



**Politecnico  
di Torino**

# **Honors Thesis**

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**Master's degree Architecture for Heritage**

## **Abstract**

### **Tripoli's Cultural Fairground:**

Conservation plan and adaptive reuse of Oscar Niemeyer's  
Rachid Karami International Fair in Tripoli, Lebanon.

#### **Tutors**

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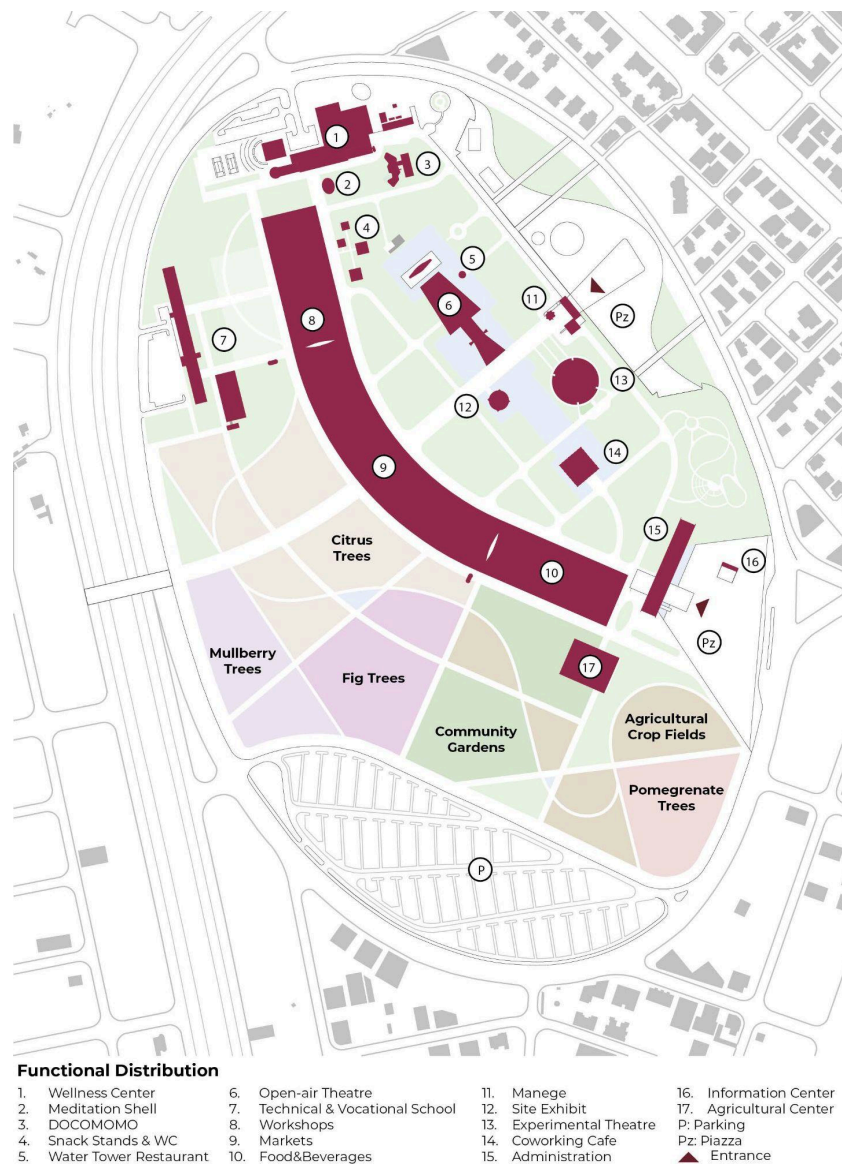
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Modern heritage in Lebanon has been one of the many victims of the Lebanese Civil War. Among the sites in question is the Rachid Karami International Fairground in Tripoli, Lebanon. This site was designed in the 1960s by Oscar Niemeyer, one of the world's most renowned modern architects. Although the site is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in 2023, this modern heritage was listed under UNESCO's "List of World Heritage in Danger". The site currently suffers from severe neglect and damage that have resulted in the collapse of parts of some structures, as well as interventions that have destroyed the site's integrity as modern heritage. The following thesis thus aims to develop a conservation and adaptive reuse plan for this endangered modern heritage. The approach used for the thesis was moving from a general overview to a more specific study relying on archival photos and documents, books, studies, documentations, and interviews regarding the different topics and subtopics at hand. The thesis initially examines the history of modern architecture in Lebanon before introducing the site and diving into Tripoli's history and territorial context. In addition to understanding the site's context, the historical events and Oscar Niemeyer's conceptual designs were studied in order to pave the way for a historically sensitive proposal. This detailed analysis was then paralleled with the as-built and current situation of the site. After having established a strong understanding of the value of the site, its history, and its context, it became clear that the site requires urgent attention with regards to the different structures' decaying conditions. It also needs to establish a relationship with its context, to maintain its modern heritage value, to provide green public spaces for its citizens, as well as ensure the site's longevity. This being said, it is proposed to strengthen the relationship between the site and Tripoli by turning the site into Tripoli's Cultural Fairground, merging socio-cultural spaces with craft and trade, agricultural, and wellness spaces. An overall masterplan is proposed with specific buildings taken as examples as well as proposed interventions regarding the decay of the structures.



View of the existing site. Photographed by Wassim Naghi, 2021. Source: UNESCO Nomination Text, 2022, p. 27



Proposed intervention, including the distribution of functions



*Render of the proposed masterplan intervention*

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