

THE CITY
OF SHADES

we have never been solar

Different intergovernmental panels have long warned that the response to climate change must start from cities: increasingly populated settlements and complex-to-change infrastructures from which we need to rethink the habitability of the planet. The ongoing climate mutation places before us the challenges of configuring new urban ideas of care, protection or shelter; allowing more plural ways of living; and protecting those who



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For this reason, it has gained great importance in different technical solutions to tackle the extreme heat of the present: municipal shading plans, bioclimatic itineraries, or shading infrastructures. This is requiring revitalizing old knowledge and techniques, as well as speculating and creating new solutions to mitigate and adapt to increasing heat. In times like this, we also need to address the social and cultural life of shades, whether already existing or designed. In a heated present, where the ability to shelter ourselves from the scorching sun is a poorly distributed good, revitalizing their knowledge and generating practices may be crucial to relearning to live as earthly beings. To do this perhaps we need, as writer Tim Horvath suggests in his tale *The discipline of shadows*, to create a 'Department of Umbrology' in each of our territories.

ages us or puts us at risk, as in atmospheric conditions of extreme heat? With that in mind, our terrestrial life could be read as a long interspecies story of how the living have learned to protect ourselves from its irradiation. The atmosphere itself, with its complex circulation of air, the seas and the rivers or the iridescent tapestry of clouds and forests are nothing but a great system, with local expressions, of ways of capturing, regulating, dissipating, or blocking the sun's rays. But, also, of producing shade.

Without a doubt, there is nothing more conventional than shades. As terrestrial beings we all have one. But thinking about urban shades can be something much deeper, since it forces us to pay attention in a different way to our daily environments. Indeed, what is shade if not our changing relationship with the sun as it passes through our habitats throughout the day? We usually attribute to the sun the ability to give life, but what do we do when it dam-

could be more exposed or suffer more from its devastating effects. In that sense, we live in a time of urgency and frantic searches for solutions. But in situations of great uncertainty, where how to respond is sometimes difficult to imagine, we may need to train ourselves to pay attention to the seemingly irrelevant, but crucial, such as shades: seemingly negligible entities, but that articulate our urban life and our daily relationships with the sun and heat.





But how to bring into existence such a space, devoted to the study of and intervention in the urban life of shades: an umbrology that addresses both the physical and material aspects as well as the social and cultural relationships. of the shadows. To make it exist, we need to train ourselves to appreciate this environmental relationship, creating fieldwork devices to devote ourselves to the ethnographic study of the complex relationships between the sun and buildings, the street or trees, as well as the role that different types of shadows can have for different people or groups and their ways of surviving the scorching heat.

Roles of the Department of Umbrology

Shadow topologist

Analyzes sources of shades (artificial or natural, temporary or permanent), their shapes, sizes, density and coverage, as well as compiling regular meteorological data (light, humidity, temperature). Hence compiling a shadow report, considering the density as well as the sequence or overlap of the shadows for different sun inclinations, and providing ideas for future shade developments.

Sunlight cartographer

They are in charge of mapping out how the sun affects given public spaces, documenting them both in a 'generic map', and exploring more nuanced colour-based 'heat maps,' also articulating the role of the wind and humidity.

Shade research creator

They explore in a speculative way the effects of producing shades, studying different approaches, individual or collective, of creating and repurposing existing urban elements to grant access to shadows.

Community shade resilience analyst

They open up the personal and collective practices of resilience to address dangerous human-sun relationships. This is done by means of personal interviews and group discussions, facilitating a conversation on the different resources, devices, practices of relating to heat and the sun (from the gadgets to avoid it, to the practices of walking in the street and the knowledge of the moment of the day that might be better to do certain things and not others, or which places to avoid), and inquiring on the possible sources of vulnerability that a certain person or group might be exposed to.



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FOR
URBAN STUDIES



Tarde
issue 06



**THE CITY
OF SHADES**

**ETHNOGRAPHIC
DEVICES**

Tafde
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WORK WITH US!

To equip these strange professionals of umbrology — between the natural and the cultural — we propose a series of devices, enabling concrete ways to understand the social and material complexity of shades, the multiplicity of actors and assemblages constituting them: their temporalities, their rhythms, their spatial configurations. If we are successful, we might make another city appear, one usually overlooked: the city of shades!

Introductory card

INSTRUCTIONS

In order for you to study urban shades, we want to provide you with a detailed ethnographic research kit. This kit is composed of four prototypes, one per role inside the Department of Umbrology, an introductory informative card, the one above, and a DIY minifolder that you can glue or grape.

Print this document, cut and assemble the minifolder, and fold the devices to keep them safe inside the folder.

DIY minifolder



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Shadow Topology

Prototype Nr:

Shadow profiler

Place / Address	Time
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Type

Natural Artificial

Accidental Planned

Size

Length _____

Width _____

Temperature (°C)

General _____ In the shade _____

Luxes

Humidity

Shadow sketch

Observations



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Shadow Topology

Prototype Nr:

Physical & social descriptions

Prototype Nr:
Heat-map



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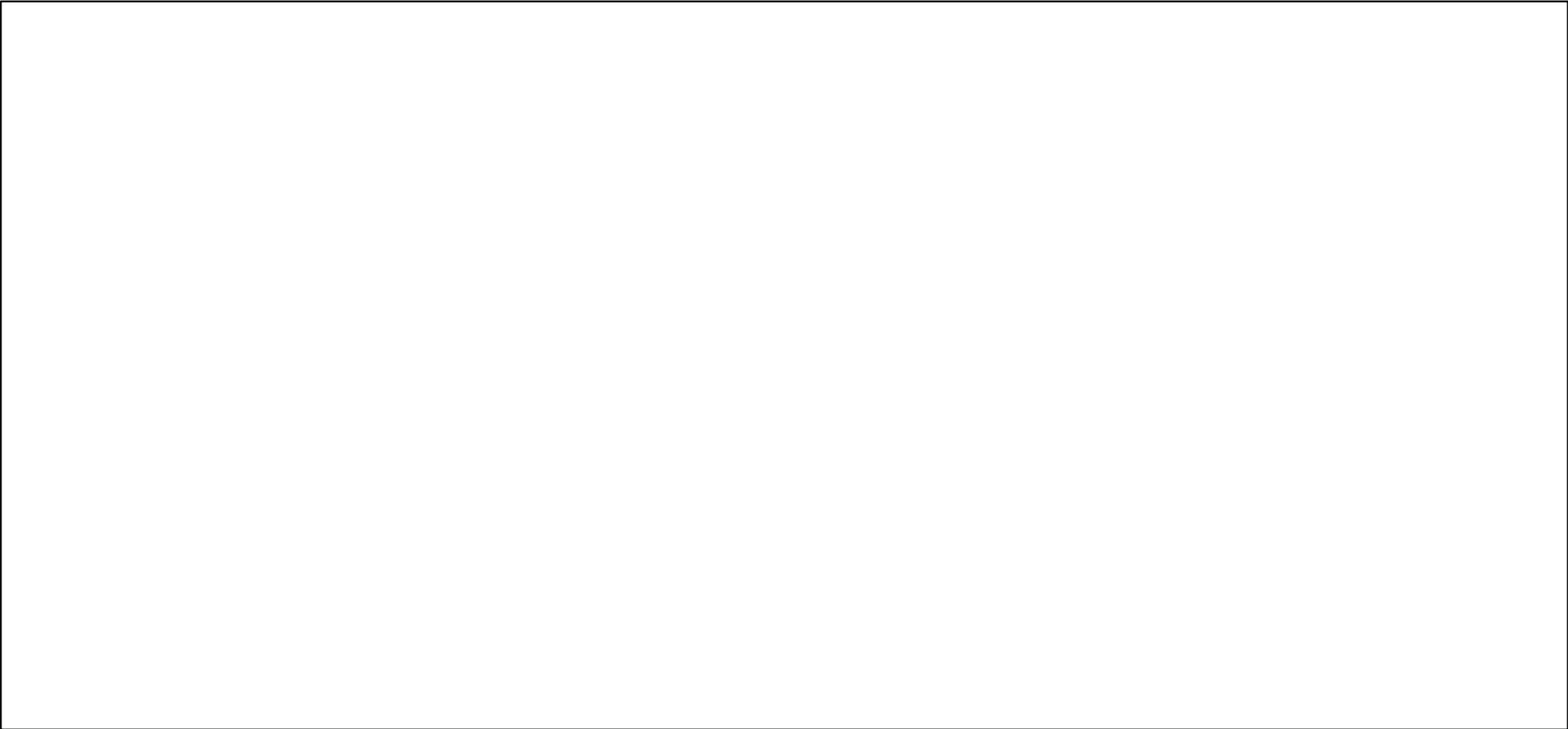
Sunlight cartographer

Time

Sequence _____ out of _____

Place / Address

Heat scale	Color pattern						
	Celsius						



Prototype Nr:
Shadow analysis



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Shadow maker

Time

Sequence _____ out of _____

Place / Address

Map

Issue

Prototype Nr:

Human-sun relationships



○/○/○ ○mon ○tue ○wed ○thu ○fri

Place / Address

Time

Gender

Age

How and where do you use to walk in a sunny/hot/and cloudy day?

Describe your outfit and the type of elements you use to carry on in a sunny/hot/and cloudy day

What role does your previous experience play in your current relationship with heat?

How do you cool yourself on the street?

How does heat influence your body?

What affects you the most? (multiple selection)

- humid heat
- hot wind
- something else
- dry heat
- lack of wind
- specify: _____
- direct sunlight
- lack of shadow
- _____