

scientific heritage of the West.² The will to speculate, argue, and explore was not a commonplace feature of the Arab intellectuality. The will to believe and conform was stronger.

The above features constituted the historical requirements that an ideology had to meet. They also constituted limitations that an ideology had to face and overcome. It is to be understood that the role of an ideology is not only to satisfy the intellectual demands and the political needs of a group of people, but also to develop those demands and needs so as to reach a higher stage of development. An ideology answers people's questions, but these answers should raise new questions.

Two political movements had made an impact on the masses in the Arab East before Arab nationalism asserted itself as an ideology: the Muslim Brotherhood and Communism. Both of them offered a simplified interpretation of the universe and history. The former exploited the religious feelings and the longing for the glorious Islamic Empire. The latter encouraged the sense of revolt against tradition. The fact that both were uncomplicated yet comprehensive systems explains their strength in appealing to the mentality of the Arab masses. But at the same time, it explains their weakness as well.

In asserting the supreme importance of Islam, the Muslim Brotherhood could not explain the cause of Arab

²R. Bayly Winder (trans.), The Meaning of the Disaster, by Constantin K. Zurayk (Beirut: Khayat's College Book Co-op, 1956), p. 34.