

Methodology of murder investigation with the focus on the use of trace evidence

Abstract

The thesis deals with the investigation of murder as one of the most serious forms of crime. After a general definition of the investigative methodology, the text focuses on the issue of trace evidence and its use in criminal proceedings, including potential challenges associated with it.

Firstly, the current legal regulation of homicides in the Czech Criminal Code is briefly discussed. This is followed by a section devoted to statistics on the number of registered murders and the clearance rate, which are compiled annually by the Police of the Czech Republic, with a brief commentary. The investigative methodology of murder is initially introduced in general terms, followed by a description of its selected components. Attention is focused on the crime scene examination process, the examination of the corpse and the forensic autopsy, as these are crucial initial tasks through which police authority obtains valuable information. The remaining parts of the thesis focus on the forensic specifics of trace evidence, its collection and examination, interpretation, and procedural value, with emphasis on some of its limits. The thesis concludes with the elaboration of a murder case, demonstrating insights from previous sections, particularly focusing on the issues of interpretation of trace evidence and its use in the identification process.

The thesis draws from criminal law and criminalistics, defining the topic not only theoretically, but also practically, through real-life cases and examples.

The aim of the thesis is to provide a comprehensive insight into the process of murder investigation and to familiarize the reader with the starting points and procedures of the enforcement authorities. Furthermore, the thesis aims to define the forensic specifics of trace evidence, to highlight some promising but on the other hand problematic areas of its examination and interpretation, and to analyze the possibilities of its use as evidence in criminal proceedings.

Key words: murder, investigative methodology, trace evidence