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ON VISUAL LAW: VISUAL LEGAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES AND THEIR SCHOLARLY EXPLORATION

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Abstract: Digital visual media have implications for the law. Also, the interest in visual legal communication is growing both within and outside the legal context. In light of these observations, this paper addresses various related questions: Is there already a trend toward visual legal communication practices? If there is, what does this trend look like? If no such trend exists at present, what might it look like in future? Do the established disciplines of applicable law and/or the basic legal disciplines explore these sensory legal communication practices? If they do, which specific legal disciplines are these? The principal findings of this paper are: first, a trend toward visual legal communication practices exists, and these practices manifest themselves both within and outside the legal context. Second, whereas these practices are interconnected, delimiting them from each other sometimes proves difficult. Third, the established disciplines of applicable law and/or the basic legal disciplines explore most visual legal communication practices. No single legal discipline, however, covers all these practices. Instead, most disciplines refer only to specific visual legal communication practices. In addition, these disciplines explore these practices merely as a

1 I would like to extend my special thanks to Franz Kummer, co-founder and co-proprietor of Weblaw corporation (Switzerland), for inviting me to write this article. Furthermore, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Mark Kyburz for his editorial assistance.
sideline. In other words, their main research focus lies elsewhere. Consequently, these phenomena need to be studied more intensively. There is a strong need for a legal discipline capable of exploring all visual legal communication practices. Visual law should be assigned this task.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Vox Iurisprudentiae Picturae

The expression “vox” stems from Latin. Among other meanings, “vox” means “voice,” “speech,” and “remark.” *Iurisprudentia picturata* or what might tentatively be called visual law has actually had a scholarly voice for quite a long time. It emerged as a legal discipline and began exploring the law as a visual phenomenon already in the 17th and 18th centuries.³

Commenting on the 20th century (1995), Katsh observed in *Law in a Digital World*:

> We live in an increasingly visual culture and are exposed to evergrowing quantities of pictures, images, icons, charts, graphs, scales, tables, diagrams, maps, sketches, blueprints, and colorful and animated graphics. [...] As new electronic tools promote the graphical, will new energies be focused on both understanding and creating through visual means? Will an increasingly visual culture devote more attention to the visual and teach about it just as print culture recognized that reading and writing text were fundamental skills that should occupy fundamental positions in the curriculum? Can the new media narrow the gulf between “visual reading” and “visual writing,” between visual consuming and visual creating, in the same manner that print narrowed the gulf between textual reading and writing? Is it likely that the new technologies can effect a new balance between visual consumer and visual creator? And if this occurs, what impact will it have on a text-oriented enterprise such as law?⁴

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² See Petschenig, *Der kleine Stowasser*, 540.
Voiced nearly two decades ago, KATSH’S visionary observations remain valid to this day.

1.2 Beyond Verbocentrism: Law as a Not Exclusively Textual Phenomenon

KATSH calls the law “a text‐oriented universe.” In Law on Display, FEIGENSON & SPIESEL note that “Law has traditionally been about words: trial testimony and oral argument, statutes and judicial opinions, negotiations and jury deliberations.”

RÜTHERS, FISCHER, & BIRK, three German‐speaking legal theorists, claim that “[n]o law exists outside language [[e]s gibt kein Recht ausserhalb der Sprache] [my translation].” In the legal context, the verbocentric paradigm remains dominant to this day. For that reason, SILBÉY calls legal actors “word people and not picture people.”

Given the emergence of visual digital media, some legal scholars have begun to question this paradigm. They suggest that a “visual turn” or pictorial turn is occurring in the legal context.

1.3 Questions

The scholarly voices advocating a visual or pictorial turn in the legal context have a bearing on the key questions raised in this paper: Is there already a trend toward visual law, that is, toward the law as a visual phenomenon? In other words, is there already a trend toward visual legal communication practices? If so, what does this trend look like? If not yet, what might such a trend look like? Do the established disciplines of applicable law and/or the basic legal disciplines explore these sensory legal communication practices? If so, which specific legal disciplines are these?

On the basis of various illustrative examples, I shall explore whether there is already a trend toward visual legal communication practices both within and outside the

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5 Id., Law in a Digital World, 146.
6 Feigenson & Spiesel, Law on Display, xi. See also http://lawondisplay.fromthesquare.org (last accessed on July 22, 2013).
7 Rüthers, Fischer, & Birk, Rechtstheorie mit Juristischer Methodenlehre, 99 n. 150.
legal context. I shall only mention legal disciplines that explore these practices. The examples given are not meant to be exhaustive.

2 VISUAL LEGAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

2.1 Visual Legal Communication Practices outside the Legal Context

2.1.1 Visual Legal Culture

2.1.1.1 High Visual Legal Culture: Visual Legal Art

Occasionally, I am asked what I do for a living. I respond, "I am responsible for the content management of a legal image database (affiliated with the Legal Visualization Unit, Department of Law, University of Zurich, Switzerland)." Moreover, I explore visual law, that is, the law as a visual phenomenon both within and outside the legal context." Such a reply often prompts bewilderment. If my counterpart is still curious to know more, I ask whether she or he has ever seen a picture of Justice (iustitia). "Are you familiar with HONORÉ DAUMIER'S caricatures of lawyers?" Often, their face then brightens and expresses a sense of clarity. "Yes, of course, this sounds interesting! Now I can imagine what you do."

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Fig. 1. Gabriël Metsu, The Triumph of Justice

As we know, art (high culture) can manifest itself as a visual phenomenon. In high legal culture, the law can also appear as a visual phenomenon. What does this mean? In Law and the Image, DOUZINAS & NEAD write:

The relationship between law and art can be analytically distinguished into two components: law’s art, the ways in which political and legal systems have shaped, used, and regulated images and art, and art’s law, the representation of law, justice, and other legal themes in art.13

12 http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7b/Gabri%C3%ABl_Metsu_008.jpg (last accessed on July 22, 2013). This picture is in public domain.
This kind of representation may be visual, verbo-visual, and/or verbal (law and literature). In high visual legal culture, especially visual legal representations are important. For instance, the building of the European Court of Human Rights can be considered a work of visual legal art.¹⁴

Legal iconography¹⁵, legal iconology,¹⁶ the art and law movement,¹⁷ and visual legal semiotics,¹⁸ all explore visual art’s law or, to put it more simply, visual legal art as a product of high legal culture.

2.1.1.2 Popular Visual Legal Culture

In a narrow sense, popular legal culture “includes commercial texts (such as movies, TV shows, or novels) about law, lawyers, or the legal system.”¹⁹ Put differently, legal and legally relevant pictures or images published by the mass media fall under this category. Such legal images depict various kinds of legal actors (law professors, law students, lawyers, judges, policemen, public officials, members of parliament, prosecutors, persons involved in legal conflicts, or other public or private legal affairs, and so forth). These visual legal representations can also contain legal objects, such as movable goods and immovable, legal events (such as the conclusion of a contract), and so forth.

Such phenomena are studied by popular legal studies²⁰ and visual legal semiotics.²¹

¹⁴ On its symbolic value, see, for instance, ECHR – Itineris (English version), available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=po75tV7r4U (last accessed on July 22, 2013).
¹⁸ On visual legal semiotics, see Wagner & Sherwin (eds.), Law, Culture and Visual Studies (forthcoming).
¹⁹ Asimow & Mader, Law and Popular Culture, 4.
What I hope these remarks establish is that the visual phenomena of popular legal culture do not really belong to the legal context. Yet there is “two-way traffic between law and popular culture.” That is to say, there are manifold interactions between law (i.e., the legal context) and popular culture, particularly in US-American jurisdiction.

2.1.2 Further Visual Legally Relevant Contents

Legal visualizations conveying psychological or rather psycholegal contents are one example of further visual legally relevant contents. For instance, lawyers and/or mediators can work with mental images, by telling their clients a story. In a family law conflict, these images might visualize “the crucial elements of the couple’s conflict.” As we know, such a conflict often not only has legal but also social, economic, and psychological dimensions. BODENMANN’S “verbo-visual model based on stress theory” explains “the possible causes of divorce.” His model is another example of visual legally relevant contents.

The two above examples could also be considered to be legal visualizations in private legal practice (see below 2.2.4.2). Since they are primarily related to psychology, brief reference is made to them here.

2.2 Visual Legal Communication Practices in the Legal Context

2.2.1 Legal Visualizations in Legislation and in the Legal Sources in a Strict Sense

Legal visualizations could be used in the legislative process.

The sources of the law in a strict sense or, more precisely, certain of their provisions, can appear exceptionally as visual phenomena:

*Images have a shadowy existence in modern law. Legal texts—whether laws, judgements or learned documents—on the whole contain no images or*

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22 Sherwin, “Imagining Law as Film,” 246.
23 Hohmann & Morawe, Praxis der Familienmediation, 200.
graphics. Text-books without images are almost symbolic of the subject of law. Although even here—as in all things in life—the exceptions prove the rule. The Highway Code with its images of traffic signals is the most obvious example. And in the fields of invention, patent and brand ownership, law images are not just normal, they are indispensable.  

As a rule, these legal norm visualizations have legal force (legal visualization in legislation).

Other legal norm visualizations have not yet obtained legal force, but may do so one day. In Visualisierung von Rechtsnormen [Visualization of Legal Norms], I developed and applied a method for visualizing legal norms.  

Figure 2 serves as a case in point.

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27 See Brunschwig, Visualisierung von Rechtsnormen, 80–10 and 154–208.
I would encourage legislative bodies to increasingly consider whether and, if so, how legal visualizations could be incorporated in future laws.

Bommarito & Katz, the founders of Computational Legal Studies,\(^\text{28}\) have created a legal visualization for measuring the complexity of the United States Code.\(^\text{29}\) This legal visualization does not constitute a legal norm visualization. Nevertheless, it might be seen as a step toward visualizing laws or at least some of their provisions. Assogba, Ross, & McKeon suggest visualizing US Federal legislation\(^\text{30}\); Aktolga, Ros, & Assogba have launched a similar initiative.\(^\text{31}\) In “Enhancing the Visualization of Law,” Curtotti & McCreathe also advocate visualizing legislation.\(^\text{32}\)

\(^{28}\) See http://computationallegalstudies.com (last accessed on July 22, 2013).


\(^{32}\) Curtotti & McCreathe, “Enhancing the Visualization of Law,” 1–27.
In sum, legal iconography, legal informatics, legal pedagogy, legal sociology, legal theory, and visual legal semiotics all explore legal norm visualizations.

2.2.2 Legal Visualizations in Court Judgments

To an increasing degree, “it seems, courts tend to integrate or embed visualizations in their judgments.”

In recent years, the media have expected courts to inform the general public about proceedings and rulings. In response, some courts have resorted to public relations activities such as establishing designated websites and issuing media bulletins. Along with such verbal legal communication, I could well imagine courts also practicing visual legal communication (visual court PR). Thus, visual court PR would intersect with e-justice (2.2.4.1).

To my knowledge, the law of procedure does not really study the use of legal visualizations in court judgments and visual court PR and, if it does, then only marginally. I am not aware of any other legal disciplines that might study these sensory phenomena, except perhaps visual legal semiotics.

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33 See, for instance, Brunschwig, Visualisierung von Rechtsnormen, 23–26.
36 See Holzer, Rechtsvisualisierung im Strafrecht, 56.
38 See, for instance, Brunschwig, Visualisierung von Rechtsnormen, 80–81.
40 The Institut für Rechtswissenschaft und Rechtspraxis [= Institute for Jurisprudence and Legal Practice] at the University of St. Gallen [Switzerland] organized a conference on “Kommunikation der Gerichte” [= Court Communication], which was devoted to verbal court communication (see http://www.irp.unisg.ch/~/media/Internet/Content/Dateien/InstituteUndCenters/IRP/Pdf%20Tagungen/2013/1083_Kommunikation%20der%20Gerichte.ashx; last accessed on July 22, 2013).
2.2.3 Visual Jurisprudence: Legal Visualizations in Legal Education and Research

Legal visualizations play an important role in jurisprudence, that is, in legal education and research.

2.2.3.1 Legal Visualizations in Legal Education

As regards legal visualizations in legal education, I would distinguish between what I would tentatively call material legal visualizations and mental legal visualizations.

In 2011, the Department of Law, University of Basel, Switzerland, offered a pioneering course that encouraged law students to produce, analyze, and evaluate material legal visualizations for learning purposes. In so doing, the students learned about and taught each other concepts of the Swiss Code of Obligation.41

Legal visualizations for educational purposes could also be used outside law schools: WALSER KESSEL & CRESPO have explored how children and adolescents visualize legal concepts and/or legal norms. "Legal norm images drawn by children, adolescents, or adults can or could be used to educate those lacking sufficient knowledge of the law."42

Quoting RORTY, DEL MAR suggests teaching law students imaginative thinking. Thereby, they learn how to generate or enlarge "alternative options for action," how to specify "the sensory and phenomenological details of options," how to shift "perspectives in a situation," and how to revise "descriptions and interpretations of perceptions (e.g. seeing a person as eager rather than aggressive, ingenious rather than cunning, collaborative rather than manipulative)," and so forth.43

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43 Del Mar, "Legal Understanding and the Affective Imagination," 181.
There are many further examples of legal visualizations in legal education. Legal pedagogy examines how legal visualizations might help law students understand the law. Legal psychology might support the epistemological efforts of legal pedagogy, by adopting insights from the psychology of communication, the psychology of learning, the psychology of perception, and so forth. The “Kompetenzzentrum für Rechtspychologie” (“Centre of Excellence for Legal Psychology”) at the University of St. Gallen (Switzerland) offers further legal education in lawyer-ing. For instance, its courses and modules might teach participants how, to what end, and with which effect lawyers could use legal visualizations for the cognitive, emotional, and physical benefits of their clients (see also below 2.2.4.2).

2.2.3.2 Legal Visualizations in Legal Research

To avoid copyright issues, I restrict myself to my own legal visualization rather than including those of other legal scholars. Thus, the following survey of the major components of visual law constitutes a legal visualization in legal research.


Fig. 3. Major components of visual law

Figure 3 also includes those components of visual law not covered in this paper: visual customary law (I do not know whether it exists at all) and visual justice.47

As far as I know, legal iconography and legal iconology,48 legal sociology49 and legal theory,50 all explore legal visualizations in legal research. Such visualizations might also be the subject of legal informatics and visual legal semiotics.

2.2.4 Legal Visualizations in State Legal Practice in a Wide Sense and in Private Legal Practice

2.2.4.1 Legal Visualizations in State Legal Practice in a Wide Sense

E-government offers a great opportunity for visualizing legal contents, that is, online legal information. In Graphic and Symbolic Representation of Law: Lessons from Cross-Disciplinary Research, ROBINSON produces "a logic diagram visualizing tax law issues to be used in an administrative agency, such as the Office of State Revenue, Queensland."51 PARYCEK, SACHS, & SCHOSBÖCK mention that public data,

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47 On visual justice, see, for instance, Röhl, "Gerechtigkeit vor Augen," 369, 382–383.
such as state information, may be visualized with the help of web applications. As is well known, state information also includes legal information. WALSER KESSEL is currently visualizing the new Swiss Child and Adult Protection Law (work-in-progress). Among other target groups, her legal visualizations might be used by guardians, social workers, police officers, educators, and so forth. WALSER KESSEL suggests that also health-care professionals (physicians and nurses) could use these legal visualizations. For instance, these visual legal media could be used to explain to patients who might feel overwhelmed by the prospect of managing their estate or who are mentally ill why and how they could benefit from official measures (see http://www.admin.ch/ch/e/rs/210/indexni45.html). The Swiss Civil Code provides for these measures in Art. 388–439, particularly in Art. 395 (asset management) or in Art. 397 (combination of deputyships). In these cases, such legal visualiza-

53 See, for instance, Bundeskanzleramt, "Rechtsinformationssystem RIS," [s. t.], available at: http://www.ris.bka.gv.at/ (last accessed on July 22, 2015).
56 See id., "Rechtsvisualisierung im Spannungsfeld zwischen Abstraktion und Applikation," 403, 408.
57 See id., "Rechtsvisualisierung im Spannungsfeld zwischen Abstraktion und Applikation," 408.
58 See ibid.
tions could be applied outside the legal context and could thus also be associated with further visual legally relevant contents.

Legal information is visualized or might also be visualized in e-justice and e-democracy. For instance, the Hungarian Parliament conveys information about legislation in the form of legal visualizations. Further, the Parliament of Canada provides the visitors of its website with a legal visualization of the legislative process.

Particularly legal informatics and its discourses on e-government, e-justice, and e-democracy study the use of legal visualizations on such websites.

2.2.4.2 Legal Visualizations in Private Legal Practice

McCloskey suggests the use of legal visualizations in order to enhance the clarity and comprehensibility of lawyer-client communication:

“As a way to introduce the possibilities of approaching the law visually, this Comment employs the metaphor of legal map-making. A legal map is a mediation device between the law and a client’s needs to make a decision, a tool to be used by lawyers acting as legal guides. As travelers use maps of a physical landscape to decide the best way to go, lawyers create and use maps of the legal landscape to counsel clients on the best way to go.”


67 See, for instance, Hudson-Smith, Evans, & Batty, “Building the Virtual City,” 62–85.

Elsewhere, McCLOSKEY observes: “The purpose of presenting methods for visualizing the law is to give lawyers a more effective way to conceive of legal issues and communicate them to their clients.”69

In family mediation, for instance, “the parties have to be informed about their rights and duties even if this complicates or impedes efforts to reach agreement [my translation] [[hat] die Information über Rechte und Pflichten der Parteien selbst dann zu erfolgen, wenn dies die Einigung in einer Mediation erschwert oder gar verhindert [my translation].”70

**Fig. 4. Legal visualization of old-age provision**

*Figure 4* refers to Swiss social insurance law. It illustrates and explains "legal issues concerning old-age provision in family mediation dealing with divorce."71 This legal visualization might be used successfully by family lawyers and/or family mediators to visualize matters to their clients.

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69 Id., “Visualizing the Law,” 165.
70 Meier, *Schweizerisches Zivilprozessrecht*, 586 n. 1078.
Last but not least, let me mention that the Sydney Mediation Partnership\(^\text{72}\) has launched a series of children’s self-help books about divorce, separation, and mediation entitled *Two Birthday Cakes*.\(^\text{73}\)

In *Law in a Digital World*, KATSH writes: Contract visualizations are a further case in point for legal visualizations in private legal practice.

> As discussed earlier, electronic contracts eventually will be more than paper contracts in electronic form. They will monitor performances and alert parties and their lawyers about problems with performance or about a need for modifying and agreement due to changing conditions. [...] What is important to recognize in connection with visual communication is that the medium’s visual capabilities provide intriguing possibilities for alerting us about change and about the direction of change. Images and numbers can be employed to show change in ways that are not possible with print. [...] In the contract context, for example, lack of performance might send a red flag to the attorney for one of the parties. This could be an actual image of a red flag, and the red flag, if ignored, could grow larger over time, something that would be both meaningful and attention getting.\(^\text{74}\)

HAAPIO et al. suggest introducing “[v]isualization [t]echniques into the [c]ontracting [p]rocess.”\(^\text{75}\) HAAPIO in particular has explored contract visualization in many other publications.\(^\text{76}\) So far, the examples of legal visualizations in private legal practice do not have a legal basis, but legislators will provide them with such a basis in the future.

In the United States, however, “the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act—codified in relevant part in 15 U.S.C. § 1333—purports to give the U.S. Food and Drug Administration the authority to require graphic images to be accompa-


\(^{74}\) KATSH, *Law in a Digital World*, 161–162.

\(^{75}\) Haapio et al., “Time for a Visual Turn in Contracting?” 52.

nied by textual warning statements on tobacco packages.” This means that “tobacco companies must implement pictorial warnings [...] on all cigarette and smokeless tobacco products.” To protect consumers, “the FDA [= Food and Drug Administration] has approved nine color images.” For instance, these images include “an African American man blowing a puff of smoke out of his tracheotomy cavity, a male cadaver with its ‘Y’ autopsy incision fastened together by steel staples, and a jaundiced nodule-covered pair of lungs shown in stark contrast to a healthy set of lungs.”

Among other things, visual litigation PR involves briefing a party to a legal conflict about how to make a persuasive public appearance with the help of appropriate body language and apparel. The “products” of visual litigation PR, for instance, include photographs of the accused in a criminal trial. Merkur-online showed JÖRG KACHELMANN, a well-known weather forecaster accused of rape and sexual assault, wearing a white shirt, the shirt of “innocence.” Along these lines, visual litigation PR overlaps with popular visual legal culture.

Which legal disciplines explore legal visualizations in private legal practice? To my knowledge, neither lawyering nor mediation specifically explores these legal visualizations. Although contract visualization is a distinct field, I would not consider it a legal discipline of its own, at least not today. In Switzerland, private law does not specifically study contract visualizations. Litigation PR, as a subfield of PR, explores both verbal and visual legal litigation PR. Other established legal disciplines in Switzerland, Germany, and Austria do not particularly explore further legal vis-

77 Jordan Bennett, “Paternalistic Manipulation through Pictorial Warnings,” 1911.
78 Id., “Paternalistic Manipulation through Pictorial Warnings,” 1910.
79 Id., “Paternalistic Manipulation through Pictorial Warnings,” 1912.
83 See Holzinger & Wolff, Im Namen der Öffentlichkeit, 13, and Maier, Litigation PR, 17, 20–21.
alizations in private legal practice. I am not familiar with the situation in other jurisdictions.

2.2.5 Visualized Legal and Legally Relevant Facts

Usually, visualized legal facts refer to visual evidence and visual argumentation; the latter is true inasmuch as it remains factual.

Visual evidence in the law is not a new phenomenon but dates back to the 19th century. Today, however, visual digital media facilitate its use. According to Feigenson & Spiesel, “[…], the variety of and the importance of visual displays in American courtrooms have exploded. Lawyers continue to use drawings, photographs, videos, in-court-demonstrations, and other traditional methods of visually persuading their audiences.”85 Sherwin states: “Thus have the methods of legal proof always adapted to reflect the introduction of new communicative technologies, from photographic evidence to tape recordings, surveillance videos, and digital simulations.”86 Elsewhere, Sherwin notes:

Today, with increasing frequency video displays and digital images accompany lawyers’ opening statements and closing arguments at trial. They are introduced as evidence in the form of animations, digital re-enactments, and video documentaries showing tort victims living damaged lives in the wake of accidents or botched surgeries or exposure to defective products or chemical pollutants. […] And increasingly, on appeal, judges review the visual record of the trial to assess allegations of error. Did jurors, or perhaps a lower appellate judge, unreasonably construe visual evidence that jurors saw at trial? […] Lawyers show digital animations depicting reconstructed airplane accidents or that take us inside the body, picturing, for example, how plaque in an artery of the heart was allegedly dislodged by a careless surgeon or a faulty medical instrument.87

There is no room here to refer to further literature and to explore whether and, if so, how visual evidence plays a crucial role in other jurisdictions. Given the impact of

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85 Feigenson & Spiesel, Law on Display, 1.
digital visual media on the law, one might, however, expect visual evidence to become more significant. "Moreover, the increasing influence of Anglo-American visual culture in general around the world is altering laypeople's views of what happens in the law. Under these pressures, some European legal systems may soon come to resemble the Anglo-American in their receptivity to visual [legal] rhetoric."\textsuperscript{85}

The law of procedure deals with visual evidence. For instance, it addresses the admissibility\textsuperscript{89} and consideration of evidence issues.\textsuperscript{90} Furthermore, legal psychology, for example, investigates the cognitive and emotional effects of visual evidence.\textsuperscript{91} Visual persuasion in the law\textsuperscript{92} or visual legal advocacy\textsuperscript{93} (these legal fields are taught at some law schools in the US) study all these issues. Additionally, these fields raise and answer various related questions: what is the function of visual evidence? Which media, signs, and methods are used or should be used to produce visual evidence? From the perspective of US-American jurisdiction, one might argue that popular legal studies\textsuperscript{94} also deal with visual evidence.\textsuperscript{95}

\textsuperscript{88} Spiesel, Sherwin, & Feigenson, "Law in the Age of Images," 232, footnote 2.
\textsuperscript{92} See, for instance, Spiesel, Sherwin, & Feigenson, "Law in the Age of Images," 232, 238–255; http://www.nyls.edu/faculty/faculty_profiles/richard_k_sherwin; and (both websites last accessed on July 22, 2013).
\textsuperscript{93} See Austin, "The Next 'New Wave'," 848–867, and https://www.law.upenn.edu/cf/faculty/raustin/ (last accessed on July 22, 2013).
\textsuperscript{94} See, for instance, Sherwin, "Law in Popular Culture," 95–112. See also http://www.nyls.edu/centers/projects/visual_persuasion/law_and_popular_culture/popular_legal_studies (last accessed on July 22, 2013).
\textsuperscript{95} See id. "Law in Popular Culture," 95–112.
3 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND OUTLOOK

3.1 Findings

The principal findings of this paper are:

First, there is already a trend toward visual legal communication practices. These practices manifest themselves both within and outside the legal context and are evident both nationally and internationally.

Second, these practices are interconnected. It is, however, sometimes difficult to delimit one from the other. Legal norm visualizations, for instance, could also be used in legal education, or even in e-justice, e-government, and e-democracy, to convey normative contents. Further, legal visualizations in court judgments might have originally constituted visual evidence or another type of visual legal communication practice.

Third, these visual legal communication practices are explored by the established disciplines of applicable law and/or basic legal disciplines. As shown, no single legal discipline covers all these practices. Instead, most disciplines only refer to specific visual legal communication practices. In addition, these disciplines explore these practices merely as a sideline. In other words, their main research focus lies elsewhere. Whereas visual legal semiotics has a broad scope, its subject matter and cognitive interest are sign-oriented. After all, “[a]ll [legal] images are signs of one kind or another; and they may also be made up of many signs.” Thus, visual legal semiotics fails to consider other important visual law issues. Moreover, this discipline could be considered to be “just” a subfield of legal semiotics, which in turn could be considered to be a “mere” branch of semiotics. As such, the main focus on signs becomes even more apparent.

For example, the art and law movement concerns law’s visual art (visual high legal culture) alone. Beyond that, it focuses mainly on how law regulates visual art. Popular legal cultural studies explores visual popular legal culture without, however, considering other forms of visual legal communication practices. Legal iconography, legal informatics, legal sociology, and legal theory all explore legal norm visualizations just as a sideline. If at all, the law of civil and criminal procedure considers

legal visualizations in court judgments no more than in passing. Legal pedagogy confines itself to the study of legal visualizations for educational purposes. Legal history, legal informatics, legal sociology, and legal theory all examine legal visualizations for research purposes as a rather marginal subject matter. Legal informatics and its discourses on e-government, e-justice, and e-democracy do not closely investigate other forms of visual legal communication practices. As far as I know, there is no legal discipline—except of course visual law—that studies all legal visualizations in private legal practice. With the exception of popular legal studies, the legal disciplines concerned with visual evidence do not really explore other forms of visual legal communication practices.

3.2 Conclusions

What conclusions can be drawn from these findings?

Since there is already a powerful trend toward visual legal communication practices, particularly those existing in digital form, these phenomena need to be studied more closely.

There is a strong need for a legal discipline capable of exploring all visual legal communication practices. Why? At present, no single legal discipline covers all these visual legal communication practices. Most disciplines instead address only certain visual legal communication practices and/or explore such practices merely on the side. Visual law should be tasked with exploring all such practices, particularly since it provides or rather could provide legal research and practice with a single roof for all visual legal communication practices. This roof could especially embrace the law as a visual phenomenon both within and outside the legal context. These conclusions do not question the legitimacy of the established legal disciplines investigating this legal phenomenon. From their particular perspective, they by all means contribute to enriching the discourse on visual law. For this reason, I would call for increasing exchange and cooperation between the disciplines.

3.3 Outlook

This paper prompts further questions:

What is visual law? What is the subject matter and cognitive interest of visual law? Why are we well advised to speak of “visual law” rather than of “visual juris-
prudence," or of "visualization of law," or indeed of "Rechtsvisualisierung" in German? Is visual law a new legal discipline? SHERWIN, for instance, speaks of a "newly emerging field."

Is there already a trend toward audio-visual and other multisensory legal communication practices? If there is, what does this trend look like? If not yet, what might such a trend look like? Do the established disciplines of applicable law and/or the basic legal disciplines explore these multisensory legal communication practices?

Many more questions need to be tackled. As regards visual law, for instance, these include process-related questions: Which methods and tools can be used to produce legal visualizations? Product-related questions: What are legal visualizations? What are the contents and meanings of legal visualizations? What types of legal

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99 On the subject matter of visual law, see id., "Multisensory Law and Legal Informatics," 618–626. This paper marks a first attempt to classify or systematize the law as a visual phenomenon both within and outside the legal context. The need for classification or systematization is also recognized by SILBEX, who argues that "It might be helpful if within the field of the visualization of law we develop a taxonomy of the various strategies of visualization, how they occur in our society generally, and how they are embedded in diverse legal contexts specifically" (Silbey, "Images in/of Law," 183).

100 On the cognitive interest of visual law, see id., "Multisensory Law and Legal Informatics," 626–628.


103 Brunschwig, Rechtsvisualisierung, IX-XII; Holzer, Rechtsvisualisierung im Strafrecht, 53–60, and Riedl, "Die Kompetenz zur Abstraktion als Informatik-Erfolgsfaktor," 42. Grapping with the term "Rechtsvisualisierung" ["visualization of law"], HOLZER instead suggests "Rechtsvisualistik" ["visualistics of law"] (see Holzer, Rechtsvisualisierung im Strafrecht, 55–57). The word "visualization" can be associated both with the production of legal visualizations and with the end-product—the legal visualization—itself. The same applies to the German expression "Rechtsvisualisierung" (see Holzer, Rechtsvisualisierung im Strafrecht, 54–55, 58).


105 See Brunschwig, "Law Is Not or Must Not Be Just Verbal or Visual in the 21st Century," 238.


107 See Brunschwig, "Rechtsikonographie, Rechtsikonologie und Rechtsvisualisierung," 42.

visualizations can we make out? Which methods can be applied to analyze and evaluate legal visualizations? In which codes and media do legal visualizations appear? What are the functions (purposes) of legal visualizations? Actor-related questions: Who are the producers and recipients of legal visualizations? What cognitive, emotional, and physical impacts do legal visualizations have on recipients? Context-related questions: In which temporal, spatial, social, economic, legal, technical, cultural, and scientific contexts are legal visualizations produced, used, assimilated, and evaluated? How do these contexts impact the content and meaning of legal visualizations? Do legal visualizations have a legal basis and, if so, which?

These questions could be attributed to the different legal visualizations mentioned above. I would argue that the diversity of these visualizations determines the answers to the above questions.

Iurisprudentia picturata will no longer blindfold her eyes, if ever she has done so. Otherwise, she will make a fool of herself—like the blindfolded judge and jurors wearing duncecaps in the first prints of the *Constitutio Criminalis Bambergensis* (CCB). On the contrary, *iurisprudentia picturata* will use glasses and/or other optical aids. Especially the various visual, audio-visual, and multisensory digital

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113 See id., *Rechtsvisualisierung im Strafrecht*, 106.
115 See Brunschwig, “Rechtsikonographie, Rechtsikonologie und Rechtsvisualisierung,” 42.
116 On the context dependency of meaning, see, for instance, Sherwin, “Visual Jurisprudence,” 16.
117 See Brunschwig, “Rechtsikonographie, Rechtsikonologie und Rechtsvisualisierung,” 42.
118 On whether Justice must be blind or not, see Jay, “Must Justice Be Blind?” 19–35.
media will encourage her to embark on further journeys. On these journeys, she will make even more discoveries in her aesthetic realm, thereby enhancing both her own self-awareness and self-knowledge as well as those of others. During these journeys, she might encourage legal actors to change from word-only folk into ones who are also visually, audiovisually, and thus multisensorially aware and educated. Thus, one day, *iurisprudentia picturata* might even let go of her ocularocentric name and call herself *iurisprudentiam multisensualem*.

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120 See Brunschwig, “Law Is Not or Must Not Be Just Verbal or Visual in the 21st Century,” 282 sq.

121 There is no space to enumerate Professor LACHMAYER’s publications in full. Instead, I refer the reader to the comprehensive list of publications on his website (see http://www.legalvisualization.com/; last accessed on July 22, 2013).

122 See http://www.univie.ac.at/IR/IRIS2013/ (last accessed on July 22, 2013).
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