitions and false starts, but the import is unmistakable. After a suitable Qur'anic verse on salvation, a lengthy blessing on the Prophet follows, merging into an enumeration of the different elements in the text of the Qur'an and their blessings: "And blessing grows by the number of chapters of the noble Qur'an, its verses, words, letters, dots, marks, stops, vowels, diacriticals, sentences, sections, and parts."[12] This sentence is a direct quotation from a lengthy prayer called *The Alchemy of Happiness (Kīmiyāʾ al-Saʿādah)*, composed by a Qadiri Sufi from Palestine, Yahya al-Ramli al-Qadiri. He went to Egypt and then settled in Medina in 1477 to study with a famous Muslim scholar, al-Sakhawi.

Yahya al-Qadiri's prayer was admired within the Qadiri order. A later scholar writes, this is

> The prayer of my master, Shaykh Yahya ibn `Abd al-Rahman al-Ramli al-Shafi`i al-Qadiri. Its author said it has many virtues, among them that a pious man [i.e., the author] recited it one night and went to sleep. It was as though a speaker called out to him, "This prayer has rewards uncounted except by God most high, and you have followed us." He said, "So I named it *The Alchemy of Happiness for Those Who Seek Increase of Beauty*, because if alchemy is effective, it makes you independent of the world's poverty, and this prayer makes you free from the poverty of this world and the next, and it

[10] Ahlwardt, *Verzeichness*, 3:340, no. 3678, ff. 122b-165b.
[11] Khu'i, *Fihristigan,* 12:344-45.

[12] Qadiri, *Kimiya' al-sa`ada*, fol. 4v.

> releases you from every worry, sadness, and evil in either one of them. And I saw it was the Prophet, and he was smiling greatly, and I sat with him a long time."[13]

With this prayer for Qur'anic blessings in mind, Sana See then presents the same eight verses of glorification found in Document 3, plus two other key Qur'anic texts, the Opening (Qur'an 1:1-7) and the Throne Verse (Qur'an 2:255). The document closes with another salutation to Muslim men and women. Document 3 begins with the same prayer for knowledge found in Document 2. It refers to a book of "Solomon the wise." This is followed by brief autobiographical remarks in the third person, written in red ink, on his name and his parents, his studies in Futa Jallon and the names of his teachers. He repeatedly greets with peace (*salam*) all Muslim men and women. He also mentions the places he has visited: Sierra Leone, Dominica, and Panama. These remarks are framed by the repeated announcement that he "greets with peace" all Muslims. The next section, in black ink, contains eight Qur'anic verses of glorification (*tasbīḥ*) from the Qur'an, i.e., containing the phrase "glory to …" (*subḥāna*). This was exactly the devotional process recommended in Document 1 for Sunday. Another section in red offers humble remarks of self-deprecation, another brief reference to his studies, and repeated salutations to the Muslims. The final section, in black ink, appears to be a question addressed to "Master Hicks," in a location that is illegible. It is followed in red by multiple declarations that Sana See has provided all the information to the Muslim men and women of Dominica. The last lines offer a prayer to God and a signature.

Technical Notes on the Arabic Texts

Some details regarding the composition of the documents can be summarized as follows. Full vocalization is provided in red ink. Some vowels are grammatically incorrect, as some nouns in construct (*ʾiḍāfah*) are shown as nominative rather than genitive; other ungrammatical vocalizations are frequent. The days of the week in Document 1 are mostly marked by numbers rather than their names. In recounting the litanies of the week, Monday occurs twice and Tuesday is missing, and there are confusions regarding the assignment of litanies to particular days; these have been corrected according to the source text. The letters F and Q are written in Maghribi style, likewise with hamza. Dagger alif is common for *alif maqṣūrah* and several individual demonstrative pronouns words (*hādhā*). Occasional spelling errors include substitution of *qāf* for *ghayn*, *sīn* for *shīn* (*yahsaru* for *yahsharu*), and

[13] Nabhani, *Jami` al-salawat,* 102.

omission of initial or final *alif*. Like Omar ibn Said, Sana See regularly replaces the letter *jīm* with *dhāl*, for example the word *jalisa* ("sat, studied"), is written as *dhālisa*. In several places, he breaks a word at the end of a line and places the last half of the word on the next line. A particularly unusual phenomenon is the practice of inserting decorative *alif*s after each consonant in a word, although the *alif* does not have a linguistic function. This feature, found in Documents 2 and 3 (but not Document 1), needs to be kept in mind; leaving these extra *alif*s out of the corrected version of the texts makes them much more readable.

Editing the texts requires some emendations. False starts occur, as in the beginning of Document 2. If we transliterate by showing Arabic consonants and long vowels as upper case, and short vowels as lower case, the result is *RaYATu KiAṬAB KiATaABu SuLaYMANa al-ḤaKiIMu.* By removing redundant alifs, correcting the vowels in the first word, and treating the second word as a false start replaced by the third word, in normal transliteration this yields *ra'aytu kitāba sulaymāni al-ḥakīm*, "I saw the book of Solomon the Wise." Similarly, the beginning of Document 3 is presented as QaALa ShaYKhu al-`aALiM al-RaBuUBiI BaḤR al-JuUDiI SiLISiLaYn al-JuU. We correct the spelling of the fourth word to be the epithet Qāla al-shaykh al-ʿālim al-rabbānī ("says the divine scholar "). The next phrase appears to be a false start on the epithet, *baḥr al-jūd* ("the ocean of generosity"), but it merges into the next phrase, *dhū silsilatayn* ("the possessor / the one with the two genealogies/ chains," i.e., `Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani's physical genealogy going back to the Prophet, and his spiritual genealogy through Sufi masters). The first instance of *al-JuUDiI* is crossed out, and replaced with *al-JuU* (minus the underdot) at the end of the line. Our reading is *qāla al-shaykhu al-`ālim al-rabbāni baḥr al-jūd_dhū silsilatayn*, "Says the master, the divine scholar, the ocean of generosity, the possessor of two genealogies." Another version of the phrase appears on line 2 as MaWJu al-JuUDi or *mawj al-jūd*, meaning "wave of generosity." Since these emendations restore standard formulas, we believe they are justified.

Another passage requiring emendation is in the final greeting of Document 3, where Sana See repeatedly writes *AKBirNA KhaBRan JaAMiAn*. The verb *akbarnā* ("we praised") seems odd in this context, and it seems preferable to substitute the visually and aurally similar verb *akhbarnā* ("we told") to go with the cognate accusative *khabran* ("news"). The result is *akhbarnā khabran jamī`an,* "we told all the news/ we told a comprehensive news." Deciphering Sana See's spelling of place names in Arabic script is also a challenge. Futa Jallon is spelled FuAṬa DhaLuUA, Sierra Leone is SaRLiYunA, and Dominica is DhiMNka, also appearing as DhuNAYaAK. Some names and places remain unidentified.

Conclusions

What can we learn from these brief documents written by a formerly enslaved man? One obvious point is that the text testifies to the wide range of the networks that could bring Arabic writings from Palestine and Iran to West Africa. The texts quoted by Sana See are also indications of a religious education that included memorizing treatises on spiritual practice, such as the extraction of Qur'anic texts to supply the daily litanies recommended in the story of Muhammad ibn Osama. Although Sana See was a scholar of middling ability, he had enough education to understand Arabic works on religious practice and communicate them to an audience. Sana See provided an example of how to do this practice in both Documents 2 and 3, by assembling eight Qur'anic verses that are glorifications, i.e., they contain the phrase "praise be" (*subhana*). Likewise, Sana See draws upon a text from the Qadiri order by a Palestinian Sufi to show how every detail of the Qur'anic text provides blessings. The choice of Muhammad ibn Osama's treatise, describing a prayer regime that is designed to gain release from imprisonment, must have had an extra emotional appeal to an audience of fellow Muslims whom he addresses with blessings of peace, since any such audience must have consisted of the formerly enslaved. The emphatic repetition of his greeting of peace, combined with his repeated declaration that he has told the news, suggests that the message was indeed the practice of the litanies listed for each day of the week. References to Dominica in this connection may mean that Sana See had acted in a pedagogical role with a Muslim community, of both men and women, on that Caribbean Island.

On a formal level, Sana See resembles Omar in both his narrative of his own life, brief though it is, and in his performance of humility. Like Omar, he refers to himself in the third person. He identifies himself as a student in Futa Jallon, the center of a theocratic state, and lists the names of his teachers and his parents. He then humbly calls himself a nobody, sinful, erring, and foolish. Similarly, Omar identifies himself in relation to his parents and his teachers in Futa Toro and Bundu, making an apology for forgetting his Arabic, although he immediately undercuts that apology by quoting a theological textbook. Sana See's practice of self-abnegation functions as a framework to present his spiritual practices directly to his audience, as he may have done in Dominica. In short, these documents provide a brief glimpse of how one formerly enslaved scholar persisted in his spiritual efforts despite his enslavement.

Document 1: Litanies of the Week

In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate. May God bless our master

Muhammad, his Prophet, his family, and his companions, and grant him complete peace.
The benefit of what one recites after ritual prayer, which one recites daily:
That which one recites on Sunday, and one recites every word of glorification that is in it.
On Monday one recites every word of trust in God that is in it.
On Tuesday one recites every word of peace that is in it.
On Wednesday one recites every word of "there is no god but God" that is in it.
On Thursday one recites every word of supplication that is in it.
On Friday one recites every word of praise that is in it.
On Saturday one recites every word of seeking forgiveness that is in it.
Just as Muhammad ibn Osama,[14] may God be pleased with him, said: They came to him in the city of Isfahan (may God the Sublime and Glorified protect it), and he was whipped in prison until his patience was worn away. One Friday night in his worst condition, the Prophet (May God bless him and grant him peace) came to him [in a dream], and said, "Did they commit injustice, Muhammad?" He replied, "Yes, Messenger of God." He said, "Take the holy book and extract from it seven litanies for seven days, a particular litany for every day. Recite that in the order of the seven days, and you will be released from this prison of yours."
Extract for Sunday: recite every glorification; for Monday, recite every "trust in God"; for Tuesday, recite every peace; for Wednesday, recite every "there is no god but God"; for Thursday, recite every supplication; for Friday, recite every praise, recite each praise in the recitations; for Saturday, recite every prayer for forgiveness.
"And if one worshiper among the believers performs these litanies, and takes them with acceptance, if he is in debt, God will settle his debt; if he is in prison, God will hasten his release. If he is in sorrow, God will cheer him of his pain, and if there is a big problem, God will address it. One who continues with this will be resurrected with the memorizers of the Qur'an. One who continues in this world shall be free from suffering and fears and will attain the rank of saints, martyrs, and the virtuous. He will attain this every hour and his bounties will increase. When he is present, even if that is with the Sultan, his petitions will be completely amazing, and scholars will approve of him entirely. He will be dressed in colored robes and given presents and much affection."
Isak Tam Yasin [?]
Completed, in praise of God in the hand of the Shaykh.

[14] The document has the name as Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Salam, but that is replaced here by Muhammad ibn Osama, to conform with the source text.

Document 2: Greeting to Muslims

Lord, increase us in knowledge.
I have seen the book of Solomon the Wise, son of David. I greet with peace all Muslims. I am Sheikh Sana See, son of Muad. My father was Muhammad, my mother was Aisha. I studied in Futa Jallon, I studied with every imam, Abu Bakr, Imam Sheikh Yahya.
I have seen Sierra Leone, I have seen the country of Dominica, I have seen the country of Panama. I greet with peace all Muslims.
[8 Glorification Verses (muṣabbiḥāt) from the Qur'an:]
"Glory be to Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Further Mosque, the precincts of which we have blessed, that we might show him some of our signs. He is the Hearing, the Seeing." (Qur'an 17:1)
"Glory be to Him above that they say!" (Qur'an 17:43)
Say: "Glory be to my Lord. Am I anything but a mortal, a Messenger?" (Qur'an 17:93)
And say: "Glory be to our Lord! Our Lord's promise is performed." (Qur'an 7:108)
"Glory be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He but says to it 'Be,' and it is." (Qur'an 19:35)
"So glory be to God, the Lord of the Throne, above what they describe!" (Qur'an 21:22)
"They say: 'The Merciful one has taken to Himself a son.' Glory be to Him! No, but they are honored servants." (Qur'an 21:26)
"And Jonah, when he went forth enraged and thought that we would have no power over him; then he called out in the darkness, 'There is no god but you. Glory be to you! I have done evil.'" (Qur'an 21:87)
Glory be to God. I am nobody son of nobody. I studied in Futa Jallon. My name is Shaykh See. I studied in the country of Kabi. I am nobody, a sinner, erring, a fool. I greet with peace all Muslims.
But I pray for the Muslims, all of them, men and women, except one who believes but did not come. "Seek forgiveness for your sin." (Qur'an 21:87)
I asked you, our master Hicks, in the country called Mussahi [?]. We told in the land of Dominica, we told all the news, we told all the news, we told, and we told all the Muslims in Dominica, the Muslims, all of them, men and women, the believers, all of them, men and women, the Muslim men and the believing women.
O God, blessing and prayer, and praise be to God, Lord of creation, amen, amen.
Shaykh Sana See.

Document 3: The Qadiri Prayer

Lord, increase us in knowledge.

Says the Shaykh, the divine scholar, the ocean of generosity, the possessor of two lineages, the teacher of knowledge, the ocean of sainthood, the wave of generosity, the quencher of spirit, the rescuer of humans and jinn, the lord and master `Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, may God be pleased with him, amen. May God benefit us with the blessing of His knowledge, which is the following:
"They will say, 'Praise be to God, who has separated us from all sorrow! Our Lord is truly most forgiving, most appreciative: He has, in His bounty, settled us in the everlasting home where no toil or fatigue will touch us.'" (Qur'an 35:34-35)
May God bless, grant peace, blessings, and honor to our master Muhammad, our Prophet, Beloved, intercessor, revealed, lamp, delight, and our link to our Lord, Abu al-Qasim al-Amin Muhammad, your servant, prophet, and messenger, the unlettered prophet, his family, companions, and descendants, with the most excellent prayer and the best of peace.
"And blessing grows by the number of chapters of the noble Qur'an, its verses, words, letters, dots, marks, stops, vowels, diacriticals, sentences, sections, and parts." [15]
[8 Glorification Verses (muṣabbihāt) from the Qur'an:]
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"And Jonah, when he went forth enraged and thought that We would have no power over him; then he called out in the darkness, 'There is no god but you. Glory be to You! I have done evil.'" (Qur'an 21:87)
In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy!
"Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, the Merciful, the Compassionate, Master of the Day of Judgement. It is You we worship; it is You we ask for help. Guide us to

[15] This sentence is a quotation from a collection of prayers called *Kimiya al-sa`ada*, by a Qadiri Sufi from Palestine, Yahya al-Ramli.

the straight path: the path of those You have granted your bounty, not those with whom you are angry, nor those who are astray." (Qur'an 1:1-7)
"God: there is no god but Him, the Living, the Supporter. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. All that is in the heavens and in the earth belongs to Him. Who is there that can intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, but they do not comprehend any of His knowledge except what He wills. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth; it does not weary Him to preserve either of them. He is the Most High, the Tremendous." (Qur'an 2:255)
And I greet every Muslim with peace, and I greet with peace all Muslim men and women.

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