[in]formal Pattern Language

- a guide to **Handmade Improvitecture©** in Cairo

rooftops

158
DLH
S

158 Laundry Day⁺
credit

women and girls, architects

Laundry reveals stories about family size, age and social status. Laundry day is a social activity for women and young girls. It is a way to expose young women for marriage and facilitates the delivery of news and goods among women. Hanging laundry on rooftops is explained by the dense urban fabric that doesn't allow much air and sunlight.

larger patterns
#dense urban fabric, #social networks

smaller patterns
pattern, # pattern, # pattern, # pattern

Pattern Template - Guide

by Nada Nafeh

This pattern template will be presented to the University of Waterloo
as part of the thesis requirements for the degree
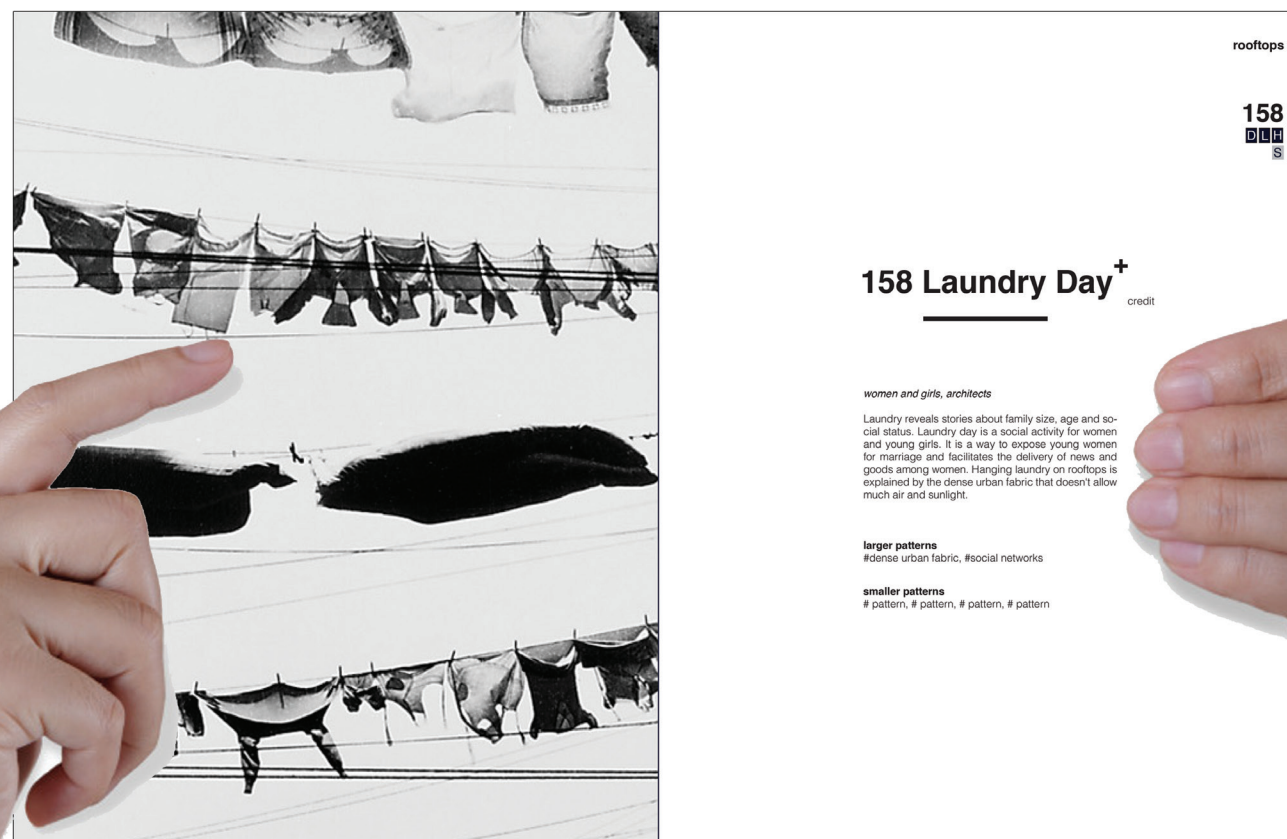of Master of Architecture

Thesis Supervisor   **Mona El Khafif**
School of Architecture, University of Waterloo

Committee Members   **Adrian Blackwell**
School of Architecture, University of Waterloo

Magda Mostafa
Construction and Architectural Engineering Department, AUC

PATTERN TEMPLATE - GUIDE

1   Select a **pattern.**

2   Indicate whether the pattern is a potential or a problem.
Mark potentials with a [**+**] sign and problems with a [**-**] sign.
Don't forget to write your name(s)

      Selecting a pattern
According to Christopher Alexander, a pattern is "a morpho-
logical law which establishes a set of relationships in space".

      Select a reoccurring / characteristic / consistent phenom-
enon, arrangement or element in Cairo's or Ard El Lewa's
informality.   This pattern should be linked to a spatial
logic.

4   Who are the **key players** involved / mostly affected / mostly
interested in this pattern ? Mark male dominated activities
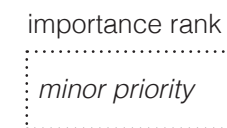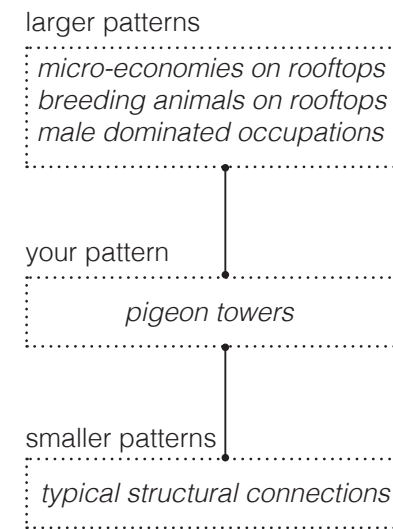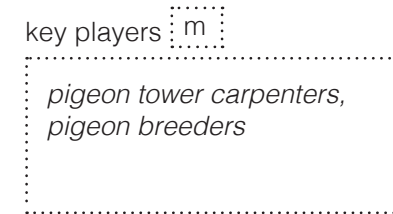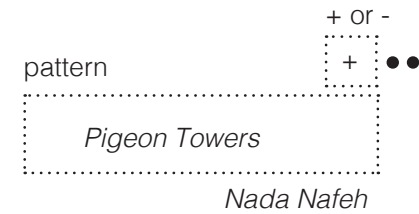with [m] and female dominated activities with [f].

5   Provide a brief **description** / **context** of the pattern:
        - empirical background of the pattern
        - evidence of the pattern's validity
        - variations and different manifestations of the pattern

6   List other patterns that are connected to your pattern.
Divide your list into **larger patterns** and **smaller patterns.**

7   Give your pattern an **importance rank:**

      1. High priority: A pattern that is absolute, needs to be
changed immediately or has major effects on the country /
city.
2. Medium priority: A pattern that affects a certain
community or has a moderate level of impact.
3. Minor priority: A pattern that seems to work, is relative or
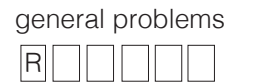can wait. It still can be optimized through design.

Example

                                       + or -

pattern   +   ● ●

      Pigeon Towers

              Nada Nafeh

key players   m

      *pigeon tower carpenters,
pigeon breeders*

larger patterns

      *micro-economies on rooftops
breeding animals on rooftops
male dominated occupations*

your pattern

      pigeon towers

smaller patterns

      typical structural connections

importance rank

      minor priority

8   How **often** is your pattern repeated?
      ● ●   very often,   ●   often,
             every informal community   Ard El Lewa specifically

9   Relate your pattern to **general problems:**   general problems
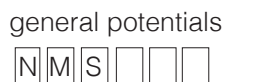   R ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

      A   loss of scarce agricultural land
D   density, lack of open and green space
G   garbage accumulation
R   sanitary problem
T   traffic congestion
C   accessibility
O   overburdened services
I   adapting to social injustice
...   . (formulate a new problem)

10   Relate your pattern to **general potentials:**   general potentials
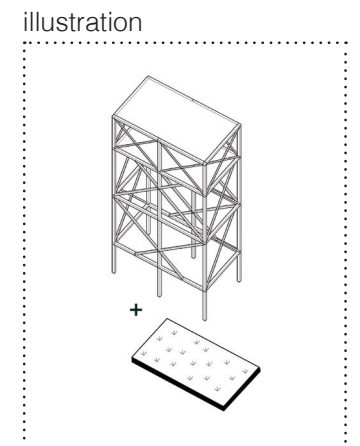   N M S ☐ ☐ ☐
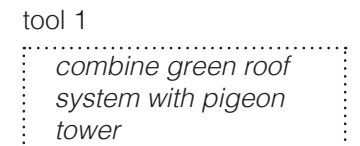
      N   homogeneous construction
M   micro-economies
F   self financing
E   low energy demands
P   close work home proximity
S   strong communal ties
.... (formulate a new potential)

11   Elaborate why your pattern is considered a **potential / problem**   illustration

12   Sketch a diagram illustrating existing network / spatial configura-
tion / spatial + temporal appropriation / types

13   Formulate your solution / tool(s) to optimize your pattern in
the form of:
      - an **illustration**
      - a **statement:** How and what is needed to solve
       the pattern?
      - **description of the tool**: summery of the solution
      - **new key players** that are affected by your introduced
       tool if applicable

14   Sketch a diagram illustrating your design interventions, its   tool 1
assembly, components and materials / new network / proposed
operation + maintenance / allowable spatial + temporal appropri-
ation / new map / new layout.   *combine green roof
system with pigeon
tower*

How can your tool be embedded in the residents' daily life?
How can ordinary people build your design?   new key players
How does your tool accommodate current and future
informality and needs?   *Schaduf (urban farming)*