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SENSING JUSTICE THROUGH CONTEMPORARY SPANISH CINEMA

AESTHETICS, POLITICS, LAW



MÓNICA LÓPEZ LERMA

Sensing Justice through Contemporary Spanish Cinema

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Sensing Justice through
Contemporary Spanish Cinema
Aesthetics, Politics, Law

Mónica López Lerma

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Dedicated to my parents, Ricardo and Pilar, and to Julen.

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Parts of this book have already been published. Chapter 1 is a modified version of the article “Witnessing Francoism: Ethics of Non-Violence in Guillermo del Toro’s *Pan’s Labyrinth*,” which appeared in *NAVEÍN REET: Nordic Journal of Law and Social Research* (n. 6, vol. 2, 2015). Chapter 2 is a revised version of the article “Law in *High Heels*. Performativity, Alterity, and Aesthetics,” which appeared in *Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal* (no. 2 vol. 20, Winter 2011). Parts of Chapter 3 appeared in “Aesthetic Irruptions: Politics of Perception in Alex de la Iglesia’s *La Comunidad*,” in Paul Bowman’s edited volume *Rancière and Film*, (Edinburgh University Press, 2013), and in “Disenso en *La Comunidad* de Álex de la Iglesia” in *Política Común* (issue 4, 2013). Finally, Chapter 5 is a longer and revised version of the chapter “Justice between Terror and Law” in *Rancière and Law* (Routledge, 2018).

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Introduction: Sensing Justice

The meaning of justice and the meaning of the aesthetic may both be sensed, but they can never be codified or entirely understood. They lack an essence, or a definition; they exist in specific performances rather than as general propositions. The aesthetic and the just alike deny the application of a priori models or abstract understandings and instead focus on the tangible and unrepeatable experience of singular events. The artwork and the moment of judgment come each time differently. Reproduction is forgery.

Desmond Manderson (2000: 195)

Sensing Justice examines the “aesthetic frames” that configure both the sensory perception and the signification of justice (i.e., its “senses”) through a close analysis of a selection of Spanish films produced between 1991 and 2012. This book does not treat justice as an abstract category or universal disposition that we all share as humans; nor is it a set of procedures for reaching substantive decisions or outcomes felt to be fair and legitimate. The senses of justice – in its procedural, retributive, and/or distributive dimensions – always come mediated by the sensory perceptions and affects produced by the narrative, symbolic, and visual frames that give them meaning. Whether and how we make sense of justice; whether and how we make ethical, political, and legal judgments; and whether and how we legitimize the institutions charged with administering justice, all depend upon these frames. Attention to these frames raises questions such as: What kind of sense of justice do these frames create? What kind of subjects do they show and address? What affective and ethical responses do they produce? What kind of relationship do they establish between self and other? What material and corporeal effects do they generate? What kind of judgments do they invite? In answering these questions, *Sensing Justice* is concerned not so much with *what* the sense of justice is, but with *how* that sense is produced and experienced. Engaging with legal theory, film studies, aesthetics, and politics, I seek here to contribute to contemporary debates about justice, aesthetics, and the senses.

Contemporary Spanish Cinema: The Distinctiveness of Law and Film in Spain

While an extensive law and film scholarship in Spain focuses on the filmic representation of legal institutions, actors, and legal issues (e.g. death penalty, prison system, euthanasia, and torture)¹ and a range of studies explore how films can be used as a pedagogical tool in legal education,² few scholars have focused their analysis on Spanish cinema produced after 1975.³ In contrast to the works devoted to Francoist Spain (1939–1975), law and film scholarship has paid little attention to the period that goes from Franco’s death to the consolidation of democracy after the transition and entry into the European Economic Market (1986) and through the 2008 financial crisis and into contemporary Spain.⁴ I want to draw attention to two notable exceptions that will help explain the specific approach of this book. The first is *El derecho en el cine español contemporáneo* (*Law in Contemporary Spanish Cinema* 2009), edited by Ricardo García Manrique and Mario Ruiz Sanz; the second is *Los derechos humanos en el cine español* (*Human Rights in Spanish Cinema* 2017), edited by Juan Antonio Gómez García.

In the first of the two volumes, García Manrique and Ruiz Sanz argue that “law films” in Spain are distinct from American courtroom dramas, noting that Spanish cinema has been less interested in the dramatic structure of legal trials. They attribute this to three complementary reasons (2009: 12–13, 18): First, the Spanish legal system follows the continental European model, which does not provide the same opportunities for spectacular trials as does the common-law model (e.g. lawyers do not make great speeches, do not move physically or gesture in the courtroom, and do not vigorously cross-examine witnesses) (2009: 19). Second, the Spanish legal profession does not enjoy the same social prestige as lawyers in the US, which makes it difficult for legal professionals to be protagonists in a film. Third, the legal profession has had less relevance in the development of modern society in Spain than its counterpart has had in the United States. This is because the legal profession is negatively associated with the power structures and repressive legal practices of Franco’s dictatorship. All this makes Spanish cinema generally less court-centered and more critical of legal institutions, legal actors, and legal processes (2009: 16). According to García Manrique and Ruiz Sanz, law and film scholarship in Spain has to look outside the courtroom and focus instead on specific legal issues or larger societal problems affected by the law.

Juan Antonio Gómez García makes a similar point in his introduction to his edited volume *Los derechos humanos en el cine español*. The editor proposes to treat films as legal texts, in the sense not of texts with direct normative force that would grant rights or generate legal obligations, but as texts that

enable a better comprehension of everyday legal reality due to their direct or indirect treatment of specific legal issues (2017: 21). From a methodological point of view, then, treating films as legal texts calls for a hermeneutical exercise that ascertains the legal relevance of the cinematographic text on the basis of a certain conception of law, as well as the purpose for which the film is being used (doctrinal, pedagogical, etc.; 2017: 21). Gómez García concedes that this narrative and instrumental approach puts its critical-aesthetic value in a secondary role, insofar as it contributes to a better understanding of the law and the legal content of the film (2017: 21).

Both volumes defend the specificity of Spanish law films and scholarship. This specificity has four key characteristics. First, film analysis is narrative or plot-oriented, paying special attention to the cinematic representation of legal issues, institutions, actors, or to the larger societal problems that law regulates. Second, cinematic spectatorship is mainly conceived as a visual experience. Through its images and representations, cinema invites viewers to look critically at the law and to reflect on its institutions, actors, functions, and problems. Third, both volumes conceive of law as a social and cultural practice that has its own structure and logic that the film can reflect and/or critically examine, but not affect. And fourth, they approach film as a hermeneutic or pedagogical tool to discuss law and legal subject matters. In this way, film is a supplement to the study of law, in which the former is at the service of the latter.⁵

My approach to contemporary Spanish films acknowledges the different genre of Spanish law films and the importance of addressing the specificity of Spanish legal and socio-political context. However, this book differs methodologically from the earlier scholarship in four key aspects: aesthetic approach to film; film as a multisensorial, embodied experience; law as an aesthetic frame; and trans-disciplinary approach to law and film.

Aesthetic Approach to Film

Sensing Justice approaches cinema not as a text that represents a legal reality to be assessed or criticized, or, alternatively, as a form of popular jurisprudence that would serve to deepen our understanding of law and justice.⁶ Rather, it approaches film as an “aesthetic frame” that disposes us to perceive and make sense of the world in one way rather than another, mapping a repertoire of appropriate or inappropriate responses and affective registers.⁷ This approach draws on Jacques Rancière’s understanding of aesthetics, by which he means not a discipline dealing with art and artworks, but what he calls the “distribution of the sensible,” a way of framing what is presented to our sense experience – what can be seen, heard, felt, understood, and thought (2004b: 13). To approach cinema as an aesthetic frame helps us to understand how

the relationship between the film and the viewer constitutes the sensible world – both the world that is sensed and the world to which “sense” (i.e. meaning) is given. Attending to film as an aesthetic frame raises questions such as: What kind of sensory experiences do these frames privilege or downgrade? What kind of gaze do they create? How do they “touch” the viewer? How do they “move” the viewer in certain directions rather than in others?

Accordingly, my analysis does not focus on the narrative aspects of the film and how these reflect on specific legal topics. Rather, I examine the ways in which the film’s use of cinematic techniques such as cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, and sound shape both the content and the viewer’s responses to it. An aesthetic reading of the film allows us to be aware of different regimes of perception that an exclusive focus on the narrative level does not afford. For example, chapter 4 examines the disciplinary technologies of control and surveillance that multinational corporations use to ensure compliance and foreclose dissent through Marcelo Piñeyro’s 2005 film *El Método* (*The Method*). The chapter demonstrates that while narratively and visually the film invites viewers to be complicit in these technologies of control, acoustically (i.e., aesthetically) it invites us to question them. Thus, restricting the analysis to the narrative dimension overlooks the power of sound to disrupt the complicity of the viewer in the regime of the visible (what is shown/seen).

While the films analyzed generally invite viewers to reflect critically upon the prevailing notions of law and justice that dominate contemporary legal and economic systems, I argue that the combination of form and content, aesthetic and narrative, deploys the full potential of these films – for example, by actualizing alternative or unrealized possibilities that reformulate law and justice.

Film as Embodied and Multisensory Experience

In line with the work of law and film scholars Rebecca Johnson and Ruth Buchanan (2009), Alison Young (2010), and Shohini Chaudhuri (2014), *Sensing Justice* argues that a narrative approach neglects the fact that film is an embodied, multisensory practice. The book draws on the work of film theorists who have explored the embodied and multisensorial experience of cinema beyond the visual and the narrative. As film theorist and composer Michel Chion has pointed out, cinema does not just address the eye, it engages the viewer in a specific audiovisual mode of “transsensorial perception” (1994: xxv, 136).⁸ In other words, viewers do not experience the visual and auditory aspects of cinema separately. Instead, the two perceptions mutually influence and transform each other, lending “each other their respective properties by contamination and projection” (1994: 9). As a result, seeing an image influences one’s aural perception, just as hearing a sound influences one’s

visual perception.⁹ In addition, cinema “also generates rhythmic, dynamic, temporal, tactile, and kinetic sensations that make use of both the auditory and visual channels” (1994: 152).

In line with Chion’s argument, film theorist Vivian Sobchack argues that “we do not experience any movie only through our eyes. We see and comprehend and feel films with our entire bodily being” (2004: 63). To explain this embodied experience of cinema, Sobchack introduces the term “cinesthetic subject,” a neologism that alludes to the ways various senses interact with one another and can be heightened or diminished, as well as normatively regulated, in relation to history and culture.¹⁰ With the cinesthetic subject, Sobchack wants to subvert prevailing theories of the gaze that restrict the cinematic sensorial experience to “an impoverished ‘cinematic sight’” (2004: 71). Instead, Sobchack emphasizes the embodied vision of the film viewer who, “in-formed by the knowledge of the other senses, ‘makes sense’ of what it is to ‘see’ a movie—both ‘in the flesh’ and as it ‘matters’” (2004: 70–71). For Sobchack, “the film experience is meaningful *not to the side of our bodies but because of our bodies*” (2004: 60, original emphasis).

In turn, film and media scholar Laura Marks proposes the metaphor of the “skin of film” to call attention to “the way film signifies through its materiality, through a contact between perceiver and object represented” (2000: xi). With the skin metaphor Marks alludes to what she calls “haptic visuality,” that is, “the way vision itself can be tactile, as though one were touching a film with one’s eyes” (2000: xi). In this way, “the eyes themselves function like organs of touch” (2000: 162). For Marks, it is important to distinguish haptic visuality from optical visuality. Whereas the latter perceives things as distinct in space and privileges the representational power of the image, the former “moves over the surface of its object . . . to discern texture,” privileging the material presence of the image (2000: 162–163).

Finally, in order to move beyond the visual and capture the haptic experience, cultural critic and theorist Giuliana Bruno proposes talking of film spectatorship not as a “sight-seeing” experience, but as a “site-seeing” activity, where spectators are not “voyeurs” but “voyageurs” (2018: 15–16). Unlike the voyeur who observes the moving image from a static, distant, and disembodied position, the voyageur is like a passenger who physically traverses and explores the filmic space from the inside, engaging in a kinetic, haptic, and embodied experience (2018: 17, 178). For Bruno, cinema is not only an image but also a space that the spectator inhabits and experiences tangibly (2018: 65). By thinking of the film spectator as a site-seeing activity, Bruno seeks to redefine film space as “a heterogeneous space comprised of constantly moving centers . . . where the spectator-passenger [or voyageur] is mapped within the landscape” (2018: 178).

Law as an Aesthetic Frame

The aesthetic and multisensory dimension of film pushes us equally to consider law not as a mere set of logical propositions or abstract rules to be applied to a specific case, but as a collection of symbols, ideas, images, and metaphors, which form specific “way[s] of seeing and constructing the world” (Manderson 2000: 28, 43).¹¹ Consequently, the law itself can be viewed as an aesthetic frame: as a form of perception and signification that allocates ways of sensing, feeling, being, moving, and thinking within a given society. Law’s aesthetic frames establish the boundaries between what is legally visible or invisible, what can be heard as legally relevant or dismissed as irrelevant noise, who is included or excluded as a legal subject, and so on. By approaching law aesthetically, the book explores the ways in which law is implicated in the construction of hierarchical and exclusionary distributions of the sensible. Thus, I analyze the aesthetic frames of neoliberalism (chapter 3), surveillance technologies (chapter 4), and of the abstract forces of urban planning (chapter 6). The book reflects on the role that law plays in reinforcing and reproducing the frames by which those who are perceived as “other” – political dissidents and the “vanquished” (chapter 1), LGBTQ (chapter 2), sex workers, homeless, drug addicts (chapter 6), protesters (chapter 4 and 5), immigrants (chapter 6) – are identified and categorized as less-deserving of legal protection.

At the same time, *Sensing Justice* explores how the hierarchical distribution of the sensible might be resisted and disrupted from within. Despite the pressures of the law to exhaust or “saturate” this order of the sensible, I show that there is always the possibility for a crack, a point of entry for imagination to seep in and change the existing frames of the perceptible.¹² Such cracks, even if temporary, encourage new ways of sensing and feeling and make possible new legal subjectivities. Beyond thematizing the frames governing the perceptible reality of law (Butler 2009), I show how these films reconfigure the viewer’s sensory frame of perception. For instance, chapter 2 examines the use of camp aesthetics in Pedro Almodóvar’s film *Tacones Lejanos (High Heels)*, focusing on the actions of the on-screen judge (Domínguez). By analyzing the aesthetics of exaggeration, excess, artificiality, parody, and incongruity in the Judge’s campy performance as a female impersonator, I argue that the film invites viewers to view the law from a queer perspective, challenging law’s manifold binarisms (masculine/feminine, identity/difference, heterosexual/homosexual, natural/artificial, private/public, reason/emotion). By re-imagining law from a queer perspective, the film undermines the hierarchy that privileges masculinity, heterosexuality, and patriarchy and opens up the possibility for an aesthetic judgment that takes seriously the call

of subjects that the law has traditionally excluded. It is in this sense that the films analyzed in this book are law-related, but not because they represent particular legal institutions, actors, and issues, but because they create new frames of perception and signification for questioning the sense(s) of law and justice taken for granted.

It is important to note that approaching law aesthetically does not negate its corporeality. Quite the opposite. Law's aesthetic frames involve both symbolic ways of conceiving the world and their concretization in material practices.¹³ Attending to law's aesthetic dimension requires us thinking of law not as a disembodied abstraction, but as embodied and emplaced (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2015). Just as film theorists invite us to see cinema as multisensorial and embodied, scholars working on law and the senses provide ways of rethinking legal semiotics beyond the visual to include the spatial, the aural, and the tangible (Marusek 2016: 2; see also Howes and Classen 2014; Pavoni 2018). These scholars note that, whereas the law's gaze functions as a powerful abstraction to articulate specific ways of seeing and knowing, law's materiality suggests "a set of practices involving embodied sensing" (Hamilton et al. 2018: 7). For this sensing to take place, the law needs to be inscribed or materialized in other bodies (human or non-human), which are already immersed in the world and therefore necessarily engaged in encounters with other bodies.¹⁴ *Sensing Justice* explores how the encounter between the law and other bodies is not unidirectional but reciprocal: the law not only affects the bodies it encounters it is also affected by these bodies (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2011; Butler 2019). In other words, the bodies that the law encounters are not passive objects of legal regulation, but active bodies able to affect the law in their reciprocal interactions. By paying attention to the aesthetic and the corporeal dimensions of law, the book shows that law is at once aesthetic and material.

Use of a Transdisciplinary/Indisciplinary Approach to Law and Film

This book's aesthetic approach does not consider film as an instrument or supplement for the study of law. Whereas *El derecho en el cine español contemporáneo* and *Los derechos humanos en el cine español* treat law and film as two separate fields and make film subordinated to law, *Sensing Justice* examines their mutual constitutive relationship. Past research has typically compared law to another discipline in order to find what they can teach each other (signified in titles structured "Law and . . .")¹⁵ or examined how law is represented in film (*Law in*).¹⁶ Instead, this book views law and film as two ways of framing the sensible that mutually inform, complement, influence, intervene, and disrupt one another. An aesthetic analysis of the law is not properly inter-disciplinary, but trans-disciplinary (Manderson 2000: 36),

or even “indisciplinary” (Rancière 2009b: 3). It seeks to break disciplinary boundaries and demonstrate that “a discipline is always a provisional grouping, a provisional territorialization of questions and objects that do not in and of themselves possess any specific localization or domain” (Rancière 2009b:3).

Book Overview

Sensing Justice examines the centrality of aesthetics, sensory perception, and affect towards an understanding of both law and justice. Each chapter provides some contextualization to situate the film it analyzes within its political, social, and historical context. But in no way is this meant to limit the scope of the analysis to contemporary Spain, as the goal of the book is to open pathways to similar challenges in different national contexts. Moreover, the book seeks to expand the notion of contemporary Spanish cinema by including Mexican director Guillermo del Toro’s *El Laberinto del Fauno* (*Pan’s Labyrinth*) and Argentinian director Marcelo Piñeyro’s *El Método*, both of which are set in Spain. Through their central topics – violence, alterity, neoliberalism, power of corporations, terrorism, and urbanism – each chapter weaves multiple ways of sensing justice in ways that may be relevant to contemporary societies throughout the world.

The first two chapters explore the ethical responsibility that arises from the encounter with groups that take the form of “the other.” Chapter one is concerned with images of graphic violence and their effects on viewers. Do they cause desensitization towards violence, such that they should be eliminated? Do they encourage objectification of others, turning their suffering into a spectacle for viewers’ enjoyment or entertainment? Alternatively, is it possible to watch these images in ways that do not reproduce objectifying ways of seeing, but open up instead the possibility for an ethical viewing? What affective and critical devices might this require? The chapter explores these questions through Guillermo del Toro’s film *El Laberinto del Fauno* (2006), which combines the imagery of dark fairy tales with images of violence (e.g., torture and murder) in its depiction of the Spanish post-war years and the resistance of anti-Francoist guerrillas. I situate the film within the genre of human rights cinema, by challenging the emphasis on narrative and truthfulness of the Charter of the Human Rights Film Network. Instead, I follow Shohini Chaudhuri’s suggestion to shift from focusing on narrative in favor of addressing aesthetic choices that lead to either moral or ethical confrontation with human rights violations. The film’s graphic images of torture and murder may shock, appall, and stir feelings of hatred and revenge, but they at all times push viewers to reflect on the frames that delimit seeing and not seeing, the subject position and agency of both victims and perpetrators,

as well as viewers' own embodied investment in the scenes of violence. In this way, the film opens up the possibility of an ethical witnessing, challenging the hierarchical subject-object relationship.

Contrary to the ideals of objectivity, impartiality, and abstraction that dominate law and the administration of justice in the modern age, chapter two seeks to establish an alternative model that would emphasize fluidity, role-reversal, and aesthetic engagement as critical for understanding law and legal judgment. It does so through the lens of Pedro Almodóvar's *Tacones Lejanos* (1991). In contrast to Orit Kamir's jurisprudential reading, which argues that the film constructs a caring, compassionate, and nonjudgmental "cinematic judgment" through the actions of the on-screen Judge Domínguez, this chapter proposes that an ethics of alterity (in the Levinasian sense) sheds more light on the film than an ethics of care. By analyzing the cinematic technique of the "direct address" (when a character looks directly into the camera) and the judge's campy performances as a female impersonator, the chapter argues that *High Heels* places the viewer in several judging positions that challenge the one-dimensional compassionate judgment and opens up the possibility for an aesthetic judgment that is responsive to the call of the vulnerable other. The last part of the chapter explores how the interaction between the camp aesthetics of the on-screen judge and the viewer re-conceptualizes law as a queer performance.

The next two chapters examine the notions of political community and the logic of consensus and dissent in contemporary democracies. Chapter three rethinks the notions of political community and democracy through Álex de la Iglesia's *La Comunidad* (*Common Wealth*, 2000), and places them in the context of the anxieties attending Spain's integration in the European Monetary Union (EMU) in 1999. Taking as starting points Jean Baudrillard's vision of the "consumer society" and Jacques Rancière's account of the "politics of consensus," this chapter suggests that *La Comunidad* launches a powerful critique of the ideological presuppositions and "regimes of visibility" of Western liberal democracies. In particular, the film invites viewers to critically examine two different but interconnected regimes of visibility that determine what can be seen, said, and thought: first, the regime of "sensory commodity" proper to the consumer society; and second, the regime of the "saturated community" proper to the society of consensus. However, departing from previous analyses, it is argued that the real strength of the film lies not in its ability to render visible this order of domination, but rather in its ability to create an aesthetics of dissensus within the sensory world of the viewer. In this way, the film demonstrates not just the aesthetic dimension of politics, but the political character of aesthetics.

Chapter four examines a perceived tension in contemporary societies

between the *depoliticization* of the public sphere (through mechanisms of surveillance by states, corporations, and the mass media) and the opposite call for its *repoliticization* (through movements such as the “picketers” (*los piqueteros*) in Argentina or the anti-corporate globalization movement). The chapter turns to Marcelo Piñeyro’s *El Método* (2005) which productively presents this tension in two ways: first, by inviting viewers to participate in depoliticizing structures of power, and then by inviting them to question their role and responsibility in those structures. On the one hand, the film uses the cinematic split-screen technique to grant viewers a godlike perspective and ability to watch different actions and events synchronically, as if through a surveillance camera. Job candidates are scrutinized from the point of view of a multinational corporation during massive anti-corporate globalization protests in Madrid, which the mass media presents in dismissive terms. On the other hand, the film’s subtle use of sound effectively disrupts the complicity of the viewer in these structures and provides possibilities for political subjectivation. Drawing on the work of Michel Chion and Mladen Dolar, the chapter shows how the “acousmatic sound” of protest irrupts into the viewer’s given space of the visible and provides avenues for what might be called a “sonic emancipation.”

The last two chapters examine strategies of policing and the aesthetic frames that underlie the logics of urbanization and (increasing) securitization of space. Chapter five explores the “aesthetic frames” that constitute the sensory configuration of security and justice in the post-9/11 “age of terror,” through Enrique Urbizu’s film *No habrá paz para los malvados* (*No Peace for the Wicked*, 2011). The film exposes what Michael J. Shapiro (2009) has called the “violent cartography” of national security in the context of the Madrid terrorist attack on March 11, 2004, when a series of ten coordinated bombs exploded in three different train stations, killing 191 and injuring 1,841. The film shows how Santos Trinidad, a once-respected but now drunken cop, kills three people in a nightclub with no apparent motive while the city of Madrid is implementing strong security and control measures in preparation for the G20 summit. From then on, the film leads the viewer on a double chase: Trinidad’s hunt for the only witness who managed to escape, which leads him to uncover a Colombian mafia network linked to an Islamist cell planning a terrorist attack; and the police search for the triple murderer, which ironically becomes a hunt for one of their own. The chapter shows how, while at the narrative level the film seemingly reinforces the ideological discourses of security and justice constituted by the state and the media, at the level of aesthetics the film disturbs and reconfigures the frames within which the former discourses are to be understood. The film uses a post-Western aesthetic that recycles themes, tropes, and styles of classical

Western cinema to actively interrupt and modify its assumptions, ideology, and values. The last part of the chapter shows how, against the state's rhetoric of safety, protection, and prevention, the film makes visible both the failure of the law to respond to violence and the inability of the police to intervene in it effectively. By leaving the viewer with a disquieting feeling of uncertainty and danger, the film asks the question, is there a place for justice between violence and the law?

Drawing on the works of Henri Lefebvre, Chris Butler, and Andreas Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos, chapter six explores the relationship between justice, aesthetics, and (the right to) the city through the 2012 Spanish film *Grupo 7 (Unit 7)* directed by Alberto Rodríguez. Based on real events, the film follows a police unit tasked with cleansing the touristy downtown of Seville of prostitution and drug trafficking in order to convey an image of modernity for the Universal Exposition of 1992. The film uses real archive footage to reconstruct the events leading up to the inauguration of the Seville Expo '92, moving from images of the city under construction to images of former King of Spain Juan Carlos inaugurating the magnificent architectural structures. The film contrasts this footage with images of the slums of the city, where a sense of community is created when their inhabitants decide to fight back against the brutality of the police. By inviting viewers to experience the violent transformation of Seville, the film makes visible pervasive forms of violence (drugs, crime, police brutality, and corruption) concealed behind the promises of modernity in an allegory of the real state bubble and the 2008 financial crisis in Spain. It exposes the ways in which the state and the law (through regulations, law enforcement, and the courts) shape the social body, organize relations of power, and distribute the sensory order – meaning who and what is included or excluded and who and what is visible or invisible – in a way that erases difference and diversity. It turns out that making the city “attractive for tourists” entails supposing that poor residents have no right to the new urban landscape. The chapter argues that rather than offering a solution, the film constructs a haptic aesthetic where the city's suburbs and outskirts, its messiness and noise, generally all brushed off by the logic of progress and modernization, cannot be left out from the viewer's sensory experience of the city.

Notes

1. See for instance the collection of monographs entitled *Derecho y Cine* directed by Javier de Lucas published in *Tirant lo Blanch*, which involve more than forty volumes. See also: Rivaya 2003 (about the death penalty); Soto Nieto & Fernández 2004 (about images of justice); García Amado & Paredes Castañón 2005 (about torture).

2. Rivaya 2006; Pérez Treviño 2007; Ruiz Sanz 2010.
3. Most of their works cover a more or less “canonized” list of Hollywood law films (*Twelve Angry Men*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Anatomy of Murder*, *Adam’s Rib*), contemporary science fiction and historical American films (*Blade Runner*, *Clockwork Orange*, *Matrix*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Schindler’s List*) or European classics (*Bicycle Thieves*, *Sacco e Vanzetti*, *M*).
4. Another exception is: Bernández Rodal et al. 2008 (about domestic violence).
5. As Spanish law and film scholar Benjamín Rivaya García argues, in the study of law and film, the point of view is the law and the object is cinema; in other words, although cinema is important for the knowledge of law, the fundamental thing is not film but the law, that is, the understanding of the law. Hence, cinema has to be put at the service of law (2010: 226).
6. For a jurisprudential approach to film see, for instance, Kamir 2006 and MacNeil 2007.
7. According to Brian Massumi, affects are “ways in which the body can connect with itself and the world” and “capacities for acting and being acted upon” (1993: 93; 36).
8. By using the term “transsensorial perception,” Chion wants to emphasize that “there is no sensory given that is demarcated and isolated from the outset. Rather, the senses are channels, highways more than territories or domains” (1994: 137).
9. In Chion’s words, “one perception influences the other and transforms it. We never see the same thing when we also hear; we don’t hear the same thing when we see as well” (1994: xxvi).
10. The term collates the word cinema with two scientific terms that designate the structures and conditions of human sensorium: *synaesthesia* and *coenaesthesia* (2004: 67–68). Whereas the former refers to an exchange (involuntary or volitional) and translation between and among the senses, the latter refers to the ways in which “equally available senses become variously heightened and diminished, the power of history and culture regulating their boundaries as it arranges them into a normative hierarchy” (2004: 69).
11. James Boyd White suggests that law should be regarded not as a system of rules or a set of social policies, but rather as a culture of argument and meaning-formation, by which he means all resources for expression, definition, and action that form and maintain a given legal community. White 1973 and 1999.
12. Cf. Douzinas and Nead: “Art is assigned to imagination, creativity, and playfulness, law to control, discipline, and sobriety” (1999: 3).
13. As Cheah, Fraser, and Grbich point out, “[L]aw and legal rules . . . serve not just to produce generalised and to a certain extent abstract bodies of legal subjects, but also act more concretely to create specific body types in particularised ways” (1996: xviii).

14. As Deleuze argues, “a body can be anything: it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity” (1988: 127).
15. See, for instance, among many others: *Law and Film*: Moran et al. 2004; Machura & Robson 2001; Sarat et al. 2005; *Law and Aesthetics*: Douzinas & Warrington 1994; Douzinas & Nead 1999; Gearey 2001; Ben-Dor 2011; Dahlberg 2012; Sherwin 2011; Delage & Goodrich 2013; Goodrich 2014.
16. Bergman & Asimow 1996; Chase 2002; Greenfield, Osborn & Robson 2010.