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Judith Nicolas, Aurélie Bidet-Caulet, Denis Pelisson. Inducing oculomotor plasticity to disclose the functional link between voluntary saccades and endogenous attention deployed perifoveally. Scientific Reports, In press. hal-02350990v1

**HAL Id: hal-02350990**

**<https://hal.science/hal-02350990v1>**

Submitted on 6 Nov 2019 (v1), last revised 11 Oct 2021 (v2)

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*TITLE PAGE*

Title: “Inducing oculomotor plasticity to disclose the functional link between voluntary saccades and endogenous attention deployed peripherally”

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Conflict of Interest: The authors declare neither financial nor non-financial competing interests.

Acknowledgements: JN received funding from ‘Association Berthe Fouassier Maladie de l’oeil - Fondation de France’ (2015 0060241). Funders had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript. This work was performed within the framework of the LABEX CORTEX (ANR-11-LABX-0042) of Université de Lyon, within the program “Investissements d’Avenir” (ANR-11-IDEX-0007) operated by the French ANR. All fees are supported by the INSERM.

1 *ABSTRACT*

2 To what extent oculomotor and attention systems are linked remains strongly debated. Previous  
3 studies suggested that saccadic adaptation, a well-studied model of oculomotor plasticity, and  
4 orienting of attention rely on overlapping networks in the parietal cortex and can functionally  
5 interact. Using a Posner-like paradigm in healthy human subjects, we demonstrate for the first  
6 time that saccadic adaptation boosts endogenous attention orienting. Indeed, the discrimination of  
7 perifoveal targets benefits more from central cues after backward adaptation of leftward  
8 voluntary saccades than after a control saccade task. We propose that the overlap of underlying  
9 neural networks actually consists of neuronal populations co-activated by oculomotor plasticity  
10 and endogenous attention deployed perifoveally. The functional coupling demonstrated here  
11 plaid for conceptual models not belonging to the framework of the premotor theory of attention  
12 as the latter has been rejected precisely for this voluntary/endogenous modality. These results  
13 also open new perspective for rehabilitation of visuo-attentional deficits.

## 14 1. INTRODUCTION

15 As much as we would like to, our brain is not able to deal with the huge amount of information  
16 brought up by our senses. Especially when it comes to vision, albeit the dominant sense of  
17 primates, our brain resources are too limited to efficiently handle visual information sensed by  
18 the millions of photoreceptors of our eyes. Therefore, we need to select what part of space we  
19 want to pay attention to. Visuospatial attention is a cognitive process which plays a critical role in  
20 this selection by facilitating the visual processing of objects and features falling in the area of  
21 space where it is focused on, at the expense of those situated outside<sup>1,2</sup>. To get a refined and  
22 homogenous analysis of our entire visual field, this attentional focus must be frequently re-  
23 oriented either automatically, in response to the sudden appearance of a stimulus (exogenous  
24 attention) or voluntarily, being driven by internal goals (endogenous attention)<sup>1</sup>. These two  
25 attention-shifting mechanisms are partially distinct, relying respectively on the ventral and dorsal  
26 streams of attention<sup>3,4</sup>, and both can either or not be accompanied by eye movements (overt and  
27 covert shifts, respectively).

28 Saccadic eye movements are also of utmost importance to explore our visual environment and  
29 select meaningful information therein. Indeed, as visual acuity is highest in the narrow central  
30 zone of the visual field processed by the fovea, gaze shifts are mandatory to explore a visual  
31 scene. Like attention shifts, gaze shifts are either exogenously or endogenously triggered,  
32 corresponding to so-called reactive (RS) or voluntary saccades (VS), respectively. Shifts of  
33 attention and saccadic eye movements share several other features, up to the point that, in the  
34 framework of the premotor theory of attention, attention shifts are considered to be unexecuted  
35 saccades inhibited at the oculomotor output level<sup>5</sup>.

36 Saccadic adaptation (SA) is a well-studied sensorimotor adaptation process <sup>see 6,7 for reviews</sup> and  
37 therefore constitutes a convenient tool to assess the role of the oculomotor system on spatial  
38 attention. Interestingly, in human, the neural substrates of SA and of visuospatial attention  
39 overlap. Indeed, the intraparietal sulcus (IPS) has been involved in both adaptation of VS<sup>8,9</sup> and  
40 endogenous attention <sup>see 3 for review</sup> while the right temporo-parietal-junction (rTPJ) has been  
41 involved in adaptation of RS<sup>8,10,11,12</sup> and exogenous attention<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, two behavioral studies  
42 have suggested that this overlap might have functional consequences: the first reports increased  
43 performances in a visual detection task performed after adaptation of RS<sup>13</sup>, and conversely, the  
44 second shows that RS adaptation efficiency is increased when subjects are simultaneously  
45 engaged in an attention-demanding task directed to the saccade target<sup>14</sup>. Note, however, that the  
46 visual detection task used by Habchi et al<sup>13</sup> did not allow to specifically isolate covert attention  
47 shifts from the other cognitive or motor components involved. In addition, and to the best of our  
48 knowledge, the coupling between SA and attention has never been investigated in the  
49 endogenous modality. As the premotor theory of attention has been challenged for the  
50 voluntary/endogenous modality <sup>see 15 for review</sup>, highlighting a functional link between oculomotor  
51 plasticity and endogenous attention would have strong theoretical implications.

52 Therefore, the present study aimed at investigating the coupling between saccades and visuo-  
53 spatial attention in the endogenous modality, using a Posner-like paradigm allowing to  
54 specifically assess pure covert attention shifts before and after the development of voluntary  
55 saccades adaptation.

56

## 57 2. MATERIALS & METHODS

### 58 2.1. Subjects

59 The experiment adheres to the code of ethics of the World Medical Association – Declaration of  
60 Helsinki (2008) and received the approval of the Ethics Committee of INSERM (CEEI - IRB  
61 00003888, n°16-305). Forty-one subjects provided a written informed consent before performing  
62 the tasks and received a compensation for their participation. Among those subjects, four were  
63 excluded because they did not show significant saccadic gain modulation in one of the two  
64 adaptation exposures and one was excluded because of poor discrimination performances (for  
65 details see paragraphs 2.3.1.2 and 2.3.2.1)The remaining subjects were all right-handed except  
66 one, comprised 17 males and 19 females, with a mean age of 25.5 +/- 4.53 SD (Standard  
67 Deviation). Their vision was normal or corrected-to-normal. Criteria of exclusion were:  
68 neurological or psychiatric disorders history; cognitive disorders preventing the comprehension  
69 of the instructions; severe sleep deprivation during the last 24 hours; consumption of  
70 psychotropic drugs, substances, or alcohol during the last 24 hours; participation to other  
71 experiments involving sensorimotor adaptation during the last week. After written consents  
72 obtained, each subject was assigned pseudo-randomly to one of the six sub-groups of each  
73 experiment, corresponding to the 6 possible orders of testing in the three sessions (within-subject  
74 design, see General Design section). The number of subjects was determined from a power  
75 analysis performed through the G\*Power software<sup>16</sup> and based on parameters established from  
76 the literature and from pilot data (see Power analysis in the Supplementary Methods).

77

### 78 2.2. Apparatus, stimuli and procedure

#### 79 2.2.1. Apparatus

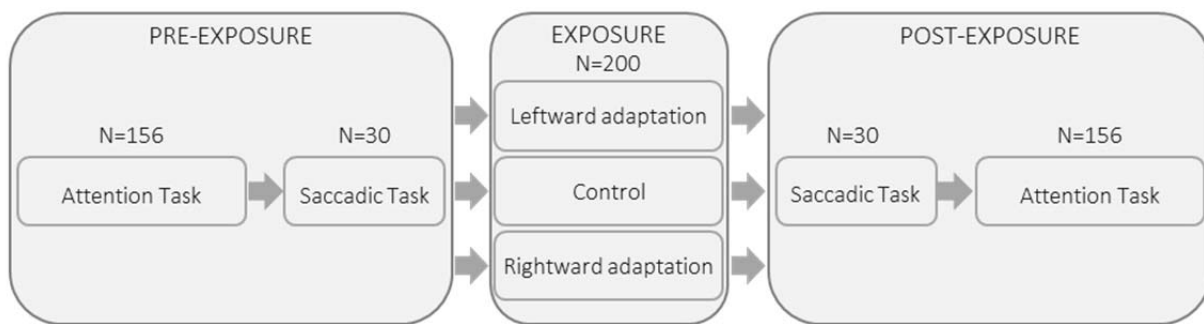
80 Experiments were carried out in a dimly lit room. Subjects were installed in a comfortable  
81 position with the head stabilized by a chin-rest, cheekbone rests, and forehead support; they faced  
82 a computer screen (1920 x 1080 pixels; 53.5 x 34.5 cm; 144 Hz refresh rate) at 57 cm from their  
83 eyes. Experiments are timed based on the 144 Hz refresh rate of the computer display (frame  
84 duration approximately 7 ms), therefore all time-intervals reported in the following represent  
85 multiple of the frame duration and are rounded to the nearest value in milliseconds. Psychopy<sup>17</sup>,  
86 an open-source software, was used for the stimuli presentation and data collection in all different  
87 tasks. Movements of the right eye were recorded at a frequency of 1000 Hz using the remote  
88 configuration of the EyeLink 1000 infrared eye-tracker (SR research, Canada). Each task started  
89 with the calibration of the eye-tracker by asking subjects to fixate a series of 5 targets displayed  
90 near the borders and at the center of the screen.

### 91 2.2.2. General design

92 Experiments 1 and 2 were carried out separately in two different experimental groups. The two  
93 experiments were identical except for the eccentricity of the target in the attention task (see  
94 paragraph 2.2.4). In each experiment, subjects were submitted to three experimental sessions  
95 (within-subjects design), each of which ('leftward adaptation', 'rightward adaptation' and  
96 'control') comprising identical pre-exposure and post-exposure phases as well as a specific  
97 exposure phase (Fig. 1). During all three exposures, saccades in both directions were performed.  
98 In the leftward adaptation, only leftward saccades were adapted; conversely in the rightward  
99 adaptation, only rightward saccades were adapted; finally in the control, no saccades were  
100 adapted. This control session allowed assessment of unspecific effects of exposure to a saccadic  
101 task. The effects on attention were measured by comparing, between the pre- and post-exposure  
102 phases of each session, subjects' performance in a visual discrimination attention task; in

103 addition, comparing the gain of saccades measured during a test saccade task performed before  
104 and after exposure allowed us to check for successful saccadic adaptation in the respective  
105 hemifields. The delay between each session was at least 14 days in order to avoid any retention of  
106 saccadic adaptation between sessions, based on a previous study disclosing a significant retention  
107 of adaptation up to 5 days after exposure but not 11 days after<sup>18</sup>.

108



109

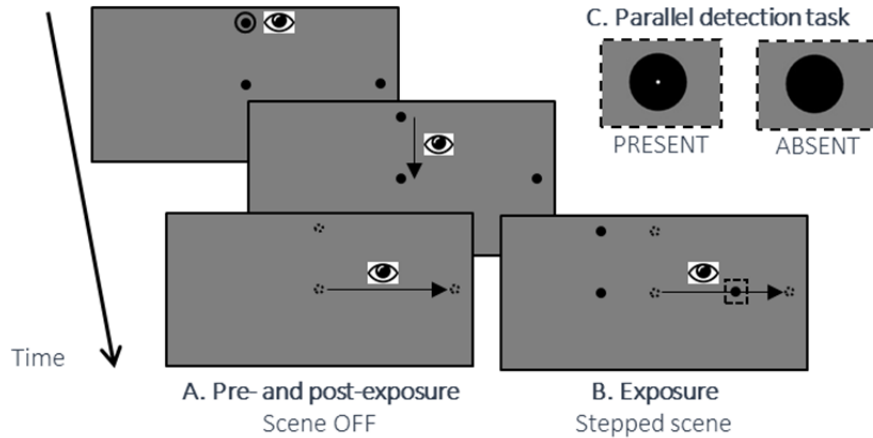
110 **Figure 1: Study general design.** In both Experiments 1 and 2, each subject underwent 3 experimental  
111 sessions -composed of a pre-exposure, an exposure and a post-exposure phases - differing only by the  
112 exposure phase (either leftward adaptation, rightward adaptation or control). N = number of trials.

113

### 114 2.2.3. Saccadic tasks

115 The saccadic adaptation was performed by a modified version of the double-step paradigm  
116 introduced by McLaughlin (1967). This paradigm consists in displacing the visual scene while  
117 the subject is executing a saccade towards a peripheral target. Thanks to the saccadic suppression  
118 phenomenon, this intra-saccadic visual displacement is usually not consciously perceived by  
119 subjects and leads to a mismatch between post-saccadic eye fixation and target location which is  
120 interpreted by the central nervous system as a saccade aiming error.





121

122 **Figure 2: Time-line of a trial in the saccadic tasks (not to scale).** After the circle around the fixation  
 123 point turns off, subjects had to make, at their own pace, a downward saccade to the central point and then  
 124 a horizontal –voluntary– saccade to the peripheral target. **A.** In the pre- and post- saccadic phases, the  
 125 visual scene was turned off as soon as the voluntary saccade was detected. Subjects were instructed to  
 126 keep looking at the peripheral target position for ~ 1 sec and then look back to the upper location in  
 127 anticipation of the fixation point re-appearance, using that time period to blink if necessary. **B.** In the  
 128 exposure phase, the visual scene was shifted backward immediately at the voluntary saccade onset  
 129 (adapted saccades) or after 805 ms (unadapted saccades). The scene remained for 1610 ms in total in  
 130 both conditions. The size of the shift increased progressively across blocks 1-4 (respectively 1°, 2°, 3° and  
 131 3°). **C.** Enlarged view of peripheral targets during the exposure phase: subjects additionally performed a  
 132 simple detection task to favor a sustained motivation: they had to report by a push button the presence of  
 133 a small white dot inside the peripheral target (visible only in perifoveal vision after the saccadic response:  
 134 see enlarged views of a dot-present target and of a dot-absent target). Feedback regarding this simple  
 135 detection task was given at the end of each block.

136

137 Sequence of events for adapted saccade trials (Fig. 2B). Three dots of 0.3° of visual angle were  
 138 displayed on the computer screen. The first dot was located 4° above the center of the screen, and

139 was surrounded by a small circle. The second dot was at the center of the screen. The third dot,  
140 the peripheral target, was at  $9^\circ$  of eccentricity aligned with the horizontal meridian, either to the  
141 left or to the right. The side of the peripheral target was blocked with 12 trials in the adapted  
142 direction, 12 in the opposite direction, repeated 2 times for each block. The subject had to fixate  
143 the upper dot during a pseudo randomized delay between 301 ms and 701 ms after which the  
144 disappearance of the surrounding circle ('go signal') indicates that he/she had to look  
145 successively at the other two targets. Correct eye fixation of the upper dot was ensured by  
146 continuous monitoring of the eye-tracker signal. In the next 2000 ms, the subject had to make at  
147 her/his own pace, a first saccade towards the central dot (vertical saccade) and then a second  
148 saccade from there towards the peripheral target (horizontal voluntary saccade). The voluntary  
149 saccade was detected when the eye velocity was higher than  $70^\circ/\text{s}$ <sup>20</sup>. This event immediately  
150 triggered the shift of the visual scene when the peripheral target was in the adapted hemifield  
151 (Fig. 2B). The visual scene shift was progressively increased through the blocks ( $1^\circ$  for the first  
152 block,  $2^\circ$  for the second,  $3^\circ$  for the third and fourth blocks) leading to a progressive decrease of  
153 the target final eccentricity ( $8^\circ$ ,  $7^\circ$  and  $6^\circ$  respectively). The visual scene remained visible for a  
154 total of 1610 ms after the detection of the voluntary saccade. The subject then had a delay of  
155 1000 ms to blink and look back to the upper dot. The next trial started as soon as correct fixation  
156 of the upper dot location was detected.

157 Sequence of events for unadapted saccade trials. These trials were identical to the adapted  
158 saccade trials except that the jump of the visual scene occurred 805 ms after the detection of the  
159 voluntary saccade. These trials correspond to the saccades toward the unadapted hemifield for the  
160 leftward and rightward exposure and for the saccades toward both hemifields in the control  
161 exposure.

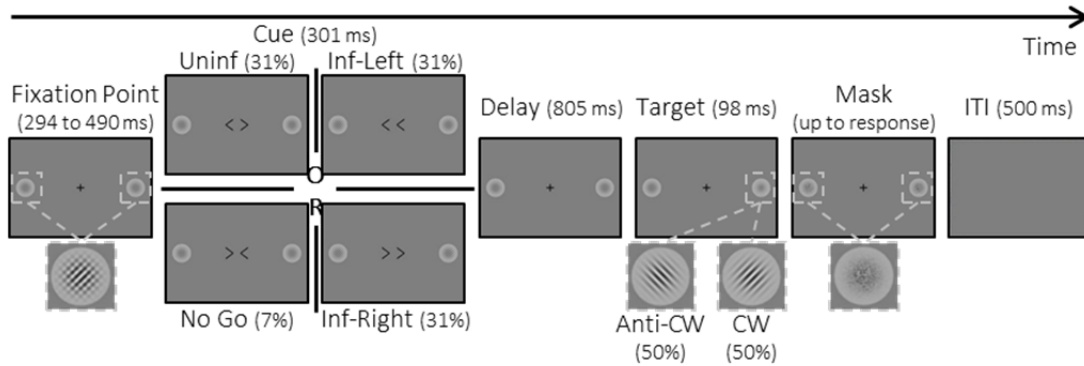
162 The total exposure phase consisted of 196 trials distributed in 4 blocks of 48 trials each (24 with a  
163 right target and 24 with a left target). Between each block, the subject was allowed to rest with  
164 the head still as long as needed.

165 To maximize subjects' involvement and motivation throughout the saccadic tasks, they were  
166 requested to perform in parallel an easy detection task: in random trials (from 5 to 20 per block),  
167 the peripheral target contained a white dot of  $0.008^\circ$  of visual angle (not detectable in peripheral  
168 vision but easy to detect after the saccade to the target), and subjects had to push a button after  
169 each trial in which they detected the white dot. Performance feedback was provided to subjects  
170 during the rest period between the blocks but was not further analyzed.

171 Pre- and post-exposure saccadic tasks (Fig. 2A). These tasks were identical to the exposure tasks  
172 except that the visual scene did not jump but instead was turned off at the initiation of the  
173 voluntary saccade. Each task consisted in one block of 30 trials (15 with a right target and 15  
174 with a left target, randomly ordered). Comparison between pre- and post-exposure tasks allowed  
175 determination of the SA after-effect (change of saccade amplitude in post- versus pre-exposure)  
176 and thus quantitative assessment of the adaptation strength.

#### 177 2.2.4. Attention task: visual discrimination

178 A variant of the Posner task<sup>1</sup> was designed with the main features (a central cue, and a long SOA)  
179 chosen to evoke shifts of endogenous attention. Contrasting between informative trials (cue  
180 always valid) and uninformative trials (uninformative cue) allowed us to measure the pure benefit  
181 of endogenous attention orienting. This approach was preferred over that used in many  
182 endogenous attentional studies, consisting of contrasting between valid and invalid cues, which  
183 rather yields the cumulated effect of exogenous costs and endogenous benefits<sup>21,22</sup>.



185

186 **Figure 3: Time-line of a trial in the attention task.** A central fixation cross and 2 lateral placeholders  
 187 (eccentricity:  $7.5^\circ$  in Experiment 1;  $3^\circ$  in Experiment 2) each containing 2 orthogonal gabors, were  
 188 present at the beginning of the trial. Then central cues appeared for 301 ms, either indicating the side of  
 189 the upcoming target (100% valid informative cue: Inf-Left or Inf-Right), or providing no spatial  
 190 information (uninformative cue: Uninf), or indicating to restrain the response (No Go cue). The target  
 191 presented after 805 ms of delay (SOA = 1106 ms) consists in the brief disappearance of one gabor on one  
 192 side (left 50% or right 50%), followed after 91 ms by a mask. Using a push / pull device, subjects had to  
 193 respond as fast and as accurately as possible whether the target was tilted clockwise (CW) or anti-  
 194 clockwise (anti-CW). Experiments 1 and 2 differed only according to the eccentricity of the discrimination  
 195 target and associated place-holder.

196

197 Sequence of events in the attention task trials (Fig. 3). A fixation cross subtending  $1^\circ$  of visual  
 198 angle appeared at the center of the screen (grey 50%) at the beginning of the trial and, except  
 199 during the cue period, remained visible until the subject's response. Subjects had to keep eye  
 200 fixation on that location all throughout the trial. Two light grey (35%) placeholders (circles of  
 201  $2.5^\circ$  of visual angle in Experiment 1;  $1.5^\circ$  in Experiment 2) were also presented along the  
 202 horizontal meridian, on the left and on the right, at  $7.5^\circ$  of eccentricity in Experiment 1, and at  $3^\circ$

203 of eccentricity in Experiment 2. Each placeholder initially contained two gabor patches  
204 (Experiment 1: 4 cycles per degree (cpd) of spatial frequency and 2.5° of visual angle;  
205 Experiment 2: 4 cpd of spatial frequency and 1.5° of visual angle) presented with a Gaussian  
206 mask and superimposed orthogonally (one gabor tilted at 45° and the other at -45° relative to the  
207 vertical, leading to the perception of a grid). The contrast of the gabor patches was previously  
208 determined for each individual by a staircase procedure to achieve a 80% level of correct  
209 discrimination (see Staircase procedure in Supplementary methods). After a pseudo-randomized  
210 (294 to 490 ms) delay from the beginning of the trial, a cue appeared for 301 ms. This cue was  
211 composed of two empty arrows (1.5° vertically x 1° horizontally) flanking the center of the  
212 screen (1.0° of horizontal spacing). For ~ two thirds of the trials (32 ‘informative trials’ out of 52  
213 trials for each block) the cue validly informed the future target location: the two arrows both  
214 pointed either toward the left or toward the right of the screen to indicate the placeholder in  
215 which the target will appear. In 16 ‘uninformative’ trials (~one third), the cue did not provide any  
216 spatial information about the upcoming target, the two arrows pointing outwards. The 1:2 ratio of  
217 uninformative versus informative trials was meant to potentiate the cueing effect<sup>23</sup>. In the four  
218 remaining trials of each block, a ‘no-go cue’ represented by the two arrows pointing inwards  
219 instructed subjects to refrain from answering. These ‘no-go’ trials were meant to enforce subjects  
220 to use the cue to perform the task correctly, and thus favoring the conscious interpretation and  
221 increasing the benefit of the cue. However, they were not analyzed. In all trials, the cue period  
222 was followed first by displaying again the fixation point and then 805 ms after cue offset by a  
223 brief extinction (98 ms) of one of the two gabor patches either in the left placeholder (50%) and  
224 or in the right placeholder (50%): the remaining gabor patch thus constitutes the target (SOA =  
225 1106 ms) which orientation had to be discriminated. Immediately after this target presentation, a  
226 mask was displayed in the two placeholders until the subject’s response was made or for a

227 maximum duration of 1500 ms. Subjects had to discriminate as fast and as accurately as possible  
228 whether the target gabor patch was tilted clockwise or anticlockwise ( $45^\circ$  or  $-45^\circ$  with respect to  
229 the vertical, respectively). Subjects answered with their index finger through a double switch  
230 device oriented in their mid-sagittal axis, with a response assignment randomized between  
231 subjects: half of them pushed the switch for a “clockwise” target and pull it for an  
232 “anticlockwise” target, the other half was instructed with the opposite assignment. Eye fixation  
233 was continuously monitored all throughout the trial and whenever the subject broke fixation  
234 (gaze deviating in any direction more than  $1.5^\circ$  from the fixation cross), the fixation cross  
235 immediately turned red and the trial was aborted. Aborted trials were replayed back during the  
236 same block of trials. We chose a SOA duration of 1106 ms in order to minimize any involvement  
237 of attention oriented exogenously<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, the pilot data reported in Supplementary data  
238 showed that the duration of the SOA does not affect the validity effect in our discrimination task.

239 The task consisted of 3 blocks of 52 trials each (156 in total): 16 ‘informative - left target’ and 16  
240 ‘informative - right target’, 8 ‘uninformative - left target’ and 8 ‘uninformative - right target’, and  
241 4 ‘no-go cue’. Between each block, subjects received standardized feedback about their  
242 performance (see Instructions and feedback in Supplementary methods).

243

### 244 2.3.Data analyses

245 Data analyses were performed with the open-source software R (The R Core Team, 2013). These  
246 analyses concerned the saccadic behavior during the pre- and post-exposure saccadic tasks as  
247 well as the performances in the attention tasks measured by cue benefit (relative change of  
248 reaction time – RT – between informative and uninformative trials). Any exclusion of a subject

249 due to criteria described in the following paragraphs led to his/her replacement. All the group  
250 analyses have been carried out separately for the two experiments.

### 251 2.3.1. Saccadic tasks

#### 252 2.3.1.1. Preprocessing

253 Eye movement data were analyzed off-line using custom software developed in Matlab (Math  
254 Works Inc., Natick, MA, USA). The beginning of the primary horizontal saccade was identified  
255 offline based on a velocity threshold of 30°/s. Saccadic amplitude was measured as the difference  
256 between eye positions 50 ms before the saccade onset and 50 ms after the saccade offset. The  
257 gain of a saccade was used as the dependent variable in the saccadic tasks: it was computed as the  
258 ratio between saccadic amplitude and initial target eccentricity (difference between target  
259 position and starting position of the saccade). Saccades with a gain less than 0.5 or outside the  
260 mean  $\pm 2SD$  interval were discarded from further analysis.

#### 261 2.3.1.2. Statistical analysis

262 Since the saccadic adaptation was critical to test our hypothesis, we excluded from the main  
263 analysis subjects who did not show the expected decreased gain of saccades in the adapted  
264 hemifield. To this aim, we first performed, separately for each subject and each hemifield, a  
265 unilateral Student t-test comparing the gain of the saccades between the pre- and the post-  
266 saccadic tasks and used a threshold p-value of 0.05 after FDR (False Discovery Rate<sup>25</sup>) correction  
267 for 6 multiple comparisons. Moreover, for representational purposes, we computed the exposure  
268 after-effect for each hemifield and each exposure condition as follow:

$$\text{Exposure after - effect}_{\text{exposure of interest}} = \frac{\text{mean gain}_{\text{post-exposure}} - \text{mean gain}_{\text{pre-exposure}}}{\text{mean gain}_{\text{pre-exposure}}}$$

269 A negative exposure after-effect reflects a decrease of the saccadic gain between the pre- and the  
270 post-exposure phases.

271 Finally to calculate the effect size of the exposure after-effect in the exposure sessions, we  
272 computed the mean of the gain for each subject, in the adapted hemifield for the pre-exposure and  
273 the post-exposure phase separately. These values were used to calculate the Cohen's *d* effect size  
274 for Student *t* test.

275 As the results to the attentional task in Experiment 2 revealed a significant effect of leftward  
276 backward SA (see paragraph 3.2.2.2), we performed two supplementary analyses on saccadic  
277 data of the leftward adaptation exposure.

278 First, to assess the effect of SA on voluntary saccades preparation time, we computed the fixation  
279 time (FT) as the period of time between the end of the first saccade and the beginning of the  
280 second (voluntary) saccade. In each subject, we computed the median FT for each saccade  
281 direction and each phase of the exposure of interest, namely the backward adaptation of leftward  
282 saccades. We then performed a rMANOVA on median FT with the saccade direction (leftward or  
283 rightward), and the phase (pre- or post-exposure) as within-factors.

284 Second, since in Experiment 2, the eccentricity of the discrimination target corresponds to the  
285 final size of the intra-saccadic step (ISS, 3°), we searched for any correlation between the cue  
286 benefit and the post-saccadic error after leftward, adapted, saccades. Post-saccadic error was  
287 measured as the distance between the saccade landing position and the jumped target. The  
288 correlations were then computed separately for each block of exposure and one global correlation  
289 on post-saccadic error across all blocks

290



## 291 2.3.2. Attention task

### 292 2.3.2.1. Preprocessing

293 To ensure that the level of involvement of each subject was high, subjects with low global  
294 performance or with high fluctuations were excluded. To this aim, each session were divided in 8  
295 experimental cells of conditions (2 cue types x 2 target hemifields x 2 phases, smallest cell = 24  
296 trials). We excluded subjects with a number of correct trials inferior to 8 for any of these cells.  
297 Then, trials with outlier RT were excluded using the John Tukey's method of leveraging the  
298 Interquartile Range, and the median RT of the remaining trials was computed in each of these  
299 cells. If one cell's median RT lies outside  $\pm 3$  SD (Standard Deviation) from the subject's average  
300 of median RTs computed across the 8 cells, the subject was excluded.

301 We emphasize that only correct responses were considered in this analysis.

### 302 2.3.2.2. Outcome neutral criteria

303 First of all, a significant difference of RT between the informative trials and uninformative trials  
304 in the pre-exposure phase was a prerequisite to demonstrate that, at the group level, our attention  
305 task readily engaged the orienting of endogenous attention. For that purpose, a 2-way rmANOVA  
306 was performed on RT of the pre-exposure phases only, with cue type as 2-level factor  
307 (informative / uninformative) and exposure as 3-level factor (control, leftward and rightward  
308 adaptation). The critical outcome neutral criterion was a main cue type effect and an absence of  
309 significant interaction between cue type and exposure factors, which would allow us to  
310 demonstrate a significant difference of RT during pre-exposure between informative trials and  
311 uninformative trials, irrespective of the exposure session.

### 312 2.3.2.3. Statistical analysis

313 For this analysis, the dependent variable was the subjects' cue benefit on discrimination RT,  
314 which was computed as follows:

$$Cue\ benefit_{exposure\ of\ interest} = \frac{RT_{Uninformative} - RT_{Informative}}{RT_{Informative}}$$

315 This dependent variable was averaged in each of the 12 experimental cells defined from the  
316 factors of the following rmANOVA, and then submitted to this rmANOVA, with the target  
317 hemifield (left or right), the phase (pre- or post-exposure) and the exposure (leftward adaptation,  
318 rightward adaptation, or control) as within-factors.

319 Post Hoc analyses of significant interaction was performed using paired Student t-tests separately  
320 for each of the three exposure conditions. The three p-values were then FDR corrected.

321 After highlighting an effect of leftward adaptation on cue benefit in both hemifields in  
322 Experiment 2 (see paragraph 3.2.2.2), we wanted to address whether the beneficial effect of SA  
323 on orienting of attention was due to a specific change in RT for informative trials relative to  
324 uninformative trials. We thus performed, for the leftward adaptation exposure and separately for  
325 informative and uninformative trials, a one-way rmANOVA on median RT with phase (pre- or  
326 post-exposure) as the within subject factor.

327 Finally, we sought for a correlation (Pearson's product-moment correlation) between the after-  
328 effect of leftward saccades adaptation (see formulae above) and the relative change of cue benefit  
329 between the pre- and the post-exposure of leftward adaptation, calculated as follow:

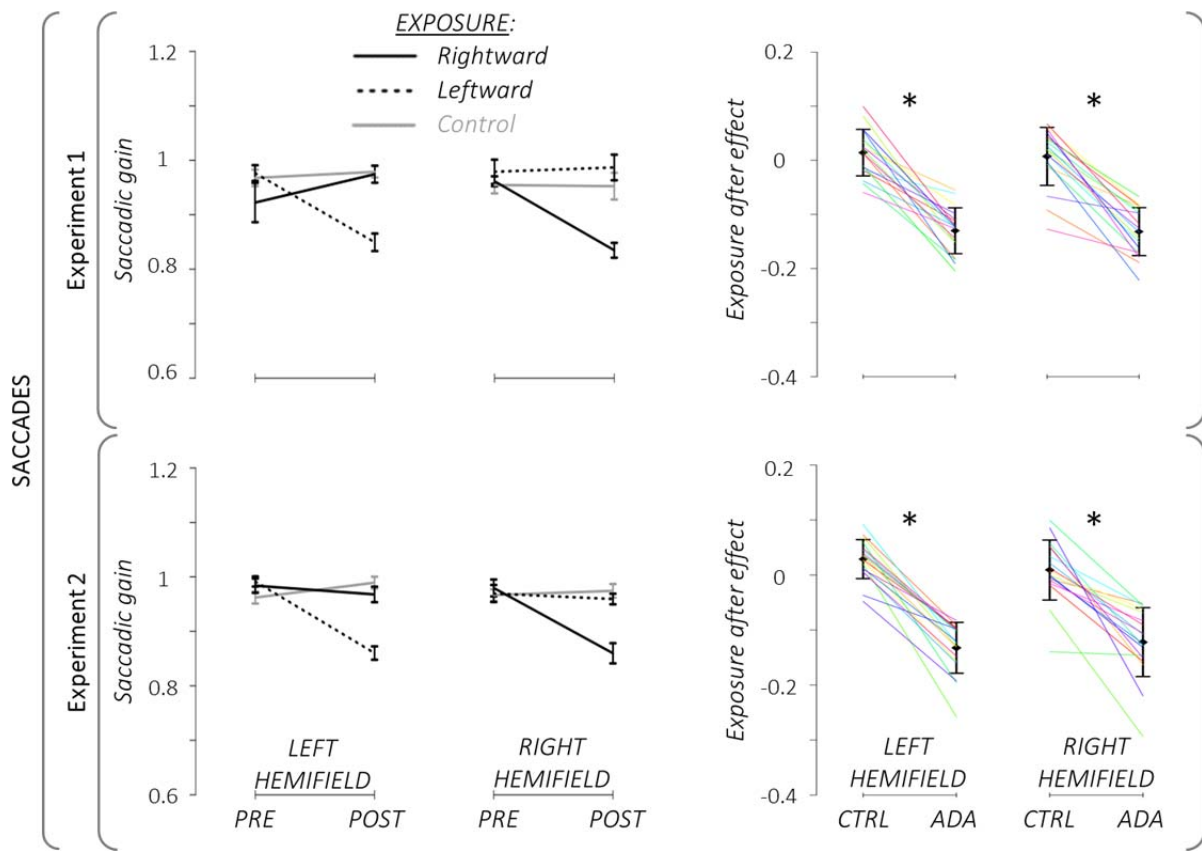
$$Relative\ Change_{Cue\ benefit} = \frac{Cue\ benefit_{post-exposure} - Cue\ benefit_{pre-exposure}}{Cue\ benefit_{pre-exposure}}$$

330

### 331 3. RESULTS

#### 332 3.1. Pre- and post-exposure saccadic tasks

333 After rejection of subjects and trials following the above mentioned criteria (see paragraph  
334 2.3.1.1 for details), the average number of analysed trials per condition was 13.6 +/- 1.3 SD in  
335 Experiment 1 and 12.4 +/-1.7 SD in Experiment 2. The mean saccadic gain in pre- and post-  
336 exposure, as well as the individual and mean adaptation after-effect, are illustrated in Figure 4.  
337 As it was a pre-requisit (see paragraph 2.1), all subjects of each experiment showed in the  
338 adaptation sessions a significant decrease of the saccadic gain for target presented in the adapted  
339 hemifield, in the post-exposure as compared to the pre-exposure, thus having a significant after-  
340 effect due to SA (Fig. 4, right panel). Moreover, as seen in Fig. 4 (left panel), this decrease was  
341 not seen in the opposite, unadapted, hemifield, whether for the leftward or rightward exposure. In  
342 addition, the amounts of adaptation in the adapted hemifields did not differ between the leftward  
343 and rightward exposures, both for Experiment 1 (Cohen's  $d = 0.04$ ;  $t_{17} = 0.14$ ;  $P = 0.89$ ) and  
344 Experiment 2 (Student  $t_{17} = 0.21$ ;  $P = 0.84$ , Cohen's  $d = 0.05$ ). Finally, no gain change in either  
345 hemifield took place in the control exposure.



346

347 **Figure 4: Pre- and Post-exposure saccadic task results.** *Left: Group mean (+/- SD) of saccadic gain for*  
 348 *Experiment 1 (upper panel) and Experiment 2 (lower panel). **Black lines:** rightward adaptation exposure;*  
 349 ***Black dotted:** leftward adaptation exposure; **Grey lines:** control exposure. **Right: Individual percent gain***  
 350 *changes between the pre- and the post-exposure tasks (after-effect) for Experiment 1 (upper panel) and for*  
 351 *Experiment 2 (lower panel). Only data from the adapted hemifield are shown for adaptation exposures*  
 352 *(ADA), i.e. left or right hemifield for adaptation exposure of leftward and rightward saccades,*  
 353 *respectively; and values of the control exposure (CTRL) are plotted for each corresponding hemifield.*  
 354 *Solid black lines represent group mean (+/- SD) and colored lines stand for individual values. \*: p-*  
 355 *value<0.05*

356

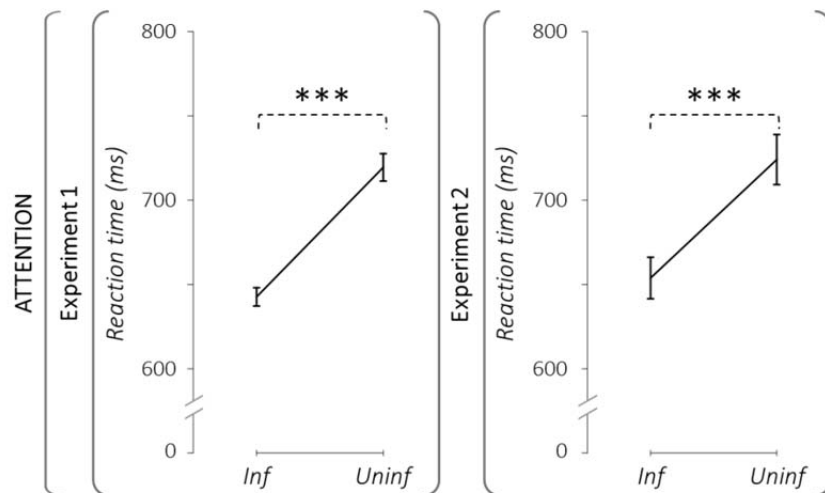
357 3.2. Attention task

358 3.2.1. Experiment 1 (target at 7.5°)

359 3.2.1.1. Outcome neutral criteria

360 After rejection of subjects and trials following the above mentioned criteria, the average number  
361 of analysed trials per condition was 58.9+/- 5.6 SD (see 2.3.2.1 for details). The rmAnova of  
362 outcome neutral criteria on the pre-exposure RT revealed a significant main effect of the cue type  
363 (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.81$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 74.15$ ;  $P = 1.32e^{-7}$ ; achieved power = 1; Fig. 5, left panel). The main  
364 effect of the exposure was not significant (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.01$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 0.17$ ;  $P = 0.85$ ), nor the  
365 interaction between exposure and cue type (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.01$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 0.28$ ;  $P = 0.76$ ). Therefore,  
366 our attention task did engage the orienting of attention during the pre-exposure phase, and did so  
367 similarly in the three sessions.

368



369  
370 **Figure 5:** Effect of cue type on reaction time in the pre-exposure attention task. Group mean (+/- SD) of  
371 median reaction times (ms) in Experiment 1 (left panel) and in Experiment 2 (right panel). A general

372 effect of cue type was disclosed by the decrease of RT for informative as compared to uninformative trials.

373 \*\*\*:  $p$ -value < 0.001

374

### 375 3.2.1.2. Statistical analysis

376 The performance in the attention task was evaluated by computing the cue benefit of subjects'

377 (Fig. 6). Submitting cue benefit to a rmANOVA with the factors exposure x phase x target

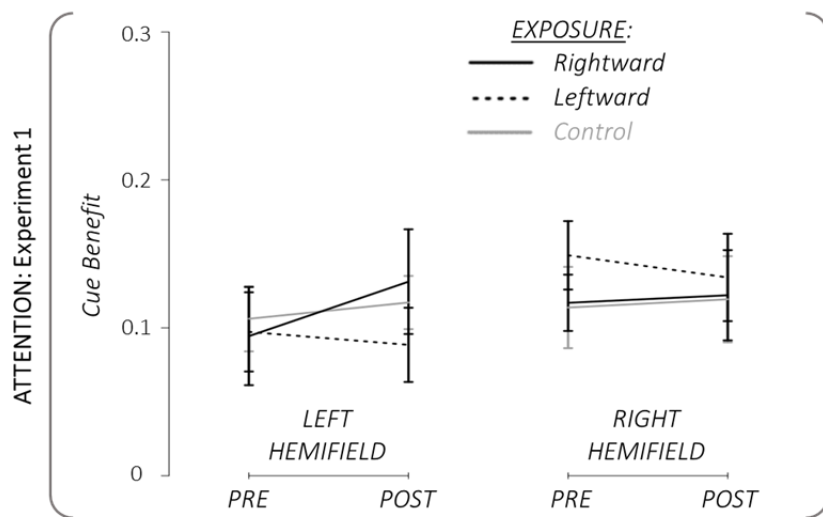
378 hemifield revealed no significant main effect and no significant double nor triple interaction (all

379  $P > 0.32$ ). Therefore, no further analysis was performed. In summary, no significant effect of

380 saccadic adaptation on attention performance could be revealed when the target was presented at

381 7.5°.

382



383

384 **Figure 6:** Pre- and Post-exposure attention results in Experiment 1. Group mean (+/- SD) of cue benefit

385 for the pre- and the post-exposure phases in the two hemifields of target presentation. **Black lines:**

386 rightward adaptation exposure; **Black dotted lines:** leftward adaptation exposure; **Grey lines:** control

387 exposure.

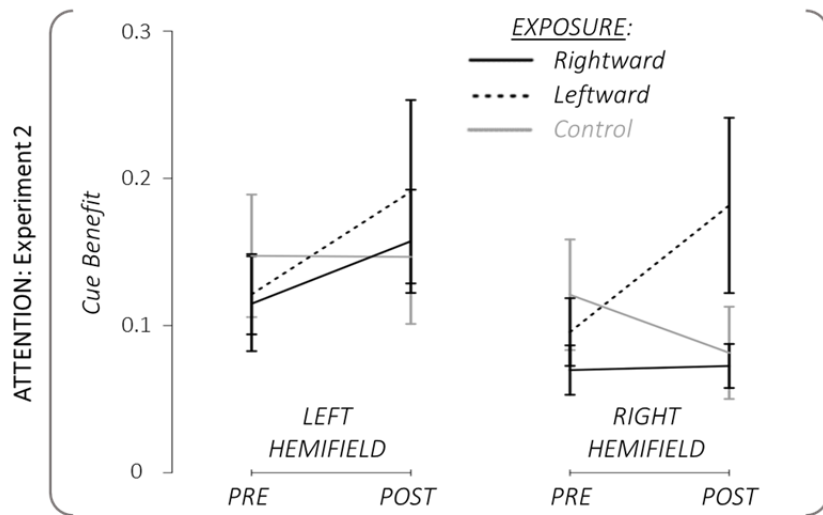
388

389 3.2.2. Experiment 2 (target at 3°)

390 3.2.2.1. Outcome neutral criteria

391 After rejection of subjects and trials following the above mentioned criteria, the average number  
392 of analysed trials per condition was 57.0 +/- 7.4 SD (see 2.3.2.1 for details) . The rmAnova of  
393 outcome neutral criteria on the pre-exposure RT revealed a significant main effect of the cue type  
394 (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.64$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 30.81$ ;  $P = 3.52e^{-5}$ ; achieved power = 1; Fig. 5, right panel). The main  
395 effect of the exposure was not significant (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.03$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 0.44$ ;  $P = 0.65$ ), nor the  
396 interaction between exposure and cue type (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.05$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 0.81$ ;  $P = 0.45$ ). Thus, as for  
397 Experiment 1, the attention task in Experiment 2 engaged the orienting of attention during the  
398 pre-exposure phase, and did so similarly in the three sessions.

399 3.2.2.2. Statistical analysis



400

401 **Figure 7: Pre- and Post-exposure attention results in Experiment 2.** Group mean (+/- SD) of cue benefit  
402 for the pre- and the post-exposure phases in the two hemifields of target presentation. **Black lines:**

403 *rightward adaptation exposure; Black dotted: leftward adaptation exposure; Grey lines: control*  
404 *exposure.*

405  
406 As for Experiment 1, the performance in the attention task of Experiment 2 was evaluated by  
407 computing the subjects' cue benefit (Fig. 7). The 3-factor rmANOVA (exposure x phase x target  
408 hemifield) revealed no significant main effect (Phase: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.10$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 1.98$ ;  $P = 0.18$ ;  
409 Target hemifield: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.11$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 2.00$ ;  $P = 0.18$ ; Exposure: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.49$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} =$   
410  $0.07$ ;  $P = 0.29$ ). The following interactions were not significant: double interactions (Exposure x  
411 target hemifield: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.09$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 1.59$ ;  $P = 0.22$ ; Phase x target hemifield: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.05$   
412 ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 0.95$ ;  $P = 0.34$ ), and the triple interaction (Exposure x phase x target hemifield: partial  $\eta^2$   
413  $= 0.05$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 0.92$ ;  $P = 0.41$ ). However, the double interaction exposure x phase was significant  
414 (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.18$ ;  $F_{(2,34)} = 3.76$ ;  $P = 0.03$ ; achieved power > 99%).

415 Post-hoc paired Student t-tests revealed that, irrespective of hemifield, the differences between  
416 the pre- and the post-exposure phases for the control exposure and for the rightward adaptation  
417 exposure did not reach significance ( $t_{(35)} = 0.92$ ;  $P = 0.36$ ;  $t_{(35)} = -1.53$ ;  $P = 0.13$ ; respectively). In  
418 contrast, the exposure to leftward adaptation induced a significant difference between the pre-  
419 and the post-exposure, yielding an increased cue benefit in both hemifields (from 0.11 to 0.19; 95  
420 CI mean difference = [-0.14; -0.02]) after SA ( $t_{(35)} = -2.56$ ;  $P = 0.015$  (FDR- corrected  $P = 0.045$ );  
421 Cohen's  $d = 0.40$ ).

422 To identify the origin of the significant exposure x phase interaction, we further submitted RT to  
423 2 one-way rmANOVAs, separately for informative or uninformative trials. The rmANOVA on  
424 informative trials revealed a nearly significant effect of the phase (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.20$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 4.16$ ;  
425  $P = 0.057$ ), whereas the rmANOVA applied to uninformative trials did not (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.06$ ;



426  $F_{(1,17)} = 1.00$ ;  $P = 0.33$ ). Therefore, the boosting effect of adaptation on discrimination speed is  
427 mainly observed for informative trials, i.e. trials that most strongly elicited an endogenous  
428 orienting of attention.

429 Concerning the link between the change in the left saccadic gain and the change in the cue benefit  
430 (Figure in Supplementary), after leftward adaptation, we did not highlight a significant  
431 correlation ( $r_{(35)} = 1.30$ ;  $P = 0.21$ ).

432 We then computed the post-saccadic target error during the exposure to leftward SA. Mean  
433 values are plotted in Table 1 separately for each block of adaptation exposure and for the 4 blocks  
434 pooled together.

**Table 1:** Mean and standard deviation (SD) across subjects of post-saccadic error in the exposure to backward adaptation of leftward saccades.

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	All Blocks
Mean	0.42	0.99	1.64	1.35	1.09
SD	0.34	0.48	0.57	0.61	0.49

435  
436  
437 Table 2 summarizes the results of the correlation between this post-saccadic error parameter and  
438 the cue benefit measured during the post-exposure discrimination task. None of the analyses  
439 revealed any significant correlation, whether computed separately for the 4 blocks or for all  
440 blocks together.

441 **Table 2** Rho coefficients (degree of freedom = 16) and p-values of the correlations between post-saccadic  
442 error and cue benefit.

	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	All Blocks
$r_{(16)}$	-0.29	-0.34	-0.18	-0.10	-0.20
p-value	0.24	0.17	0.47	0.69	0.43

443

444 Finally we assessed as a potential attentional marker the preparation time of voluntary saccades  
445 by measuring the fixation time between the first and second saccades: the overall median fixation  
446 time is 271 ms with an interquartile range (IQR) of 122 ms (see details in Table 3). The  
447 rmANOVA did not reveal any significant main effect (saccade direction: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.02$ ;  $F_{(1,17)}$   
448  $= 0.30$ ;  $P = 0.59$ ; phase: partial  $\eta^2 = 0.02$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 0.30$ ;  $P = 0.59$ ) nor an interaction between the  
449 two factors (partial  $\eta^2 = 0.002$ ;  $F_{(1,17)} = 0.03$ ;  $P = 0.89$ ). Therefore, no significant effect of SA on  
450 the fixation time preceding voluntary saccades could be demonstrated.

***Table 3:*** Median and interquartile range (IQR) fixation time across subjects for the pre- and post-phase of the exposure to backward adaptation of leftward saccades and of rightward saccades.

	Leftward saccades		Rightward saccades	
	Pre-exposure	Post-exposure	Pre-exposure	Post-exposure
Median (ms)	269.75	272.75	275.75	266
IQR (ms)	117.25	138.5	97.125	117.75

451

452 In summary, the adaptation of leftward saccades resulted in significantly increased attention  
453 performance when the target was presented at 3° in both the adapted and unadapted hemifield, but  
454 without significant relationship with individual variations of the level of adaptation or of the  
455 amount of post-saccadic target error.

456

#### 457 4. DISCUSSION

458 The present study questioned the link between the oculomotor and visuospatial attention systems,  
459 by testing the effect of sensorimotor plasticity of VS on covert endogenous orienting of attention.  
460 Based on a within-subjects comparison between leftward adaptation, rightward adaptation, and  
461 control exposure, we found the cueing effect on discrimination RT to increase specifically after  
462 leftward adaptation for discrimination stimuli at 3° in either (adapted or unadapted) hemifields.  
463 This boosting effect of SA was mainly related to a decreased RT for informative trials, i.e. those  
464 that elicited an endogenous orienting of attention. No effect was observed on saccade preparation  
465 time. These results demonstrate for the first time a boosting effect of oculomotor plasticity on  
466 endogenous orienting of attention in healthy humans, deepening our knowledge of saccadic  
467 adaptation mechanisms and providing evidence for shared neuronal representations for eye  
468 movements and visuospatial attention.

469 As mentioned in the INTRODUCTION, a coupling between SA and covert shifts of attention has  
470 been reported only once at the behavioral level in a previous study from our lab<sup>13</sup>. However,  
471 contrary to the Posner-like paradigm used here, the detection task Habchi and colleagues<sup>13</sup> used  
472 could not entirely distinguish attention orienting from other potential cognitive or motor  
473 components. In addition, they investigated exogenous attention orienting. Here we decided  
474 instead to focus on the voluntary/endogenous modality, because it has been suggested to refute  
475 the premotor theory of attention<sup>15</sup>. The present demonstration of a coupling in this latter modality  
476 therefore provides a new piece of empirical argument in this debate.

477 Interestingly, despite these differences, in both Habchi and colleagues' study and ours, the  
478 coupling was observed only after adaptation of leftward saccades. They interpreted this saccade  
479 direction specificity as resulting from the known dominance of the right hemisphere in

480 controlling exogenous attention<sup>4</sup>, without making any assumption of hemispheric laterality for  
481 saccadic adaptation, which is completely unknown. Indeed, in the relevant fMRI literature, only  
482 cortical BOLD modulations after leftward SA have been investigated so far<sup>26,8,12</sup>. A right  
483 dominance interpretation of the saccade-direction specific coupling demonstrated here for the  
484 voluntary/endogenous modality is not straightforward in this framework. However, TMS studies  
485 have suggested that, although both left and right IPS play a role in voluntary orienting  
486 visuospatial attention, the right hemisphere has a dominant contribution. Caposto and  
487 colleagues<sup>27,28</sup> reported that the disruption of the right IPS, and not the left IPS nor the right FEF,  
488 led to a bilateral alpha band synchronization in the occipito-parietal cortex and therefore to a  
489 decreased efficiency of target processing in both hemifields. Indeed, alpha synchronization and  
490 desynchronization are known to index visual perception performance: the lower alpha power the  
491 better the performances<sup>e.g. 29,30,31,32</sup>. The impact of the right IPS disruption was also observed in  
492 two studies<sup>33,34</sup> using concurrent TMS/fMRI in which stimulation of right but not left posterior  
493 parietal cortex caused changes of fMRI activity bilaterally in the occipital lobe. Thus, the  
494 presently demonstrated effect of adaptation of leftward, but not rightward, VS fits in the  
495 framework of a right hemispheric dominance in visuospatial attention. In addition, the benefit in  
496 the two hemifields that we found in the attention task is consistent with the above mentioned  
497 TMS studies. Indeed, it can be postulated that SA of leftward saccades, contrary to the disrupting  
498 effect of TMS, increases brain excitability in the right IPS and therefore modulates neural  
499 excitability in the occipital cortex bilaterally.

500 Other previous investigations of the link between SA and visuospatial attention have all focused  
501 on the so-called pre-saccadic shift of attention, corresponding to an enhanced perception which  
502 automatically occurs at the saccade target location just before saccade initiation<sup>35</sup>. These studies

503 have shown that after saccadic adaptation, the spatial locus of highest perceptual performance  
504 remains coupled with the saccade endpoint, not to the visual target<sup>36,37,38</sup> (but see<sup>39</sup>). In line with  
505 the premotor theory of attention<sup>5</sup>, this observation reflects an adaptation-related change of a  
506 prediction of saccadic commands, which is also consistent with the proposal that oculomotor  
507 efference copy is modified after adaptation<sup>38</sup>.

508 The present findings clearly point to a new oculomotor plasticity-visuospatial attention coupling  
509 as compared to the studies mentioned above. First, the lack of significant correlation between the  
510 adaptation rate and the cue benefit boost does not illustrate the metrical relationship found in  
511 previous studies between saccade size and endpoint of pre-saccadic attention shift<sup>41</sup>. Together  
512 with the specificity to a 3° eccentricity, this observation suggests an all-or-none effect restrained  
513 to the peri-foveal part of the visual field. Second, we demonstrated an effect of SA on covert  
514 shifts of attention, unrelated to any oculomotor preparation, as subjects always kept central  
515 fixation throughout the attention tasks. Thus, possible changes of oculomotor efference copy are  
516 unlikely to play any role in our experiments. Furthermore, the discrimination performance did not  
517 change for a target at 7.5°, i.e. the eccentricity which matched best the adapted saccade endpoint.  
518 Thus, the coupling we report is not related to the new metric of the adapted saccade, and not to  
519 the adaptation field<sup>42,43</sup>. Instead the boosting effect was actually found at the eccentricity of 3°  
520 which corresponds to the size of the target intra-saccadic step (ISS) eliciting SA. This raises the  
521 interesting possibility that it is the systematic exposure to the error signal driving SA, rather than  
522 the oculomotor changes related to SA itself, which drives the changes in covert attention. Recall  
523 however, that the same target jump and error signal were induced during the control exposure,  
524 but 805 ms after the saccade, a delay which prevented SA to be elicited. Moreover, our analyses  
525 failed to disclose any significant correlation between the post-saccadic error experienced during  
526 the leftward adaptation exposure and the cue benefit measured during the post-exposure

527 discrimination task. Therefore the correspondence between the size of ISS and the eccentricity  
528 for which the effect was found could be a mere coincidence. Further experiments would be  
529 required to test this possibility. For example, one could induce adaptation of larger saccades with  
530 larger target jumps and test whether the eccentricity where the boosting effect occurs changes  
531 accordingly or remains in the peri-foveal part of the visual field.

532 Another possible explanation of this limitation to the peri-foveal part of the visual field is a SA-  
533 induced compression of represented visual space (in case of backward adaptation) that would  
534 shift the representation of visual stimuli toward the center of gaze. Indeed, Zimmermann and  
535 Lappe<sup>39,45</sup> showed that SA induces a shift of the subjectively-perceived location of objects  
536 flashed before a saccade or during fixation, suggesting that spatial visual representations are  
537 shaped by oculomotor planning<sup>46,47</sup>. Consequently, when subjects have to localize (Zimmermann  
538 and Lappe's) or discriminate (current study) such peri-foveal stimuli, they would both  
539 underestimate the targets eccentricity and discriminate them with a faster reaction time. The  
540 functional coupling between adaptation and attention, highlighted by the present results, strongly  
541 suggests that the corresponding neural substrates overlapping at the macroscopic level (see  
542 Introduction<sup>8,9,3</sup>) actually host neuronal population co-activated for saccades and attention.  
543 Although neuronal recordings in the monkey posterior parietal cortex have provided evidence for  
544 distinct neuronal populations for orienting of attention and saccadic eye movements<sup>48</sup>, other  
545 studies have suggested that the monkey LIP hosts priority maps used both by attention and eye  
546 movements to select targets<sup>49</sup>. Therefore, we believe that SA acts on such 'common priority  
547 maps', thereby transferring to covert attention mechanisms. Common priority maps for attention  
548 and eye movements may have been implemented in the course of natural selection because  
549 sharing neural substrates for cognitive functions is advantageous in terms of neural resource.  
550 Accordingly, as mentioned above, we propose that the boosting effect would emerge from an SA-

551 induced increase of top-down signals from the right parietal cortex to the visual cortex of both  
552 hemispheres. Indeed, there is increasing evidence that adaptation of leftward saccades relies on  
553 metabolic activation in the right IPS<sup>50,8,12,9</sup>. Second, during an endogenous attentional orienting  
554 task, the right IPS send top-down signals to the visual cortices in both hemispheres to modulate  
555 their excitability and therefore their readiness to process an upcoming stimulus <sup>see 4 for review</sup>. To  
556 account for the observed boosting effect restricted to +/-3° eccentric targets, we further suggest  
557 that the increased activity of the IPS is centered on the fovea, which is in accordance with the  
558 oculocentric representation of visual space in the posterior parietal cortex<sup>51</sup>. The boosting of  
559 attention we specifically observed after leftward SA for targets flanking the fovea bilaterally  
560 seems to be related to the dominant role of the right IPS in the control of visual attention and to  
561 its properties in representing the visual space. This specificity speaks for a functional link  
562 between adaptation of voluntary saccades and endogenous visuospatial attention based on the  
563 brain substrates common to these processes, rather than on a general increase in brain excitability  
564 after SA.

565 The hypothesis of shared neural resource between adaptation and attention predicts the existence  
566 of another functional coupling, opposite to that reported here, i.e. from attention to saccadic  
567 adaptation. Indeed, some studies have suggested that attention shifts affect SA. Flashing in the  
568 vicinity of a stationary saccade target a stimulus attracting exogenous attention, a perceptual  
569 target<sup>52</sup> or a salient visual distractor<sup>53</sup>, is sufficient to induce SA. Further, McFadden et al.<sup>46</sup>  
570 showed that it is possible to adapt the exogenous shift of attention by ‘stepping the attentional  
571 target’ during a covert attentional task, and that such ‘adapted attention’ transferred to saccades.  
572 Finally, SA efficiency has been shown to increase with attentional load<sup>14</sup>. The hypothesis of  
573 shared neural substrates between adaptation and attention also predicts that some neural changes

574 related to SA can be detected in the attentional task performed immediately after, akin to the  
575 change of gamma band activity we could disclose recently, albeit in the exogenous/reactive  
576 modality<sup>11</sup>. A similar magnetoencephalographic study will be required to disclose whether the  
577 coupling between adaptation of voluntary saccades and endogenous attention is subtended by an  
578 increased brain activity, reflected in the gamma band, in the region of the right IPS of the dorsal  
579 attention system.

580 Taken together, this study highlights a functional coupling between adaptation of voluntary  
581 saccades and endogenous visuospatial attention. This finding provides deeper insight into the role  
582 of the motor system in the updating of visual space representations, and leads toward promising  
583 rehabilitation procedure for patients with visuospatial disorders.



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705 *AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENTS*

706 DP, ABC and JN design the protocol, JN performed the experiment and the analysis. JN wrote  
707 the main manuscript text and prepared figures. All authors reviewed the manuscript.

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