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Gestures in Slow Motion: On Making Use of Video Art in Phenomenology

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Abstract

This article deals with the relevance of video art and filmic techniques for the phenomenological method by thematizing how slow-motion scenes can be used in the analysis of gestures. Drawing on Edmund Husserl's theory of image consciousness, I argue that while, for the empirical researcher, slow motion is a non-analogizing moment that helps the researcher observe the positional image subject, for the phenomenologist, it depicts a different, neutralized image subject that serves as an initial example. This approach leads to further insights revealing a specific form of disappointment of our passively constituted patterns of anticipation concerning the pace of gestural interaction.

Résumé

Cet article aborde la pertinence de l'art vidéo et des techniques filmiques pour la méthode phénoménologique en thématisant comment les scènes au ralenti peuvent être utilisées dans l'analyse des gestes. Inspiré par la théorie de la conscience d'image d'Edmund Husserl, je soutiens que si, pour le chercheur empirique, le ralenti est un moment non analogique qui l'aide à observer le sujet existant, pour le phénoménologue, il dépeint un sujet neutralisé qui sert d'exemple initial. Cette approche révèle en plus une forme spécifique de déception de nos schémas d'anticipation passivement constitués concernant le rythme d'interaction gestuelle.

Keywords: gesture; image subject; interest; slow motion; temporal typification; video art

1. Introduction

The role of art in phenomenological inquiry cannot easily be overlooked. It can be traced back to one of Edmund Husserl's most famous methodological remarks in *Ideas I*, where he notes that even more than history, art and literature “[...] in the originality of their invention of forms, the abundance of their single features and the unbrokenness of their motivation, tower high above the products of our own phantasy.” Moreover, the suggestive power of artistic means allows them to be “[...] converted into perfectly clear phantasies with particular ease [...]” (Husserl, 1976, p. 148 [160]¹). It is

¹ Page numbers for the English translations are provided in square brackets after German edition page numbers.



in this sense that I am approaching the role of video art and filmic techniques, and the role of slow-motion video in particular, in the phenomenological investigation of gestures.

As it has been shown in the literature of the last decade (Ferencz-Flatz & Hanich, 2016), phenomenology today plays an increasingly important role in film scholarship. Drawing both on phenomenological works that deal explicitly with film as well as on the classical phenomenological method and its more recent expansions, film phenomenology starts from the *lived experience* of the spectator and identifies and describes the invariant structures of the intentional object, i.e., the film, and of the specific consciousness in which it is given. This allows for significant contributions in film studies by broaching themes such as the bodily experience of the viewer (the so-called *embodied spectatorship*, see Sobchack, 1992, 2004), the role of smell (Sobchack, 2013), or of the sense of touch in the cinematic experience (see Marks, 2000 on *haptic visuality*), or viewer emotions (see Hanich, 2009 on disgust, 2010 on fear and pleasure), or the social or collective experience of watching movies (see Hanich, 2014), to name just a few.

However, already from the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and, more recently, of Vivian Sobchack, it has also become clear that film itself can be relevant for phenomenology since it “[...] does indeed ‘make manifest’ certain characteristics of human experiences” (Ferencz-Flatz & Hanich, 2016, p. 15). Thus, my aim in this article is not to engage in a phenomenological analysis of film or media *per se* but to employ examples of filmic technique, namely slow-motion, to describe certain structures of bodily expressivity, specifically of the gestural expressive modality. It is well known that one of the key moments of the phenomenological endeavour is to proceed from concrete instances of a phenomenon, given in perception, memory, or imagination, and transform them through an open series of free phantasy variations into pure examples detached from any connections with the real world, which reveal in the end the invariant characteristics of said phenomenon (Belt, 2022; Husserl, 1939, pp. 340–348; Lohmar, 2005). My main argument in this context is that slow-motion video offers phenomenologists variations of the phenomenon under investigation that otherwise are not readily accessible given the inherent limitations of one’s phantasy and its ability to produce different instances of the phenomenon. More concretely, I show that with slow-motion techniques the researcher gains access to a new possible variant of the studied object and not merely — like in the case of the empirical approach to gestures that makes use of slow motion — to a more detailed or clearer rendering of the same real-world object (say, a particular hand gesture). Thus, as I contend, the phenomenological approach can make use of the variations concerning the pace of movement in order to better understand and describe the subjective constitution of gestural interaction and even challenge the pre-existing theories in the domain of gesture studies concerning the nature of gesture.

In Section 2, I discuss the role of videotaped material in the field of gesture studies. Here, I show that the emphasis lies both on the fidelity of the video recording to the real-life interactions that are to be observed and on the precise pinpointing of different gesture phases in their factual connection with speech. This eventually leads to the elaboration of a classification of gestures and to the identification of empirical laws concerning their relationship with discursive thinking. In Section 3, I argue for a

distinct use of video art and film. For this, I draw on Husserl's theory of image consciousness in order to describe and distinguish between the specific attitude of the researcher in gesture studies and that of the phenomenologist. The latter, I contend, focuses on the experience of what I call the *slow-motion gestural object* — a neutralized image subject entirely different from the real-world gesture analyzed by gesture studies. Analyzing a short excerpt from Bill Viola's video installation *The Raft*, I exemplify how slow motion affects our apprehension of functional gestures. In Section 4, I identify the experiential structures that essentially affect the meaning-constitution of gestures in working with this kind of experimental media. Taking Husserl's later theory of types in *Experience and Judgment* (Husserl, 1939) as my point of departure, I argue that in the experience of slow-motion gestural objects, we are dealing with a *deconstruction of gestural meaning* determined by the constant disappointment of expectations that are based on what I call *temporal typifications*, i.e., passively acquired types regarding the duration and pace of temporal objects. In Section 5, I deal with another effect of slow motion, which I refer to as the *intensification of interest in gestural meaning*. By drawing on Husserl's earlier theory of attention (see Husserl, 2004), I show how the disappointment of our expectations motivates the awakening of feelings that drive our interest in the slow-motion gestural object. I illustrate this with a famous slow-motion scene in Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*.

2. Preliminaries: On Videos in Gesture Studies

To better grasp, by contrast, the particular use of slow-motion video in phenomenology, in this section, I analyze the way videotaping is employed in gesture studies, the specific experimental protocols in which it is employed, and its overall significance for advancements in the field. I will therefore focus primarily on two sources that not only use videotaped material, but also explicitly refer to its use — namely, Adam Kendon's (2004) *Gesture: Visible Action as Utterance* and David McNeill's (1992) *Hand and Mind: What Gestures Reveal About Thought*.

At the beginning of Chapter 7 of Kendon (2004), titled "Gesture Units, Gesture Phrases and Speech," the author stresses the importance of minute analyses of how speakers employ gestures in connection with their speech, and adds that

[a]udio-visual technology, easily available only very recently [...] now makes possible the kind of descriptive analysis of gesture use that we believe is needed [...] a descriptive survey of gesture use, based upon the analysis of specimens drawn from a large collection of video recordings of occasions of conversational interaction in many different settings. (Kendon, 2004, p. 108)

What Kendon has in view in his descriptive endeavour is more precisely the identification of what he calls *gesture units*, with their respective phases, and of gesture phrases — elements that are vital for understanding the relationship of coordination between the gestural and the verbal modalities of expression (Kendon, 2004, p. 113). To this end — and this is also important for the general point of this article — Kendon (2004, p. 365) uses analysis equipment (VHS and 8mm video players) that

is capable of rendering the material in slow motion. Thus, by closely following videotaped interactions, researchers determine the very first and last moments of a gestural movement,² that is, the gesture unit, and within it several *phases*: the *preparation* or the movement of the hand from its initial position to the starting position of the expressive gestural movement as such, also called the *stroke* (what the casual observer would simply call a *gesture*); the possible *post-stroke hold* in which the hand maintains the final position of the stroke; and finally, the subsequent relaxing or withdrawing of the gesturing hand in the *recovery phase*. Furthermore, the movement composed of preparation, stroke, and post-stroke hold (if present) represents what Kendon calls the *gesture phrase* — a subset of the *gesture unit* that can contain multiple strokes (thus, multiple gesture phrases) and the final recovery movement. All of these elements are now minutely coded onto the transcripts of the videotaped scene, precisely identifying the word or pause in speech where the gesture phase begins and ends.

Let me summarize a short example that Kendon uses to illustrate this theoretical framework. In a filmed interaction, the speaker, designated as M, explains how his father would preserve the cheeses he had for sale by throwing rice over them at a particular point in their maturation process. M's exact formulation is: "And he used to go down there and throw ground rice over it" (Kendon, 2004, p. 113). What Kendon observes in the video is that, at the beginning of this phrase, M's hands rest on the table in front of him, but as he says the word "throw," his right arm is already extended and begins to perform a movement similar to that of scattering a powder on a surface, then returning to its original position on the table. The hand's travel from the surface of the table to the beginning position of the scattering movement is what Kendon calls the *preparation phase*, followed by the *stroke*, i.e., the gesture of scattering as such, and finally by the *recovery* — returning the hand to the table. What this analysis stresses is that "[b]efore he comes to say 'throw' his hand must already be in an appropriate position to do the action that is to coincide with it [...]. [T]he speaker begins the *preparation* for this action [...] well in advance of 'throw' — indeed he begins it just as he finishes saying 'down'" (Kendon, 2004, p. 115). This leads Kendon to the double conclusion that the gestural meaning of the stroke (to scatter) is consistent with the spoken meaning (to throw), being a species of it, and that from the way in which speech and movement synchronize, the two expressive modalities must constitute a thought unity: "The gestural action must have been got ready at the same time as the speech was got ready. It is used as an expressive device that *complements* the expression achieved in words" (Kendon, 2004, p. 116).

As we see in Kendon's descriptive endeavour using videotaped material, it is crucial to make a precise observation of the connection between speech and bodily movement. This is why the slow-motion function of the playback device is significant, since it helps the researcher better pinpoint the exact moments of the speech-movement correlation, which will then serve the inductive determination of the empirical laws concerning the relation between the gestural and the verbal modality.

² "[...] from the moment the articulators begin to depart from a position of relaxation until the moment when they finally return to one [...]" (Kendon, 2004, p. 111).

It is also important to consider the implicit definition of gestures that Kendon employs here. In Chapter 1, he explicitly defines gesture as

a label for actions that have the features of manifest deliberate expressiveness. They are those actions or those aspects of another's actions that, having these features, tend to be directly perceived as being under the guidance of the observed person's voluntary control and being done for the purposes of expression rather than in the service of some practical aim. (Kendon, 2004, p. 15)

This means that functional movements such as hammering, breaking your fall, pushing something out of the way, etc., are not gestures in themselves and are not recognized as such by others. However, Kendon continues by amending this definition and stressing that how the action will be understood is indeed up to how it appears to others. One can, for instance, camouflage an insulting gesture by faking an involuntary scratching movement on the cheek, making the gesture obvious as such only to its intended recipient (see in this regard Kendon, 2004, pp. 9–10). For my following discussion, it is especially important to note here that, according to Kendon, there are specific traits of actions that characterize them as being expressive or not.³ The questions thus arise of how we are to identify and thematize these traits and whether they belong exclusively to expressive movements.⁴

Until now, I have discussed a method of analysis employing videotaped interactions on everyday occasions where the subjects were aware of being recorded and fully consenting. A different, experimental setup is described in McNeill's *Hand and Mind*. Here, the subjects were shown a film and then asked to retell the story as clearly and comprehensively as possible to a listener:

The narrator and listener were placed face-to-face in comfortable chairs at an angle of about 130°. The camera was off to one side, at an angle of about 60° with respect to the narrator's forward direction. In this way, one camera could resolve most movements in all three dimensions and was out of the speaker's direct view (however, no attempt was made to hide the camera). (McNeill, 1992, p. 374)

Subsequently, the material was processed by a team of researchers who transcribed the speech and gestural data, identifying different gestural movements, the preparation, stroke, or recovery phases, etc. However, McNeill offers a more specific insight into the video playback techniques that are key to identifying the relation between speech and movement:

The accuracy of placement of the gesture can then be made to within one syllable by using the slow-motion and freeze-frame features of the VCR: (1) move the

³ “[...] deliberate expressiveness is *manifest*, it is perceived *directly*, and requires no deductive processes leading to an *inference* of an intention. The intentionality of an action is something that is directly perceived. That is, it is the quality of the action as intentional [...] that is directly perceived. In other words, an action that is gestural has an immediate appearance of gesturalness” (Kendon, 2004, p. 15).

⁴ Sections 4 and 5 of this article will offer a phenomenological lead concerning these questions by dealing precisely with a certain experiential structure (namely, temporal types) that determines how gestures appear to others.

tape in slow-motion until you just reach the onset of the movement you are interested in; (2) pause the tape and note down the frame number; then (3) release the tape: you will hear the syllable that was in progress at this frame number. (McNeill, 1992, p. 377; see also pp. 13, 264)

Certainly, these techniques may well seem outdated in the current context, but they nevertheless familiarize us with the paradigmatic use of media in gesture studies. Techniques such as slow motion and freeze-frame, as well as repetition or zooming in, are meant to provide better clarification of the interaction being studied without distorting it in any way. Furthermore, as McNeill has demonstrated more recently (McNeill, 2005, pp. 279–280), other more advanced techniques of image processing are used to track the movements of the subject's hands and thus corroborate theoretical accounts.

3. The Experience of Slow-Motion Gestures

We can see now why it is so important for investigations in gesture studies to work with video material that renders the *pace* of movement with high precision. Any artifact introduced by the quality of the recording will greatly influence and modify the study object itself, leading to an entire chain of errors in the analysis. When determining the laws that describe the relationship between gesture and speech, it is vital that certain moments of the gestural movement — such as preparation, stroke, and recovery — match the moments of speech that they accompany. If the preparation phase is distorted by the recording (whether it is slowed down or accelerated), not only is there an alteration of the meaning or of the expressive component, but the gesture itself will turn out to function quite differently in relation to speech. However, as we saw, deliberately slowing down the video material — along with repetition, reversal, zooming in, or other techniques of image processing — is still widely used to pinpoint correlations more precisely, even in the case of the smallest, quickest gestures.

But can slow-motion material be of use in what it depicts *in itself*? What can viewing and working with interactions depicted as such in slow motion — in contrast to merely using slow motion as a tool for the more rigorous analysis of normal-paced gestures — reveal about the essence of gestures? It can be argued that a slow-motion recording presents us with a *different object* altogether, one that is no longer a real, objective interaction taking place in the real world between real subjects.⁵ We are dealing instead with a filmic object, a sequence that no longer refers to a real communicative event that took place somewhere outside of its frames, out there in the real world. However, by considering it a “slowed-down” or a “slow-paced version” of an original interaction, we do in fact tacitly maintain the reference to a real, up-to-tempo, objective version, no longer considering the slow-motion sample as such.

⁵ Moreover, it is not only the case that the field of gesture studies focuses on real-world gestural behaviours, but it is frequently of great importance *where* exactly in the real world the interaction takes place (e.g., Southern Italy), since studies may be dealing with specific gestures in a culture or community, e.g., the well-known *mano a borsa* (purse hand) or *mani giunte* (praying hands) frequently used in the region of Salerno, Italy — see Kendon (1995, pp. 247–249; 2004, pp. 231–232). For more on cultural differences in relation to gestures, see also Kendon (2004, pp. 326–354).

We can elucidate the fundamental structures of these radically different uses of slow motion by drawing a preliminary distinction between *slow-motion replay* and *slow-motion object*. In the case of the former, we slow down the video (up to the extreme case of frame-by-frame) so that we can better determine a certain moment of the real interaction, maintaining our orientation toward its real duration and pace throughout our analysis. In this case, the slow-motion function is a tool that helps researchers notice certain elements of the object studied (i.e., of the communicative interaction). However, if researchers were to shift their attitudes temporarily and consider what the slow-motion video depicts at face value, then they would in fact be dealing with a different object than the original, real one, for it was never the case that the hands of the subjects moved so sluggishly in the real-life interaction.

Husserl's analyses of image consciousness can help to clarify the specificities of this attitudinal change. It is well known that Husserl distinguishes between three levels of image constitution (Husserl, 1980, pp. 15–34 [17–35]): the *image thing* (*Bildding*) or the physical support of the image, e.g., the screen on which the video is played; the *image object* (*Bildobjekt*), i.e., the lines, shapes, nuances, and shades formed by the pixels on the screen; and the *image subject* (*Bildsujet*), that which is depicted in the image object, such as the hand gesture, the head nod, the facial expression, etc.⁶ By slowing down the videotape, we alter the speed at which the image object moves. The speed-moment of the image object can now be apprehended both as an analogizing and as a non-analogizing element (such as is the case with the size of the image object, its colour, etc.). In turn, this leaves us with two possible attitudes: the first, specific to the field of gesture studies, takes the slow motion of the image object as a mere non-analogizing moment, and thus brackets, as it were, the image subject constituted in the slow-motion clip: the researcher is interested not in a slow-moving hand gesture or facial expression, but in the way in which certain elements of the image object correlate with each other or with audio data. An extreme example of this can be seen in the image processing analysis that I mentioned above, in which researchers trace certain elements of the image object in order to better study the trajectory and amplitude of the movement of a gesturing hand. However, if instead of bracketing the slow-motion image subject, we do pay attention to it as our study object proper,⁷ and apprehend the pace as an analogizing moment, then we are in fact dealing with an entirely different object than in the former case. Through a certain attitudinal change, then, it is always possible in principle to shift our focus between what I called *slow-motion replay* and *slow-motion object*.

If this is true, then how is our experience structured when we turn toward the slow-motion image subject? In other words, what are we seeing in the slowed-down movements, and how is their meaning constituted? Jean Epstein goes so far as to argue that the more the video is slowed down, the more trouble we have in recognizing movements *as a form of human intentional accomplishment*. They gradually regress

⁶ See also Husserl's analysis of Dürer's engraving "Knight, Death and the Devil" in Husserl (1976, p. 252 [261–262]). For a detailed account of the distinctions mentioned here as well as of the structuring function of attention in the context of the complex intentionality of image consciousness, see Scanziani (2019, pp. 102–109).

⁷ This activity of attention should not be confused with the attentional interest discussed in the fifth section of this article, although they are indeed closely connected.

to animal-like behaviour and then even to plant movement: “Slowed down even more, every living substance returns to its fundamental viscosity [and] lets its basic colloidal nature rise to the surface” (Epstein, 1946, p. 59).⁸ The same thing, we could further argue, happens with movement in any denser environment, as in the case of underwater interactions between divers. Even at the normal, original tempo, their movements will appear slowed down, but this of course does not make the divers consider each other plants. Whether it be underwater communication or a slow-motion video of gestural behaviour, it is not the case that Epstein’s remark is to be taken literally, as if we could no longer apprehend human interaction as such and would instead see some form of animal or vegetal movement. Rather, through its colloidal aspect, slow motion highlights the intrinsic continuity of the nature of movement from human meaning-laden behaviour to natural “undulations of the hair of the mane [...]” or to “[...] the swaying of the forest,” (Epstein, 1946, p. 59). Nevertheless, it is true that the viscosity specific to slow motion modifies our subjective meaning-intentions in at least two main ways: (1) in some cases, it facilitates a deconstruction of the meaning-accomplishments that are otherwise at work in our normal intersubjective interactions, and (2) in other cases, it can function on the contrary as an intensification of interest in gestural meaning (see Section 5 below).

I believe the first aspect can especially be seen in the case of functional gestures rendered in slow motion. As mentioned, these are bodily movements that are meant not to communicate or express a meaning, but to perform some task, as in the case of barbers’ gestures in the exercise of their craft. To quote an argument made by Vilém Flusser (Flusser, 2014, pp. 1–9; see also Ciocan, 2022; Kendon, 2004, pp. 9–15), functional gestures can be satisfactorily explained in a causal manner: to cut the client’s hair, the barber performs this and that move, each of which is triggered by nervous impulses to the muscles, etc. There is no element of the movement as such that cannot be causally reduced to something else. But, when viewed in slow motion, these gestures no longer appear to us straightaway as such functional movements; instead, they seem to express or communicate something. Thus, as Flusser would have it, an element of meaning creeps in that can no longer be dealt with through mere causal explanation, and accordingly requires a theory of interpretation (Flusser, 2014, pp. 2–3).

To get an intuitive grasp of this modification, consider, for example, a sequence from Viola’s work *The Raft*. Viola’s experimental video begins with various people gathering as if for a group portrait. While some of them are reading, adjusting their appearances, making their way through the crowd, talking to each other, etc., the group is violently struck without notice by two powerful streams of water from opposite sides. Thus, the peaceful and serene atmosphere of the beginning is violently disrupted, although everything happens in slow motion, and we find ourselves in the middle of a disaster, where some have already fallen to the ground while others trip or try to maintain their balance against the force of the water. Though I cannot offer here a minute discussion of Viola’s video, some remarks in the literature concerning this work prove helpful for our discussion. For instance, Timon Beyes and Chris

⁸ As quoted in Merleau-Ponty (2020, p. 77). I would like to thank Christian Ferencz-Flatz for pointing out this passage.

Steyaert show that, in grasping the entire expressive richness of the slow-motion movements, “[s]omething as everyday as waiting becomes unnatural [...]” (Beyes & Steyaert, 2011, p. 46). Moreover, despite the fact that the authors focus on the production of space in that situation,⁹ their insight that in fact “Viola shows us the everyday richness of affect and embodiment but through slow motion and close-up restores them to a molecular level, to an almost original step-by-step nature so that we can see them at work” (Beyes & Steyaert, 2011, p. 46) also supports the claim that the slow-motion filmic technique allows us to access certain structures of bodily movement and expressivity. In retrospect, what we saw were of course mainly functional gestures — movements to fight away water, maintain one’s balance, break one’s fall, etc. However, on closer examination of our subjective viewing experience of this “unnatural everydayness,”¹⁰ we can notice that since everything was shown in slow motion, at a “molecular level,” we did not immediately apprehend the movements as functional, as we would normally do. This complex “[...] story of bodies and faces, water and sounds” (Beyes & Steyaert, 2011, p. 47) presents us with a certain expressivity or even a pictorial aspect that seemed to accompany them,¹¹ and which I will further investigate and attempt to better understand its underlying constitutive structures. Finally, highly relevant is also the author’s testimony that, after viewing the video, “I walked out conscious of my own walking, my own mood and my own sensation of the dark room” (Beyes & Steyaert, 2011, p. 47). This highlights how slow-motion techniques favour at the same time a reflexive attitude, guiding the viewer’s attention — like in a phenomenological endeavour — toward their own subjective experience. Thus, we can construe this as further proof of the inherent relevance of art, and in particular of these kind of media and filmic techniques, for the phenomenological investigation that breaks with the natural, everyday attitude and turns toward the immanent structures of experience.

4. Temporal Typification in the Experience of Slow-Motion Video

This peculiar experience of slow-motion gesture-apprehension offers a challenging example for phenomenological investigation. What is at stake is the particular way in which the apprehension of sense data delivered by the moving images constitutes the meaning of the intentional intersubjective object, i.e., the gestural behaviour. From the point of view of genetic phenomenology, this puzzling apperceptive shift at the heart of our viewing experience of slow-motion gestures — a shift between mere functionality and expression — offers significant insights for the elucidation of the fundamental temporal structures of gestural behaviour and its perception.

⁹ Which, to be sure, is in itself a key theme also for phenomenological research in general and especially for phenomenological aesthetics, but cannot be further discussed here, being a subject for an entire article. I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out Beyes and Steyaert’s discussion of Viola’s *The Raft*.

¹⁰ The constitution of this characteristic of “unnaturalness” or of the “uncanniness” of experience will be approached in the next two sections of this article.

¹¹ After all, one of Viola’s inspirations for this work was Géricault’s painting *The Raft of the Medusa*.

Our normal daily interactions with other people generally fall into an array of average paces or tempos. The sedimented traits of intersubjective experiences in our development teach us the normal rhythm, i.e., what to expect in any normal interaction, and how to understand others. We thus passively acquire certain types and habits that determine our intersubjective dynamic. Beginning with these fuzzy types of average movement, we come to apprehend the behaviour of others in one way or another. For instance, we perceive someone who is constantly making rash, swift, or precipitous gestures while communicating with us (or with someone else) as impulsive, angry, in a hurry, emotionally distressed, anxious, etc. Someone who gestures calmly with sluggish movements may come across as bored, lethargic, disinterested, etc. Along with the gestures themselves — or better yet, along with their physical shape (more or less ample and complex) — their pace and duration significantly contribute to their expressivity and to the wider context of their reception. The speed, shape, amplitude, and frequency of gestures complement their meaning, thus establishing and defining the intersubjective dynamic between the speaker and the listener by constantly indicating the disposition or state of mind of the one to the other.

Hence, our apperception of a gesture, that is, the way in which we grasp its meaning, is essentially determined by the speed with which the different movement phases succeed one another. More precisely, as Husserl's theory of expectation shows (Husserl, 1966, pp. 185–191 [235–242]), in the flow of our experience, what is impressionally present to us is always accompanied by various protentions and retentions that aim at what is absent at this precise moment — namely, they aim both at future, open perceptive possibilities and at just-passed perceptions that are still maintained in our consciousness even while sinking deeper and deeper into the continuum of retentions¹²:

[...] we have in the progression of experience on the one hand an ever new coexistence formed out of original experience itself, and on the other hand we have it interwoven with a structure of expectation, with a layer of anticipation, which is partly fulfilled by the experiencing, partly in conflict with the experiencing and annulled. (Husserl, 1966, pp. 186–187 [237])

Thus, every momentary perception is determined by what Husserl calls *intentions of anticipation*¹³ that depend on our passively acquired experiential types (*Typus*) and

¹² For the way in which Husserl deals with the problem of non-actual experiences linked to present ones prior to his elaborating the framework of genetic phenomenology — more specifically, in the *Logical Investigations* and in the next decade up to Husserl (1976) — see Dwyer (2007). Dwyer shows that as Husserl began working on his theory of time-consciousness, a few years after the first edition of the *Logical Investigations*, he modified his theory of intentionality by acknowledging “that the present moment reaches out beyond itself, that it is surrounded by a temporal horizon of past and future” (Dwyer, 2007, p. 85).

¹³ As Husserl puts it: “Every phase of perception is thus a radiating system of actual and potential intentions of anticipation” (Husserl, 1939, p. 93 [87]). For the difference between horizontal intentionality (such as the intentions toward the unseen side of a table, etc.) and intentions of anticipation (*Erwartungsententionen*), see Lohmar (1998, pp. 228–229).

that prescribe the usual patterns of anticipation. Types are pre-predicative empirical generalities based on passive syntheses of coincidences or congruences (*Deckungssynthese*) between similar past experiences that constantly develop and expand during our lives, guide any object-apprehension, and define our habitualities.¹⁴ To this extent, no object encountered in the world is absolutely unknown, but is given in the manner of pre-acquaintedness since it conforms to a more or less general type, from the highest degree of unfamiliarity as a mere “something” to the highly determinate and specific type of, say, a very close friend.

To better grasp this, we can think about the way musical structures work. When listening to a chord progression, our experience is never limited to whatever sound we hear in this particular instant, for our retention still holds in grasp the former sounds and/or the phases of the current sound while we protentively anticipate what will come next. But this anticipation is not as general as “*something* will happen next,” or even as “another *sound* will follow.” Apprehending a chord progression as such, we expect one of a certain range of possible sounds to follow, a range determined by our personal life experience as well as by our cultural paradigm. Lastly, we expect a final resolving chord that eliminates the tension created by the previous chords. Hearing it will fulfil the anticipation and contribute yet another instance to the long array of experiences that constitute this type in one’s experience. However, if the resolving chord is delayed or if it never sounds at all, we experience a certain feeling awakened by the contradiction or annulment of one’s expectation, a feeling musicians make good use of in their compositions.

I contend that this is also the case when dealing with slow-motion gestural objects¹⁵: our expectations are constantly disappointed or annulled. The familiarity of the scene is thus shattered to the point at which we are no longer sure what the behaviour means. In other words, when we are grasping the meaning of a movement or of a gesture according to our typified or habitual patterns, what we perceive at the subjective moment t_1 — for example, a hand stretching downward — motivates the expectation that at t_2 the movement will proceed in a certain way, for example, with the hand landing on the ground and breaking a fall. Our pre-constituted types concerning a falling person in our day-to-day experience (and not, say, on the moon) determine the general tempo at which we expect t_2 to occur. But, when the anticipated elements are somehow distorted in slow motion — when at the subsequent subjective moments t_2, t_3, t_4 , etc., which themselves succeed each other at their usual pace, the hand is still floating, only inching toward the ground — then we are faced with what can be called an *undecidable gesture*. This means that new,

¹⁴ For Husserl’s concept of typifications, see Husserl (1939, pp. 26–36 [31–39], 381–408 [317–338]). See also (Ferencz-Flatz, 2014; Lohmar, 1998, pp. 236–244, 2003, 2008, pp. 103–156; Schütz, 1959; Steinbock, 1995, pp. 159–162). For an ample discussion of Husserl’s concept of habitus and habituality in his mature genetic phenomenology, see Moran (2011). On the relation between typification and eidetic variation, see De Santis (2011); Ferencz-Flatz (2019); and Schütz (1959).

¹⁵ For the sake of clarity, I leave aside the level of image consciousness that is always at play here. However, we should bear in mind that the processes analyzed here are not processes of mere perception, but take place in the constitution of the image subject (see Section 2 above). Hence, all the kinaesthetic possibilities of further explicating the gestural object in the manner of “I can” (such as seeing it from another angle, from a distance, etc.) do not come into play.

conflicting horizons of meaning open up. For example, the hand could be reaching in a helping gesture toward another who has fallen, as if asking “are you OK?” or saying “take my hand,” or it could be reaching out in that person’s own effort to maintain balance or to break a fall.

Furthermore, this analysis goes even deeper than just instantiating another example of disappointed anticipations, since it also brings forth a new species of typification, and consequently another way in which anticipations can be disappointed. Husserl mainly discusses how types determine, by association, our anticipations of future possible presentations¹⁶: a stretched hand in a pointing gesture will eventually return to its normal, relaxed position and not transform into, say, a melody; when we see a dog, we can immediately anticipate its behaviour, e.g., how it will eat, play, run, etc. (Husserl, 1939, p. 399 [331]). Thus, types offer the general style¹⁷ of further possible experiences. But, in our case of the experience of video in slow motion, it does not suffice to say that the style is contradicted as such. In other words, it is not the “what” of future phases, nor the “how,” but rather the “when”: it is the expected pace of the procession (*Ablauf*) of anticipated givenness that is disappointed. The progressive fulfilment of expectations is not hindered as such; it is rather the pace at which it continues that is constantly challenging our general expectation. The rate at which the objective moments tO_1 , tO_2 , etc., of the movement succeed is different from the rate we expect.¹⁸ We are dealing with a significant mismatch between the tempo of the objective moments and the anticipated subjective tempo, which is to say that the temporal type — i.e., the array of paces at which we are accustomed to experience the phases of the movement unfold — is put into question, leading to the apperceptive challenges already mentioned.

Working with what I call *slow-motion objects* thus proves relevant for phenomenology and for the phenomenology of gestures in particular, since it reveals the essential traits of temporal typification at play in the apprehension of the meaning of movement. It becomes clear that different meanings are constituted through the span of our retentive-protentive gaze, or in Merleau-Ponty’s words, that they

are linked to a certain tempo of presentation, are modes of temporalization, are of a piece with the existence of a certain temporal field (it’s the field that makes me unable, despite all my efforts, to see a movement [shown] in slow motion as the same movement at normal speed, even “taking into account” the slow motion, the dilation of time). (Merleau-Ponty, 2020, p. 77)

In summary, it is not only that our passively acquired experiential types determine our expectations regarding the object and its parts: I see a house from afar, just as I have seen so many other houses before, and I thus expect that, as my perception

¹⁶ “[...] we can say in evidence: I expect q ’ here because I have experienced q under similar circumstances, and this ‘because-thus’ is given in evidence. Correlatively: I infer ‘inductively’ in complete evidence the present, similar arrival from what has arrived under previous, similar circumstances” (Husserl, 1966, p. 188 [238]).

¹⁷ For the concept of style and the complexes of institutions involved, see Meacham (2013).

¹⁸ This constitutes an essential difference from the experience of other experimental techniques such as, e.g., repetition, in which case at the subjective moment t_2 , the same object is given again as at t_1 .

proceeds, I will see that the house has doors, windows, a roof, etc. But, on the subjective plane, these types also determine certain expectations regarding the pace of the different phases of the flux of my experience. Therefore, a peculiar discrepancy — or to return to the music analogy, a “dissonance” — bursts into our subjective, monadic temporal typifications. Breaking with our familiar apperceptive patterns by “dilating” the usual objective duration and thus also altering the pace, slow motion often awakens a feeling of uncanniness, unlike the usual process of fulfilment that in Husserl’s view grants “a specific feeling of satisfaction in this enrichment” (Husserl, 1939, p. 92 [86]).

However, it could also be argued that, actually, after perceiving object X at t_1 , I expect to perceive object Y at t_2 , but since Y is *not* given as such at the subjective moment t_2 , my expectation remains a mere unfulfilled intention. This argument thereby reduces what I have called the *disappointment of temporal typification* to the disappointment of types concerning the givenness of objects and their parts (the “what”). However, this does not seem to hold, since it cannot account for the expected pace at which t_1 and t_2 succeed one another, and thus allows for an illegitimate importation of objective time into the sphere of consciousness, reducing t_1 and t_2 to tO_1 and tO_2 .

5. Slow Motion and Attention

The second aspect I mentioned earlier (see Section 3 above) has to do with the opposite case, namely, the *intensification of interest in gestural meaning*. In plain terms, slow-motion gestural objects grab our attention in a special way. We are all familiar with slow-motion or super-slow-motion footage in races, sporting events, or experiments involving high-velocity events (for example, bullets going through different kinds of materials, etc.). In this case, one of the main factors that makes them so appealing to the viewer is the richness of details that are difficult or impossible to notice at a normal pace. It is the same ease of noticing that — as we saw in Section 2 — makes slow motion a vital tool in gesture studies. However, this is not the case with what I have called *slow-motion gestural objects*. Even simple, everyday gestures that do not overwhelm us with exotic details when slowed down still come forth as if emphasized and more expressive. As I will show, this has to do with the already mentioned disappointment of our temporal types and their influence on the apperceptive process that constitutes the image subject.

Aside from, perhaps, sign language and other conventional or emblematic¹⁹ gestures (such as the gestures of traffic officers, etc.), it is rarely the case that our gestures function as labels, referring in an exterior fashion to a sense or meaning. Therefore, it is of great importance to consider how gestural meanings are constituted in the dynamic process of gesture perception. We see this even in the simplest gesture of pointing to something, which can be performed in a myriad of ways and implies much more than just the indication of a spatial position (see, in this respect, Ferencz-Flatz, 2022).

¹⁹ On emblems and quotable gestures, see Kendon (2004, pp. 335–344).

We can gain a more intuitive grasp of the specific phenomenon of intensification of interest in gestural meaning by turning to a famous slow-motion scene in Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*. More specifically, I am referring to the brief tight frame in which the main character, Alex, reaches out — toward us, since it is a subjective perspective — in a gesture of inviting his mate Dim to grab his hand and get out of the water. Despite the dominant comedy of the situation generated by Dim and Georgie, who seem to be desperately fighting to escape drowning in knee-high water, we immediately recognize the gesture, its meaning, and its importance in the logic of the story. Had it not been slowed down, it could have easily gone unnoticed, or in Husserlian terms, it could have been only “implicitly perceived” (Husserl, 2004, p. 89) and assimilated without further ado to the context of the comical and ludicrous situation. This gesture cannot, however, pass as a mere gag; instead, it is central to the narration, since it highlights Alex's deceiving (we see him in a previous frame pulling out a knife behind his back) and dominating response to Georgie's rebellion. The slow-motion solution also eliminates the need for repetition, a repetition that would only have diluted the gesture and contrasted, within the wider logic of the scene, with the assertiveness of the main character. Instead, at this particular pace, the gesture not only comes through clearly in its initial (feigned) meaning of offering help, but also carries the power and imperative character of a command, which will eventually become a punishment when Alex slits Dim's hand and lets him fall back into the water.

Accordingly, here slow motion does not distort our intentional accomplishments, but rather highlights the essential traits of the intersubjective context and of the hierarchy being established. It is not just the duration of the phases of the gesture that is expanded, but also its connotations, which are now placed in the centre of the intricate dynamic of power relations. So, how exactly is this intensification phenomenologically constituted? It can be observed that we are dealing with a complex intentional relation between *two* image subjects: the slow-moving one and the normal-pace one that is actually being depicted in the scene (since the scene does not imply that the characters suddenly begin to move very slowly). If this is true, then considering the slow pace of the image object to be a mere non-analogizing moment would lead to the sole presentification in the viewing experience of the normal-paced image subject. This is the case, as we have seen, in the analyses of gesture studies or when watching old low-frame-rate movies where the pace of movements is distorted without it playing any role in the meaning of the scene. But, in Kubrick's slow-motion scene, the effect generated by the slow pace can only be explained on the basis of the relation that holds between these two image subjects that compete with each other (or better yet, *complete* each other) in our perception. If the viewer's experience is in fact oriented toward the normal-pace image subject while it is also passively determined by the implicit presentification of the slow-motion one, then the phenomenological analysis that thematizes the constitution of this latter, possible image subject can highlight the particular attentional structure that determines the connotations of the normal-pace image subject, and thus of the entire scene. For, as I will further show, the slow-motion gestural object structures our perceptive field by making the normal-pace gesture *stand out* against the backdrop of our general perception.

To clarify this, I will draw on Husserl’s early theory of attention, first developed in a text from 1898 and then revisited in a lecture from 1904/05.²⁰ Husserl develops this theory within the more general framework of perception and its different kinds of content: (a) immanent or really intrinsic (*reel*) presentive content (primary content or sensations) that, through the interpretative apperception (*deutende Auffassung*), constitutes the appearing of (b) the intentional content, that is, the presented, transcendent object.²¹ Already at this stage, attention functions for Husserl in the manner of a spotlight: it shines upon objects or parts of objects already implicitly given in our perception.²² But this highlighting is comprised of two interrelated modes, namely, the *intending* (*Meinung*) and the *interest* (*Interesse*).²³ To grasp this distinction, we must bear in mind that in Husserl’s theory of perception, every perceived object, be it a simple or a complex object (such as, for example, a collection), is a multiplicity in unity; that is, every perception allows, at the same time and in identity with it, multiple partial perceptions (*Sonderwahrnehmungen*) or partial intentions (*Sondermeinungen*) of parts of the intentional object (Husserl, 2004, p. 69). That is to say, a total perception (*Gesamtwahrnehmung*) is not a sum of individual

²⁰ For the following, see Breyer (2012, pp. 149–158); Dwyer (2007); Husserl (2004, pp. 68–123); Scanziani (2019); Wehrle (2013, pp. 89–100). However, the current discussions dealing with Husserl’s theory (or theories) of attention are so vast and multifarious that I cannot account for them here. Thus, I will merely indicate a few directions relevant for our topic. For a descriptive analysis of attention as the *praxis* of intentionality, see Depraz (2004). On the significance of Husserl’s theory of attention for critical reflection, see Jacobs (2016). For an analysis of the intertwining of developed habits and attention in the framework of a Merleau-Pontyan analysis of agency, see Romdenh-Romluc (2013). For Gurwitsch’s critique of Husserl’s account of attention, see Arvidson (2006, pp. 86–114). On the advantages and limitations of understanding reflection as an attentional modification in order to reject Natorp’s challenge to the reflective approach to experience, see Zahavi (2005, pp. 88–96).

²¹ See Husserl (2004, pp. 8–14) for the basic concepts of the analysis of perception, and Husserl (2004, pp. 15–18) for a discussion of apperception (*Auffassung*). For Husserl’s early theory of perception and the distinction between different kinds of contents, see also the *Fifth Logical Investigation* — see especially Husserl (1984, pp. 352–440 [81–127]). In the following analyses, I do not offer an in-depth account of attention and image consciousness, since attention can function across the spectrum of acts without affecting the original doxic position implied by the initial apprehension. For a detailed account of this trait of attention, see Scanziani’s argument regarding the “plasticity of attention” (Scanziani, 2019, pp. 92–98). I also do not consider the specific form of aesthetic interest to be relevant for my main point.

²² See Wehrle (2013, p. 100). Husserl takes up and explicitly discusses the metaphor of the spotlight a decade later in Husserl (1976): “Attention is usually compared to a spot light. The object of attention, in the specific sense, lies in the cone of more or less bright light; but it can also move into the penumbra and into the completely dark region. Though the metaphor is far from adequate to differentiate all the modes which can be fixed phenomenologically, it is still designative in so far as it indicates alterations in what appears, as what appears. These changes in its illumination do not alter what appears with respect to its own sense-composition; but brightness and obscurity modify its mode of appearance [...].” (Husserl, 1976, p. 191 [224]).

²³ On Husserl’s attempts to differentiate between attention and intention, as well as on their dynamic in the activity of the former, see Bégout (2007, pp. 15–24). However, Bégout does not discuss the 1904/05 lecture and tackles other lectures (mainly after 1904/05) where Husserl does not mention the distinction between intending and interest — though the latter will come up again, as Bégout rightly observes, in *Experience and Judgment*. This leads to the presentation of a concept of attention not as an act, but as a superimposed modification of intentions (in this regard, see also Depraz (2004, pp. 8–10)). It is, however, outside the scope of this article to clarify the way in which Husserl’s view of attention changed after the 1904/05 lecture, which still remains an important theme for future scholarship.

perceptions, but a unitary act of perception that allows the special intending of various objective moments. Hence, attention as *intending* delimits, emphasizes, or favours one or more of these objective moments²⁴ against the general, unnoticed perceptive background: “[...] in the perception that is only now presented as an act of its own, precisely this object and no other is intended in a self-contained manner.”²⁵

To be sure, interest also presupposes delimitation, but it is not interest itself that actually carries out this delimitation, since it is not an objectifying act, but is only founded on the objectifying character of intending.²⁶ Interest is especially analyzed by Husserl in its epistemological relevance, namely, as making an object or a part of it the theme²⁷ of theoretical accomplishments. But, as has been shown,²⁸ it need not be understood solely in terms of theoretical interest. Hence, for Husserl, interest is founded on intending, and essentially belongs, along with intending, to the structure of any perception (Husserl, 2004, pp. 103–109). For our topic, the most important difference between interest and intending is that the former is an emotional act (*Gemütsakt*), while the latter is an objectifying act that lacks any emotional basis: “We speak often enough of a burning interest, but it makes no sense to speak of a burning intending [...]; I intend it, I perceive it in its own right in a perception, there are no differences of intensity.”²⁹ Thus, interest in something is determined by a form of affection.³⁰ It has been argued that the turning toward (*Zuwendung*) specific to interest is motivated by that content of our general field of experience to which we have been less attentive (Scanziani, 2019, p. 89). As I will further show, this content need not be another object or part of an object in our experiential background; it can also be a kind of passively acquired typification at work in the constitutive process of apprehension.

Applying Husserl’s distinctions to our discussion, it can now be argued that what affects us, or the force that drives our interest in the slow-motion gestural object, is a

²⁴ For an analysis of the descriptive, immanent level of attention as a transition from one part of the sensuous content to another, see Dwyer (2007, p. 88). In light of Husserl’s later theory of attention, it seems to me that intending could be similar to the way Bégout first describes attention, “to be adjusted to an object”: “The object of attention is what is given itself, picked out, so that attention is equal to the giving of something itself. But, around the object, in its surroundings, many other objects are apprehended also by consciousness” (Bégout, 2007, p. 19).

²⁵ “[...] in der Wahrnehmung, die sich nun erst als ein eigener Akt darstellt, ist in abgeschlossener Weise gerade dieser und kein anderer Gegenstand gemeint” (Husserl, 2004, p. 116, my translation). See also Husserl (2004, pp. 73–75); Wehrle (2013, p. 93).

²⁶ As Husserl concludes, “[t]he favouring intending and the favouring interest go hand in hand” (“[d]as bevorzugende Meinen und das bevorzugende Interesse gehen Hand in Hand”) (Husserl, 2004, p. 119, my translation).

²⁷ Husserl once again takes up the analysis of interest as making something our theme in §§19–21 of *Experience and Judgment* (see especially, Husserl (1939, pp. 86–94 [81–88])). See also Bégout (2007, pp. 24–32) and Wehrle (2013, pp. 100–107).

²⁸ I follow in this regard Wehrle, who argues that interest can also be considered “a fundamental aspect of perception itself, even though Husserl makes use here mostly of epistemological metaphors in order to explain the phenomenon” (Wehrle, 2013, p. 94, my translation).

²⁹ “Von einem brennenden Interesse sprechen wir oft genug, von einer brennenden Meinung zu reden, gibt keinen Sinn [...] [i]ch meine ihn, ich nehme ihn in einer Wahrnehmung für sich wahr, das gibt keine Intensitätsdifferenzen” (Husserl, 2004, p. 118, my translation).

³⁰ As Steinbock put it, Husserl conceives this affective allure in connection to attention as “[...] an enticement to be on the part of the ‘object,’ a motivational (not causal) solicitation or pull to attentiveness, eventually to respond egoically and epistemically [...]” (Steinbock, 2004, p. 24).

feeling — namely, that of unfamiliarity or of the uncanny determined, as I indicated, by the disappointment of our temporal types, since “[e]very feeling connected to the interesting thing raises the intensity of the interest.”³¹ But interest also implies, as Husserl elaborates, taking pleasure (*Lust*) in the activity (*Betätigung*) of the interest. More precisely, it is the pleasure in the rhythmicity of the *release* our interest gains by new fulfilments, while at the same time these fulfilments awaken other empty intentions that *tense* it once again (Husserl, 2004, p. 104). In the case of ordinary perception, this can motivate further kinaestheses in the process of perception. However, in our case of image consciousness, the lack (*Mangel*) that tensions our interest is determined by the *disappointments of temporal types*, i.e., the lack of anticipated fulfilments with regard to the expected duration of the object. Thus, it is not the sensible data as such (colours on the screen) or a part of the intentional object, but the feeling of unfamiliarity that maintains our turning toward the slow-motion gestural motion and intensifies our interest regarding its meaning.

The phenomenon that I am analyzing regarding the intensification of interest in gestural meaning also adds a new dimension to Husserl’s theory of attention, opening it up to a genetic point of view. Husserl lists some of the objective conditions that make it impossible for some perceived objects to go unnoticed, such as the horn of a passing locomotive, an explosion nearby, or lightning in the dark of night (Husserl, 2004, p. 93). He then argues that the salience of these events is due to two elements: *sense data* (or sensations) and their *presenting function*, i.e., what they actually mean. Regarding the first, we are dealing with an excess of the intensity of the sensation (be it visual, auditory, tactile, etc.). As to the latter, it is the apprehended object itself (e.g., a violent situation, a scary sound, a gruesome scene, etc.) — in short, a constituted objective meaning — that cannot be overlooked. In this sense, “[...] we are led back to the innate and acquired dispositions and to the momentary state of consciousness.”³² To be sure, in his analyses of 1904/05 on intending and interest, Husserl does not dig deeper into these acquired dispositions. Despite this, the discussion in this section hopefully shows that Husserl’s static account of attention can be integrated within a genetic point of view. What allows this is the fact that attention as interest is grounded on affective states or emotions that, as I have tried to show, are determined by the contradiction of our passively constituted types regarding the object’s pace. Finally, this opens up further directions of research in the phenomenology of attention by offering, more precisely, a lead regarding how consciousness selects objects from its background, based on the complex relationship between attention and typification in general.

6. Conclusion

This article has explored a specific way to employ slow-motion video in the phenomenological analysis of gestures. I have distinguished this use from the use that

³¹ “Jedes an die interessanten Sachen geknüpfte Gefühl hebt die Intensität des Interesses” (Husserl, 2004, p. 107, my translation).

³² “[...] werden wir also auf die angeborenen und erworbenen Dispositionen und die momentane Bewusstseinslage zurückgeführt” (Husserl, 2004, p. 95, my translation).

audiovisual recordings play in the field of an empirical science like gesture studies. The key distinction I have emphasized has to do with a change of focus from the original interaction captured by the video recording to the imagistic subject as depicted in the slow-motion material. This, I have argued, furnishes the phenomenologist with an altogether different object than the real one considered in the empirical endeavour of gesture studies, one that lacks any doxic position. In Husserl's vocabulary of eidetics, we could speak of slow-motion material as a source of pure *variants* of gestural phenomena, free from any connection with the real world and its physical, social, or cultural constraints.³³

I have further argued that this kind of objectuality affects what I called *temporal types*, leading in turn either to (a) a deconstruction of gestural meaning or to (b) an intensification of the interest in gestural meaning. As a species of our passively acquired types, temporal types have to do with the usual pace of events, thus constituting our expectations about the temporality of experiences. Regarding the first aspect — the deconstruction of gestural meaning — I have demonstrated that temporal types can be disappointed when a mismatch occurs between our subjectively anticipated objectual pace and the pace of the object itself. I have therefore argued that the distinction between functional and expressive movements can be challenged when we are dealing with slow-motion gestures. Furthermore, as we have seen in the analysis of the sequence from Viola's *The Raft*, although gestures may lose their manifest functional character, they may gain an intimating trait and appear to be directed not at something, but toward someone. To be sure, this has to do with the way in which we apprehend the movement phases of the other's body and their pace. By slowing down movement, the possibility of new partial meanings arises; thus, which elements facilitate this specific way of apprehension can also be investigated. In other words, what is it that makes one question the functional nature of the gesture and understand it instead as an instance of communication? Slow-motion video can offer countless examples of situations through which phenomenology can explore how variations of bodily movement blur the distinction between the functional and communicative nature of gesture.

The second aspect — the intensification of interest in gestural meaning — showed how the same disappointment of temporal types can direct our interest by awakening a feeling of unfamiliarity. Contrasting with our usual way of apprehending a gestural behaviour, the slow-motion gesture gains, so to speak, centre stage. We are not only turned toward this particular object in our general field of consciousness, but we take a heightened interest in it, grasping the entire complexity of its meaning. As I have argued, our attention is not grabbed by the richness of otherwise unnoticeable moments, but by the emotional basis that, as Husserl shows, drives interest. The difference between this intensification of interest and the deconstruction of gestural meaning also has to do with the alternance and the ensuing contrast (or lack thereof in the case of *The Raft*) between normal-paced and slow-motion scenes in the economy of the film; in the case of *A Clockwork Orange*, the gestural meaning is already set up and anticipated from the construction of the general normal-paced context of the greater sequence, the isolated slow-motion scene adding, in the described manner,

³³ For the process of eidetic variation, see De Santis (2011) and Lohmar (2005).

emphasis and nuances to the complex gestural meaning. In the case of *The Raft*, however, the entire story unfolds in slow-motion allowing for the wider play of gestural meanings. Hence, slow-motion reveals, on the one hand, the central structures of meaning apprehension, i.e., the temporal constitution of gestural expressivity, and highlights, on the other hand, the affective element at work in orienting our attention. Finally, this use of slow-motion video material in phenomenological analysis — particularly concerning the significance of the confirmation or contradiction of temporal types for meaning-constitution and attention — can open further research directions significant both for the study of gestures as such as well as for genetic and eidetic phenomenology.

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