

of action. Though they influenced a whole generation of Arab intellectuals, the liberal nationalists did not penetrate the masses' consciousness. Consequently, they failed to form the orthodox structure of Arab nationalism.

The orthodoxy was born later by the political parties which adopted nationalism: the Ba'th, followed by the ANM. These two parties came to the fore at a time when the colonial question was being settled. Hence, they did not have to fight the identity of "natives". However, they found themselves in the midst of another battle where they had to face not only the regional identities, but also the ideologies of international Communism and Islamic fundamentalism. At this time, both ideologies were exploiting the masses' enthusiasm for a comprehensive ideology concerning man and his universe, a question which the early nationalist writers did not address themselves to.

Hence, the ideological task as conceived by the founders of the ANM was to develop a comprehensive scheme by which a Syrian, an Egyptian or any citizen of the Arab states for that matter would identify himself with the wider Arab nation. This ideological task represented a difficult dilemma for the founders of the ANM who had their political education within the heritage of liberalism. On one hand, to keep themselves within the framework of liberalism implied the acceptance of nationalism as a concept which defined something that exists, i.e., the Arabs. Consequently, the