

## Chapter 5

### THE IDEOLOGY OF THE ARAB NATIONALISTS MOVEMENT

Having traced the historical background of the Arab national movement in the first chapter, the author begins here by outlining the context within which an ideology was searched for in the Arab World so as to appreciate the ANM's contribution to this quest.

The first characteristic feature of that context was the search for a national identity. In the late 'forties, an average citizen of Egypt had several identities. He was considered a 'native' by the British, an Arab by the Israelis. At the Mosque, he was taken as a Muslim but by the ruling class he was treated as one of the faceless masses. Again, by geography, he was an African. What was true of the average Egyptian was equally true of the man-in-the-street in the other Arab states. He too had several identities, not necessarily the same as that of his brother Egyptian.

Since the last century, the intellectual activities which were interested in emphasizing one or the other of the above identities or in striking a balance between them, were mainly governed by Western influence. This influence had manifested itself in two peculiar ways. On the one hand, the national resentment against the colonial West was working