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Chapter 68

Inherited Wounds: Intersectionality, Gendered Violence, and Cultural Memory in "Comfort Woman"

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The paper utilizes the novel *Comfort Woman* (*1997*) by Nora Okja Keller to understand the disjointed perceptions of the treatment of women in World War II and its impact on familial relationships, identity, and cultural legacy. The element of gender-based violence is centered around the idea of "comfort woman" during the World War, which happens to be the setting of the novel. The paper explores the relationship of Beccah with her mother Akiko who has been subjected to most heinous acts of sexual violence under institutionalized prostitution. The theoretical tools would comply with finding out the role of gender and the impact of intersectional feminist theory. The language of the novel and the thematic background along with the timeline would be used to draw conclusions on the framework of the novel which addresses the unique struggles endured by the Akiko. Cathy Caruth's work on the question of past memory will be utilised for Akiko's past and the maternal identity dysmorphed due to the gendered violence carried by institutionalized slavery and prostitution. The paper also sheds some light on the malpractice of "Comfort Woman" which emerged as a historical terminology of oppression. The systemic violence that the protagonist is subjected to acts as an element of analysis to understand the state of women and those times. The Postcolonial perspectives are sidelined in the paper to make broader grounds for the application of feminist theory of intersectionality and its incorporation with cultural memory and Intergenerational trauma through Anne Whitehead's *Trauma Fiction* (*2004*).

Keywords: Comfort Woman; Gender-based violence; Intersectionality; Memory.