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**Transnational Civil Society to Reconciliation**

An Introduction

**Birgit Schwelling**

The idea for this book has emerged out of a field that since the 1990s we have come to call the neologism ‘transitional justice’. Within this field, justice became the standard formula for reference to processes, and measures dealing with atrocities, disappearances, and other human rights violations in post-conflict situations. The label for legal instruments and mechanisms for transitional justice, such as trials, commissions of inquiry, vetting, and reparations, has also been widely adopted. While transitional justice can be viewed as a label for legal instruments and mechanisms for the criminal justice system reform or the reintegration of former combatants, it also covers a much broader set of measures dealing with past violence. A burgeoning scholarly literature has begun to grapple with the concept of transitional justice. For a sampling, see Elazar Barkan, Negotiating Historical Injustices (New York: Routledge, 2006); Piers Beever, Unspoken Truths: Transitional Justice and the Politics of Human Rights (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Germaine and Forgiveness: Facing History and Ourselves, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998); Transitions Reckon with Former Regimes, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2000).