

Translocal Dynamics of the *P'yŏnghwaŭi Sonyŏsang*: An Interdisciplinary Approach

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This paper aims to present a theoretical and conceptual framework for investigating the translocal phenomena surrounding the *P'yŏnghwaŭi Sonyŏsang* (hereafter *Sonyŏsang*) using the examples of Seoul, Kyoto, and Berlin. Since the first *Sonyŏsang*, also known as the ‘Statue of a Girl for Peace’, was installed in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, South Korea, identical or similar replicas have been erected and/or exhibited nationwide in South Korea and other global cities, including Berlin, Sydney, Shanghai, New York, and Toronto. The bronze figurative statue serves as a mnemonic platform and represents Korean “comfort women”, a euphemistic term referring to numerous girls and women, mostly from colonial Korea but also other countries in the Asia-Pacific region and the Netherlands, whom the Japanese military forced into sexual acts during the Second World War (Ahn 2020, 9; Yoshimi 2003, 106–14; Kwon 2019, 7). The initiatives over installing the statue outside South Korea have led diverse actors to collaborate locally and translocally but have also often generated conflict with the Japanese government.

Previous research has focused on the transnational dissemination of the “comfort women” memorial, emphasizing the role of the Korean diaspora as a carrier and its strategies for the universalization of the collective memory of “comfort women” (Hasunuma and McCarthy 2019; J. Yoon 2019; R. Yoon 2018; McCarthy and Hasunuma 2018; Son 2018; Schumacher 2021). These studies elucidated that collective memory extends beyond national borders through immigrants’ agency, transforming into universally recognized norms, in alignment with extant scholarly works on transnational memory (e.g., Erll 2011; Wüstenberg 2020; Assmann 2014). Adding to this body of scholarship, this paper takes an interdisciplinary approach, drawing upon insights from sociology, geography, and history, and explores the complex dynamics, including the mobility and socio-spatial configuration of the memorial, through the lens of *translocality* (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013; Porst and Sakdapolrak 2017). By transcending disciplinary confines, this paper offers new perspectives on the memorial’s meaning and significance in different geographical and social contexts and fosters interdisciplinary exchange in Korean Studies. (289 words)