postcolonial nations in the global south. These projects consisted largely of necessary infrastructure such as drinking water distribution, sewage, and expansion of road networks and transport. One of the first newly established institutions following 1952 was a national institute dedicated to the design of schools across the country. Another set of institutions were created to respond to the need for housing. Existing housing developments in the private sector were nationalized and managed by the same state-run consortium, mentioned above. These political transformations diminished the place of architects as serving a bourgeois minority. By 1963, Egypt was home to more than 18,000 architects and engineers most of whom practiced like anonymous civil servants, as part of the developmental machine which produced architecture at an unprecedented pace.

Some exceptional structures from this period include Mahmoud Riad's municipality building and the Arab League Headquarters, both along the Nile in central Cairo. The Arab League building in particular embodies the politics of the time and the aspirations of Cairo as the political heart of the region. The building is composed of a multi-story building, flanked by two volumes for the administration and the assembly hall. The resulting central court is adorned with Moorish patterns, reinterpreted with 1950s tiles grafted on the building's otherwise unadorned façade.

The 1959 establishment of Nasr City provided Sayed Karim with the tabula rasa he had wished for in 1945. It was his opportunity to build an entire city unburdened with Cairo's complex and decaying urban fabric. The new city included middle income housing blocks, villas, and new government buildings. The centerpiece of the new city was a landmark stadium; a necessary structure for hosting political rallies, with a capacity of over one hundred thousand spectators. The stadium was the first structure completed in the new city, along with a military parade grandstand. Both structures utilized concrete in functional yet visually stunning ways. The various government offices in this aspiring new political center, akin to Chandigarh or Brasilia in its conception, consisted of functional multistory buildings with horizontal articulations and strip windows. The idea was to move such offices outside the old heart of Cairo and to house the state bureaucrats in the new housing blocks. A team of architects designed the apartments with Sayed Karim at the helm. Karim's distinctive H-shaped apartment blocks were arranged on a diagonal in relation to the city's streets, as to create open space in front and in the back of each block. The apartments were efficient, yet spacious by international standards for postwar state-built housing, with apartments consisting of three and four bedrooms, and others consisting of two floors.

The apartments of Nasr City were, however, inaccessible to the majority of Egyptians in need of housing. Nasr City was considered remote in location, discouraging families from relocating, and the prices were not accessible to the masses. More affordable housing models were developed across the country to absorb the population growth. Increasingly the designs of such projects were not credited to particular architects but rather to the state. By the mid-1960s, architects became anonymous, save a few exceptions. The 1967 war and Egyptian military defeat were a final blow to an economy and development vision that had been economically and politically unsustainable. The architectural profession, having been fully controlled by the military state through its syndicate, professional meetings, and publications, never recovered its autonomy.

The functional, modernist designs, which proliferated in the 1950s and 1960s, evolved from two decades of architectural practice prior to 1952. However, the close affinity of such practice with a failing political project put into question the validity of the architecture produced during that era. The Egyptian state had become increasingly authoritarian, and ultimately, despite some success in expanding services, failed to deliver on its promises for lasting social equality. While Egypt experienced national trauma following 1967 and entered into a national existential crisis recorded in the cinema and literature of the time, on an international level too, modernism was seen as an expiring architecture.

The 1970s can be characterized as a decade of search for identity. While intellectuals and professionals searched for Egypt's true identity, the majority of the built environment from then on was produced outside the confines of architecture as a profession. Contractors rendered the architectural profession increasingly irrelevant, and informal building activity proliferated among poor communities, mostly rural migrants to cities. Within the besieged architectural profession, calls to return to basics and to reevaluate the vernacular gained momentum, as Hassan Fathy entered the canon of western architectural history books. Fathy's 1945 New Gourna Village, which was deemed at the time a social, economic, and practical failure, was rediscovered, and presented within the Egyptian academy as a model for "architecture for the poor." Several subsequent projects were commissioned to Fathy such as the Sadat Resthouse in Kalabsha, Nubia. Fathy's students preached his message and built careers on building, in his style, country homes for the urban elite. Architects such as Abdel Wahed al-Wakil built – on the Hassan Fathy aesthetic – private residences for the affluent seeking modern spaces grounded in a conscious construction of identity that ambiguously claims to be simultaneously down to earth, Egyptian, Islamic, and Arab.

Perhaps more successful in recuperating some notion of the vernacular without subscribing to absolutism nor fully rejecting modern practices, Ramses Wissa Wassef's Saint Mary's Church in Zamalek exhibits a modern monolithic ribbed structure for its nave, while introducing elements that recall traditional eastern Christian architecture. His earlier Mahmoud Mukhtar Museum, also in Zamalek, was a building that appeared modernist from its exterior with its rectilinear colonnade, however, the entire design was a meditation on space and light as an architectural response to the sculptures exhibited in the museum. Wissa Wassef's engagement with vernacular architecture was grounded in a phenomenological reading of space, unlike Fathy's materialist approach to vernacular design, which was fixated on mud brick and a conscious rejection of modern technology.

The period of political and economic stagnation of the Mubarak presidency was largely unremarkable architecturally, as architects struggled to reconfigure their role in society. A few landmark buildings were erected, namely the 1988 new Cairo Opera House and Mahmoud El-Hakim's 1997 Nubian Museum. Both buildings were part of a wave of large developmental projects – involving international funding – that were presented by the Mubarak regime as evidence of its modernization. The design of such buildings continued to flirt with the notion of situated modernism, that is, the use of architectural vocabularies that vaguely point to local traditions (arches, domes, etc). Abdelhalim Ibrahim Abdelhalim's 1990 Children's Cultural Park presented an assemblage of such architectural elements in a manner reminiscent of 19th century garden follies: architecture as a collection of fragments. By the end of the 1990s, other appropriations of pseudo-historical motifs emerged in buildings such as the Faisal Islamic Bank Tower, consisting of offices and twenty luxury flats. The building features extensive calligraphy cast into screens. The entrance portal is topped by a *muqarnas*-inspired decorative element. The dawn of the new millennium also witnessed a revival of Ancient Egyptian – rather than Arab or Islamic – pastiche, appearing in key public commissions such as the Egyptian Supreme Court by Ahmed Mito.