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Research Plan (2021/22
Q1)

Silent Urban Occupation:

*urban form and discourse invasion: the gaze
as a tool of control*

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Abstract

As a result of early colonial influences, Marseille was originally built and developed as a port city by local inhabitants and Italian and Algerian labourers, and has become the third largest city in France today, and a place where different races, groups, etc. converge and divide to live. The top-down gaze of the city, such as the video surveillance and the police patrols, as well as the “occupants” of the space sitting, lying down, looking down from above, gazing from different directions at the “other” who enters, has to some extent changed the way the invisible space is used and felt in terms of the formation of pressure. This gaze changes to a certain extent the way in which the invisible pressure is used and felt in the space. The difference such a gaze makes may mean that this public space - or at least the spontaneous social behaviour within it - will be forced to ‘die’, or that mistrust, suspicion and ambiguity will increasingly become the dominant emotions experienced in such spaces.

This paper analyses gaze as a system and framework, examining the extent to which Marseille is influenced by gaze as a tool of control, and the extent to which gaze (whether bottom-up or top-down) changes the way cities operate. Three scales are chosen for the analysis: the article first analyses and classifies the different individuals and elements of gaze, then moves on to discuss the complexity of sight, body and space through different perspectives (the first perspective of the source of gaze, the perspective of the gazed upon and the perspective of third party objective observation) and presentations in space, and then forms a system of links to analyse the city through a network of gaze. This is followed by the formation of a system of connections, the analysis of urban areas and perceptual differentiation due to gaze, and finally the synthesis of gaze behaviour and spatial and social influences through a mapping approach.

Keywords

Gaze, Control, Marseille, Spatial form, Spatial perception, Mapping

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1. Context

As a result of early colonial influences, Marseille was initially established and developed as a port city by the indigenous population in collaboration with Italian and Algerian laborers, eventually growing to become France's third largest city and a melting pot of races and nationalities, and cultures. While these areas appear to be uniform on a Google map, when entering them, the spatial perception of the gaze changes dramatically due to the disparities in position and space, which piques my interest in the spatial qualities influenced by the gaze. On the one hand, the complexity of Marseille's urban space is a result of the city's common fractured and stepped spaces, the cramped paths, the dense windows, and the varying scales of the streets; on the other hand, the gaze of urban space plays a significant role. Individuals or groups entering the many spaces of Marseille see and are affected by the original elements in the space. For instance, the idle citizen standing by the roadside, the eye peeking out of the window, the overlooker from the balcony, the policeman on patrol, the camera hanging high above the ground. They gaze at the intruding elements that enter the field of view, and it is not always pleasant to be under the unavoidable and intense gaze of a small space.

On the one hand, the top-down gaze of the city, like video surveillance and patrolling police, regulates urban behaviour and thus controls the city; on the other hand, the different scales and types of gaze in areas where neighbourhoods are clustered, leading to residential differentiation, and in abandoned urban spaces, where people in these different areas create different spatial atmospheres and spatial uses for urban space, in order to maintain their own space and prevent its appropriation by others. To preserve their space from encroachment by others, the 'occupants' of space sit, lie down, look down from above, and gaze at the 'other' entering from



Narrow streets with height differences typical of Marseille

different directions, using the repetitive but different perspectives of the gaze as a form of censorship (without being considered illegal). “warning” or alerting the “intruder” that you are entering their domain, these people are trying to assert their sovereignty over the area in this way, trying to use the gaze as a tool to control the space, a bottom-up control as opposed to the top-down discipline of the city which is the opposite of top-down urban discipline. The complex juxtaposition of the two forms of gaze greatly influences the individual’s emotional experience and use of urban space, and in many areas, one feels shocked or free, belonging or rejection, relaxed or tense, cautious or free. The ‘occupiers’ of this space (the people who try to claim the area with their gaze) and the ‘watchers’ (the city and government who control the people through surveillance) make each new participant or ‘intruder’ in these different areas of space feel, through the gaze “The ‘intruder’ feels a different atmosphere - you are welcome, or not allowed, or ignored. This gaze changes how the invisible pressure of formation is used and felt in the space. Space is controlled, silently, by these networks of gazes.

2. Rationale

Gaze

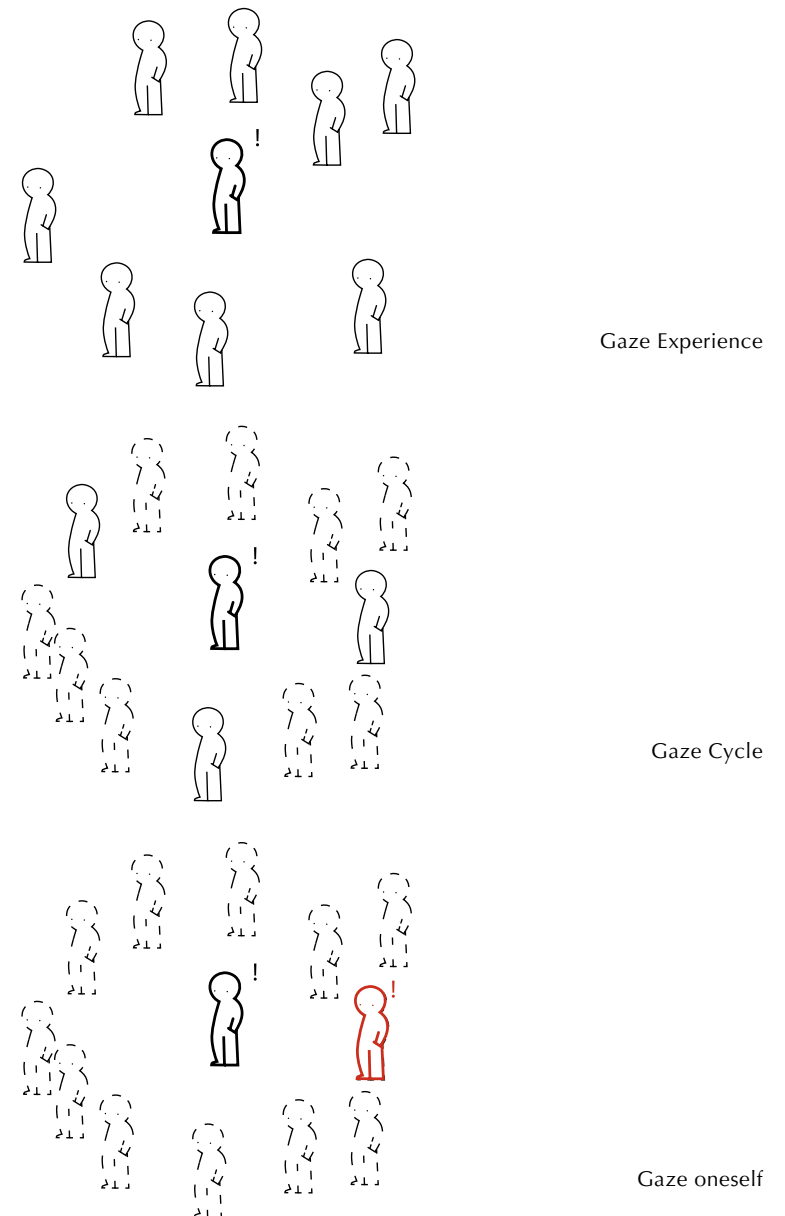
In critical theory, sociology, and psychoanalysis, the gaze (le regard in French), in a philosophical and metaphorical sense, refers to an individual’s (or group’s) awareness and perception of other individuals, other groups, or oneself (Sartre, 2015). At the same time, understood psychologically, “the gaze implies more than looking - it implies a psychological power



Areas in the city of Marseille where different groups of people reside are divided.

relationship in which the gazer is superior to the object gazed at." Nicholas Mirzoeff argues that "by making us simultaneously aware of visual perception and the ability of others to see us, the gaze creates and re-creates the identity of the gazer." (Mirzoeff, 1999) In this state, I try to regulate my movements to conform to the expectations and norms of the public. In this state, I am not gazing at other people in my imagination, but I am gazing at myself as the gazer; we are participating in the gaze rather than being outside it. However, at this moment, I am also the object of the gaze, aware that I am in a state of loss of autonomy, "I can only see from a certain point, but in my being, I am goggled by gazes from all sides," that gaze from all sides refers in fact to the gaze of the subject himself which contains otherness, a presupposed imaginary gaze. In Lacan's words, "the gaze I encounter is not the gaze of being looked at, but the gaze I imagine in the realm of the Other." Lacan's theory suggests that the subject's authentication comes from the gaze of the otherness of the subject (Krips, 2010). That is, the subject ultimately becomes the object of the other's desire, captured by the other's desire. This is to say that in the visual realm, the gaze is external, that is, I am an image, I am viewed as an OBJECT, not a self, and so what determines me in the visible world is the external gaze, which loses its autonomy once it becomes aware of itself as a visible object.

The immediate cause of the anxiety caused by the gaze is that the "I" sees the gaze and feels itself being gazed at, that I lose my autonomy and become the object of the gaze of others. In this state of anxiety, my own behaviour and awareness of myself are affected. The elements of the city that are vehicles of the gaze train and remind me that I will be seen here in my repeated experiences in the city, and at the same time, these elements, which do not carry any condition, become stand-ins for the gaze, that is, when seen, "I" would feel the pressure that I was once subjected to from this aspect, and thus I was controlled by this pressure of the gaze, subliminally changing my behavior in different areas - I was disciplined by this urban space element, whether or not a person was gazing there or a



security camera under scrutiny. The gaze as a tool of control also serves this purpose.

3. Problem

One submits to the gaze of this bottom-up gaze that claims the area is occupied and thus, cautiously, avoids and passes quickly, while at the same time, one has to question whether the top-down gaze of surveillance is monitoring those who try to commit crimes or all those who try to enter the surveillance area. This is similar to Foucault's reference to the social discipline of the gaze, which is more of a collective gaze from a higher, authoritative level, such as surveillance and penal discipline. Slavoj Žižek redraws the so-called site of gaze, saying that the public often turns a blind eye to acts such as petty tax evasion, speeding, and trampling on the lawn, even though they know they are wrong, but also because they enjoy a certain amount of freedom in such areas. Nevertheless, it is also because of this freedom that the public is constantly under the gaze of others and thus more submissive to the law, which Žižek believes is the true meaning of Foucault's panoramic gaze. (Krips, 2010) Marseille is a city that does not seem to mind minor infractions, where people can cross red-lit streets with impunity, where cars sometimes speed through without fear of crowds, where motorcyclists lift their front wheels and speed on one tyre, and where sneaky groups of people make bizarre deals in squares with previously hidden boxes of tobacco taken from under manhole covers. People see these events taking place and thus stare, at which point anyone entering the area becomes aware of being stared at or possibly staring at because they see it, in order to create a conscious and constant state of visibility in the person being stared at, thus ensuring that this declaration of area

occupation automatically takes effect. People are more submissive to the law and so do not actively break the rules, but are also more scrupulous and therefore use the gaze, which is not covered by legal boundaries, as a tool of control to try to occupy and control the city.

Moreover, the difference such a gaze makes may mean that this public space - or at least the spontaneous social behavior within it - will be forced to 'die', or that mistrust, suspicion, and ambiguity will increasingly become the dominant emotions experienced in such spaces. (Koskela, 2000) To better understand this, we must look at space more closely. So the main question posed by the gaze is, to what extent is Marseille influenced by the gaze as a tool of control? And to what extent does the gaze (whether bottom-up or top-down) change the way the city operates?

4. Research Question

How the gaze interacts with the urban space of Marseille as a means of spatial control

- What are the elements that carry the gaze in Marseille's urban spaces?
- How the gaze is implemented in the complex urban spaces of Marseille
- The changing spatial nature of urban space under the gaze
- How the gaze is used as an instrument of spatial control
- How urban space provides the conditions for the implementation of the gaze as a tool of control
- The impact of the gaze network on the city

5. Methodology

Art historian Margaret Olin argues that the term gaze is not limited to the act of looking per se but highlights both the person gazing and the person being gazed at and that the gaze requires us to use the entire visual field that constitutes a given viewing as a framework for analysis, rather than just the image itself. In other words, the gaze points not to an object but a field, and this paper also attempts to analyze the gaze as a system and a framework, not just the value of the gaze as a look or as an image. This framework encompasses the object of the gaze, its process, and the relationship between gaze and space, and its related parameters. The study hopes to combine gaze theory with Marseille's urban condition and provide a comprehensive analysis of the spaces and elements of Marseille within the framework of gaze.

The subsequent study attempts to analyze how the 'gaze' is conceptualized and understood, how it contributes to producing a specific urban space, and how the gaze occupies public space as a negative part of the community by contrasting and understanding the complex urban space. The interaction between Marseille's space and the gaze is analyzed through people's behavior, the use of space, the impact on sociality. In order to analyze the relationship between gaze and urban space systematically and holistically, three scales are chosen for the analysis: the monolithic scale (the implementation and carriers of gaze); the street scale (the interaction between gaze and space); and the urban scale (the network and system of gaze). Each element and system is analyzed microscopically at the most miniature scale of the monolith, then expanded to the scale of the street space, and then studied at the scale of the macroscopic urban network and bird's eye view.

1. The classification and analysis of categories and constituents.
2. An examination of the relationship between sight and space
3. An examination of the gaze system at the urban scale

The article first analyses and classifies the different individuals and elements of gaze, then moves on to the specific urban space, discussing the complexity of sight, body, and space through different perspectives (the first perspective of the source of gaze, the perspective of the gazed upon and the perspective of third party objective observation) and spatial presentation, then forms a connected system, analyses the urban areas and perceptual differentiation of the city due to gaze through the gaze network, and finally analyses the gaze behavior and the spatial and social impact in a comprehensive way through mapping.

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Figure Bibliography

All the drawings and photos are drawn or taken by the author.

6. Appendix: Experiments on future research

Category of Gaze(Micro scale)

Sample: Pick gaze cases from the city



Lower gaze

Elements of Gaze:

Ground

Bench

Doorsill

Cornice

How does gaze operate:

Relations

1 direction

Position

Lower level (0.6-1.2m)

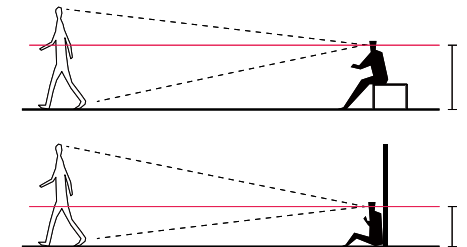
Object and Subject

Subject: eyes

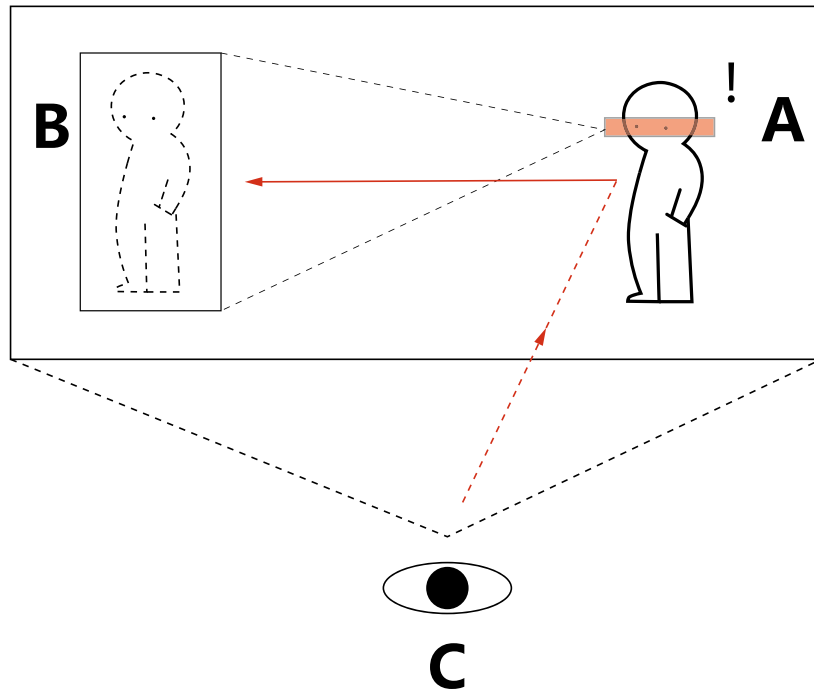
Object: body/ constructions/ events/ personal stuff

Behavior

Sit on constructions or lie on the ground and gaze at people or their stuff



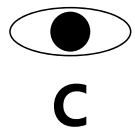
Gaze in complex urban space(Middle scale)



The complexity of sight, body, and space from various perspectives (the first perspective of the source of gaze, the perspective of the gazed upon, and the perspective of third party objective observation) and the presentation in space

Gaze in complex urban space(Middle scale)

Sample 1: From 3rd person perspective



11:50am



12:25am

Complex space gazes:

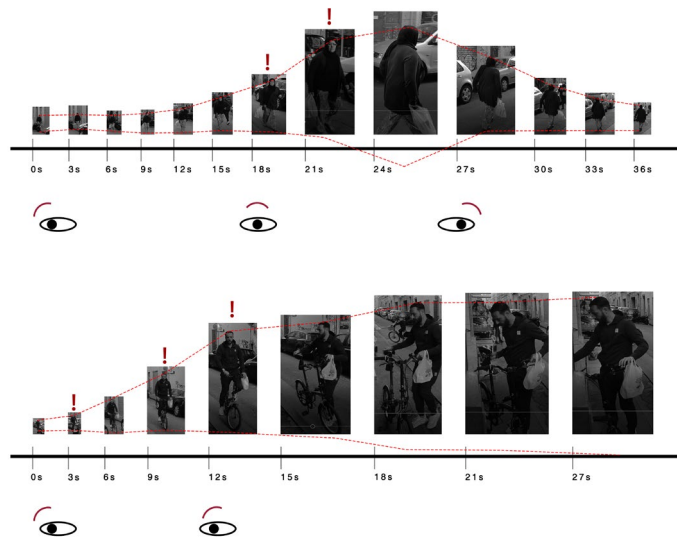
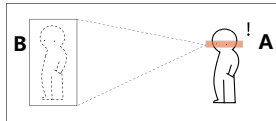
Rd across the Porte d'Aix

Video to record



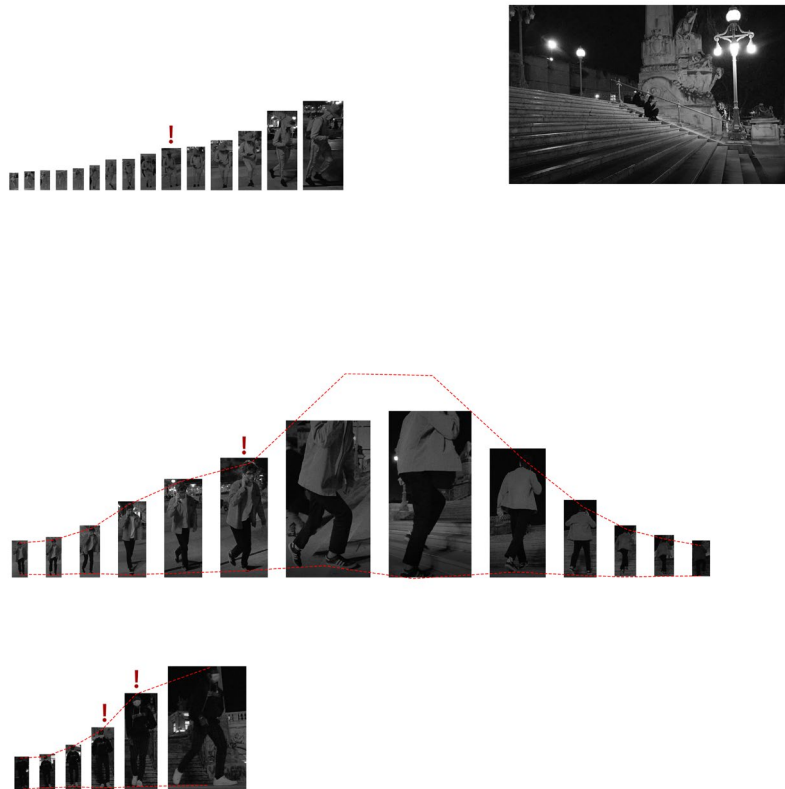
Gaze in complex urban space(Middle scale)

Sample 2: From 1st person perspective



Gaze in complex urban space(Middle scale)

Sample 3: From 2nd person perspective



Gaze in complex urban space(Middle scale)

Sample: Some space for analyzing Marry-go-round

