

Current Research Projects

Policing and Forensic Issues in the Search for Truth and/or Justice for Forced Disappearance

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The exploratory study 'Policing and Forensic Issues in the Search for Truth and/ or Justice for Forced Disappearances' investigates how truth, justice and reparations ("transitional justice" for past crimes are being advanced through the work of specialised police squads and forensic anthropologists in Chile and Northern Ireland. It highlights their centrality, alongside the judges, lawyers and civil society groups who are often studied as protagonists of transitional justice. It contrasts the non-judicial (non-prosecutorial) approach of Northern Ireland with the trials-based approach of Chile in searching for those still disappeared after political violence or dictatorship. It tests claims about how anonymity and impunity affect the recovery and identification of remains by examining the relationships between truth-telling and justice in each jurisdiction. By highlighting these auxiliary agencies as key partners in transitional justice outcomes, it will show their dual importance: in dealing with the past, they can also potentially improve wider justice system capacity and rights compliance