



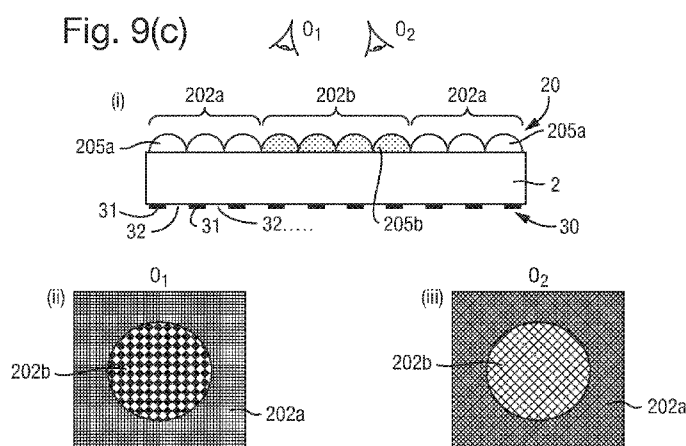
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(54) Title: METHODS OF MANUFACTURING SECURITY DOCUMENTS AND SECURITY DEVICES



(S7) Abstract: A method of making a security device is disclosed, comprising: (a) forming an array of focussing elements on at least a first region of a focussing element support layer, by: (a)(i) applying a first transparent curable material either to the focussing element support layer or to a casting tool carrying a surface relief corresponding to the focussing elements, over an first sub-region of the first region and applying a second transparent curable material to a second sub-region of the first region laterally offset from the first sub-region, the first and second transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics from one another; (a)(ii) forming the first and second transparent curable materials with the casting tool; and (a)(iii) curing the first and second transparent curable materials in the first region, so as to retain the surface relief.

METHODS OF MANUFACTURING SECURITY DOCUMENTS
AND SECURITY DEVICES

5 This invention relates to methods of manufacturing security documents and security devices, and to the corresponding products. Security devices are typically used on security documents such as banknotes, cheques, passports, identity cards, certificates of authenticity, fiscal stamps and other secure documents, in order to confirm their authenticity.

10 Articles of value, and particularly documents of value such as banknotes, cheques, passports, identification documents, certificates and licences, are frequently the target of counterfeiters and persons wishing to make fraudulent copies thereof and/or changes to any data contained therein. Typically such objects are provided with a number of visible security devices for checking the
15 authenticity of the object. By "security device" we mean a feature which it is not possible to reproduce accurately by taking a visible light copy, e.g. through the use of standardly available photocopying or scanning equipment. Examples include features based on one or more patterns such as microtext, fine line patterns, latent images, venetian blind devices, lenticular devices, moiré
20 interference devices and moiré magnification devices, each of which generates a secure visual effect. Other known security devices include holograms, watermarks, embossings, perforations and the use of colour-shifting or luminescent / fluorescent inks. Common to all such devices is that the visual effect exhibited by the device is extremely difficult, or impossible, to copy using
25 available reproduction techniques such as photocopying. Security devices exhibiting non-visible effects such as magnetic materials may also be employed.

One class of security devices are those which produce an optically variable effect, meaning that the appearance of the device is different at different angles
30 of view. Such devices are particularly effective since direct copies (e.g. photocopies) will not produce the optically variable effect and hence can be readily distinguished from genuine devices. Optically variable effects can be generated based on various different mechanisms, including holograms and

other diffractive devices, moiré interference and other mechanisms relying on parallax such as venetian blind devices, and also devices which make use of focussing elements such as lenses, including moiré magnifier devices, integral imaging devices and so-called lenticular devices.

5

Security devices comprising focussing elements typically require the use of at least one transparent material either to act as an optical spacer between the focussing elements and an image, or image array, on which the focussing elements are to focus, or to act as a support for the focussing element so that
10 some other object can be viewed therethrough. As such, security devices comprising focussing elements are particularly well suited to deployment on security documents based on polymer document substrates, such as polymer banknotes, since the polymer document substrate can be selected to be transparent and so provide one or both of the above functions if desired.
15 Therefore, in the main part the present disclosure relates to polymer-based security documents.

However, other aspects of the invention disclosed herein are not so limited as will be made clear below. For example, the security devices can be formed using
20 a transparent material which is applied to a security document of any sort, such as a conventional paper-based document, e.g. in the form of a security article such as a thread, strip, patch, foil or inserted which is incorporated into or applied onto the security document.

25 Several aspects of the invention involve the provision of a focussing element array and an image array located approximately in the focal plane of the focussing element array such that the focussing element array exhibits a substantially focussed image of the image array. This focussed image may preferably be optically variable and could for example be based on any of the
30 mechanisms detailed below. It should be appreciated that in all aspects of the invention the focussing element array and image array could optionally be configured to provide any one or more of these effects, unless otherwise specified:

Moiré magnifier devices (examples of which are described in EP-A-1695121, WO-A-94/27254, WO-A-2011/107782 and WO2011/107783) make use of an array of focusing elements (such as lenses or mirrors) and a corresponding
5 array of microimages, wherein the pitches of the focusing elements and the array of microimages and/or their relative locations are mismatched with the array of focusing elements such that a magnified version of the microimages is generated due to the moiré effect. Each microimage is a complete, miniature
10 version of the image which is ultimately observed, and the array of focusing elements acts to select and magnify a small portion of each underlying microimage, which portions are combined by the human eye such that the whole, magnified image is visualised. This mechanism is sometimes referred to as “synthetic magnification”. The magnified array appears to move relative to the device upon tilting and can be configured to appear above or below the surface
15 of the device itself. The degree of magnification depends, inter alia, on the degree of pitch mismatch and/or angular mismatch between the focusing element array and the microimage array.

Integral imaging devices are similar to moiré magnifier devices in that an array of
20 microimages is provided under a corresponding array of lenses, each microimage being a miniature version of the image to be displayed. However here there is no mismatch between the lenses and the microimages. Instead a visual effect is created by arranging for each microimage to be a view of the same object but from a different viewpoint. When the device is tilted, different
25 ones of the images are magnified by the lenses such that the impression of a three-dimensional image is given.

“Hybrid” devices also exist which combine features of moiré magnification devices with those of integral imaging devices. In a “pure” moiré magnification
30 device, the microimages forming the array will generally be identical to one another. Likewise in a “pure” integral imaging device there will be no mismatch between the arrays, as described above. A “hybrid” moiré magnification / integral imaging device utilises an array of microimages which differ slightly from

one another, showing different views of an object, as in an integral imaging device. However, as in a moiré magnification device there is a mismatch between the focusing element array and the microimage array, resulting in a synthetically magnified version of the microimage array, due to the moiré effect, the magnified microimages having a three-dimensional appearance. Since the visual effect is a result of the moiré effect, such hybrid devices are considered a subset of moiré magnification devices for the purposes of the present disclosure. In general, therefore, the microimages provided in a moiré magnification device should be substantially identical in the sense that they are either exactly the same as one another (pure moiré magnifiers) or show the same object/scene but from different viewpoints (hybrid devices).

Moiré magnifiers, integral imaging devices and hybrid devices can all be configured to operate in just one dimension (e.g. utilising cylindrical lenses) or in two dimensions (e.g. comprising a 2D array of spherical or aspherical lenses).

Lenticular devices on the other hand do not rely upon magnification, synthetic or otherwise. An array of focusing elements, typically cylindrical lenses, overlies a corresponding array of image sections, or "slices", each of which depicts only a portion of an image which is to be displayed. Image slices from two or more different images are interleaved and, when viewed through the focusing elements, at each viewing angle, only selected image slices will be directed towards the viewer. In this way, different composite images can be viewed at different angles. However it should be appreciated that no magnification typically takes place and the resulting image which is observed will be of substantially the same size as that to which the underlying image slices are formed. Some examples of lenticular devices are described in US-A-4892336, WO-A-2011/051669, WO-A-2011051670, WO-A-2012/027779 and US-B-6856462. More recently, two-dimensional lenticular devices have also been developed and examples of these are disclosed in British patent application numbers 1313362.4 and 1313363.2. Lenticular devices have the advantage that different images can be displayed at different viewing angles, giving rise to the possibility of

animation and other striking visual effects which are not possible using the moiré magnifier or integral imaging techniques.

5 Arrays of lenses or other focussing elements can also be used as a security device on their own (i.e. without a corresponding image array), since they can be used to exhibit a magnified or distorted view of any background they may be placed against, or scene viewed therethrough. This effect cannot be replicated by photocopying or similar.

10 Aspects of the present invention provide improved methods of manufacturing security documents comprising security devices of the sorts described above.

One aspect of the present invention provides a method of making a security device, comprising:

15 (a) forming an array of focussing elements on at least a first region of a focussing element support layer, by:

(a)(i) applying a first transparent curable material either to the focussing element support layer or to a casting tool carrying a surface relief corresponding to the focussing elements, over an first sub-region of the first region and
20 applying a second transparent curable material to a second sub-region of the first region laterally offset from the first sub-region, the first and second transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics from one another;

(a)(ii) forming the first and second transparent curable materials with the
25 casting tool; and

(a)(iii) curing the first and second transparent curable materials in the first region, so as to retain the surface relief.

This enables the complexity of the device to be enhanced by providing a
30 detectable pattern within the focussing element array. In some cases, the first and second sub-regions may be spaced from one another, e.g. forming separate regions of focussing elements and potentially forming different security effects (e.g. each could be combined with a different image array). However, the two

(or more) sub-regions will nonetheless form part of one and the same security device. Hence, preferably the first and second sub-regions abut one another. This enables the contrast between the first and second transparent curable materials to be used to convey the pattern. Advantageously the first and second

5 sub-regions individually or collectively define one or more indicia, preferably alphanumeric character(s), symbol(s), logo(s), graphics or the like. Preferably the different optical detection characteristics are any of: different visible colours, different fluorescence, different luminescence or different phosphorescence.

10 Advantageously, the first and second transparent curable materials are applied to the focussing element support layer or to the casting tool only over the area corresponding to that of respective sub-regions (together forming the first region) and the casting tool carries the surface relief over an area extending beyond that of the first region, preferably over substantially the whole area of the casting tool.

15 In this way the lateral size and shape of the focussing element array can be determined solely by the application of the curable material, with the surface relief being formed by a standard casting tool. This enables differently shaped focussing element arrays to be formed using the same equipment through control of the application process only, making the method well adapted for the

20 production of devices which are customised, e.g. to a particular series of banknotes, without having to produce a specific casting tool for the purpose.

In many preferred embodiments, the focussing element array will be uniform across all of the sub-regions thereof. That is, the focussing elements in all of the

25 sub-regions will be of the same size and shape (and hence focal length), and arranged on the same continuous grid, with the same pitch and orientation. In this way, no registration between the sub-regions and the relief used to form the focussing elements is needed and the appearance can be controlled through application of the first and second materials alone.

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In some other preferred implementations, the focussing element array includes focussing elements of different focal lengths, preferably having different heights. This can be used to increase the complexity of the optical effects achieved. The

arrangement of different focussing elements may or may not be related to the arrangement of the sub-regions. In a preferred example, the focussing elements in the first sub-region may have a first focal length whilst those in a second sub-region may be of a second, different focal length. In this way both the optical characteristics (e.g. colour) of the device and the visual effect itself (e.g. magnification level) would change between sub-regions.

The method may advantageously further comprise:

(b) providing an image array located in a plane spaced from the array of focussing elements by a distance substantially equal to the focal length of the focussing elements whereby the focussing elements exhibit a substantially focussed image of the image array.

The image array can be configured to co-operate with the focussing element array to produce an optically variable effect, e.g. of any of the types mentioned above.

This aspect of the invention further provides a security device, comprising a focussing element array formed of at least two transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics disposed in respective laterally offset sub-regions of the focussing element array on a focussing element support layer, the at least two transparent curable materials being formed in accordance with a surface relief defining the focussing elements.

The method is particularly well suited to use on polymer-based security documents and hence this aspect of the invention further provides a method of making a security document, comprising:

providing a polymer substrate having a first and a second surface;

forming a security device thereon using the above method, wherein either the focussing element support layer comprises the polymer substrate or step (a) further comprises applying the focussing element support layer to the first surface of the polymer substrate, at least across the first region; and

applying at least one opacifying layer to the first and/or second surfaces of the polymer substrate, the or each opacifying layer comprising a non-transparent material, wherein at least the opacifying layer(s) on the first surface of the substrate define a gap forming a window region in which at least part of each of the first sub-region and the second sub-region is disposed.

The window region could be a full window (in which the opacifying layers are absent on both surfaces of the polymer substrate) or a half window (in which the opacifying layers are present on one surface and absent on the other) or some combination of the two. This definition applies wherever the term window region is used throughout this disclosure unless indicated otherwise.

The invention further provides a security document made in accordance with the above method, preferably a banknote, cheque, identification document, passport, visa or stamp.

This aspect of the invention further provides a security document, comprising
a polymer substrate having first and second surfaces;
a focussing element array formed of at least two transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics disposed in respective laterally offset sub-regions of the focussing element array on a focussing element support layer, the at least two transparent curable materials being formed in accordance with a surface relief defining the focussing elements, wherein the focussing element support layer is either the polymer substrate or another layer applied thereto; and

at least one opacifying layer applied to the first and/or second surface of the polymer substrate, the or each opacifying layer comprising a non-transparent material, wherein at least the opacifying layer(s) on the first surface of the substrate define a gap forming a window region in which at least part of each of the first sub-region and the second sub-region is disposed.

The security device or security document may advantageously further comprise an image array located in a plane spaced from the array of focussing elements

by a distance substantially equal to the focal length of the focussing elements whereby the focussing elements exhibit a substantially focussed image of the image array. Preferably the image array is located on the second surface of the polymer substrate. However, in other cases the image array or a second image array could be provided on the first surface of the polymer substrate, e.g. if the focussing element array is formed in an additional transparent layer applied to the first surface of the polymer substrate and itself provides the necessary optical spacing. Such an additional transparent layer could be provided by laminating a component carrying the focussing element array onto the first surface, or by cast curing for instance.

Preferably, the image array can be configured to co-operate with the focussing element array to produce an optically variable effect, e.g. of any of the types mentioned above. For example, in a particularly preferred embodiment, the image array comprises a microimage array, and the pitches of the focusing element array and of the microimage array and their relative orientations are such that the focusing element array co-operates with the microimage array to generate a magnified version of the microimage array due to the moiré effect. (Moiré magnifier)

In another case, the image array comprises a microimage array, the microimages all depicting the same object from a different viewpoint, and the pitches and orientation of the focusing element array and of the microimage array are the same, such that the focusing element array co-operates with the microimage array to generate a magnified, optically-variable version of the object. (Integral imaging device)

In a still further example, the image array comprises a set of first image elements comprising portions of a first image, interleaved with a set of second image elements comprising portions of a second image, the focusing element array being configured such that each focusing element can direct light from a respective one of the first image elements or from a respective one of the second image elements therebetween in dependence on the viewing angle,

whereby depending on the viewing angle the array of focusing elements directs light from either the set of first image elements or from the second image elements therebetween, such that as the device is tilted, the first image is displayed to the viewer at a first range of viewing angles and the second image is displayed to the viewer at a second, different range of viewing angles. (Lenticular device)

The security documents and security devices of the current invention can be optionally be made machine readable by the introduction of detectable materials in any of the layers or by the introduction of separate machine-readable layers. Detectable materials that react to an external stimulus include but are not limited to fluorescent, phosphorescent, infrared absorbing, thermochromic, photochromic, magnetic, electrochromic, conductive and piezochromic materials. This applies to all aspects of the invention.

15

Examples of security documents, security devices and methods of manufacture thereof will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1(a) shows an exemplary security document in plan view, Figures 1(b), (c) and (d) showing three alternative cross-sections along the line X-X';

Figure 2 is a flow diagram illustrating selected steps of a method of manufacturing a security document according to one embodiment;

Figure 3 schematically depicts exemplary apparatus for manufacturing a security document in an embodiment;

Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7 show comparative examples of apparatus for forming a focussing element array, in each case illustrating (a) the apparatus from a side view, and (b) a perspective view of the focussing element support layer, Figure 5(c) showing a further variant of Figure 5(a);

Figures 8(a) to (d) show examples of apparatus for forming a focussing element array, and associated methods, in accordance with embodiments of the present invention, Figure 8(a) illustrating the apparatus from a side view, Figure 8(b) showing a perspective view of the focussing element support layer, and Figure 8(c) and (d) illustrating two variants of the apparatus shown in Figure 8(a);

Figures 9(a) and (b) show an exemplary security document formed using any of the methods of Figure 8, (a) in plan view and (b) in cross section along the line X-X'; Figures 9(c) and (d) showing two further exemplary security devices (i) in cross-section, (ii) in plan view from a first viewing angle, and (iii) in plan view from a second viewing angle;

Figures 10(a) and (b) illustrate two further embodiments of security devices, in cross-section; and

Figure 11A to J shows examples of elements of image arrays formed as relief structures.

10

The ensuing description will focus on preferred techniques for the manufacture of security documents, such as bank notes, based on polymer document substrates. However, many aspects of the disclosure are more widely applicable and so should not be considered limited to use on polymer-based security documents unless otherwise indicated or necessitated by the nature of the product or method in question. For example, many of the methods and products described below can be utilised on security documents of conventional construction, e.g. paper-based documents. For instance, the described methods can be performed on a polymeric support layer which can then be affixed to or incorporated into a security document of any type. However, in all cases the preference is for combination with a polymer-based security document.

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To aid understanding, the following terminology has been used throughout the present disclosure:

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- Polymer substrate – this refers to a polymer document substrate which ultimately forms the main body of a security document. Examples of such polymer substrates are discussed below.
- Focussing element array – this refers to an array of elements capable of focussing visible light, such as lenses or mirrors. The term “array of focussing elements” is analogous. Examples are given below.

30

- Image array – this refers to a graphic which typically comprises a pattern of microimages or image elements, although neither is essential. In preferred cases the image array co-operates with a focussing element array to generate an optically variable effect. For example, the image array and the focussing element array may in combination form a moiré magnifier, an integral imaging device or a lenticular device (each described above), or some other optically variable device. In many preferred examples, the image array is formed of elements of applied ink or another such material. However this is not essential since the image array could instead be formed of recesses or the like. Preferred methods of manufacturing image arrays are discussed below.
- Focussing element support layer – this is a layer on the surface of which the focussing elements are formed. The focussing element support layer could be the polymer substrate (defined above) or could be another layer which is then applied to a document substrate (paper or polymer), or used as a carrier from which the focussing elements are later transferred to a document substrate (paper or polymer). For instance the focussing element support layer could take the form of a security article such as a thread, strip, patch or foil which is then incorporated into or onto a security document.
- Pattern support layer – this is a layer on the surface of which the image array (e.g. a pattern) is formed. The pattern support layer could be the polymer substrate (defined above) or could be another layer which is then applied to a document substrate (paper or polymer), or used as a carrier from which the image array is later transferred to a document substrate (paper or polymer). For instance the pattern support layer could take the form of a security article such as a thread, strip, patch or foil which is then incorporated into or onto a security document.
- Transparent material – “transparent” is used to mean that the material is substantially visually clear, such that an item on one side of the material

can be seen sharply through the material from the other side. Therefore transparent materials should have low optical scatter. However, transparent materials may nonetheless be optically detectable (defined below), e.g. carrying a coloured tint.

5

- Optically detectable material / optical detection characteristics – an optically detectable material may or may not be transparent but is detectable either to the human eye or to a machine via an optical detector (e.g. a camera), or both. Thus, the optical detection characteristic(s) of the material could be for example a visible colour, a non-visible reflection or absorbance such as UV or IR reflection or absorbance, or a photoluminescent response such as fluorescence or phosphorescence (the stimulating radiation and/or the emitted radiation being visible or invisible), or the like.

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- Curable material – “curable” means that the material hardens (i.e. becomes more viscous and preferably solid) in response to exposure to curing energy which may for example comprise heat, radiation (e.g. UV) or an electron beam. The hardening involves a chemical reaction such as cross-linking rather than mere physical solidification, e.g. as is experienced by most materials upon cooling.

15

For reference throughout the description of preferred manufacturing processes below, Figure 1 shows an exemplary security document 1, such as a banknote, based on a polymer substrate construction. Figure 1(a) shows the document in plan view and Figures 1(b), (c) and (d) show three alternative cross-sections along the line X-X'. It will be appreciated that the constructions shown are merely exemplary and alternative arrangements are viable, some of which will be discussed with reference to particular preferred manufacturing techniques discussed below.

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The security document 1 is based on a polymer substrate 2 which is preferably transparent but this is not essential in all embodiments. The polymer substrate

2 has a first surface 2a and a second surface 2b. It should be noted that wherever components are described herein as being “on” one of the surfaces of the polymer substrate 2, or actions are described as being performed “on” one of said surfaces, this does not require the component or action to be directly on the surface of the polymer substrate. Rather, some intermediate layer, such as a primer layer, could exist immediately on the surface of the polymer substrate itself and the component or action may be applied to or performed on that intermediate layer, unless otherwise specified.

On at least one of the surfaces of the polymer substrate 2, preferably both, one or more opacifying layers 3a, 3b (indicated generally as 3 in Figure 1(a)) are provided. The opacifying layers typically cover a large proportion of the surface area of the security document 1, in some cases the entire area (as in Figure 1(c), described below), but in other cases being omitted on one or both sides of the polymer substrate 2 in localised areas to form window regions. An exemplary window region 5 is shown in Figures 1(a), (b) and (c) but is omitted in the Figure 1(d) variant. The opacifying layer(s) 3 are configured to provide a suitable background for a graphics layer 8, typically applied by printing, which in the case of a banknote generally comprises secure fine line patterns such as guilloches, a portrait, currency and denomination information and the like. Thus the opacifying layers 3 are non-transparent and, in the case of a transparent polymer substrate 2, act to increase the opacity of the document 1 as a whole.

If the opacifying layers 3 are omitted in the window region 5 on both sides of the polymer substrate 2, as shown in Figure 1(b), the window region will be a “full window” and, provided the polymer substrate is transparent, will itself be transparent. If the opacifying layers are omitted in the window region 5 on one side of the polymer substrate 2 but not the other, the window region will be a “half window” which is non-transparent but typically of lower opacity than the surrounding regions of the document 1. An example of a half window is shown in Figure 1(c) in which the first opacifying layer(s) 3a on the first surface 2a of the polymer substrate 2 are absent in the window region 5 but the second opacifying layer(s) 3b on the second surface 2b are continuous across the

window region 5. It will be appreciated that the window region 5 could contain a mixture of full and half window areas by arranging the gaps in the first and second opacifying layers to overlap one another only partially (not shown). In Figure 1(c) there is no window, both opacifying layers 3a and 3b being continuous across region 5.

The security document 1 is provided with a security device 10 which comprises at least an array of focussing elements 20 provided on the first surface of the polymer substrate 2. The security device 10 could consist exclusively of the focussing element array 20 or may also comprise an image array 30 as discussed below. In the constructions of Figures 1(b) and 1(c), the focussing element array is applied in a gap defined by the first opacifying layer 3a such that the security device 10 is located in a window region 5 as discussed above. However this is not essential and Figure 1(d) shows an example where the focussing element array 20 is applied to the first surface 2a of the polymer substrate 2 over the first opacifying layer(s) 3a. Preferred methods for manufacturing the focussing element array 20 are discussed below, as well as preferred configurations of the focussing element array 20 itself.

The image array 30, if provided, is preferably located in a plane which substantially corresponds to the focal plane of the focussing elements array 20 (e.g. to within +/- 10%, more preferably +/- 5%) so that the focussing element array 20 exhibits a substantially focussed image of the image array 30, which is illustrated schematically by the broken-line sun-shaped outline in Figure 1(a). In practice this focussed image may be optically variable, i.e. have different appearances at different viewing angles, and as such may be referred to more generally as the "optical effect" exhibited by the security device 10. For instance, the image array 30 could co-operate with the focussing element array 20 to form a moiré magnification device, an integral imaging device or a lenticular device, the principles of each having been discussed above, or any combination thereof. Preferred methods of manufacturing the image array 30, as well as examples of its configuration, are discussed below.

The focussing element array 20 and image array 30 can be provided at various different positions provided the necessary spacing between them is achieved. In the Figure 1(b) example, this spacing is provided at least in part by the polymer substrate 2 itself, which here is transparent. The focussing element array 20 is located on the first surface 2a of the polymer substrate 2 whilst the image array 30 is located on the second surface 2b. It will be appreciated that whilst Figure 1(b) shows the device 10 as being located in a full window, the second opacifying layer(s) 3b could continue across all or part of the window region 5 (over the image array 30), forming a half window or a mixture of full and half window portions.

In the Figure 1(c) example, both the focussing element array 20 and the image array 30 are provided on the first surface 2a of the polymer substrate 2, which now need not be transparent (although this is still preferred). The optical spacing is provided by means other than the polymer substrate 2. In this case the focussing element array 20 and image array 30 are located in a gap in the first opacifying layer(s) 3a which forms a half-window. However, the second opacifying layer(s) 3b could also be at least partially omitted across the window region 5 to form a full window or a mixture of full and half window portions.

In the Figure 1(d) example, the focussing element array 20 and image array 30 are again both provided on the first surface 2a of the polymer substrate 2, this time over the first opacifying layer 3a since as previously indicated no window is formed in this case. Again the optical spacing is achieved by means other than use of the polymer substrate 2. It will be appreciated from the Figure 1(d) example, in which the polymer substrate need not be transparent, that whilst security devices 10 of the sort disclosed herein are particularly well suited to application to documents based on polymer substrates, they are not limited in this regard and can be utilised on any type of security document, e.g. those based on paper substrates, or indeed on any article which requires protection from counterfeiting.

Depending on the type of optical effect desired to be displayed by the security device 10, accurate registration between the focussing element array 20 and the image array 30 may or may not be necessary. However this is highly desirable in certain cases.

5

The security documents and security devices disclosed herein can be optionally be made machine readable by the introduction of detectable materials in any of the layers or by the introduction of separate machine-readable layers. Detectable materials that react to an external stimulus include but are not limited to fluorescent, phosphorescent, infrared absorbing, thermochromic, photochromic, magnetic, electrochromic, conductive and piezochromic materials. This applies to all embodiments of the invention.

10

Typically to form the finished security document 1, a number of additional processes will take place, including printing of the graphics layer 8 already mentioned above, as well as application of any further security articles such as security threads, strips, patches, foils or the like which may carry features such as diffractive elements (e.g. holograms or Kinegrams), iridescent material, colour-shifting material etc. One example of such an applied security article is shown in Figure 1 as strip 9. The so-formed material (generally in the form of a web or a sheet, at this stage, as discussed further below) will then be cut into individual security documents 1. All of these process steps are considered optional in the present disclosure and can be implemented by conventional means.

20

25

Turning now to the manufacturing process, Figure 2 is a flow diagram illustrating, at a high level, the main process steps in an exemplary implementation. It must be emphasised that the order of the steps can be varied significantly. Therefore, Figure 2 serves merely to introduce the key steps involved in manufacturing a polymer-based security document and should not be considered to limit the order of those steps, except where otherwise indicated. It should further be noted that all steps shown in dashed lines are optional.

30

Thus in step S101, a polymer substrate 2 is provided, typically in web form.

In step S200, a focussing element array 20 is applied to the polymer substrate on its first surface. This will be described below but for the time being it is sufficient to note that the step S200 could involve actual formation of the focussing element array, either on the polymer substrate or on an intermediate component such as a security thread, strip or patch (indicated as step S200a) which is then affixed to the polymer substrate. However this is not essential since the focussing element array could be formed in some separate process, possibly by a different entity, as an article such as a security thread, strip or patch, in which case the present step S200 need only involve affixing the pre-formed focussing element array 20 to the polymer substrate 2. For this reason, in the main part the discussion below describes preferred methods of forming the focussing element array as taking place on a focussing element support layer, which could be the polymer substrate 2 but alternatively could be a carrier layer in such a component.

In step S300, an image array 30 is applied to the polymer substrate as will be described below. However, as in the case of the focussing element array 20, similarly step S300 may or may not involve the actual formation of the image array 30. That is, step S300 may comprise forming the image array 30 either on a surface of the polymer substrate or on an intermediate component such as a security thread, strip or patch (indicated as step S300a) which is then affixed to the polymer substrate. Alternatively the image array could be formed in some separate process, possibly by a different entity, as an article such as a security thread, strip or patch, in which case the present step S300 need only involve affixing the pre-formed image array 30 to the polymer substrate 2. For this reason, in the main part we describe preferred methods of forming the image array as taking place on a pattern support layer, which could be the polymer substrate 2 but alternatively could be a carrier layer in such a component.

Indeed, where the focussing element array 20 and the image array 30 are both formed away from the polymer substrate 2 and then applied thereto, the

focussing element array 20 and the image array 30 could each be formed as part of one and the same security article (such as a thread, strip or patch) which can then be affixed to the polymer substrate 2 in a single step. Thus the focussing element support layer and the pattern support layer could be provided
5 by a single support layer. It is noted as an aside that security articles equipped with a focussing element array 20 and an image array 30 can be applied to any type of security document, not necessarily one based on a polymer substrate.

In step S400, the at least one opacifying layer(s) are applied to the first and/or
10 second surfaces of the polymer substrate 2. In practice this may optionally take place in several steps, which need not all be performed immediately sequentially, one after the other. For instance, one or more of the opacifying layers could be applied before steps S200 and/or S300.

15 In step S500, which is optional, the graphics layer 8 is applied to the opacifying layers, typically by way of security printing techniques. For example, the graphics layer 8 may be printed by any conventional printing technique, or combination of techniques, such as intaglio printing, lithographic printing, offset printing, flexographic printing, gravure printing and the like. The graphics layer 8
20 typically comprises high resolution patterns such as fine line patterns and guilloches, portraits, and other indicia. In step S600, which is also optional, any additional security devices on articles such as threads, strips, patches etc., are applied to the substrate. Any conventional techniques for applying such components can be utilised, including bonding by adhesives, lamination, hot
25 stamping, transfer methods and the like. The security devices could be of any known type, such as holograms, kinograms and other diffractive elements, iridescent or colour-shift material, etc. Steps S500 and S600 could take place in either order and/or as a series of sub-steps which could be intermingled with one another. Finally, the processed material is cut into individual security documents
30 in step S700.

In the present example, all of the steps described have been web-based processes, i.e. applied to a web of the polymer substrate 2, e.g. in one in-line

process. Typically a web with a large width (e.g. between 0.75 and 1.5 m) is supplied for this purpose. However, for some process steps it is desirable to reduce the width of the web, e.g. so that shorter (and hence less costly) processing tools can be used. It is also desirable to carry out certain process

5 steps on individual sheets of the material, rather than on a continuous web. This is particularly the case for security print step S500. Hence, line S800 represents slitting the initial web along its longitudinal direction so as to reduce its width, subsequent processing steps utilising processing tools of correspondingly shorter width compared with those of the preceding steps. Line S900 represents

10 dividing the web into sheets, by cutting it along its cross direction at intervals spaced in the longitudinal direction. This process is sometimes referred to as "sheeting". Each sheet will preferably be sized so as carry a plurality of the final security documents. Subsequent processes are performed using sheet-fed machinery.

15

It will be appreciated that the points in the process at which steps S800 and S900 are performed can be varied and are indicated only schematically in Figure 2. Typically at least one process step will be performed on the reduced-width web (i.e. between steps S800 and S900), although this is not depicted here.

20

To illustrate the production of various key components of the security document 1 by the above steps, Figure 3 schematically illustrates exemplary apparatus for carrying out steps S200, S300 and S400 on a polymer substrate 2 in the form of a web. It will be noted that the order of steps shown here is different from that in

25 Figure 2. The polymer substrate 2 is provided from a supply such as a reel 100. The polymer substrate may undergo various treatment steps (not shown in Figure 3), such as the application of a primer or corona treatment, before being subjected to the processing described below. The polymer substrate is conveyed along a transport path by a transport module (not shown) of

30 conventional construction. The direction of transit is termed the machine direction (MD) and the orthogonal direction in the plane of the web is the cross direction (CD).

At a focussing element station 200, a focussing element array 20 is applied to the first surface of the substrate. As mentioned above, this may involve actual forming of the focussing element array 20 in-situ on the polymer substrate, e.g. by cast-curing, or could involve supplying a security article 290, shown in the form of a thread or strip, from an ancillary supply 200a and affixing at least portions of it carrying a pre-formed focussing element array to the surface of the polymer substrate, e.g. by lamination, adhesive or hot-stamping. Further details of preferred methods for forming the focussing element array 20 are below. In the example shown, the focussing element array 20 is applied at spaced intervals so as to form one or more devices 10 on each section of the web that will form a separate security document once cut. However in other cases the focussing element array could be applied continuously along the polymer substrate 2.

At an opacifying layer station 400, one or more opacifying layer(s) are applied to the first and/or second surfaces of the polymer substrate 2, as described further below. Since the focussing element array 20 has already been applied to the polymer substrate in this embodiment, the application of the first opacifying layer 3a should omit at least part of the area(s) in which the focussing element array 20 is disposed so that it remains at least partially uncovered. The exception is where the focussing element array comprises mirrors rather than lenses in which case it could be covered on the first surface of the substrate and ultimately viewed from the opposite side. In the example shown, the second opacifying layer 3b is also omitted in the same area, so as to form a full window in which the focussing element array 20 is arranged.

At an image array station 300, an image array 30 is applied to the second surface of the polymer substrate 2. As mentioned above, this may involve actual forming of the image array 30 in-situ on the polymer substrate, e.g. by printing, or could involve supplying a security article 390, shown in the form of a thread or strip, from an ancillary supply 300a and affixing at least portions of it carrying a pre-formed image array to the surface of the polymer substrate, e.g. by lamination, adhesive or hot-stamping. Further details of preferred methods for

forming the image array 30 are below. In the example shown, the image array 30 is applied opposite each of the focussing element arrays 20 such that in each window the device 10 exhibits a focussed image of the image array 30.

- 5 The web can then go on to be subjected to any of the optional processing steps described previously with respect to Figure 2, not shown in Figure 3. As noted above, whilst the apparatus shown in Figure 3 is depicted as an in-line, web-based process, it is not essential that all of steps S200, S300 and S400 be carried out in such a way.

10

A focussing element array 20 comprises a plurality of focussing elements, typically lenses or mirrors, arranged over an area typically in a regular one-dimensional or two-dimensional grid. The nature of the focussing elements will depend on the desired optical effect but examples include cylindrical focussing
15 elements, spherical focussing elements, aspherical focussing elements, elliptical focussing elements, Fresnel focussing elements and the like. The focussing elements can operate on refraction, diffraction or reflection (in the case of mirrors). For brevity, in the discussion below the term “lens” is used interchangeably with the term “focussing element” but this should not be taken
20 as limiting.

The focal length of the lenses is directly related to their size (radius) and the available optical spacing must be taken into account when designing the lens array. Generally, the relationship between focal length f and lens radius r is:

$$f \propto \frac{r}{\Delta n}$$

- 25 where Δn is the difference in refractive index across the interface defining the lens surface. In an example, for an image array 30 on the second surface of the polymer substrate 2 to be focussed by a focussing element array on the first surface of the polymer substrate 2, the optical geometry must be taken into account when selecting the thickness of the polymer substrate 2 (and any other
30 optical spacer layer that may exist between the focussing element array 20 and the image array 30) and the dimensions of the lenses. In preferred examples

the thickness is in the range 50 to 100 microns, hence the focussing element array should have a focal length in the same range. The periodicity and therefore maximum base diameter (or width, in the case of elongate lenses) of the focusing elements is preferably in the range 5 to 200 μ m, more preferably 10 to 100 μ m and even more preferably 10 to 70 μ m. In other examples, the focussing element array 20 and image array 30 may both be arranged on the same side of the polymer substrate in which case the available optical spacing is likely to be smaller (e.g. 5 to 50 microns) and hence the dimensions of the lenses will need to be correspondingly reduced. The f number for the lenticular focusing elements is preferably in the range 0.1 to 16 and more preferably 0.5 to 4.

The focussing element array 20 could include focussing elements with different optical properties from one another, e.g. different focal length, in different sub-regions of the array, by appropriate design of the elements' shape and size. For example, the focussing element array could include lenses of different height from one another giving rise to different focal lengths in each region. In such cases, if a focussed image of an image array 30 is desired the image array 30 may be located at just one of the focal lengths, or two image arrays 30 could be provided, one at each focal length.

The focussing element array 20 can be formed either on the first surface of the polymer substrate 2 or could be on another (transparent) support layer which is then affixed to the first surface of the polymer substrate 2. As defined above, the term "focussing element support layer" is intended to cover both of these options and is therefore used below. In places this is shorted to "support layer" for brevity.

In embodiments of the present invention, the focussing element array 20 is formed by cast-curing. This involves applying a transparent curable material either to the support layer or to a casting tool carrying a surface relief defining the desired focussing element array, forming the material using the casting tool and curing the material to fix the relief structure into the surface of the material.

For reference, Figures 4 and 5 schematically depict two cast-curing techniques which constitute comparative examples. Components common to both methods are labelled with the same reference numbers. In both cases the process is shown as applied to a focussing element support layer 201, comprising a transparent film, which may be the aforementioned polymer substrate 2 or could be another layer which is later applied to the polymer substrate 2. In each case, Figure (a) depicts the apparatus from a side view, and Figure (b) shows the support layer in a perspective view, the manufacturing apparatus itself being removed for clarity. Figure 5(c) shows a variant of the Figure 5(a) example.

In the Figure 4 example, a transparent curable material 205 is first applied to the support layer 201 using an application module 210 which here comprises a patterned print cylinder 211 which is supplied with the curable material from a doctor chamber 213 via an intermediate roller 212. For example, the components shown could form part of a gravure printing system. Other printing techniques such as lithographic, flexographic, screen printing or offset printing could also be used. Print processes such as these are preferred since the curable material 205 can then be laid down on the support 201 only in first regions 202 thereof, the size, shape and location of which can be selected by control of the print process, e.g. through appropriate configuration of the pattern on cylinder 211. However, in other cases, an all over coating method could be used, e.g. if the focussing element array is to be formed all over the support 201 or if the method variants described below with respect to Figures 6 and 7 are utilised. The curable material 205 is applied to the support 201 in an uncured (or at least not fully cured) state and therefore may be fluid or a formable solid.

The support 201 is then conveyed to a casting module 220 which here comprises a casting tool 221 in the form of a cylinder carrying a surface relief 225 defining the shape of the focussing elements which are to be cast into the curable material 205. As each region 202 of curable material 205 comes into contact with the cylinder 221, the curable material 205 fills a corresponding region of the relief structure, forming the surface of the curable material into the

shape defined by the relief. The cylinder 221 could be configured such that the relief structure 225 is only provided at regions corresponding to shape and position of the first regions 202 of curable material 205. However this gives rise to the need for accurate registration between the application module 210 and the casting module 220 in order that the focussing elements are accurately placed in each first region 202 of the curable material. Therefore in a particularly preferred example, the cylinder 221 carries the relief structure corresponding to the focussing elements over an area larger than that of the first region 202, preferably around its complete circumference and most preferably over substantially its whole surface (although axial regions which will not come into the vicinity of the curable material may be excluded). In this way, each entire first region 202 of curable material 205 is guaranteed to come into contact with the surface relief structure 225 such that the focussing element array is formed over the full extent of the material. As a result, the shape, size and location of the focussing element array 20 is determined solely by the application of the curable material by the application module.

Having been formed into the correct surface relief structure, the curable material 205 is cured by exposing it to appropriate curing energy such as radiation R from a source 222. This preferably takes place while the curable material is in contact with the surface relief 225 although if the material is already sufficiently viscous this could be performed after separation. In the example shown, the material is irradiated through the support layer 201 although the source 222 could alternatively be positioned above the support layer 201, e.g. inside cylinder 221 if the cylinder is formed from a suitable transparent material such as quartz.

Figure 5 shows variants of the above process in which, rather than apply the curable material 205 to the support layer 201, it is applied instead to the surface of the casting cylinder 225. Again this is preferably done in a patterned manner, using a print cylinder 211 to transfer the curable material 205 only onto the first regions 202 on the casting cylinder 221. Upon contact with the support layer 201, the regions 202 of curable material 205 affix to the support layer 205 and curing preferably takes place at this stage to ensure strong bonding. The so-

formed focussing element arrays 20 again have a shape, size and location determined solely by the application module 210.

Figure 5(c) illustrates an alternative implementation in which rather than apply
5 the curable material 205 to the support layer 201 or the casting cylinder 221 in a
patterned manner to define the first regions 202, the casting cylinder 221' is
modified to achieve such patterning. Thus, the surface relief 225 defining the
focussing element array is only provided in discrete patches of the surface of the
casting cylinder 221' with the intervening areas having no surface relief. The
10 curable material 205 can be applied all over the surface of casting cylinder 221',
e.g. from a reservoir as shown or from an applicator roller. The curable material
205 fills at least the relief regions 225 and if any is collected on the intervening
surface regions, a removal device such as a doctor blade or squeegee 213' may
be provided to clear those areas. The support layer 201 is brought into contact
15 with the cylinder 221', preferably in a wrap configuration as shown, and the
curable material 205 is exposed to appropriate curing energy R from a source
222, preferably during contact as shown. The support layer 201 is then
separated from the cylinder 221' and now carries discrete patches of focussing
element arrays 20 in respective first regions 202.

20

In all of the above examples, preferably the first regions 202 have the form of
indicia, such as an alphanumeric character, a symbol, logo or other item of
information to increase the complexity of the design.

25 The surface relief 225 may be carried by cylinder 221 in the form of a sheet
embossed or otherwise provided with the required relief, which is wrapped
around the cylinder 221 and clamped in place. This may result in a noticeable
join 225a where the two ends of the sheet meet, at which there is a discrepancy
in the relief pattern. If replicated into one of the focussing element arrays this
30 would cause a reduction in quality. It is therefore preferred that the casting
module is at least coarsely registered to the application module so that the
location of join 225a where it contacts support 201 does not coincide with any of
the first regions 202 but rather is located between them, as shown by the

example location labelled 225b. In cases where the curable material is applied (and retained) all over the support, or at least along a continuous strip in the machine direction MD, this join 225a is still preferably positioned outside the first region which is to be used to form the security device, advantageously in a location which will subsequently be coated with one of the opacifying layers 3. To achieve this consistently it is desirable for the process for forming the focussing element array to be registered with the opacifying layer application process, e.g. performed in the same in-line process.

Figures 6 and 7 show an alternative cast-cure process for forming the focussing element array according to another comparative example. Again, components corresponding to those described above are labelled with the same reference numerals used previously and will not be described in detail again. In this case, the shape, size and location of each focussing element array is determined not by the initial application of the curable material 205 to the support layer 201 but by selective curing of that material.

Referring first to Figure 6, here the application module 210 applies the curable material over not only the first regions 202 in which the focussing element array is ultimately to be located, but additionally over a second region 203 such that in this example substantially the whole of the first surface of the support layer 201 is coated with the curable material 205. Thus whilst in the example shown the application module is still constituted by a printing system as described previously (but in which the cylinder 211 defines a print area substantially over the whole area of the support as described here), this could be replaced by a non-selective, all over coating module. The curable material 205 is then brought into contact with the casting tool 220 which again in this case is preferably provided with the appropriate surface relief 225 over substantially the whole of its circumference. Thus, the whole of the first and second regions 202, 203 of the curable material are formed in accordance with the relief structure. However, only selected portions of the material are cured. This can be achieved by providing a mask 223 through which the curable material 205 is exposed to the curing energy, e.g. UV radiation. The mask 223 defines radiation-transparent

portions corresponding to the first regions 202 and radiation-opaque portions in between such that the second region 203 of the curable material is not cured. In this example, the radiation source 222 is located inside the casting cylinder 221 and the mask 223 is also arranged on the inside of that cylinder.

5

A removal module 230 is additionally provided to remove the uncured material 205 from the second region 203, leaving only the cured material in the first regions 202, bearing the desired surface relief and thereby forming the focussing element arrays 20. The removal module 230 can comprise a cleaning roller 231 with a (preferably soft) surface to which the uncured material 205 will adhere and be lifted off the support 201. A cleaning system such as a doctor blade or squeegee 232 may be provided to remove the waste material 205 from the roller 231.

10

15 In a variant of the Figure 6 example, the patterned mask 223 and curing energy source 222 may be arranged on the other side of the transport path, as shown in Figure 7. Here the support layer 201 is conveyed through a nip defined between the casting cylinder 221 and a mask cylinder 223 arranged to move at substantially the same speed as one another. In other respects the Figure 7 apparatus is the same as that of Figure 6.

20

In both variants, any join 225a in the surface relief on the casting cylinder is preferably aligned with one of the opaque portions of the mask 223 such that the area of material 205 into which that part of the surface relief is formed will not be cured and is removed by station 230.

25

In both variants, the curable material 205 could be applied to the surface of the casting cylinder 221 instead of onto the support later 201, e.g. using an arrangement corresponding to that shown in Figure 5.

30

In the above methods, a single curable material 205 has been used to form the focussing element array 20. However, in embodiments of the present invention, any of the above techniques are modified by the use of two or more curable

transparent materials, with different optical detection characteristics, e.g. colour. Figures 8(a) and (b) show an example of such a process which in all other respects corresponds to that of Figure 4 above. Nonetheless it will be appreciated that any of the other cast-cure methods disclosed herein (or known
5 previously) could be adapted similarly for use with two or more curable materials.

As shown in Figures 8(a) and (b), two application modules 210a, 210b are now provided, one for the application of each different curable material 205a, 205b.
10 Each application module can be of the forms discussed previously and is configured to selectively apply the curable material 205a, 205b to respective first and second sub-regions 202a, 202b of the first region 202 across which the focussing element array is to be formed. It should be noted that in the present example the two sub-regions 202a, 202b abut one another, as is preferred, but
15 this is not essential. Either the perimeter of the first region 202 as a whole, and/or the two sub-regions 202a,b (in combination or independently of one another) preferably define indicia. The two application modules 210a,b are preferably registered to one another, e.g. performed in the same in-line process. The two curable materials 205a,b are then brought into contact with the casting
20 cylinder 221 so as to form the surface relief into both materials, and cured in the same manner as previously described. The result is a focussing element array formed of at least two materials laterally offset from one another (i.e. side by side), giving rise to an optically detectable pattern or indicia. The two curable materials 205a, 205b preferably have different visible colours from one another
25 but in other cases the different optical detection characteristics could be revealed only under certain non-visible wavelengths (e.g. IR or UV) and/or could be detectable only by machine.

Figures 8(c) and (d) show two alternative apparatus arrangements which may be
30 used to form focussing element arrays of at least two materials. In these examples, the two curable materials 205a,b are applied to the casting cylinder 221' rather than to the support layer 201. Thus, in the Figure 8(c) embodiment, application module 210a selectively applies a first curable material 205a to first

sub-regions 202a of the surface relief 225 on cylinder 221' and then application module 210b selectively applies a second curable material 205b to second sub-regions 202b. In each application module 210, either or both of the rollers 211, 212 in the inking chain may be patterned. For example, rollers 212a,b may be
5 patterned gravure rollers configured to take up resin on selected portions of their surfaces only, with respective removal means 213a', 213b' such as doctor blades optionally being provided to remove any excess. Rollers 211a,b may then be uniform transfer rollers. The patterning required to form regions 202 and sub-regions 202a, 202b could be achieved solely by the two application modules
10 210a,b in which case the focussing element relief structure 225 may be provided continuously across the whole surface of casting cylinder 221'. Alternatively, as shown in Figure 8(c), the relief structure 225 may be provided only in discrete patches on the surface of cylinder 221' and an optional removal means 213a'', 213b'' such as respective doctor blades can be provided after each application
15 station to remove any excess material. The precise location and extent of the first regions 202 (and their sub-regions) which are ultimately formed on the support layer 201 may be determined by the manner in which the curable materials 205a,b and/or by the arrangement of the surface relief structure 225 on the cylinder 221'.

20

In a variant, shown in Figure 8(d), rather than apply the two curable materials 205a,b onto the support layer 201 sequentially, the two application modules could be configured to apply the respective curable materials in the desired pattern onto some intermediate component, such as a blanket or an offset roller.
25 The pattern of different curable materials can then be transferred onto the support layer 201 in a single application step. This has been found to improve the achievable registration. Thus, the apparatus shown in Figure 8(d) corresponds largely to that of Figure 8(c) except for the provision of collect roller 214 which is inserted between the application modules 210a, 210b and the
30 casting cylinder 221'. Thus, each application module 210a,b deposits its curable material 205a,b in a pattern onto the surface of collect roller 214, from which both materials 205a,b are then transferred together onto the casting cylinder

221'. This approach has been found to achieve particularly accurate registration between the two curable materials 205a,b.

Figures 9(a) and (b) show an exemplary security document 1 in which the focussing element array 20 is formed of two materials using a method such as any of those shown in Figure 8. In other respects, the security document is the same as previously described with reference to Figures 1(a) and (b). It will be seen that here the focussing element array 20 comprises a first sub-region 202a which is colourless (constituting the left half of the circular region 202 forming the focussing element array 20) and a second sub-region 202b which is visibly coloured forming the right half. It will be appreciated that more complex designs can be implemented through control of the two application modules 210a,b.

For instance, Figure 9(c) shows another exemplary security device, (i) in cross-section and (ii), (iii) in plan view from two different viewing angles. The focussing element array 20 as a whole covers a rectangular area. Within that area, a central circular area is formed by one sub-region 202b of the array 20, in which the lenses (or other focussing elements) are formed of a curable material 205b carrying a coloured tint, e.g. yellow, whilst the remainder of the rectangle surrounding (and abutting) the circle is formed of another sub-region 202a in which the lenses are clear and colourless. In this example, the image array 30 provided on the opposite surface of transparent substrate 2 comprises first image elements 31 formed for example of a dark ink (e.g. black) or metal, spaced by second image elements 32 which are relatively light (e.g. white ink) or may be blank (i.e. carrying no material). The image elements 31, 32 are arranged to form a two-channel lenticular array which is uniform across the whole rectangular area. For example, the first image elements 31 may be rectilinear elongate strip elements regularly spaced from one another across the device by elements 32.

30

When the device is viewed at a first viewing angle by observer O_1 , the focussing elements act to direct light from the first image elements to the observer across the whole device. Thus, the outer sub-region 202a takes on the colour of the

first image elements 31, e.g. black or metallic. The central, circular sub-region also displays the first image elements 31 but here their colour is modified by that of the tint in the lens material 205b, e.g. causing the circle to appear brown or metallic yellow. When the viewing angle is changed to that of observer O_2 , now
5 the device again displays two colours alongside one another, but these are different colours from those seen by the first observer O_1 . This is because the focussing elements 20 are now directing light from the second image elements 32 to the viewer. Hence in the outer sub-region 202a, the device displays the colour of the second image elements 32 which may for example be white or
10 even transparent. The central circular sub-region meanwhile displays a colour modified by that of the material 205b and hence in this case it may appear yellow. Thus by providing the focussing element array in two colours, a device has been achieved which displays a total of four different colours as it is tilted, despite the use of a standard, single colour image array 30. Further, the relative
15 arrangement of the two colours visible alongside one another at any one viewing angle is determined by the lateral positioning of the two sub-regions of the focussing element array, which can be controlled through the methods described above, and also does not require modification of the image array 30.

20 It will be appreciated that whilst in this example the sub-regions are arranged as a circular area against a rectangular background, any desirable arrangement of sub-regions could be implemented. In preferred cases, one or more of the sub-regions, of a combination of two or more of the sub-regions, are formed of indicia, e.g. to convey an item of information. For instance, the sub-regions may
25 define one or more alphanumeric characters, particularly letters or numbers, symbols, logos, graphics or the like. In general it is preferred if one sub-region is entirely surrounded by another sub-region, which provides a background area.

In the Figure 9(c) example, the image elements 31 are typically of high optical
30 density, e.g. opaque, and the device may be configured primarily for viewing in reflected light. However, in other cases it is desirable for the image elements of array 30 to be formed in a colour which combines with those carried by the focussing element array 20 so as to generate further colours, e.g. when viewed

in transmissive light or against a reflective surface (such as a white background). Thus the image elements 31 may be translucent or transparent with a coloured tint. Figure 9(d) shows such an example, the structure of which is substantially the same as that of Figure 9(c) except here the sub-regions 202a,b of the focussing element array 20 are arranged as two adjacent rectangles, and image array 30 is formed of coloured elements 31, e.g. green. The lenses 20 are colourless in sub-region 202a and yellow in sub-region 202b. Thus, observer O_1 sees sub-region 202a as a green rectangle and adjacent sub-region 202b as a rectangle in a different shade of green (relatively more yellow than that of sub-region 202a). At the different viewing angle of observer O_2 , now the two rectangles appear white / colourless (sub-region 202a) and yellow (sub-region 202b), respectively. Thus once again four colours have been exhibited.

Of course, three or more different curable materials could be applied to form the focussing element array by extending the above principles as necessary.

In many embodiments, the focussing element array 20 will be uniform in all respects other than the material from which it is made across all of its sub-regions. For instance, preferably the size and shape (and hence focal length) of the focussing elements will be the same in all sub-regions, and the elements will be arranged on a continuous regular grid which is uniform in all sub-regions (e.g. same pitch and orientation). However, in other embodiments it may be desirable to further increase the visual complexity of the device by arranging other characteristics of the focussing element array to vary in conjunction with the different colours of the focussing elements (or other change in optical characteristic, e.g. fluorescence).

Figures 10(a) and (b) show two further embodiments of security elements taking advantage of this approach. In Figure 10(a) the security device has substantially the same construction as already described in relation to Figure 9(d) except that in the first sub-region 202a, the lenses are of a first height, h_{1a} , whilst in the second sub-region 202b, the lenses are of a second, different height h_{1b} , which here is shown to be greater than the first height. The different shapes of the

lenses in the two sub-regions results in different respective focal lengths. In the first sub-region 202a, the focal length f_a of the lenses is longer than the thickness of the substrate 2 such that the lenses focus at a point behind the security device and not on image array 30. This has the result that no focussed optical effect will be exhibited in this sub-region, which will now appear static as the device is tilted, with a colour modified by that of the material 205a. In the second sub-region 202b, the focal length f_b is shorter and coincides with the image array 30 as before. Thus, the optical effect previous described is exhibited here, together with the colour modification achieved by material 205b.

10

In the Figure 10(b) variant, a second image array 30' is provided on a second substrate 2' laminated to the first, and positioned so as to coincide with the longer focal length of the lenses in the first sub-region 202a. The second image array 30' can for example contain different image content or elements of a different colour from the first array 30', so that the visual effect exhibited by each sub-region is different. For instance, the array 30' could comprise microimages arrayed so as to generate a moiré effect with the lenses in sub-region 202a whilst the array 30 is a lenticular array as before. This enables particularly complex devices to be designed.

20

In all of the above methods, the two or more transparent curable materials 205 in which the lenses are formed can be of various different compositions.

Each curable material 205 is preferably radiation-curable and may comprise a resin which may typically be of one of two types, namely:

25

a) Free radical cure resins, which are typically unsaturated resins or monomers, pre-polymers, oligomers etc. containing vinyl or acrylate unsaturation for example and which cross-link through use of a photo initiator activated by the radiation source employed e.g. UV.

30

b) Cationic cure resins, in which ring opening (e.g. epoxy types) is effected using photo initiators or catalysts which generate ionic entities under the radiation

source employed e.g. UV. The ring opening is followed by intermolecular cross-linking.

5 The radiation used to effect curing will typically be UV radiation but could comprise electron beam, visible, or even infra-red or higher wavelength radiation, depending upon the material, its absorbance and the process used. Examples of suitable curable materials include UV curable acrylic based clear embossing lacquers, or those based on other compounds such as nitro-cellulose. A suitable UV curable lacquer is the product UVF-203 from Kingfisher
10 Ink Limited or photopolymer NOA61 available from Norland Products. Inc, New Jersey.

The curable material 205 could itself also be elastomeric and therefore of increased flexibility. An example of a suitable elastomeric curable material is
15 aliphatic urethane acrylate (with suitable cross-linking additive such as polyaziridine).

As noted above, the provision of an image array 30 is optional but preferred. It is particularly advantageous to provide an image array configured to co-operate
20 with the focussing element array 20 to produce an optically variable effect. For example, the image array 30 and focussing element array 20 may, in combination, form a moiré magnification device, an integral imaging device or a lenticular device, the mechanism on which each operates having been discussed above.

25 Security devices of the above types depend for their optical effect at least in part upon the high resolution with which the image array 30 has been produced. For instance, in a lenticular device, each image element or "slice" making up image array 30 must be narrower than the pitch of the focussing element array 20,
30 which as discussed above is typically no more than 100 microns, usually less. For example, if the diameter of the focusing elements is 30µm then each image element may be around 15µm wide or less. Alternatively for a smooth lenticular animation effect it is preferable to have as many different interleaved images as

possible, typically at least five but ideally as many as thirty. In this case the size of the image elements should be in the range 0.1 to 6 μ m. In practice, in a lenticular device, the width of the image elements is directly influenced by two factors, namely the pitch of the focusing element (e.g. lens) array and the number of image elements required within each lens pitch or lens base width. The former however is also indirectly determined by the thickness of the lenticular device. This is because the focal length for a plano-convex lens array (assuming the convex part of the lens is bounded by air and not a varnish) is approximated by the expression $r / (n-1)$, where r is the radius of curvature and n the refractive index of the lens resin. Since the latter has a value typically between 1.45 and 1.5 then we may say the lens focal approximates to $2r$. Now for a close packed lens array, the base diameter of the lens is only slightly smaller than the lens pitch, and since the maximum value the base diameter can have is $2r$, it then follows that the maximum value for the lens pitch is close to the value $2r$ which closely approximates to the lens focal length and therefore the device thickness.

To give an example, for a security thread component as may be incorporated into a banknote, the thickness of the lenticular structure and therefore the lens focal length is desirably less than 35 μ m. Let us suppose we target a thickness and hence a focal length of 30 μ m. The maximum base diameter we can have is from the previous discussion equal to $2r$ which closely approximates to the lens focal length of 30 μ m. In this scenario the f-number, which equals (focal length / lens base diameter), is very close to 1. The lens pitch can be chosen to have a value only a few μ m greater than the lens diameter – let us choose a value of 32 μ m for the lens pitch. It therefore follows for a two channel one-dimensional lenticular device (i.e. two image element strips per lens) we need to fit two image strips into 32 μ m and therefore each strip is 16 μ m wide. Similarly for a four channel one-dimensional lenticular the printed line width requirement drops down to 8 μ m (in this example).

As a result, the f-number of the lens should preferably be minimised, in order to maximise the lens base diameter for a given structure thickness. For example

suppose we choose a higher f-number of 3, consequently the lens base diameter will be $30/3$ or $10\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. Such a lens will be at the boundary of diffractive and refractive physics – however, even if we still consider it to be primarily a diffractive device then we may assume a lens pitch of say $12\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. Consider
5 once again the case of a two channel device, now we will need to print an image strip of only $6\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ and for a four channel device a strip width of only $3\text{ }\mu\text{m}$.

Similar considerations apply to other types of devices. For example, in moiré magnifiers and integral imaging devices, each microimage must be of the same
10 order of magnitude as one lens, or smaller. Thus, the microimage will typically have overall dimensions of 50 microns or less. In order to provide the microimage with any detail, small line widths are required, e.g. of 15 microns or preferably less, ideally 5 microns or less.

15 Conventional printing techniques will generally not be adequate to achieve such high resolution. For instance, typical printing processes used to manufacture pattern elements (image arrays) for security devices include intaglio, gravure, wet lithographic printing and dry lithographic printing. The achievable resolution is limited by several factors, including the viscosity, wettability and chemistry of
20 the ink, as well as the surface energy, unevenness and wicking ability of the substrate, all of which lead to ink spreading. With careful design and implementation, such techniques can be used to print pattern elements with a line width of between $25\text{ }\mu\text{m}$ and $50\text{ }\mu\text{m}$. For example, with gravure or wet lithographic printing it is possible to achieve line widths down to about $15\text{ }\mu\text{m}$.
25 However, consistent results at this resolution are difficult to achieve and in any case this level of resolution still imposes a significant limitation on the security device. Thus while any of the above-mentioned techniques can be employed in embodiments of the present invention, higher resolution methods (i.e. suitable for achieving smaller line widths) for forming the image array
30 desirable.

One method which has been put forward as an alternative to the printing techniques mentioned above, and can be employed in embodiments of the

invention, is used in the so-called Unison Motion™ product by Nanoventions Holdings LLC, as mentioned for example in WO-A-2005052650. This involves creating pattern elements ("icon elements") as recesses in a substrate surface before spreading ink over the surface and then scraping off excess ink with a doctor blade. The resulting inked recesses can be produced with line widths of the order of 2 µm to 3 µm.

A different method of producing high-resolution image elements is disclosed in WO-A-2015/044671 and is based on flexographic printing techniques. A curable material is placed on raised portions of a die form only, and brought into contact with a support layer preferably over an extended distance. The material is cured either whilst the die form and support layer remain in contact and/or after separation. This process has been found to be capable of achieving high resolution and is therefore advantageous for use in forming the image array 30 in the present application.

Some more particularly preferred methods for generating patterns or micropatterns (i.e. an image array 30) on a substrate are known from US 2009/0297805 A1 and WO 2011/102800 A1. These disclose methods of forming micropatterns in which a die form or matrix is provided whose surface comprises a plurality of recesses. The recesses are filled with a curable material, a treated substrate layer is made to cover the recesses of the matrix, the material is cured to fix it to the treated surface of the substrate layer, and the material is removed from the recesses by separating the substrate layer from the matrix.

Another strongly preferred method of forming a micropattern is disclosed in WO 2014/070079 A1. Here it is taught that a matrix is provided whose surface comprises a plurality of recesses, the recesses are filled with a curable material, and a curable pickup layer is made to cover the recesses of the matrix. The curable pickup layer and the curable material are cured, fixing them together, and the pickup layer is separated from the matrix, removing the material from the recesses. The pickup layer is, at some point during or after this process,

transferred onto a substrate layer so that the pattern is provided on the substrate layer.

5 The above-mentioned methods described in US 2009/0297805 A1, WO 2011/102800 and WO 2014/070079 A1 have been found to produce particularly good results and are therefore particularly preferred for use in forming the image array 30 in embodiments of the invention.

10 In other examples the image array 30 can be formed by a relief structure and a variety of different relief structure suitable for this are shown in Figure 11. Thus, Figure 11a illustrates image regions of the image elements (IM), in the form of embossed or recessed regions while the non-embossed portions correspond to the non-imaged regions of the elements (NI). Figure 11b illustrates image regions of the elements in the form of debossed lines or bumps.

15 In another approach, the relief structures can be in the form of diffraction gratings (Figure 11c) or moth eye / fine pitch gratings (Figure 11d). Where the image elements are formed by diffraction gratings, then different image portions of an image (within one image element or in different elements) can be formed by gratings with different characteristics. The difference may be in the pitch of
20 the grating or rotation. This can be used to achieve a multi-colour diffractive image which will also exhibit a lenticular optical effect such as an animation through the mechanism described above. For example, if the image elements had been created by writing different diffraction tracks for each element, then as
25 the device is tilted, lenticular transition from one image to another will occur as described above, during which the colour of the images will progressively change due to the different diffraction gratings. A preferred method for writing such a grating would be to use electron beam writing techniques or dot matrix techniques. Using a diffractive structure to provide the image elements provides
30 a major resolution advantage: although ink-based printing is generally preferred for reflective contrast and light source invariance, techniques such as modern e-beam lithography can be used generate to originate diffractive image strips down

to widths of 1 μm or less and such ultra-high resolution structures can be efficiently replicated using UV cast cure techniques.

Such diffraction gratings for moth eye / fine pitch gratings can also be located on
5 recesses or bumps such as those of Figures 11a and b, as shown in Figures 11e and f respectively.

Figure 11g illustrates the use of a simple scattering structure providing an achromatic effect.

10

Further, in some cases the recesses of Figure 11a could be provided with an ink or the debossed regions or bumps in Figure 11b could be provided with an ink. The latter is shown in Figure 11h where ink layers 200 are provided on bumps 210. Thus the image areas of each image element could be created by forming
15 appropriate raised regions or bumps in a resin layer provided on a transparent substrate. This could be achieved for example by cast curing or embossing. A coloured ink is then transferred onto the raised regions typically using a lithographic, flexographic or gravure process. In some examples, some image elements could be printed with one colour and other image elements could be
20 printed with a second colour. In this manner when the device is tilted to create the lenticular animation effect described above, the images will also be seen to change colour as the observer moves from one view to another. In another example all of the image elements in one region of the device could be provided in one colour and then all in a different colour in another region of the device.

25

Finally, Figure 11i illustrates the use of an Aztec structure.

Additionally, image and non-image areas could be defined by combination of different element types, e.g. the image areas could be formed from moth eye
30 structures whilst the non-image areas could be formed from gratings. Alternatively, the image and non-image areas could even be formed by gratings of different pitch or orientation.

Where the image elements are formed solely of grating or moth-eye type structures, the relief depth will typically be in the range 0.05 microns to 0.5 microns. For structures such as those shown in Figures 11 a, b, e, f, h and i, the height or depth of the bumps/recesses is preferably in the range 0.5 to 10µm and more preferably in the range of 1 to 2µm. The typical width of the bumps or recesses will be defined by the nature of the artwork but will typically be less than 100µm, more preferably less than 50µm and even more preferably less than 25µm. The size of the image elements and therefore the size of the bumps or recesses will be dependent on factors including the type of optical effect required, the size of the focusing elements and the desired device thickness.

CLAIMS

1. A method of making a security device, comprising:
 - 5 (a) forming an array of focussing elements on at least a first region of a focussing element support layer, by:
 - (a)(i) applying a first transparent curable material either to the focussing element support layer or to a casting tool carrying a surface relief corresponding to the focussing elements, over an first sub-region of the first region and
10 applying a second transparent curable material to a second sub-region of the first region laterally offset from the first sub-region, the first and second transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics from one another;
 - (a)(ii) forming the first and second transparent curable materials with the
15 casting tool; and
 - (a)(iii) curing the first and second transparent curable materials in the first region, so as to retain the surface relief.
2. A method of making a security device according to claim 1, wherein the
20 first and second sub-regions are spaced from one another.
3. A method of making a security device according to claim 1, wherein the first and second sub-regions abut one another.
- 25 4. A method of making a security device according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the first and second sub-regions individually or collectively define one or more indicia, preferably alphanumeric character(s), symbol(s), logo(s), graphics or the like.
- 30 5. A method of making a security device according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the different optical detection characteristics are any of: different visible colours, different fluorescence, different luminescence or different phosphorescence.

6. A method according to any of the preceding claims, further comprising:
(b) providing an image array located in a plane spaced from the array of focussing elements by a distance substantially equal to the focal length of the focussing elements whereby the focussing elements exhibit a substantially focussed image of the image array.
7. A method of making a security document, comprising:
providing a polymer substrate having a first and a second surface;
forming a security device thereon using the method of any of the preceding claims, wherein either the focussing element support layer comprises the polymer substrate or step (a) further comprises applying the focussing element support layer to the first surface of the polymer substrate, at least across the first region; and
applying at least one opacifying layer to the first and/or second surfaces of the polymer substrate, the or each opacifying layer comprising a non-transparent material, wherein at least the opacifying layer(s) on the first surface of the substrate define a gap forming a window region in which at least part of each of the first sub-region and the second sub-region is disposed.
8. A security device, comprising a focussing element array formed of at least two transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics disposed in respective laterally offset sub-regions of the focussing element array on a focussing element support layer, the at least two transparent curable materials being formed in accordance with a surface relief defining the focussing elements.
9. A security device according to claim 8, further comprising an image array located in a plane spaced from the array of focussing elements by a distance substantially equal to the focal length of the focussing elements whereby the focussing elements exhibit a substantially focussed image of the image array.
10. A security document, comprising

a polymer substrate having first and second surfaces;

a focussing element array formed of at least two transparent curable materials having different optical detection characteristics disposed in respective laterally offset sub-regions of the focussing element array on a focussing element support layer, the at least two transparent curable materials being
5 formed in accordance with a surface relief defining the focussing elements, wherein the focussing element support layer is either the polymer substrate or another layer applied thereto; and

at least one opacifying layer applied to the first and/or second surface of
10 the polymer substrate, the or each opacifying layer comprising a non-transparent material, wherein at least the opacifying layer(s) on the first surface of the substrate define a gap forming a window region in which at least part of each of the first sub-region and the second sub-region is disposed.

15 11. A security document according to claim 10, further comprising an image array located in a plane spaced from the array of focussing elements by a distance substantially equal to the focal length of the focussing elements whereby the focussing elements exhibit a substantially focussed image of the image array.

Fig. 1(a)

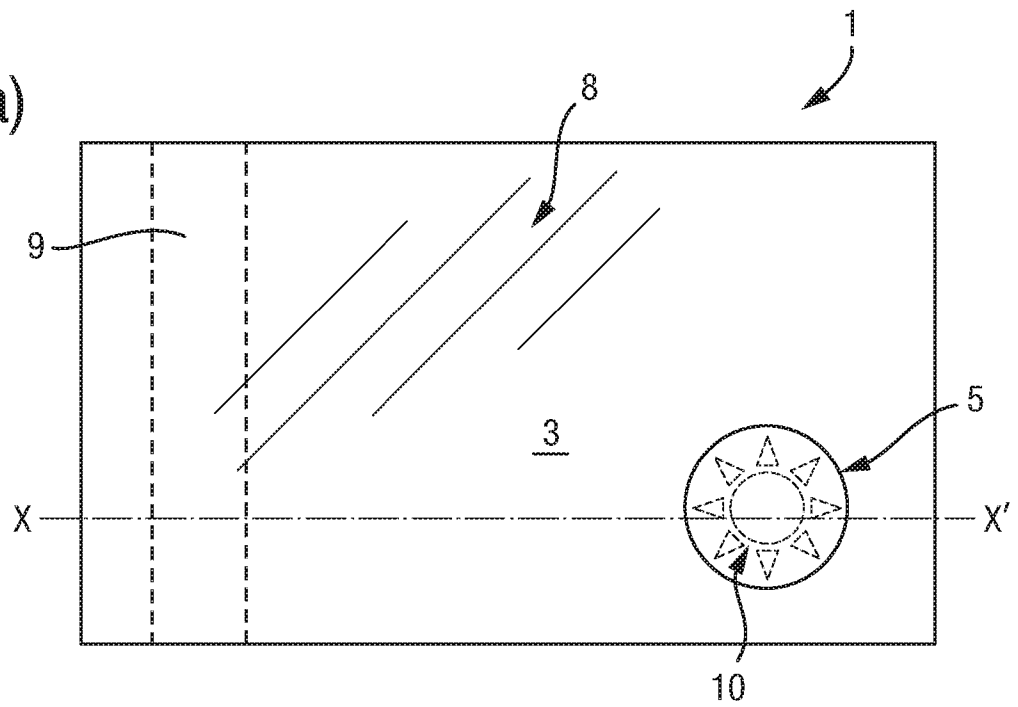


Fig. 1(b)

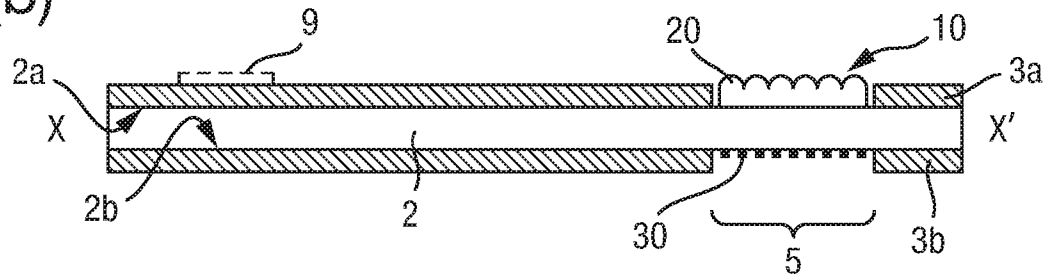


Fig. 1(c)

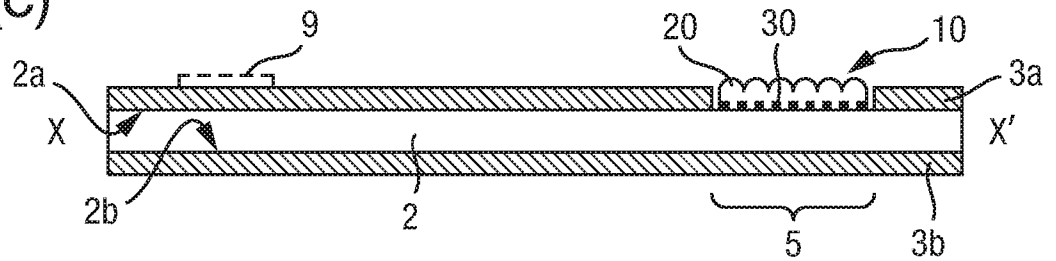
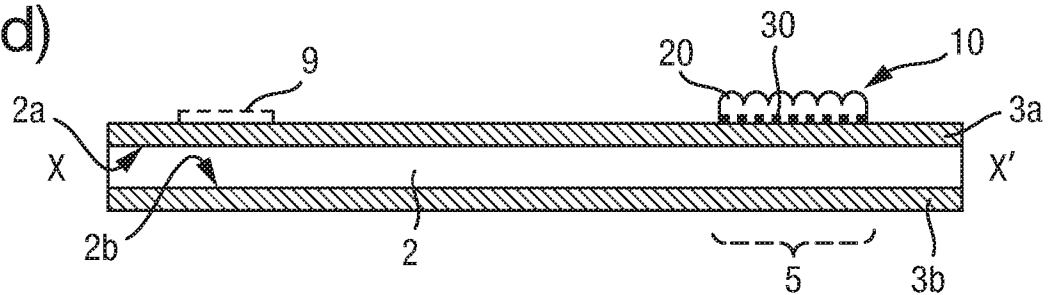
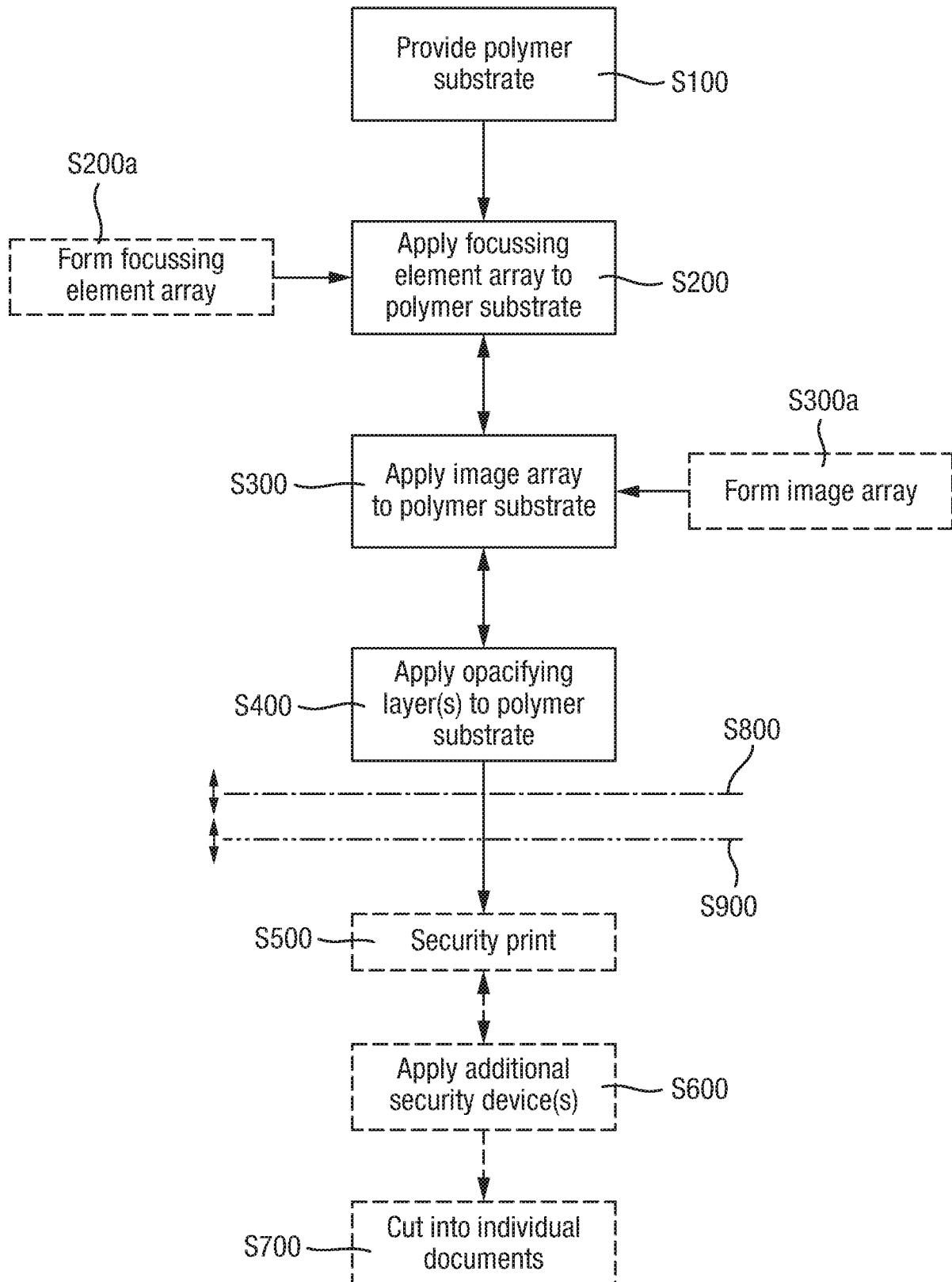


Fig. 1(d)



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Fig. 2



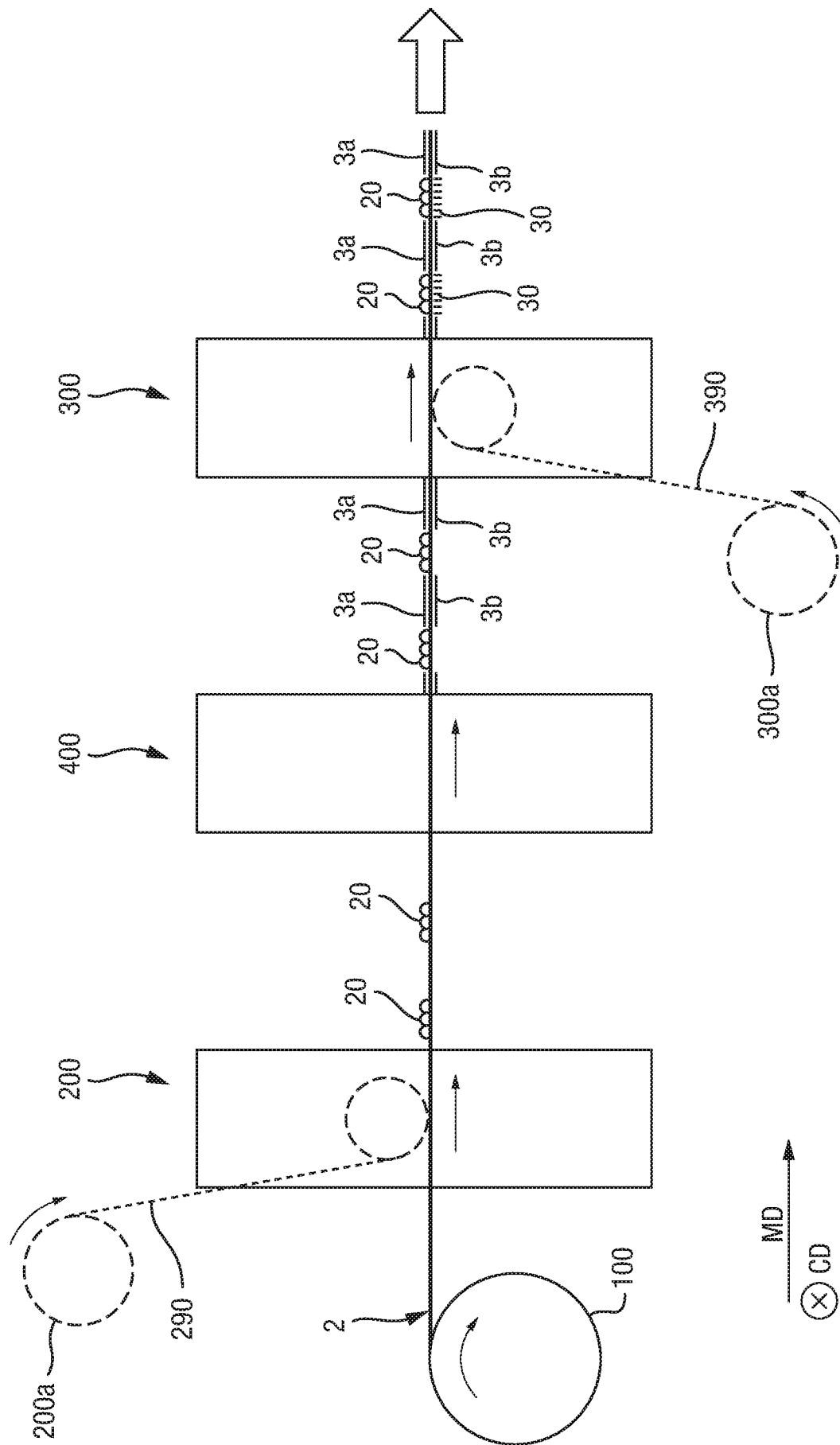


Fig. 4(a)

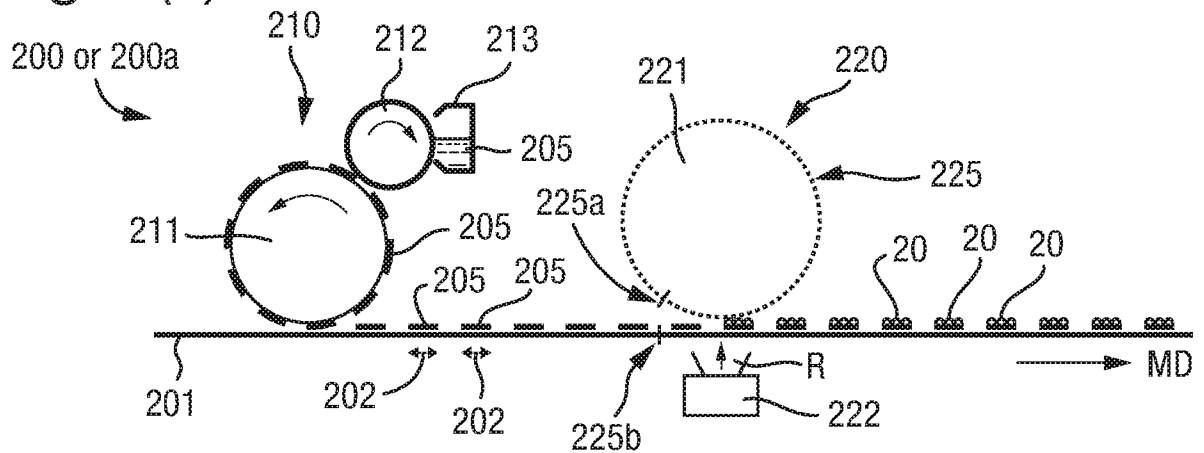


Fig. 4(b)

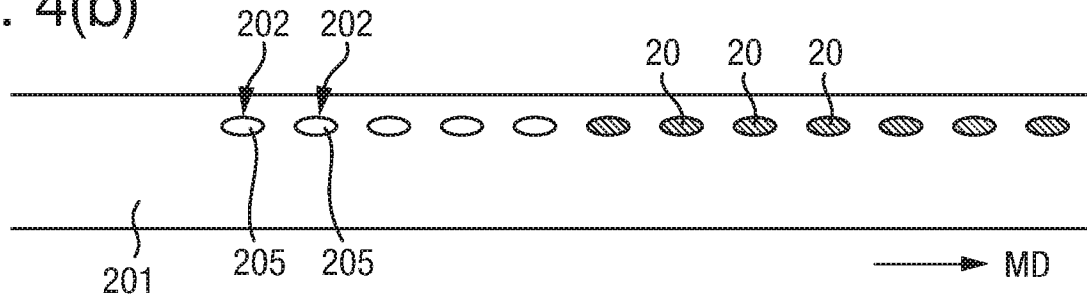


Fig. 5(a)

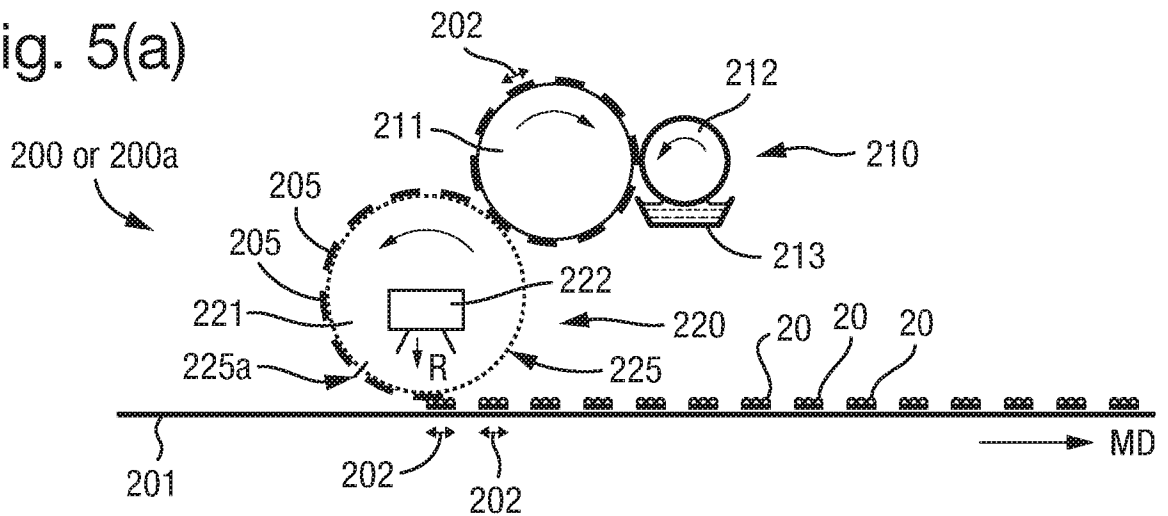


Fig. 5(b)

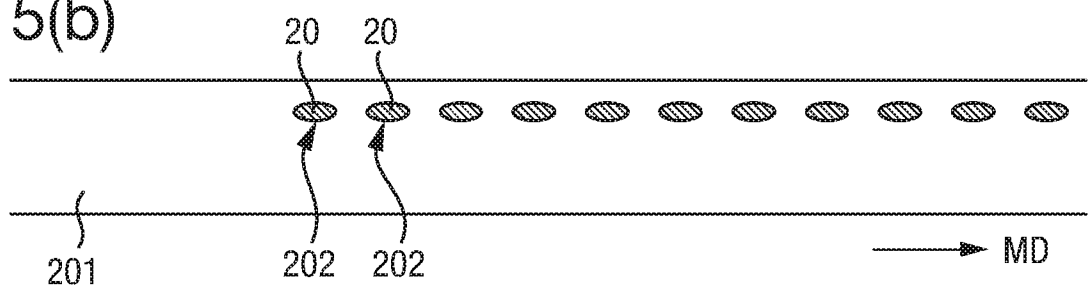
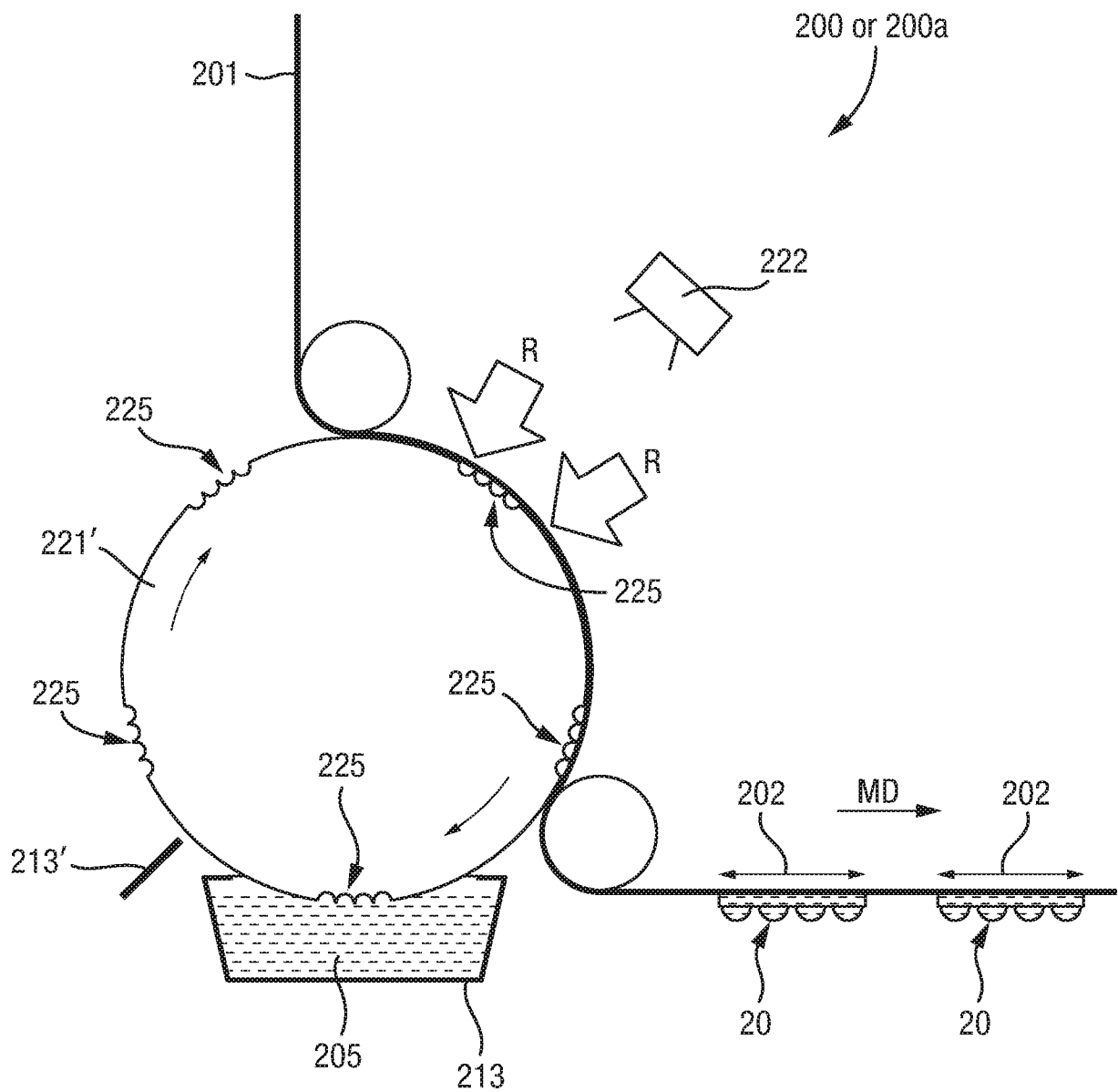


Fig. 5(c)



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Fig. 6(a)

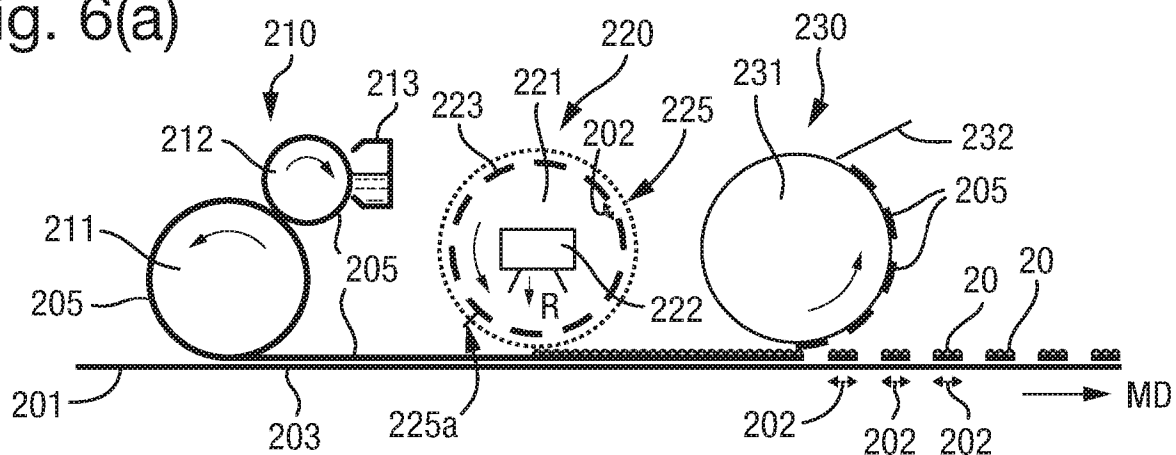


Fig. 6(b)

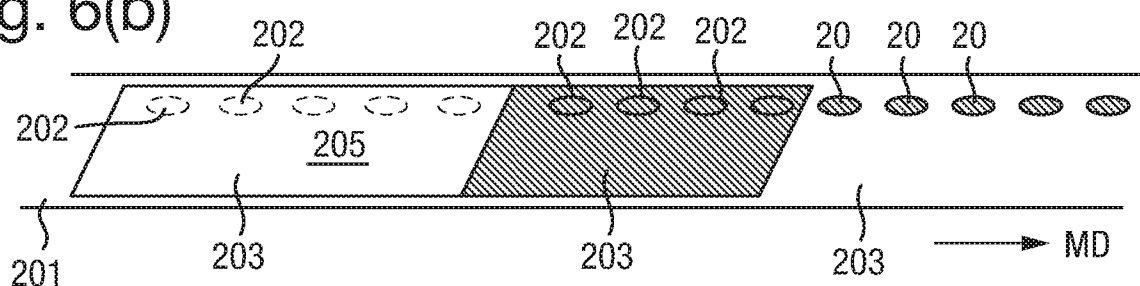


Fig. 7(a)

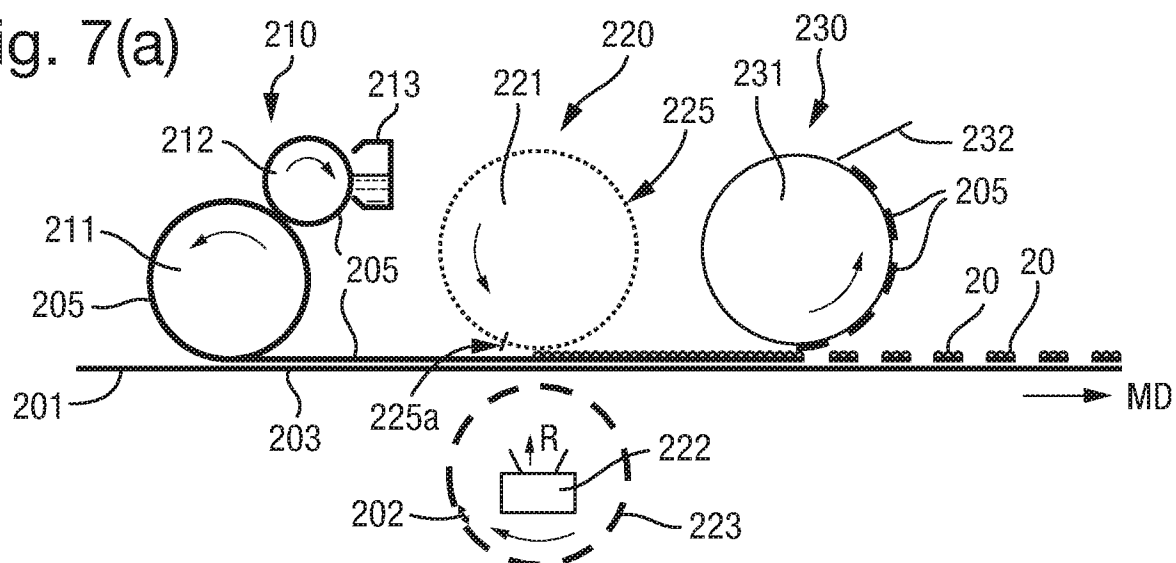
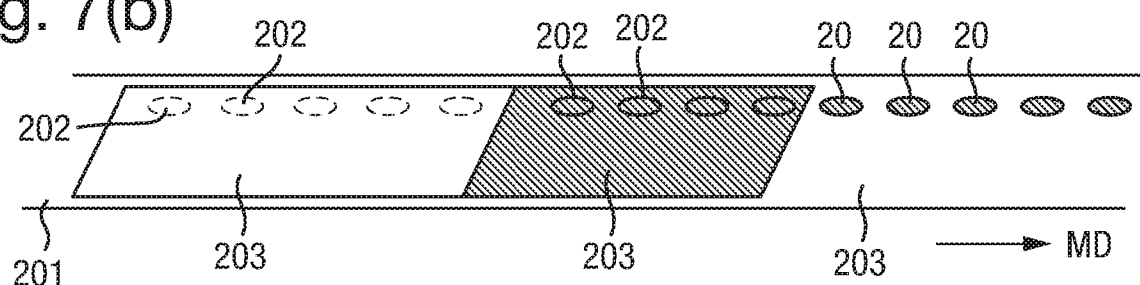


Fig. 7(b)



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Fig. 8(a)

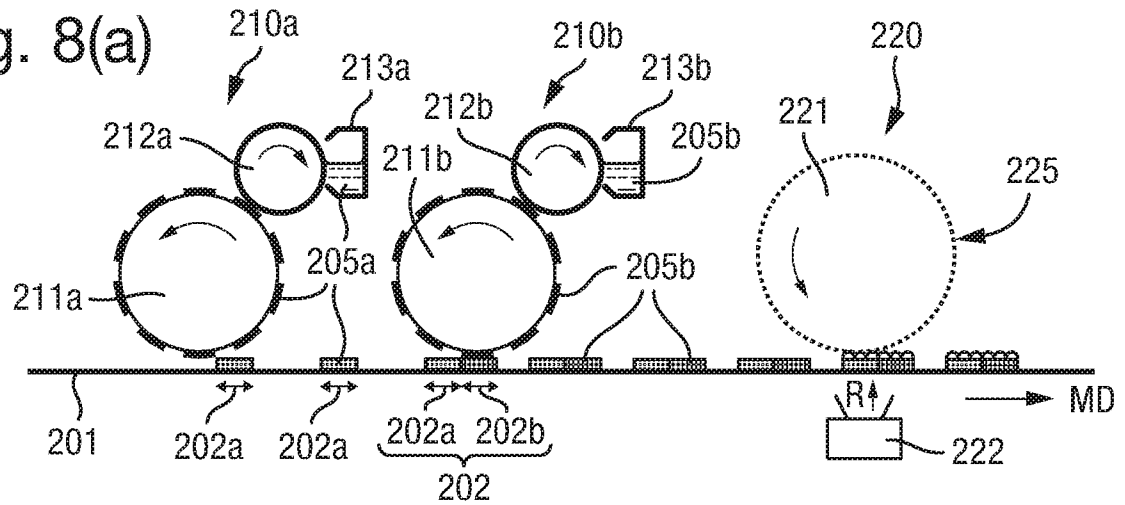


Fig. 8(b)

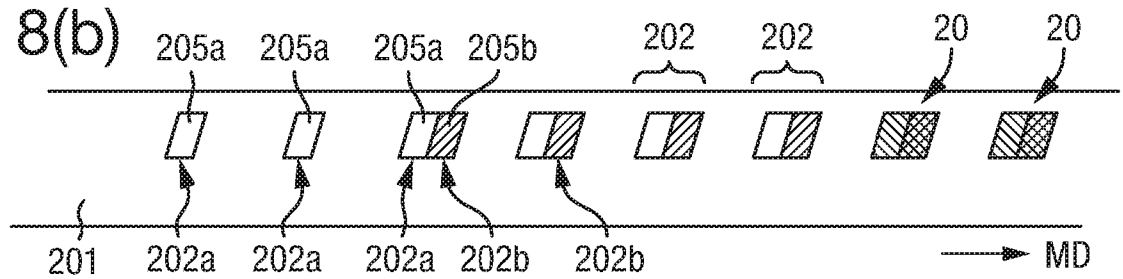


Fig. 9(a)

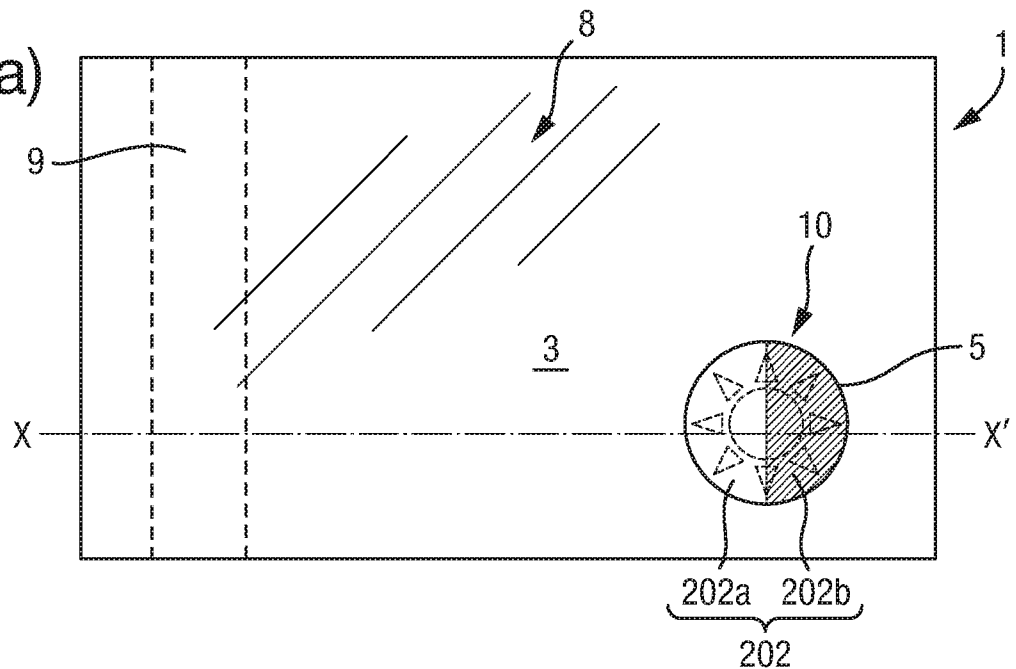


Fig. 9(b)

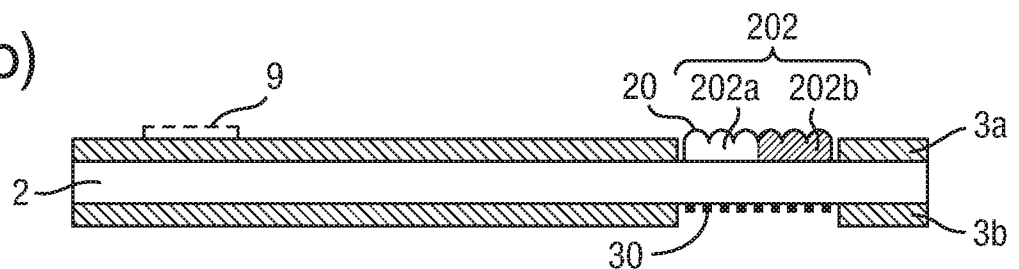


Fig. 8(c)

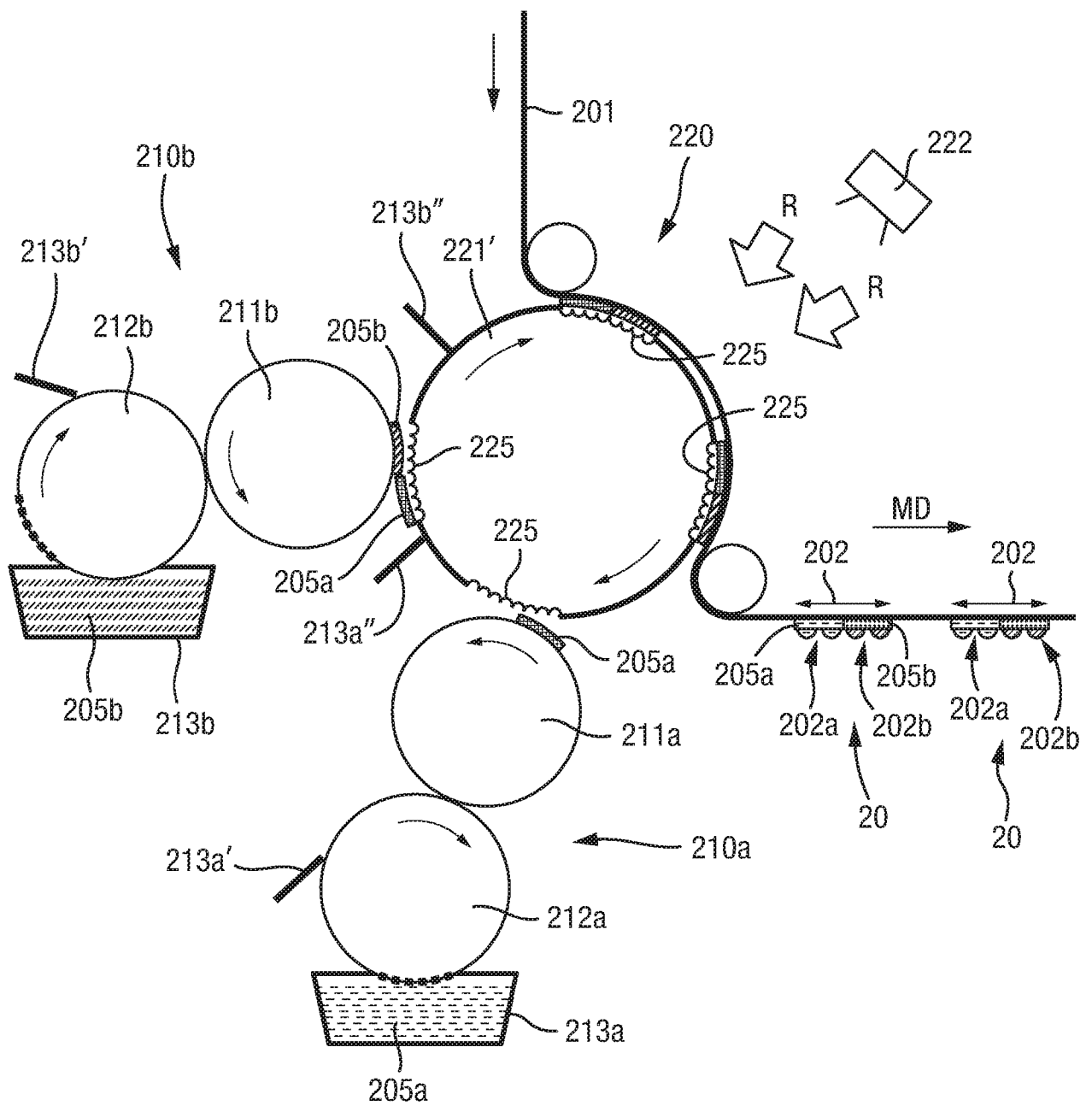


Fig. 8(d)

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Fig. 9(c)

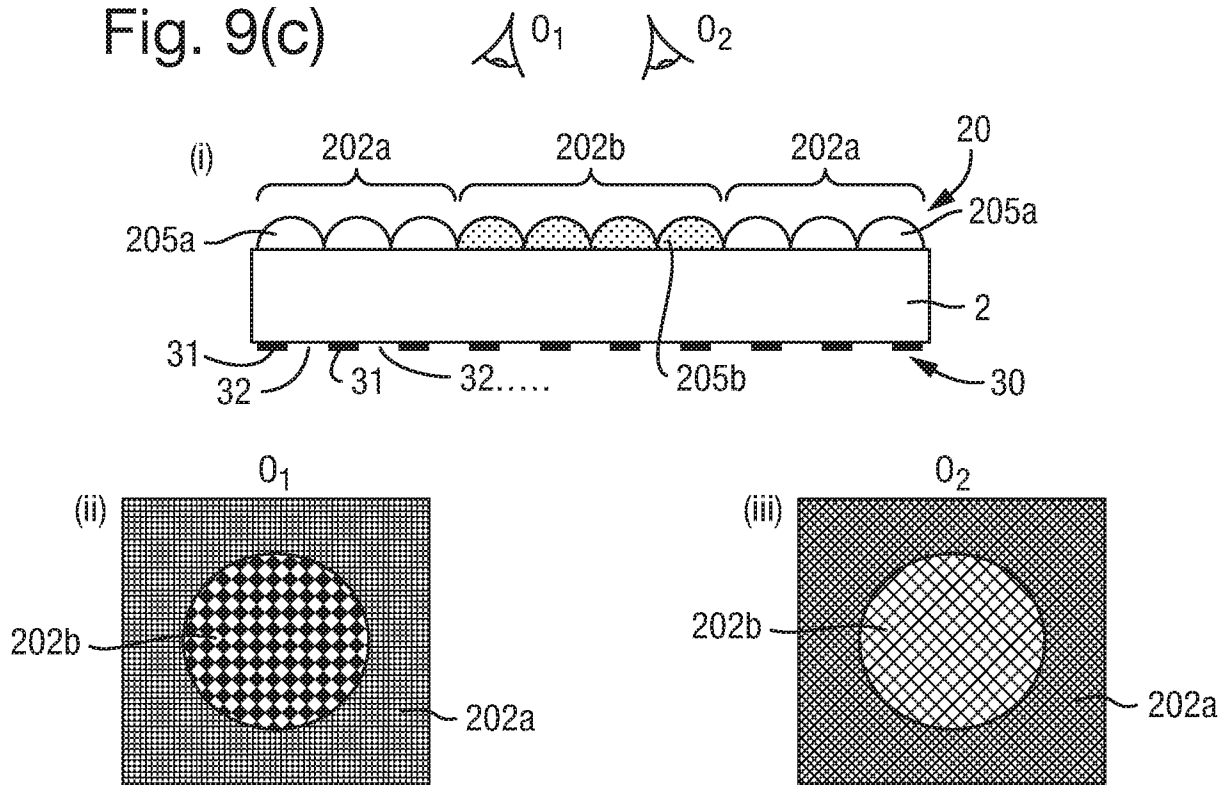


Fig. 9(d)

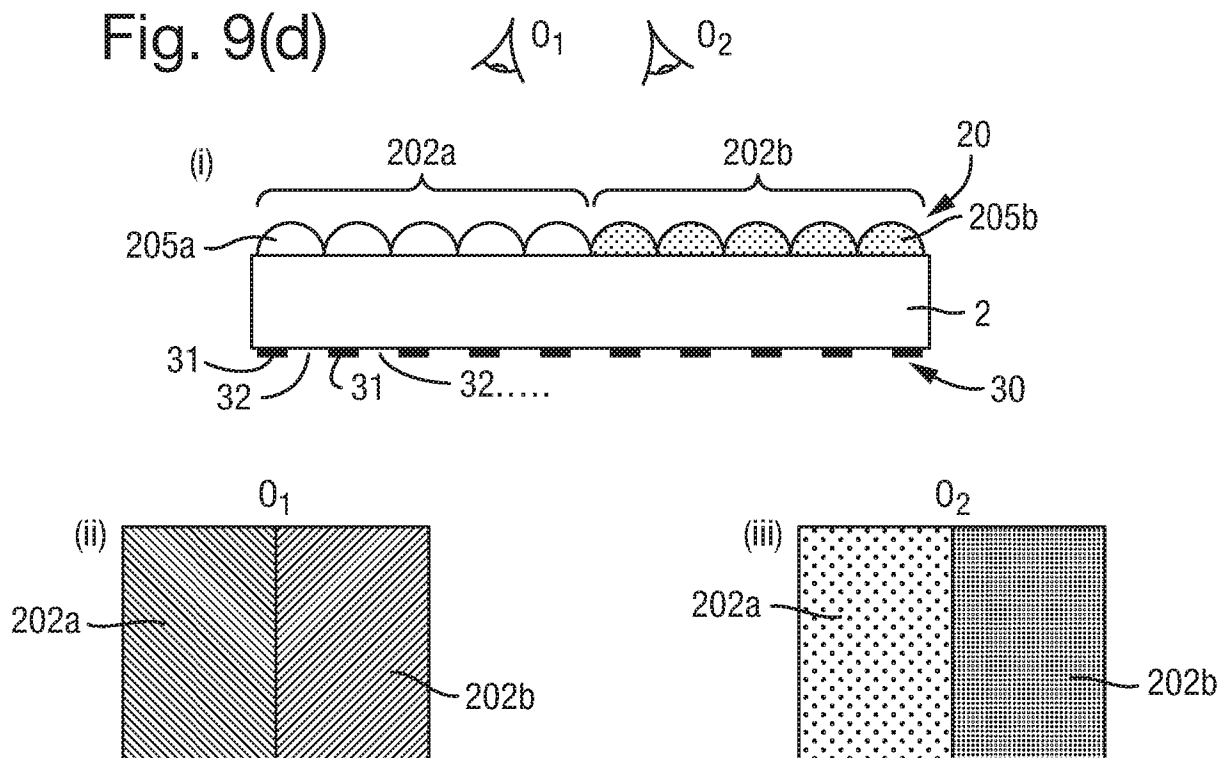


Fig. 10(a)

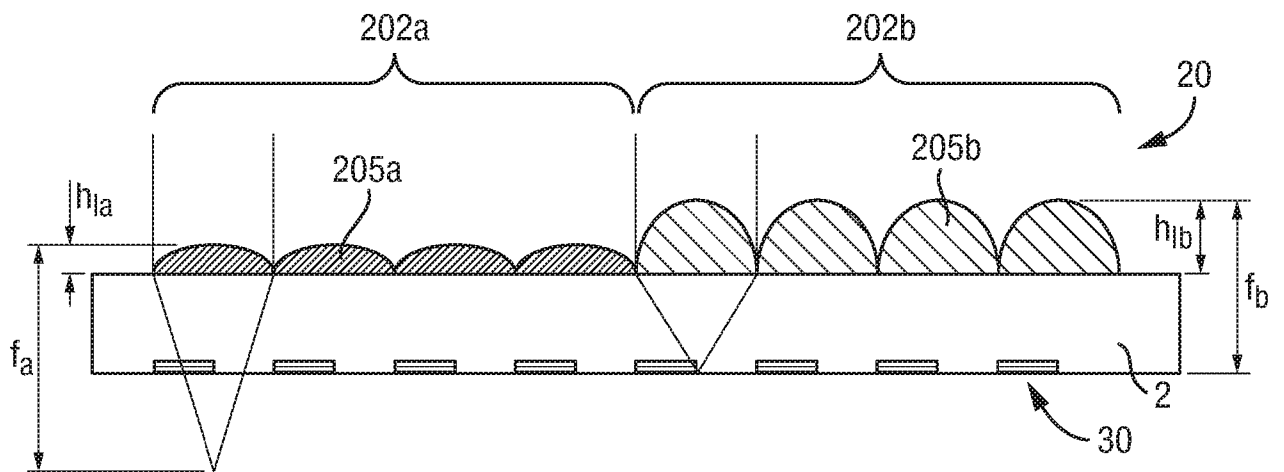
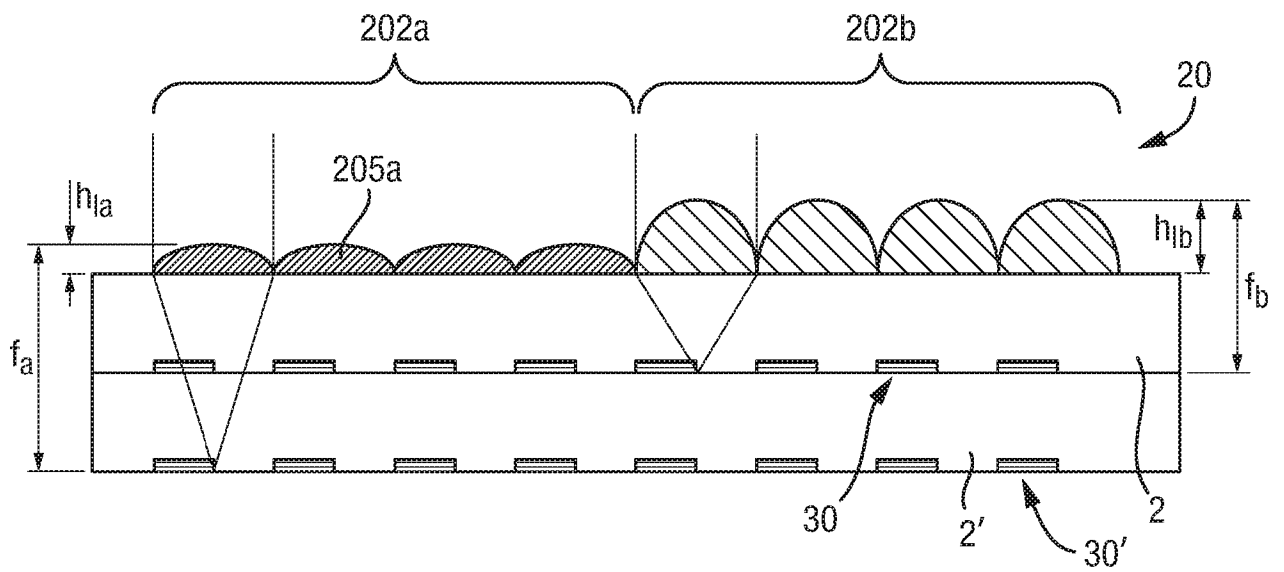
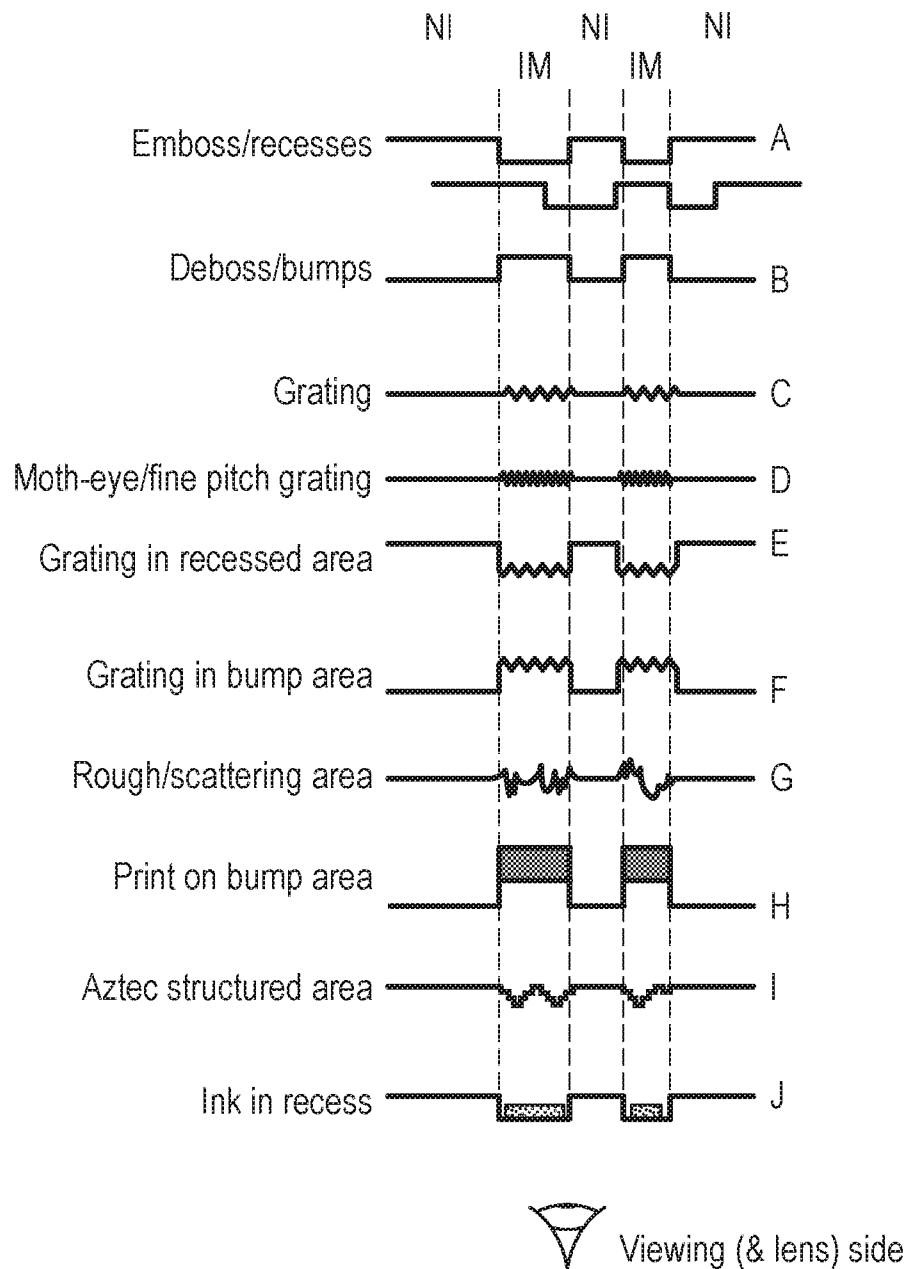


Fig. 10(b)



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Fig. 11



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/GB2016/052082

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER INV. B42D25/324 B42D25/342 B42D25/351 B42D25/378 B42D25/425 B42D25/45 ADD. According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC																										
B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) B42D Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI Data																										
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category*</th> <th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th> <th>Relevant to claim No.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>WO 2014/184559 A1 (RUE DE INT LTD [GB]) 20 November 2014 (2014-11-20)</td> <td>1,3-5,7, 8,10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td>page 14, line 7 - page 26, line 11; claims 1,12-29; figures 1-7</td> <td>2,6,9,11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td>----- WO 2013/167887 A1 (RUE DE INT LTD [GB]) 14 November 2013 (2013-11-14)</td> <td>2,6,9,11</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>page 21, line 22 - page 30, line 12; claim 1; figures 2-4, 18, 19</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td>----- WO 2011/116425 A1 (SECURENCY INT PTY LTD [AU]; POWER GARY FAIRLESS [AU]; BATISTATOS ODISE) 29 September 2011 (2011-09-29)</td> <td>6,9,11</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>page 1, line 10 - page 26, line 6; claims 1-23; figures 1-12</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>----- -/-</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	X	WO 2014/184559 A1 (RUE DE INT LTD [GB]) 20 November 2014 (2014-11-20)	1,3-5,7, 8,10	Y	page 14, line 7 - page 26, line 11; claims 1,12-29; figures 1-7	2,6,9,11	Y	----- WO 2013/167887 A1 (RUE DE INT LTD [GB]) 14 November 2013 (2013-11-14)	2,6,9,11		page 21, line 22 - page 30, line 12; claim 1; figures 2-4, 18, 19		Y	----- WO 2011/116425 A1 (SECURENCY INT PTY LTD [AU]; POWER GARY FAIRLESS [AU]; BATISTATOS ODISE) 29 September 2011 (2011-09-29)	6,9,11		page 1, line 10 - page 26, line 6; claims 1-23; figures 1-12			----- -/-	
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Date of the actual completion of the international search 30 September 2016		Date of mailing of the international search report 12/10/2016																								
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016		Authorized officer Seiler, Reinhold																								

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/GB2016/052082

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A	US 2008/037131 A1 (STEENBLIK RICHARD A [US] ET AL) 14 February 2008 (2008-02-14) the whole document -----	1-11

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Information on patent family members

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