Abu Abdulmalek al-Shar'i (Muhammad Teibah), "The Awakening: Its Birth, Its Causes, and Its Treatment", 20 November 2013 (all in-text hyperlinks added). Translated by Samuel Heller.

The "*Sahawat*" [Awakening] is the name of the dagger that exhausted and obstructed the *jihad* in Iraq. It tore apart and scattered many of the *mujahideen*.

The Awakening began with the establishment of a tribal militia, supposedly to maintain security and protect Sunni areas. Then it graduated to fighting the *mujahideen* based on those same pretenses.

What made the *Sahawat* even more harmful was that it was born from within the Sunni environment and its deep-rooted tribes, and it was thus able to break apart many of the jihadist groups in Sunni areas.

The *mujahideen* in general need to analyze the case of the Awakening that took place in Iraq, but it is incumbent on those in *Bilad al-Sham* [Syria] in particular.

And a believer should not be stung twice from the same hole.

There were many reasons for the appearance of the Awakening, reasons which overlapped and interacted and ultimately led to this bitter end. [Those reasons included] the actions of the enemy, the state of the local environment, and the state of the *mujahideen* who had embraced deviant thinking.

The enemy's actions to manufacture the *Awakening*:
1. The intensity of the enemy's pressure.
2. The temptations of money and weapons.
3. Infiltration by intelligence services.
4. Recruiting detainees.

The local environment's [contributions to] the appearance of the *Awakening*:
1. The clan-based nature [of the area].
2. The weakness of the religious conscience [i.e., what might restrain local Muslims from participating for religious reasons].
3. The spread of religious innovation and a lack of awareness.
4. Fear and poverty.
5. Exhaustion at the length of the war.

The state of the *mujahideen*:
1. The way some [*mujahideen*] adulterated or weakened many issues.
2. Competition and infighting between some groups of *mujahideen*.
3. Extremism and excess.
4. A lack of understanding of Prophetic *al-siyasah al-shar'iyyah* [right-minded policymaking in the absence of revealed guidance].

We must all safeguard against the causes of the malignant disease that is "the Awakening," which leaves nothing in its wake and from which no one benefits but the enemies of God.

We need to accord people their proper place. We ought to pay attention to the elders of the community, communicate with them, and make them the community's leaders.

Lots of problems are the result of putting *muhajireen* ahead of *ansar* in terms of administering the community's affairs, so we should be alert to this and not fall victim to it.

We ought to make the resolution of disputes hinge upon the acceptance of the law of God Almighty, without stubbornly insisting on a particular judge or a specific group's court.

We ought not to provoke a confrontation with those groups that are polluted or dirty. Instead, we should work gradually to contain or neutralize them.

We ought to draw a sharp distinction between competition and infighting [between rebel factions] and aiding the infidels, just as we should distinguish between a commander's loyalty to the infidels in secret and [the status of] soldiers joining his organization.

The fact that a group's *emir* appears with an American isn't sufficient to render him an apostate, to say nothing about declaring his whole group apostates.

We ought to make use of these safe liberated areas as educational and scholarly incubators, as well as forums for safe, direct communication between the *mujahideen*.

We need to be extremely cautious in matters of *takfir* [declaring someone an apostate] and *tabdi'* [declaring someone guilty of *bid'ah*, un-Islamic innovation], and we need to avoid accusing someone of being a traitor on the basis of nothing more than suspicions, speculation, and rumors. Our fundamental principle should be the sanctity of Muslim blood, the shedding of which should not be declared permissible based on suspicions or incitement.

We need to adhere to the instructions of known scholars and their advice to the *mujahideen*, and we should avoid getting ahead of them or announcing their positions [before they do]. Beware of those hiding behind these unknown [social media] accounts.

We have to exploit the failure of the *Awakening* experience in Iraq to deter others from repeating it, just as we have to do the same with these adulterated or weakened experiments in Iraq and Egypt .

We need to head off the excuses for hostility, ill-feeling, and infighting among the *mujahideen*; instead, we should spread the spirit of brotherhood, goodwill, and tolerance among them.

We have to be alert to our enemies' machinations and plots and to the ploys of these various intelligence services, which know how some groups think and invent means to manipulate them.

We should pay attention to public services, the provision of the necessities to which the people have become accustomed, and to improving people's living conditions.

We must be careful that the *jihad* doesn't turn into an elite [phenomenon] that's disengaged from the people and doesn't invite the public's participation in its aims and concerns.

We should pay attention to the media aspect [of the *jihad*], which reflects these *mujahideen* movements at their best. We cannot dismiss the campaigns of defamation that lead to the creation of the Awakening.

These *mujahideen* groups need to focus their efforts on uniting people around the Quran and the Sunnah, not around banners and organizations; that is what is most conducive the acceptance of their call [to Islam], and not misrepresented.

Everyone who turns his rifle toward the liberated areas to fight his brothers – whatever the excuse – accomplishes the West's goal of an Awakening project, whether he understands that or not.

The Awakening failed, and in so doing lost what it possessed in this world and the Afterlife. Its abortion of the Iraqi Islamic project will be weighed among its sins. Now the idea of the "Awakening" remains, a term to be applied to everyone who fights the *mujahideen*.