Justice Through Commemoration:
Memorial Building Through Transformative Reparations

Ochi Zemi
Team: Actores Memoriae

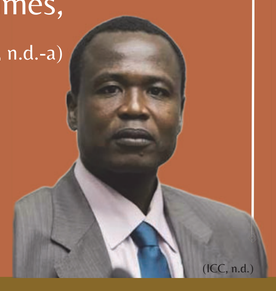
I Introduction

1 What is the International Criminal Court?

- investigates and tries individuals charged with the crimes of concern to the international community: genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression. (ICC, n.d.-a)

2 Ongwen Case

- Total Award: € 52.4 million
- More than 50,000 victims (ICC, 2025)


(ICC, n.d.)

3 Research Question

How can the ICC-arranged symbolic measures, such as war memorials, contribute to transformative justice?

II Background

1 Transformative Justice

- a new concept in criminal justice
- goes beyond simply punishing individuals or returning to the pre-existing status quo
- focuses on addressing and changing the underlying social structures that cause harm or crime
- ICC adopts the concept of transformative justice

(Ochi, 2024)

2 Dominic Ongwen

- Served as a brigade commander in the rebel force, the "Lord's Resistance Army," in northern Uganda
- Arrest warrant in 2005
- Convicted of crimes including murder, injury, sexual and gender-based crimes, child soldiering

(ICC, n.d.-b)

3 Reparation Order

- physical rehabilitation
- mental rehabilitation
- social and economic support
- symbolic measures (ICC, 2024)

III Case Study

1 Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum

- Goal & Exhibition: Aims for nuclear abolition and world peace by showcasing personal belongings and narratives of victims
- Impact: Tells visitors about the tragedy and fosters a commitment to future peace

(Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, n.d.)



2 Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum

- Goal & Exhibition: Aims to preserve human rights and historical truth by keeping the authentic camp site and victims' belongings
- Impact: Passes down the story and physical site of the Holocaust to warn against future violations

(Auchwitz Birkenau, n.d.)


(Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, n.d.)

3 The Women's Archive Museum on War and Peace - Tokyo, Japan


(The Woman's Archive Museum on War and Peace, n.d.)

- Problem: How do we create a museum that transcends time?
- Solution: Be active, display sensitively, demonstrate all stories, connect the past to the present

(Watanabe, 2015)

4 The Legacy Museum - Montgomery, Alabama

- Problem: How do we create a museum with limited artifacts?
- Avoid: Romanticizing technology, creating artificiality
- Display: The humanity, simplicity, scale, narrative story

(Becker, 2026; Félix, 2024)


(The Legacy Museum, n.d.)

IV Interview: Victim's Perspective

How will the museum bring transformative justice to affected communities from a victim's perspective?

- Interviewee: a direct victim, a former child soldier
- Questions asked include: museum progress, possible artifacts, possible impact, and ideas the victim would like to see
- Progress: currently one classroom in a local primary school
- Artifacts: everyday tools used by those who had resided in internally displaced people's camps
- Transformative impact: "strengthen[s] relation[s] with victims from Uganda and other part[s] of the world", "sensitize young people on the danger of war", and memorialise stories that will last generations
- Ideas: promotion of "everlasting peace" (a "peace shrine"), full of visual and written artworks, with cultural and modern concepts represented

- Oral informed consent was obtained from the participant over the phone on 15 October, prior to their inclusion in the study.
- Structured interview was conducted via WhatsApp on 22nd October.

V Conclusion

Answers to the Research Question

While memorials do not equal transformative justice, memorialization is a fundamental component of transformative justice.

Because transformative justice depends on changing the social structures that allowed the crime to occur, remembrance is crucial to minimize the repetition of crimes.

(ICC, n.d.)

✳References✳

Auschwitz Birkenau. (n.d.). Auschwitz-Birkenau. Retrieved October 25, 2026, from https://www.auschwitz.org
Becker, A. (2026). Exhibiting Wars and Genocides: Museum-Memorials in a Global World. In B. Cabanes & C. Givens (Eds.), Globalizing the History of the World Wars (pp. 268–284). chapter, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Félix, D. S. (2024). Brian Stevenson reclaims the monument, in the heart of the Deep South. The New Yorker. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2024/04/01/bryan-stevenson-reclaims-the-monument-in-the-heart-of-the-deep-south
Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. (n.d.). Hiroshima peace memorial museum. Hpmmuseum.Jp. Retrieved October 25, 2026, from https://hpmmuseum.jp/?lang=eng
ICC. (n.d.-a). About the court. Retrieved October 25, 2026, from https://www.icc-cpi.int/about/the-court
ICC. (n.d.-b). Ongwen case. Retrieved October 25, 2026, from https://www.icc-cpi.int/uganda/ongwen
ICC. (n.d.-c). Ongwen case. Retrieved October 25, 2026, from https://www.icc-cpi.int/victims/ongwen-case
ICC. (2025). ICC trust fund for victims welcomes the end of the judicial reparations phase in the ongwen case.https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-trust-fund-victims-welcomes-end-judicial-reparations-phase-ongwen-case
Ochi, M. (2024). Towards a transformative reparation process: The communication practice by the International Criminal Court. SSRN Electronic Journal. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4955187
Prosecutor v. Ongwen, ICC-02/04-01/15-207 (2024) https://www.icc-cpi.int/court-record/icc-02/04-01/15-2074
Watanabe, M. (2015). Passing on the history of 'comfort women': the experiences of a women's museum in Japan. Journal of Peace Education, 12(3), 236–246. https://doi.org/10.1080/17400201.2015.1092713