


Tarde

a handbook of minimal and irrelevant urban entangleents

ISSUE 8

Prototypes for
a Department
of Umbrology

 tarde.info	
TARDE, A HANDBOOK OF MINIMAL AND IRRELEVANT URBAN ENTANGLEMENTS	
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We have never been solar

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“For art to have emancipatory significance, it must go beyond mere questioning and deconstruction, and learn to retool statecraft’s arsenal to construct alternative popular institutions.” In: CIGC – Court for Intergenerational Climate Crises. Rotterdam: Framed.

Taking this thread, perhaps what is needed in times of a deep climatic mutation and growing extreme urban heat is to propose an alternative popular institution of that kind, as a parasitic companion to the work of existing civic actors

could be of great relevance to go beyond an attempt at undermining the workings of existing institutions. In fact, at a time in which we might also need to reclaim the social state as a crucial actor accompanying and sustaining our experimentation with the forms of personal and collective protection, the task might be more akin to what legal activist Radha D’Souza and artist Jonas Staal (2024: 10) stated when creating a Court for Intergenerational Climate Crises (CIGC):

sible avenue for this is for ethnographers to draw inspiration from artistic practices searching to probe new ways into the climatic mutation we are now undergoing.

Indeed, as suggested in Tarde’s number 6 *The City of Shades* – the first in a trilogy on urban shades – we could follow the trail of the guided walks proposed by Los Angeles Urban Rangers or the immersive protocols of experimental politics of the Crisis Cabinet of Political Fictions. Their workings

How could we transition from a dangerous modernist solar urbanism to the renewed hope in the urban powers of shade? This transition is far from being just a material or technical one, requiring also cultural-symbolic and everyday practical undertakings. To achieve this, perhaps there is no other way around experimenting with speculative political practices and collective formations, where ethnography might not just be a documentary practice but an interventive one. A pos-

and administrations. Perhaps, then, as we discussed in our previous issue we could unfold a Department of Umbrology (DOU) in our urban territories: a space where to equip a new kind of professional of this strange discipline imagined by writer Tim Horvath, as well as a crossroads of knowledges and practices, bundling together those interested in the inquiry on and politics of urban shades.

practices that this department, however fictional or speculative, might need to foster? First of all, it would need to gather people devoted to understanding things like: the social and material complexity of shades, the multiplicity of actors and assemblages constituting them; the practices of generating shade, by and for whom; or the forms of sociality that they allow as regions or territories, attending to their temporalities, their rhythms, and their spatial dramaturgies. Come what may, its first

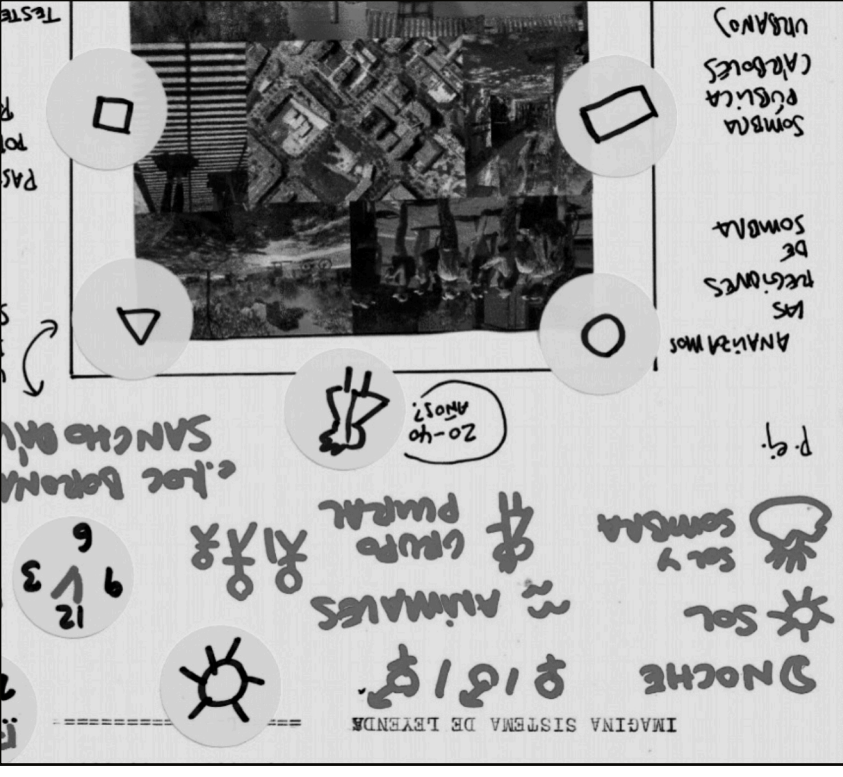
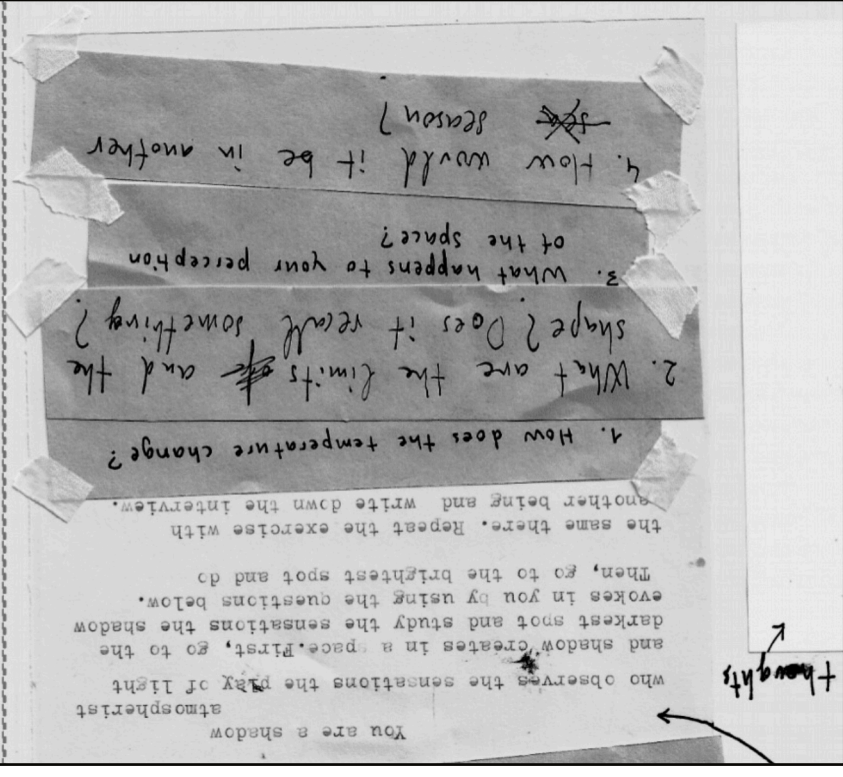
mandate would be to create the conditions for this to happen. Even if we imagined it to be a flexible collective of sorts - perhaps even summoned anew for every issue, articulated around yet-to-be-defined mandates, and devoted to exploring the wide gamut of mediational possibilities ranging from civic or activist protest and para-institutional endeavours - to grant it some reality we needed a setting, as well as a series of practicable ways for people to imagine this. This is-

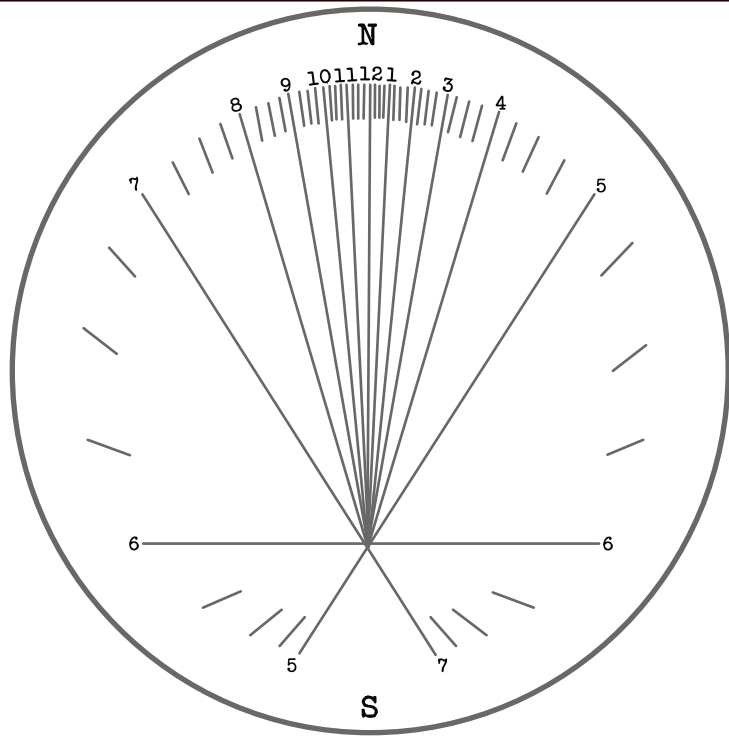
sue of Tarde seeks to document our first attempt in doing this, slightly upgrading what we learnt in the workshop The City of Shades, which we organised in Barcelona on June 17-21, 2024.

The zine is the fruit of the collective work in the workshop. A small kit with a series of practical exercises and research devices: on the one hand, there are devices enabling a sensitization to what thinking with shades does to understanding the urban, as a

matter of sun inclinations and exposure, or a first attempt at their inventory, documenting their changing features, their uses and uselessness; on the other hand, we have devices for a more collective analysis of shades as regions with their spatial divisions, a proto-ethology of their human and other than human actors, and a series of prompts to elicit individual and group experiences.

An excerpt from
the zine collectively
created in Barcelona





Repurpose a sundial

If interested in learning to understand urban arenas from their solar inclinations, what better device than the millenia-old sundial: one of the earliest timekeeping devices, using the sun as a source, here repurposed to make us think about the passing of the sun through our urban habitats, at what inclination, from which to what point, in a given season. Here you have one of the many possible paper-based sundials you could easily download from the web, perhaps helping you understand that a shade is never the same. On a sunny day, direct the N to the North. Hold this parallel to the floor. Make sure the pillar is straight and follow the number it indicates, and... voilà! But you could also perhaps repurpose it to locate your place in the cosmos: the shade you now see, from a building or a tree, is a passing moment of time relating to your concrete position on Earth in relation to the sun's rays!

An incomplete list of prototypes

Small guide to Create your own anthotypes

If you click on the accompanying QR code you could read Carla Boserman's article "Solar Drawings: On anthotypes and environmental affectivity", published in the journal *Re-visiones*, 13. In it, she describes anthotypes on emulsified papers - the predecessor of photographic printing, using the sun as a recording device - as a great exercise in relating to atmospheres affectively. Carla became passionate about anthotypes when inquiring on climatic forms of inscription that might also be attentive to atmospheric changes. There are many tutorials online on how to emulsify and try out anthotypes. We believe this drawing/recording technique enables us to study shades and their shaky silhouettes as a moving entity that, in its wake, could also move us!

Catalogue of useless shadows

On a sunny day, take 6 pictures of what for you could be 'useless' shadows. Print them in a size fitting in the square you have here. Using glue or adhesive tape you could join them together so they could be folded like an accordion. Like this you could display your small catalogue of useless shadows to discuss with others. But are they really useless? Maybe they could be useless for you, but what about other city dwellers, like dogs, birds or bugs?

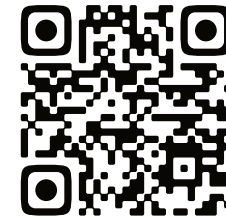


Perhaps you have now become a true umbrologist? Welcome, then, to the Department of Umbrology!

WHY? | Because shades are important urban places!

WHERE & WHEN? | In hotter climates shades can become regions of care, whilst in colder ones or during the night they might be places to avoid.

You can create your own Department of Umbrology - for more info and to contact so we could support you in this task, check: <https://umbrology.org/>



Tafde
ISSUE 8

GEORG SIMMEL CENTER FOR URBAN STUDIES



Shadow regional analysis

I : A collage

The shades we're interested in are regions, territories configured by relations and proximities. To study them you will need to work individually or, even better, in groups. Let's start from a concrete place where shades are an issue: because of their uneven status and emplacement or the lack thereof. It could be a square, a park, or an alley. Spend some time on it, analysing the problem, perhaps at different hours of the day, and take pictures. Then select the 5-6 pictures that in your opinion best help you out to identify the shady problems in that region. Print them in a small format that could fit on a A4 page leaving space to annotate, and form a collage with them. Individually or collectively annotate the collage. Numbering the pictures, describe the problems they help us understand: the uneven distribution of shades, problems of access, the urban actors affected by it (human or other than human), etc.

II : Ethnological inventory of shady relations

A regional gaze to shades not only pays attention to divisions of space, their materials and their conundrums. How about learning to understand the plurality of beings affected by or enjoying the urban life in the shadows? Let's create an inventory of these shady relations. First of all, you'll need to buy coloured stickers in a shape and size that might allow you to fill them up with recognizable symbols or signs with permanent markers. Before doing anything with the stickers, let's create a list. Try to be as thorough as possible, identifying all the possible actors: types of people (older people or children, consider understanding the racial and gender distribution of these dwellers), flying animals, terrestrial animals, vehicles, residues, trees, canopies, water fountains, you name it. Then start a list of the things they are doing under a given shade: resting, talking, feeding one another, breaking, exercising, sex, reading, contemplating the world, passing by, etc. Create a symbol system for all these actors and actions, and mark the stickers with them. You could then paste the stickers in the collage to add further layers of regional analysis.

III : Life experiences in urban shades

As a regional urban analyst, your experience of the places you might be working in matters. Go to the darkest spot and focus on the sensations that shade evokes in you. Ask yourself questions like: How does temperature change? Does this shade have limits? What's its shape? Who else could enjoy this beyond me? How would this space be in another moment of the day or in a different season? Make up other relevant questions for you. Write your answers to these questions in a piece of paper others could use. However, a regional gaze should never be a solitary or solipsistic one. It would be important to get to know other shady actors a bit better. If dealing with speaking beings, perhaps it might be of some relevance to try and understand their experiences of others by means of the spoken word. Talk to people, individually or creating a social dynamic where a conversation about the social life of a concrete region of shades might unfold (you could use similar questions to the ones above). Create a summary of this conversation in a piece of rolling paper. Discuss what this might mean to you and what paths of change and intervention this creates...

Public shade ● Private shade ■ Research activity ▼	Age group Time 00:00 Date --/--/--	Gender Animals Diverse	Night Day Cloudy
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26 degrees outside

Trees

Drawing shades

Trees

17/06/24

Walking

10:30

Trees

No wind

Trees

There were no clouds

This is just a reference. Feel free to improve and modify the outcome of this exercise