

**HISTORICAL (MIS)REPRESENTATION AND
THE LITERARY WRITING BACK: A
POSTMODERNIST STUDY OF SELECTED
NATIVE AMERICAN FICTION**

By

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**Historical (Mis)representation and the Literary Writing Back:
A Postmodernist Study of Selected Native American Fiction**

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: Historical (Mis)representation and the Literary Writing Back: A Postmodernist Study of Selected Native American Fiction

Using the theoretical underpinnings of postmodernism, this qualitative study analyzes the selected Native American literary texts to bring forth the voice of the suppressed American Indians as well as their silenced and marginalized truth. This research sets its direction with the help of the three guiding research objectives. To achieve the first and the third objective of the study, Jean-François Lyotard's concept of disbelief in grand narratives is applied on the selected novels of the writers, to draw a comparison between grand narratives established and promoted by Euro Americans with mini-narratives promoted by Native Americans. The study reveals that the selected writers have challenged these grand narratives in a way so as to prove that there is no authentic reality behind those so-called legitimized grand narratives. The challenging claims of the Native American writers have dragged grand narratives, based on Euro American superiority and legitimacy to the margin, bringing new mini-narratives based on American Indian perspective and their superiority, to the center. To achieve the second objective of the study, Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction is used to make a comparison between the Euro American's officially documented history with the fictive history presented by the selected writers. The study is based on the analysis of fiction from the American Indian's marginalized perspective and their silenced truth. It has been proved with shreds of evidence from the selected fictional works, that the history is not always based on factual truth. The study finally winds up with recommendations for the future researchers.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my beloved parents

Muhammad Arshad Khan Rind Baloch

&

Qamar-Un-Nisa

who have always loved me unconditionally

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

There are several stereotypes and monolithic notions about Native Americans, wherein they are portrayed as uneducated and inferior. This essentialist approach holds that Native Americans have failed to counter these stereotypical notions due to their primitive way of life. There is no denying the fact that the issue of labeling Native Americans with such stereotypes has a long history, and it is significant to explore the reasons why Native Americans have been branded with such notions that result in their misrepresentation.

One of the major reasons for this misconception is the cultural and religious difference between Native Americans and Euro-Americans. Native Americans have had a complex cultural and religious system, and they enjoy staying in close proximity to nature. Their love and respect for nature is an essential and integral part of their religion as well as culture. Moreover, Native Americans are divided into several tribes, some of which like to call themselves Native Americans, while others like to be known as American Indians. The fifteenth century invasion by Euro-Americans of the Natives' lands caused chaos, which subsequently affected Native Americans and their ways of life. After the invasion, the relationship between Euro-Americans and Native Americans broke beyond repair due to the emergence of an unbridgeable gulf between the two races.

The invaders suffered from a false sense of cultural superiority over Native Americans and hence they failed to accord any respect to the sensibilities of Native Americans. Native Americans had unique religious beliefs. As part of their religious practices, they venerated nature and considered it their relative. Every ceremony of Native Americans started with the phrase “all my relatives” which reflected their attachment to all objects of nature. They mostly lived on hunting due to their strong association with nature. As discussed earlier, Euro-Americans could not appreciate Native Americans’ love for nature; they regarded Native Americans as mere hunters and warriors belonging to a primitive and uncivilized race. Despite bearing a distinctive culture, Native Americans were forced to assimilate themselves into white culture which they were alien to. White culture was promoted in order to eclipse the culture of Native Americans. Euro-Americans relegated Native Americans to the status of slaves. The widening gulf of cultural difference between the two peoples kept on creeping with no signs of any thaw between them. Robert Lee states this difference in following sentences:

Indians, like the wilderness, must inevitably diminished and if they survive at all, only in reserves-less scenic counterparts to the National Park system. “Black” people, slaves or former slaves, like Indians may be objects of white people’s intentions, benevolent or not, but they, too can never be quite “American”, subjects and actors in the narrative, though in some versions they may, enough hard work and education, become more like white people, thus more American (60).

Robert Lee’s extract asserts that Native Americans can never be equal to Euro- Americans as they are taken as slaves and inferior beings. They also can never be exactly like Euro-Americans because they are different from Euro-Americans. In the last sentence, Lee reveals an inbuilt superiority complex of Euro-Americans, saying that Native Americans can be more like white people if they strive hard to get education. Here the question

arises: Why should Native Americans try to be like Euro-Americans despite having their own rich culture and distinct identity?

Native Americans were friendly and hospitable, unlike Euro-Americans, so they warmly welcomed Euro-Americans; however, Columbus mistook their spirit of cordiality and hospitality as their weakness and later Native Americans were regarded as Euro-Americans' slaves. Howard Zinn discusses Columbus' first encounter with Native Americans in the following passages:

They . . . brought us parrots and balls of cotton and spears and many other things, which they exchanged for the glass beads and hawks' bells. They willingly traded everything they owned. . . They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features. . . They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword, they took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane. . . They would make fine servants. . . With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.

Columbus wrote:

As soon as I arrived in the Indies , on the first Island which I found, I took some of the natives by force in order that they might learn and might give me information of whatever there is in these parts (3)

Zinn's discussion about Columbus' first interaction with Native Americans makes the ground for my research. The above-mentioned excerpts are emblematic of the invasion of Native Americans' land by Christopher Columbus and his people. They had already been living there since ages and therefore the claim of Euro-Americans about the discovery of America lost legitimacy. Since the discovery of America by Euro-Americans was mistaken, their conquest for conquering the lands of Native Americans could not be justified either, on the grounds that Native Americans were

peaceful people and they welcomed Columbus and his people without showing any resistance against them. If there was no war, there was no conquest.

This research is designed to explore the point that history is not always true as it is written in some context and with some pre-knowledge and preconceptions. The study aims to evaluate the selected texts in the light of Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction to examine deconstruction of history under the cover of fiction by the selected authors. Euro-Americans exposed Native Americans to swords and arms because they did not know anything about the use of such weapons. They had yet to master the art of even holding a sword as Columbus writes in his journal. Zinn brings Columbus' perspective into the consideration of his readers as he writes that Native Americans wore tiny gold ornaments but they had no iron which makes it quite evident that Native Americans were not familiar with the use of weapons (5).

The second concern of the present research is to refute the pre-knowledge that Native Americans are warriors and savages. As earlier discussed, Native Americans did not know the use of weapons at the time of the invasion of their lands and hence they could not be classed as savage warriors. Their compelling and harmonious relationship with nature also contradicts the idea of branding Native Americans as savage and primitive. Euro-Americans have misrepresented Native Americans to establish their hegemony over them. The reality is contrary to Euro-Americans' claim of discovering America. Euro-Americans could be held responsible for making Native Americans as savages and warriors since they introduced them with swords and weapons. So, this is taken as a point of departure for this study. For the present study, 'mis' of misrepresentation in the title has been placed in the parenthesis in a bid to call it neither 'representation' nor 'misrepresentation' and to let the study decide on the basis of the selected literary texts. Moreover, since the real representation is an impossibility in

the postmodern world, the study would ensure staying away from reaching at conclusions in absolute terms.

Zinn further writes about Columbus' intentions of subjugating Native Americans; he felt that they would serve the purpose of slavery well. Then Columbus confessed to the readers that Native Americans were forced to learn white way of life; in fact, he wanted to extract the information regarding gold and wealth from them. It is worth mentioning here that Columbus' act of using force, power and weapons to seize the resources and lands possessed by Native Americans makes him barbaric and uncivilized warrior. Therefore, the whole edifice of preconceptions about Native Americans falls apart. These preconceptions are grand narratives of the present study discussed by Jean Francois Lyotard. The study will show the subversion of grand narratives in the selected works of fiction and will consequently promote mini narratives.

The works of fiction by Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King have been selected for the present study. Their treatment of the subject of history of Native Americans has inspired the researcher to embark on this project. They have rewritten the history of Native Americans under the cover of fiction to write back to dominant Euro-Americans. They have discussed important events from their history to raise their voice against the distorted and fabricated version of their history written by Euro-Americans. This research focuses on the historical events with the lens of Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction to comprehend the distortion of the boundary of history and fiction. The study is also designed to challenge almost all these notions about American Indians because the selected authors have portrayed Native Americans as civilized, intelligent and advanced nation that is not inferior to Euro-Americans in any respect or walk of life; the study also dismantles grand narratives about Euro-Americans that consider them a superior nation, perennially excelling in religion, technology and intelligence. The challenge to grand narratives promotes mini narrative about American Indians that publicizes them

superior, intelligent and advanced in technology. (Andres 4) Thomas King even mocks at the religion of Euro-Americans and highlights negative things about it. Therefore, the research is designed to study historical, religious and cultural events from a new perspective under the cover of fiction by Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King with Linda Hutcheon's concept of historiographic metafiction and Jean-François Lyotard's concept of dismantling of grand narratives and familiarization with mini narratives. The study also aims to make a serious effort to bring forth the truest image of the Native Americans. The rationale for this research is to create a comprehensive work based on historiographic metafiction and on dismantling of grand narratives for a purpose to highlight mini narratives by Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King.

The research is unique because it places history and fiction on the same level with postmodern literary techniques of historiographic metafiction. The study strives to give an American Indian perspective about history that will be totally different from legitimized Euro-American historical perspective. This research aims to question the authenticity of grand narratives promoted by Euro-Americans about religion, nationhood and history. In the academic context, the significance of the research is that it will show how the margin can be brought to the center because it will highlight mini narratives from American Indian perspective which have been placed on margin previously. The study is important because it is based on the comparison of history and fiction, grand narratives and mini narratives. The investigation of the study is carried out to point out that both history and fiction have been written by human beings, and both can contain the subjective truth; so, fictive history is also important. This study is a significant effort to highlight marginalized and untold truths.

1.2 The Use of Terms as Referents to the Native Americans/ American Indians

N. Scott Momaday, in *The Names: A Memoir*, writes that “the meaning of who we are that is contained and not contained in our names” (qtd. in d' Errico, “Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names”). He argues that names are mysterious. At times they reveal our identity and sometimes they conceal our identity. Peter d' Errico states in his essay that “names can have great power, and the power of naming is a great power”. He argues that the history, law, politics and literature all are activities of naming. He strengthens his argument by saying that the Bible narrates a story of God giving Adam the power to name all the creations and the animals. According to the Judeo-Christian creation story, the power of naming is actually the power over creation. d' Errico maintains that a critical approach to Native American Indian Studies attempts to reclaim the power of naming that has so long muted Indigenous self-expression and self-awareness (d' Errico, “Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names”).

In the past five hundred years, numerous terms have been used to refer to the Indigenous Americans. These terms include Native Americans, American Indians, First Nation, Native Alaskan, Inuit and Eskimo. Some of these terms are used interchangeably by tribal folks, while others show specific entities (Pauls, “Tribal Nomenclature: American Indian, Native American, and First Nation”). Peter d' Errico writes in his essay that he wants to provoke a critical awareness of history and culture in the study of Indigenous people. He makes his readers think about names as he does not want the question of names to be taken for granted. He narrates the story of Columbus' voyage to explain why these people are termed as American Indians. He starts his narration by saying that Columbus was a vain and self-important man who thought he was going to India and insisted that he has

discovered it. As a result, he named those people as Indians. The American part came later when Columbus admitted his error and the land had been named for another Italian navigator, Amerigo Vespucci. Thus, the term American Indian is not the real name of anyone but it is derived from the colonizers' perspective. It is the name given to people by outsiders and we should not use any name given to the people by anyone but themselves. This term is commonly used by many indigenous people in the United States and it is also the legal definition of these Peoples in United States law (d' Errico, "Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names").

Some people do not like to use the term American Indian because of its association with Columbus. The term Native American came into vogue as a result of political correctness. There is an equally serious dilemma with the use of this term. This was an effort to acknowledge ethnic diversity in the United States while it insisted on all-embracing American Unity.

The term native has a generic meaning, denoting to anyone or anything that is at home since its origin. Native also has a pejorative meaning in English that carries a negative connotation like primitive. The word primitive has both a generic definition, meaning first or primary and a pejorative use that means ignorant and backward. Thus, Native American doesn't avoid the problem of naming from an outsider's perspective (d' Errico, "Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names").

d' Errico believes that we have to discard both Native American and American Indian to be faithful to the reality that the names of the people should come from themselves. Hence, the original residents of this land are to be called by whatever names they want to give themselves. They are not American Indians or Native Americans but they are many different peoples, bearing such names as Cherokee, Navajo, Hopi, Seminole and Wampanoag. They are the real names of the people. He states that one should acknowledge the fundamental difference between how a people view

themselves and how they are viewed by others for the sake of political correctness. (d' Errico, "Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names").

The conundrum of names does not end there. Some of the traditional or real names are not actually derived from the people themselves, but from their neighbors or even enemies. Mohawk is a Narraganset name, meaning flesh eaters. Sioux is a French corruption of an Anishinabe word for enemy. Similarly, Apache is a Spanish corruption of a Zuni word for enemy, while Navajo is from the Spanish version of a Tewa word. If we want to be fully authentic in every instance, we will have to inquire into the language of each People to find the name they call themselves. It may not be surprising to find that the deepest real names are often a word for people or for the homeland or for some differentiating characteristic of the people as seen through their own eyes (d' Errico, "Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names").

The term American Indian generally gives an indication that it has been used for indigenous cultures of the Western Hemisphere. The constituent parts of the Western Hemisphere were in use from the early sixteenth century. Christopher Columbus stated his mistaken belief repeatedly with a claim that he had reached the South Asian Shores. As a result, the term Indian came to be used. As he was convinced about his claim to be on the South Asian Shores, he fostered the use of the term as Indios to denote to these people. The term Indios refers to a person belonging to Indus Valley. In 1507, the term America came into use to refer to the Western Hemisphere continents. This was the time when a German mapmaker Martin Waldseemuller published a map. The word America was associated with Indian to differentiate the Indigenous peoples of these regions from the South Asian continent (Pauls, "Tribal Nomenclature: American Indian, Native American, and First Nation").

Many activists of the United States and Canada rejected the term American Indian in the 1960s. They believed that the term carried a racist connotation. Hence, Native American became the preferred term of reference in these countries. Many indigenous peoples living north of the Rio Grande continued to use the term Indian for themselves (Pauls, "Tribal Nomenclature: American Indian, Native American, and First Nation").

The peoples of the American Arctic were called Eskimo by Europeans. Eskimo means eaters of raw flesh in the languages of Ojibwa and Abenaki nations. American Arctic peoples found the term inappropriate and they started the use of their self-naming during the 1960s. Those of Northern and Eastern Alaska and all of the Canada became known as the Inuit, while those of Southern and Western Alaska became known as the Yupik. These diverse societies, which included not only the Inuit and Yupik but also the Deg Xinag, Tanaina, Aleut and Gwich'in adopted the umbrella term Native Alaskan to express their unity. Native Americans who were settled in Canada began to use the term First Nation as their self-referent in the 1970s. The Canadian government also adopted the term to refer to Native Americans but they did not provide a legal definition for the term. The Metis and Inuit did not like to be called First Nations. For the Inuit, Metis and First Nations peoples of Canada collectively, the terms aboriginal peoples or aboriginal nations are used (Pauls, "Tribal Nomenclature: American Indian, Native American, and First Nation").

Native peoples from around the world had started to encourage others for tribal self-naming, by the end of the twentieth century. They like to refer to an individual to the terms as Hopi, Sami, Xavante and indigenous to stress on their shared political identity. The United Nations recognized this preference and it established the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in 2000. Later in 2007, a Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was passed. However, in the United States, many individuals of indigenous heritage continued to refer themselves to aboriginal Americans,

in aggregate, as Indians (Pauls, “Tribal Nomenclature: American Indian, Native American, and First Nation”).

The phrases Native Americans and American Indians have been used interchangeably in the present study because certain tribal writers favor the term American Indians and some of the tribal writers like to use Native Americans.

1.3 Historical Background to Native Americans

Native Americans have decided to reshape their identities based on their truth about history. This research does not solely rely on the fictional works of Native American authors but it has also been linked to Native Americans’ historical perspective to create a reasonable level of authenticity even in the evaluation of historiographic metafiction in the selected fictional works. Native American fiction writers and historians both have strived hard to regain their true identity by highlighting historical facts in their works.

Barry M. Pritzker writes in the preface of his book that Native Americans are trying to reestablish their cultural identity and reclaim their lands and they are facing challenge in doing so but they are trying to regain all what has been stolen from them by “so called right people to come along and civilize them” (Pritzker ix). He further writes in the introduction of the book about the first arrival of Native Americans in North America that there is no agreement on the fixed time about their first appearance on the continent but one theory is that they have always been there. Another theory states that they have been there for fifteen thousand to forty thousand years. They were divided in groups due to weather and geographical conditions and some started to live in small groups and some made larger groups. Some groups made their living by cultivations and others relied on hunting. Some groups developed complex mythological and religious beliefs and others made simple belief system. Some people learned war techniques and others liked to live in peace. There are some specific things which are common in

all the groups of Native Americans and those are their intelligence and knowledge. Some people among them discovered many plants that could be used in medication. They were also intelligent enough to make seagoing vessels that took them more than sixty miles to sea to hunt marine life. They had a very strong sense for art and traditions and they developed drama and storytelling in a very artistic way that took these traditions to artistic height (Pritzker xi-xii).

Different groups of these Native Americans had different government systems. Some made councils and some made clan system while other had separate war and peace government. Like other real communities some groups had strong leaders, some had weak leaders and some had no leaders at all. Pritzker highlights the diversity of culture of Native Americans by giving these examples and he further writes that it is not justified to consider the people “handful” with such a diverse culture and traditions. The idea of terming Native Americans handful could help Euro-Americans to pretend that they had not taken the land from millions of people. The population of Native Americans also decreased when they suffered from cholera, measles, typhoid and smallpox brought by Euro-Americans and since these Natives suffered a heavy population loss, it became very easy for Non-Natives to declare the land of these Natives as virgin and open. Pritzker writes that Non-Natives took control over Natives’ lands after wreaking havoc on their resources. Spanish arrived for the greed of gold and they tried to convert Native Americans to Christianity and they killed and enslaved these people to further their agendas. British arrived and they demanded their land and tried their hard for conversion of religion and culture. French wanted to convert Indians but they accepted the culture of these people because their primary motive was interracial marriages with Indians in New France. Russians arrived on Indian lands for the purpose of trade but their hidden motive was to convert Indians and enslave them to destroy their culture and traditions. They considered them savage and wanted to civilize them with Euro-American ways of living (Pritzker xiii).

When Non-Natives arrived at Native lands, it caused the loss to Native manufacturers who had been producing certain goods; their traditional religious beliefs were intermingled with Christianity. Horse and firearm culture was also introduced by Euro-Americans. Natives suffered great loss of population because of the arrival of Non-Natives as they carried with them venereal disease, warfare and alcohol. After weakening Natives, Canada and United States forced them to give up their land and settle in small reservation. They were forced to adopt a new culture owned by Non-Natives who used different ways to achieve this goal. They forcefully separated Native children from their parents to make them live in boarding schools run by Euro-Americans in the name of educating them and they were forced not to practice their culture by banning traditions, religious beliefs and language. It was a great setback for Natives as it destroyed tribal culture, broke family bond and put a big question mark on tribal identity (Pritzker, xiii).

The governments of United States and Canada passed many laws to assimilate American Indians into white culture and the General Allotment Act (1887) was implemented in America in this regard. The ulterior motive behind it was to break tribal system. At the start of 1871, Canada signed a number of treaties with Natives to exchange their lands for reservations. By 1876, Canadian federal government gained great power to define “who is Indian and who is not” (Pritzker xiii). Pritzker tone is very satirical when he writes that Non-Natives practiced power and the power legitimized their inhuman practice to even define Natives. The Federal government’s agenda was just to eradicate Indianness. The maltreatment meted out to Natives not only pushed them into abject poverty but they also became dependent on Non-Natives. In 1924, Indians were granted citizenship by the U.S government. In 1934, Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) was passed by the U.S government that allowed Indians to make their own constitution, besides giving them liberty to join Non-Native schemes for their betterment. The policy makers had very high hopes from this Act but many Natives

rejected this Act because they thought it would again destroy the culture and identity of Natives. Non-Natives had violated all previous treaties so trusting them again was not a wise move. In 1950, the process of termination started in which the U.S government tried hard to improve the relationship with Natives and encouraged them to leave reservations and live in the cities. Some Indians went to live in cities but there too they found poverty, alienation and loneliness. Natives created Pan Tribal Organizations and in 1944, National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) designed its primary motive and it was Indian self-determination. In 1961, youngsters made National Indian Youth Conference which helped Natives get rid of the process of termination. It demanded a sovereign system in which Indians could decide their own course of action. It was a period of Cold War and these remarkable initiatives taken by Natives attracted Non-Native officials for the very first time. Canadian government also tried to introduce its own termination process in 1969 but they faced a very strong resistance from Natives and it “forces the government to kill the policy before it was even enacted” (Pritzker xiv). It was a great threat for Canada and they started serious discussion with Natives. There were many reforms made for Natives and local control of education was one of them. In 1995, ninety eight percent schools on reservations were under control of Natives that made a new way towards self-determination (Pritzker xiv).

In the late nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies, the revolution of rising expectation produced the Red Power Movement. The Native American Civil Rights Council and the American Indian Movement were also a remarkable step to regain Native power and the establishment of self-determination. (Chadwick 07) These people fought very hard for their rights and regained their fishing rights which were promised in treaties. But fishing rights were practically denied after signing the treaties. There were a lot of significant achievements by Natives after gaining the Red Power. This power provided them with the Red Pride that was an inspiration for Native Americans. The Red Pride created confidence in Natives to fight for

their rights. The Native population is growing day by day and it is for sure that poverty and poor health is still a big problem but these problems are not that grave as they used to be in early twentieth century. In 1990, the Indian population was recorded to be two million. They lived on reservations and the number of their reservations was two hundred and eighty-seven that spread over fifty six million acres of land. The federal government had to approve more than three hundred tribal governments. In North America, Native Americans have continued to fight for their natural resources focusing on self-sufficiency and self-determination. The Council of Energy Resource Tribe (CERT) in the United States is working for Indian natural resources and rights. The Child Welfare has also been given to Indian Control. After 1995, many Indians have started to run their own business. They have their independent television and radio stations and the motive behind this step is to revitalize the Indian Culture and the focus here is to revitalize their language. Other motives are economic self-sufficiency and political self-determination. Native North Americans are now working to make their own political, social and economic system to forget oppression, dependence and fear. Their effort had made them able to work with Non-Indians for the welfare of Indians and it makes them partners as partners enjoy equal treatment and equal power for decision making (Pritzker xiv- xv).

1.4 An Introduction to the Selected Authors and Their Works

As discussed earlier, Native Americans have taken the responsibility to voice their version about their history and challenge the misrepresented identities. In this context, the researcher has focused on the selected fiction authors to highlight the same sense of responsibility on the part of Native Americans. Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King share a postmodern deconstructive strategy to rewrite Native American history and reshape their identity as Native Americans. They both show postmodern resistance in their fiction for the same purpose. They draw their inspiration from the

works of theorists such as Linda Huchon and Jean François Lyotard to frame the study of Native American misrepresentation through fiction.

History refers to a narrative form of a coherent story with a specific beginning and a muddled middle that becomes clear with a conclusive ending. American history that is officially documented by Euro-Americans is a progressive tale. It begins with the European discovery of America and tells about the development of civilization, a new setting, the overcoming of wilderness and finally the triumph of democracy. But, for Vizenor and King, history is discoverable, knowable and a sequence of events which careful research can establish and it is always subject to revision.

Gerald Robert Vizenor was born in 1934. He is a Native American mixed blood Chippewa/ Anishinaabe author. He is also an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe of the White Earth Reservation. He served for several years as Director of the Native American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He has also served as a professor of American Studies at the University of New Mexico.

He keeps his readers involved and alive to the unexpected, uncertain, unseen and unpredictable possibilities. He has always insisted that all Native Americans are constructed by Euro-Americans as frozen species. This frozen specie is in fact an identity to declare them as an Indian stuff. Vizenor has long insisted on Native Americans as postindians and actual selves. He has highlighted postindian Native life and experience in his both novels.

1.4.1 Gerald Vizenor's *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991)

Gerald Vizenor narrates the story of Christopher Columbus on the behalf of Native Americans. Americans. The novel is a collection of magical realism, although the vigor of its contents sometimes turns obscure. According to Vizenor, "stories have natural rights to be heard and liberated"; therefore, the novel may be termed as a success in its own ways. Being the descendent of early Mayans, the author himself claims to be the real explorer of

America. Columbus is presented in the novel in an entirely different manner and shown as an Indian who is serving his Indian descendants. Subsequently, the author describes the creation of his wonderful tribal nation created by his present-day mixed-blood successors. As per the alternate history presented by Vizenor, the author claims that Mayans were the first to imagine the universe and to write about the stories in their blood and Columbus was, in fact, descendant from Mayans. The author is of the view that Columbus actually sailed from the New to the Old World.

The version of this deconstructed history intersects with a modern-day account of some Native Americans and mixed-bloods. At an annual meeting, heirs of Columbus see each other at the headwaters of Mississippi River. Here they plan for a new tribal nation and recollect their stories in blood which are the best stories about their strain and estate. An affluent trickster healer, Stone Columbus, is also part of these meeting. Stone became rich and earned more than a million in a season. He is also the captain of the sovereign bingo barge named Santa Maria Casino. The plan of the successors to regain their heritage infuriates the government. At the same time, this acts as an inspiration for the tribal nations. The comic plotline expands to mythic proportions. Vizenor goes on to narrate the mystery story by interweaving fantasy and reality. He describes altered states of consciousness and visions experience in shamanism. He also talks about the hand-talkers who show their stories in the summer, in silence, leaving their handprints around the world. Vizenor's story deals with the effort to separate the genetic code of tribal survivance and radiance and a global pursuit for the remnants of Columbus.

1.4.2 Gerald Vizenor's *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* (1990)

This is the first novel by Gerald Vizenor. The background of the novel is based on a situation when America has exhausted its oil and gas supply. Thus white world has descended into chaos. Proud Cedarfair is

forced to go on a pilgrimage with his wife named Rosina. They are accompanied by a weird group of believers. They are forced on the pilgrimage because people belonging to the government come to the reservation to seize and use their sacred cedar trees as fuel. The Natives reverse the feelings of Manifest Destiny and traverse through the remains of American civilization that ran out of gas.

When cedar trees are snatched for fuel, Proude Cedarfair and his wife head from Minnesota towards New Mexico. On their way to their destination, different people join them in their journey. One of them is Benito Saint Plumero who has murdered an individual for a lady statue in a park. Another is Pio Wissakodewinini who is surgically converted into a woman for the crime of rape. They also come in contact with a dog named Pure Gumption who possesses healing powers. They also meet the evil gambler who bets fuel against anybody's life; food fascists who slice up witches for restaurant charges; and a group of crippled people who were born so, due to the environment poisoned by chemicals.

Thomas King was born April 24, 1943 in the United States. He has Cherokee and Greek/German- American ancestry, possessing the United States and Canadian dual citizenship. His unique style of writing combines oral story telling structure with traditional Western narrative.

1.4.3 Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993)

The title of *Green Grass, Running Water* is significant because the phrase, 'as long as grass grows or water runs' has become the representation of the United States' failure to keep their promises with Native American throughout American history. They did not keep their promises regarding Native Americans' rights to their land. The phrase was used by President Monroe in 1817.

The novel consists of a non-standard, nonlinear narrative which does not follow direct causality pattern. It rather interchanges between a number of key plot lines that ultimately interconnect at the end. The beginning of

the novel features an unseen narrator who holds interactions with several people from both Native American and Christian traditions. When the novel begins, the first-person narrator meets the traditional North American trickster god, Coyote.

The story then turns to four Native American presumably black-foot Indian elders. Their names are Lone Ranger, Ishmael, Robinson Crusoe, and Hawkeye. All of them had escaped from a confinement, designated for mentally ill people. The mental institution is supervised by Dr. Hovaugh who has a firm belief that the escapes of the inmates are coincidentally connected to simultaneous natural disasters that happen at the same times. Nevertheless, the police is then approached to investigate their disappearance, and Sergeant Cereno inquires a lady named Babo Jones about the escape.

In the meantime, the elders head towards Canada and tell diverse accounts of creation stories drawn from Native American, Christian, and Greek mythologies. Lone Ranger tells the first creation story involving first two humans on the earth named Ahdamn & First Woman (Adam and Eve). Ishmael tells the next account of the creation story featuring Changing Woman. The creation story told by Robinson Crusoe involves a lady drifting by the river whose name is Thought Woman. The story told by Hawkeye features a lady named Old Woman who comes across a figure Young Man Who Walks on Water (Christ). The man has a lot of followers due to his miracles and supernatural abilities.

In parallel, a realistic plot having characters from modern Canada is also presented in the novel. The plot highlights a love-triangle involving Lionel Red Dog, Charlie Looking Bear and Alberta Frank. Alberta has a romantic relationship with Lionel and Charlie who are both cousins. She is a professor in a college whose first marriage was not successful. She wants to have a child one day without getting married. Another story revolves around a lady named Latisha who is Lionel's sister. She is divorced and has three young kids. She is the owner of a restaurant named the Dead Dog

Café. One more plotline focuses on Lionel's uncle whose name is Eli Stands Alone and he is a professor of literature.

Finally, all the plotlines intersect when all of the characters plan to go to a reservation to attend the annual Blackfoot Sun Dance ceremony. On the way to the reservation, Lionel and his aunt Norma pick up four Indian elders standing by the side of the road and drop them off a hotel in Blossom. Dr. Hovaugh is informed about the escaped elders who immediately heads towards their location along with Babo. The doctor hysterically tries to hunt them down before a disaster is caused. Meanwhile, due to singing and dancing of Coyote, an earthquake is triggered due to which the dam bursts and causes the flood, killing Eli.

After a month, the story is picked up again when Charlie loses his job. He decides to visit his father in Los Angeles. Alberta gets pregnant, and despite being anxious and uncertain about the future, she considers starting a serious relationship with Lionel. When Dr. Hovaugh returns, he finds the Indians back at the mental institution. The elders are convinced that they have succeeded to fix some part of the world. The novel ends with Coyote and the unnamed narrator continue to tell stories about the creation of the world.

1.4.4 Thomas King's *Truth and Bright Water* (1999)

Truth and Bright Water appears to be a little family account full of sacrifice and secrets. Cassie comes back home. Her mother pursues a lifelong dream. Her grandmother offers counsel. Still, there are certain huge subjects at work here. The author points out conventional thoughts about aboriginal legitimacy and customs and he makes scathing remarks about colonial arrangements and how they carry on to adversely disturb the lives of aboriginal persons.

In this novel, Truth is the name of a small town at America-Canada border in Montana. Tecumseh lives in Truth. There is a reserve named

Bright Water across the glacial Shield river in Canada. Tecumseh's dog is his best friend and his name is Soldier. His second-best friend is Lum who also lives in Truth. His mother is a beautician who is a practical lady, while his father is a carpenter who is mostly scheming and endeavoring to do illegal business. His parents are separated.

Cassie is Tecumseh's aunt, who visits Truth, but this time she does not go back mysteriously. She and Tecumseh's mother carry a lot of secrets. Monroe Swimmer has also returned to Truth. He was once a close friend of Tecumseh's father. He is a famous Indian artist and is considered the most distinguished son. He comes back from Toronto, and Tecumseh gets a job from him. One night, Tecumseh and his older cousin Lum see a woman throwing a baggage into the River from a cliff, followed by herself jumping into the river. Subsequently, the woman's body is found, but there is no trace for the suitcase. Mysteries continue when a Soldier finds a skull of a child having a hole and a red ribbon.

Two aspects of postmodernism have been selected for an in-depth analysis of the selected texts for the study. These texts are evaluated through Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction and Jean François Lyotard's concept of subversion of grand narratives

1.5 Postmodernism as an Approach

Linda Hutcheon asserts that postmodern theory and practice suggest that everything is cultural because it is mediated by representation. It suggests that notions of truth, reference, and the non-cultural real have not ceased to exist but that they are no longer unproblematic issues, assumed to be self-evident and self-justifying. For her, it is not degeneration of 'hyperreality' but it is a questioning of what reality can mean and how we can come to know it. "It is not that representation now dominates or effaces the referent, but rather that it now self-consciously acknowledges its existence as representation" (*The Politics* 34). She is of the opinion that

interpreting is indeed creating its referent that does not offer direct and immediate access to it.

Postmodernism's distinctive character lies in this kind of wholesale 'nudging' commitment to doubleness, or duplicity. In many ways it is an even-handed process because postmodernism ultimately manages to install and reinforce as much as undermine and subvert the conventions and presuppositions it appears to challenge. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to say that the postmodern's initial concern is to de-naturalize some of the dominant features of our way of life; to point out that those entities that we unthinkingly experience as 'natural' (they might even include capitalism, patriarchy, liberal humanism) are in fact 'cultural'; made by us, not given to us. Even nature, postmodernism might point out, doesn't grow on trees (*The Politics 2*).

Christopher Butler states that postmodernism developed in the mid of twentieth century in arts, history, fiction, literature, music, architecture, criticism and philosophy. It was a departure from modernism (7). It shows a strong disbelief towards grand narratives, ideologies, objective reality and absolute truth. It believes that knowledge and truth are based on a system of social, historical and political discourses and interpretation. Knowledge has always some context so it is constructed on the basis of social, historical and political circumstances. Postmodernism tries to highlight critical interpretation of knowledge instead of blindly trusting 'objective reality' constructed by social system. It dismantles one objective reality because the critics of postmodern literature believe that there is no fixed reality of things in the world. For different people meaning of signs can be different and for them reality is what they consider it because signs change their meanings with the change of context. Postmodern literature dismantles grand narrative and promotes mini narratives. Jean-François Lyotard asserts that grand narratives are mythological beliefs and traditionally accepted ideas

about human purpose and human reason. He states that large background of mythological beliefs and traditionally accepted ideas become the reason to create grand narratives. Postmodern literature challenges the authenticity of grand narratives and it provides the readers with a freedom to take a different perspective of the things that is subjective and biased.

Postmodernists contest many works of mainstream history because they are convinced that there cannot be only one story line or central meaning of a particular story. (Cui 12) They take meanings as subject to contestation as they believe the meanings are not closed, definite or final. Postmodern literature focuses on subjectivity, uncertain narratives, self-consciousness, parody, irony, generic mixing, and ambiguity. Postmodern literature celebrates the authority of writers with the help of historiographic metafiction and pastiche; the main function of historiographic metafiction and pastiche is to dismantle grand narratives and to introduce mini narratives.

In their research paper, Kenneth Allan and Jonathan H. Turner argue that the term “Postmodernism” has made inroads into social theory after the publication of Jean-Francois Lyotard's book *Postmodern Condition* (1984). They believe postmodernism includes very vast and complex fields which are based on contradictions. One defining feature of postmodernism is that it is always contradictory to modernism. They give many examples to show how postmodern contrasts with modernism. First of all, they contrast it on the level of literary world. Postmodernism in the literary world may be understood as a reaction against the unity of narratives” (364). It was in the reaction of such contraction with unity of narrative that Susan Sontag made a statement that the modern novel was dead after the emergence of postmodernism. Secondly, they have drawn a comparison between postmodernism and the world of modern art. They believe that postmodernism is a clear attack on modern art on the basis of impressionism, symbolism and all external influences. Postmodernism rejects it on all the levels. Thirdly, “postmodern architecture makes space

more personalized through the use of pastiche, the blending of styles, and the inclusion of historical references and it challenges the rationalization of space” (364). Finally, postmodernism is different from modernism in social theory as well because “it rejects all the grand narratives on the basis of nature of universe and it also doubts the advantages of technology and reduces science to a language game” (364).

The major focus of postmodernism is destabilization of traditionally accepted social and cultural practices and beliefs. Lyotard believes that destabilization is the result of the change in economic and institutional realms that leads to the doubt about grand narratives. Jameson is also one of the main philosophers of postmodern theory and he also believes that destabilization is the result of cultural change. Postmodernism is the reason for destabilized culture and institutions. Institutionalization is a structured pattern of actions and interactions and this structural pattern shapes cultural symbols that carry emotional and moral tones. They are also responsible for legitimizing myths and symbols about some culture or society. With postmodern destabilization, actions, interactions and interpersonal rituals have lost the control and are no more constrained by the structures where legitimized myths and symbols support the structural patterns and all these structures are subject to challenge. All the cultural symbols are destabilized in postmodern view and they become flat with no associated symbols and myths. Such structural differentiations create conflicts among specific cultures and all legitimating myths and symbols face a strong challenge in some particular society. Individual identity and subjectivity are key features of postmodern theory. All the social activities become destabilized and all the grand narratives lose their authenticity as collective identity. As a result, individual identity gets importance (Allan and Turner 374).

Historiographic metafiction is also a feature of postmodern literature. The term is coined by Linda Hutcheon. It fictionalizes the actual historical events and figures. Fiction is made history and history takes the place of fiction, and the boundary between them remains unclear because

readers have their own perspective, so they can interpret the text with their own subjective point of view. Postmodern historiographic metafiction provides the reader with an opportunity to take a new perspective of past events which has been marginalized previously. It is in fact the process of rewriting history with the help of fiction. Historiographic metafiction makes the reader believe that there is no fixed reality in history and history can also be interpreted in a subjective way that separates the events from its originality. Linda Hutcheon is of the view that postmodernism is 'Ahistorical'. The term ahistorical firmly rejects the authenticity of history. The present study is designed to evaluate the fictional texts of the selected Native American authors to rewrite history from a marginalized perspective. The study also shows that grand narratives have been dismantled in these works of fiction to reshape Native American identity and to remove stereotypical images from them.

Michael Foucault introduced the concept of discursive regime in his book *The Order of Things* (1989) that is also linked to postmodernism. Foucault's discursive regime explains the relationship of meaning to the social behavior within social orders and power. He believes that rational judgment of the text, social practices and power relationships in a society all are interrelated to each other and they cannot be separated. He believes that knowledge is socially constructed and it is based on cultural hegemony and violence. He states that language is oppression and it is based on the conventions of power backing a society. He also suggests that language should be used in a way that it should leave the nonsense and false tendencies of knowledge. This research is also planned to show false tendencies of knowledge about Native Americans promoted by Euro-Americans.

Postmodernism is also linked to another school of thought that is deconstruction. Jacques Derrida developed a theory of deconstruction in his book *Writing and Difference* (1978). The notion of this approach is to question understanding of the texts on the basis of ideological system,

presuppositions and hierarchical values that are based on power structures. It believes that the text should be examined deeply without its reference to culture, moral opinion, ideological system or the belief in the authority of the author who provides readers with specific knowledge. Derrida states that there is nothing important outside the text because the analysis should be based on the text itself not on the elements outside the text or the external factors which can be the motivation behind writing the text. The present study intends to evaluate fictional works of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King to challenge presuppositions and ideological system based on power structure implemented by Euro-Americans.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

Mostly negatively portrayed as savages, uncultured and wild beings by the majority of Euro-American historians, the essentialist misrepresentation of Native Americans has resulted into the latter's stereotyping in many works of the related history. If these portrayals of the Native Americans are read without analyzing their own representative historical accounts and literary texts, such descriptions present not only a blurred but also stereotypical image of this community.

1.7 Significance of the Research

The study is significant because it strives to bring into the limelight the Native American ways of life. In a broader perspective, the research has investigated their culture. Then the researcher narrowed down the study to explore their religion, history and traditions. This research examines the real identity and existence of Native Americans, besides understanding that who actually they are. The study has taken Native Americans as real human beings who can act and feel differently under different circumstances. The present study observes that Native Americans are not just mere products of stereotyping, objects to be experienced or inferior beings. It is earnestly

hoped that this research will in some small way contribute to the cause of securing equal rights by Native Americans as enjoyed by Euro-Americans.

The study analyzes, extends, and critiques the emerging critical approaches to Native literature offered by Native scholars such as Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe) and Thomas King (Cherokee). It distinguishes written products by Natives from that of non-Natives to remove the tags of stereotyping from Native Americans. Native American fiction is influenced by non-fiction. Native Americans have traced out historical facts under the cover of fiction to voice their truth about their history and identity. The researcher has thoroughly sifted the fiction of selected authors, besides taking into account literature broadly with the intent to explore Native American history and their true identity. The researcher has also studied their history to comprehend Native American perspective of history. Literature and history alike exercise the concept of selectivity in order to include or exclude details. As history and literature both are creations of human beings, the research banks on in-depth study of Native American stories, history, religion combined with postmodernism. It is also profoundly cultural. A serious effort has been made to focus on Native American cultural values to bring to the fore their true identity and their sense of particularity as respectable members of human race.

The present study has been exclusively carried out to spotlight American Indian stance on history and grand narratives which have been documented and promoted by Euro-Americans. The research has been conducted in response to what Mc Pherson and Douglas Rabb have noted that Native Americans have been studied to death (1). The literary output of the present study is a reflection of Native American culture and history. Native Americans have always been marginalized by Euro-Americans and this is true for both the physical environment as well as for academic field of knowledge. This is also a fact that every historian is a product of his or her time and place and is influenced by bias and personal ideology. In the end, history is just another story told to people. So, this research revolves

around the concept of unearthing Native American truth about history and reconsideration of grand narratives. In this context, the researcher has tried to promote mini narratives addressed by Native Americans about their history and identity. Similarly, Lyotard also notes that the subversion of history provides multiple perspectives of reality instead of one single truth thus undermines the metanarrative of authorized history and generates mini narratives (4). The study of Native American authors demonstrates that in spite of huge cultural differences within the same community, fictive history of the selected authors brings out an alternative image of the culture to reconstruct the subject.

An effort has been made in the study to bridge the gap between this research and the previous works done on American Indian writers specifically on Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King. A lot of research has been conducted previously on American Indian literature but this research is unique in nature since it is exclusively based on deconstruction and de-legitimation of many traditionally accepted and established grand narratives bringing American Indians and mini narratives to the center. This study has been carried out to see all the grand narratives and historical events regarding American Indian perspective to promote Natives' stance on the history and social issues. A serious and honest attempt has been made to reconstruct American Indian identity as well to show the readers the real American Indians; the study endeavors to present a very positive image of American Indians which has always been tarnished by Euro-Americans. The research uncovers themes and ground social realities about American Indians which have been presented under the cover of fiction by the selected writers.

At the outset, Vizenor's and King's revisionist view of history and grand narratives seem absurd due to their complex religious belief system and culture. But the researcher has carried out a close dissection of their culture and religion to prove that their subversion of history and grand narratives is not irrational and absurd. For this purpose, wherever there is a

mention of an incident or historical event or religious perspective that seems to be superfluous in the analysis of the selected works of fiction, the researcher has related the evidence with the work of a well-known Native Americans historian, Vine Deloria, Jr. who lends a Native American perspective to historical, social and religious realities to bring the marginalized truth to the center.

The inclusion of history in the present study makes it an interdisciplinary research as the researcher has dealt with literary theory, history and fiction. It will improve the scope of postmodernism as it is connected with historical discussion and subjectivity of history. It will also augment the scope of history as the researcher has expanded it to the level of fiction in dealing with historiographic metafiction. An important contribution of this study will be the selection of intertextuality of historiographic metafiction from the vantage point of postmodernism to evaluate fictional works. As mentioned earlier, the study will have a broader scope being an interdisciplinary study and therefore intertextuality of historiographic metafiction has been carefully selected to broaden its horizon for the students of history and literature.

1.8 Objectives of the Study

The study endeavors to achieve the following research objectives:

- i. To investigate mini narratives introduced by Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King in a bid to determine how grand narratives are dismantled and mini narratives are promoted
- ii. To analyze how Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King have used intertextual parody and self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction to write back to Euro-American historians

- iii. To study mini narratives established by Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King to counter stereotypical image of Native Americans

1.9 Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

- i. In what ways do literary texts help dismantling grand narratives and promoting mini narratives?
- ii. How have Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King used intertextual parody and self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction in their selected literary works to challenge the Native American history written by certain Euro-American writers?
- iii. How is the stereotypical portrayal of Native Americans countered by the mini narratives of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King?

1.10 Delimitation of Study

The following four novels have been selected for the proposed study:

- i. *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991) by Gerald Vizenor
- ii. *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* (1990) by Gerald Vizenor
- iii. *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993) by Thomas King
- iv. *Truth and Bright Water* (1999) by Thomas King

The selection of two Native American postmodern novelists is also intentional. Both Gerald Vizenor (Anishinaabe/ Chippewa) and Thomas King (Cherokee) are Native American contemporary authors but they are from different tribes. Since they are from different tribes, there is diversity in their fictional contents. Gerald Vizenor has written extensively about Native American history under the cover of fiction. Thomas King inspects Native American complex religious beliefs including the creation of earth and other basic beliefs of Christianity. He has taken a subversive stance on grand narratives of Christianity. In a nutshell, they both have tried to rewrite

Native American history and they have promoted mini narratives about themselves as well as about Euro-Americans. The research is designed to promote mini narratives of Native American history and identity. Therefore, the researcher has selected these two authors. There was another chief reason for selecting two authors instead of one and that was to have a deep insight into Native American culture and history. The researcher found it inadequate for this extensive study to take only one author.

1.11 Proposed Chapter Breakdown

- i. Introduction
- ii. Review of Related Literature
- iii. Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework
- iv. Analyzing Fiction by Thomas King and Gerald Vizenor : Self-reflexivity and Intertextual Parody of Historiographic Metafiction in Focus
- v. Subversion of Legitimized Grand Narratives and Promotion of Mini Narratives in the Selected Literary Texts
- vi. Conclusion

1.12 Key Terms Used in the Study

Postmodernism

Subversion of the belief of ultimate reality. It asserts that there is no definite truth and this belief of uncertainty invites subjectivity (*The Poetics 199*)

American Indians/Native Americans

These phrases have been used interchangeably in the study because certain tribal writers favor the term American Indian while a few writers prefer using term Native Americans (d'Errico, "Native American Indian Studies -A Note on Names").

Euro-Americans

All those Europeans who came to North American continent and settled there ("Euro- Americans").

Historiographic Metafiction

Deconstruction of history by bringing multiple voices in fiction from history through parody, irony, and humor (*The Politics* 15).

Mini narratives

Stories that explain small practices, local events rather than largescale universal or global concepts (*The Postmodern Condition* 10).

Metanarratives/Grand narratives

The grand universal theories and ideologies established to shape the belief systems. They are considered strong components of culture which set up the base of culture (*The Postmodern Condition* 7).

Bear signature of survivance

Measure of civilization and the power of resurrections. It is not the inheritance of genetic code (*The Heirs of Columbus* 26)

Stories in Blood

Ancestral memories of American Indians (*The Heirs of Columbus* 4)

Terminal Creeds

They are belief systems that seek to impose static definitions upon the world. The principle target of terminal creed in the novel *Bearheart: The Chronicles of Heirship* is Indian/Invented Indian (“Manifest Manners” 225).

Panic holes

In *The Heirs of Columbus*, Luster Browne used to shout at the holes, into meadows or even concrete. He shouted and shouted to heal himself for the loss and fraud on the land that was done by Euro-Americans. He shouted at priests, renounced the mission, sneered at federal agents and despite their censure of his intractable nature, he became a noble man, the first baron of the reservation by the order of the president of United States (*The Heirs of Columbus* 23).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the literature that is relevant to the present study in order to trace the research gap. The researcher has divided the chapter into three sections. The first section deals with the theory; the second section explores Native Americans' historical perspective while the third section delineates the fictionalized revision of history. The chapter starts with a general discussion on postmodernism and then it generates a debate about Native Americans' counter narrative to understand their silenced history and their stance on their historical background. The study also investigates the voice raised by Native American fiction authors in response to their marginalization and misrepresentation at the hands of Euro-Americans. The researcher concludes the chapter by proposing a roadmap for her own research.

Section I

Postmodernism at a Glance

2.1 An Overview of Postmodernism

Linda Hutcheon opines that there are some positive as well as negative dimensions to the term “postmodernism”. There has always been a lot of focus on the exact definition of postmodernism. The people

interested in deciphering postmodernism find it decisively contradictory and inevitably political in nature. Postmodernism has made an indelible impression on art, architecture, dance, film, literature, music painting, photography and video. It challenges presuppositions, conventions, cultural forms and dominant systems prevailing in society. The notions of capitalism, patriarchy and liberal humanism are also questioned through the lens of postmodernism. All the systems, conceptions and cultural forms are man-made and nature has no role in their creation. Postmodernism even probes the concept of nature; hence it may be perceived that postmodernism underscores the inevitability of inquiring into every system or notion including culture. “Even nature, postmodernism might point out, doesn’t grow on trees” (*The Politics 2*). She further states, “It is one which juxtaposes and gives equal value to the self-reflexive and the historically grounded: to that which is inward-directed and belongs to the world of art (such as parody) and that which is outward-directed and belongs to ‘real life’ (such as history)” (*The Politics 2*).

Postmodernism and politics have a strong connection. Hutcheon justifies her argument with the statement of Muller, a German writer, who believes that politics and postmodernism cannot be separated. The studies of recent years show that postmodernism has radical potential of politics. Muller proclaims that “I cannot keep politics out of the question of postmodernism” (58). Postmodernism has realization that all cultural forms of representation have ideological grounds and they cannot be separated from social and political relations. This is a strange kind of critique that is bound up with power and domination and this discourse challenges ideology. We know the world through a network of socially accepted and established system of meanings and through discourse of our culture. This concept of socially and culturally learning the system of meanings raises many questions about the transparency of the representations. Fiction and photography used to be considered realist representations but postmodern critique puts a question mark on these two representations also because it

gives the concept of reinterpretation and in this school of thought, history meets self-reflexivity and parody. This concept of representation becomes a study of exploring the way we construct our notion of self in the present and in the past. “Narrative representation – fictive and historical – comes under similar subversive scrutiny in the paradoxical postmodern form I would like to call ‘historiographic metafiction’” (*The Politics* 15). Postmodern historiographic metafiction is also paradoxical in a sense that it is a combination of historical events and socio-political grounds; it is history at the same time it is parody. Irony, ambiguity, parody of the art of modernism and exploration of the language that challenges classical realist systems of representation are the features of postmodernism. It legitimizes the culture at the same time it challenges it. These paradoxical relationships in postmodernism discourage the critical urge to underestimate some political and historical questions. It is based on a contradictory ideological system. Postmodernism demands a transparent representation at the same time it focuses on its ambiguous nature of representational strategies (*The Politics* 15).

Hutcheon and Lyotard have the same concept of postmodernism. Lyotard does not believe in grand totalizing of narratives; rather he delegitimizes this view by focusing on mini and multiple narratives that do not depend on universalizing, legitimizing, or stabilization (*The Politics* 24). “Therefore, for Lyotard, postmodernity is characterized by no grand totalizing narrative, but by smaller and multiple narratives which seek no universalizing stabilization or legitimation” (24)

With the problematizing and ‘de-doxifying’ of both realist reference and modernist autonomy, postmodern representation opens up other possible relations between art and the world: gone is the Benjaminian ‘aura’ with its notions of originality, authenticity, and uniqueness, and with these go all the taboos against strategies that rely on the parody and reappropriation of already existing representations. In other words, the history of representation itself can become a valid subject of art, and not

just its history in high art. The borders between high art and mass or popular culture and those between the discourses of art and the discourses of the world (especially history) are regularly crossed in postmodern theory and practice. But it must be admitted that this crossing is rarely done without considerable border tension. (*The politics* 35).

2.2 Acknowledging Limitation of Human Knowledge in Postmodern World

Linda Hutcheon asserts that postmodernist view suggests that the issue of representation of the past and fiction raises a question about the source from which we know the past. The importance of the past cannot be denied and one cannot escape or avoid it. Whenever we talk about the past, we must acknowledge the fact of limitation of human knowledge and power relationship. She writes “. . . as various forms of modernist art suggest through their implicit view of the ‘nightmare’ of history. The past is something with which we must come to terms and such a confrontation involves an acknowledgement of limitation as well as power” (*The Politics* 87). She further writes that we can know about past events only through the traces from documents and witnesses. If we acknowledge the limitation of human knowledge and the documents created by human beings and then the witnesses who are again human beings then we believe in the fact that all past representations are one way or the other, human constructions of narratives and explanations. It basically shows a desire to understand the present culture in the light of previous representations. In a very real sense, then, the representation of history, ironically, becomes the history of representation. The task of postmodernism becomes to acknowledge the history of representations but to exploit and comment critically with the help of irony and parody (*The Politics* 58).

2.3 Postmodern Confrontation with Totalized Notions

Hutcheon states that narrative structure is always made by human being. It is not given by nature. Historical and fictional representations both

have a structure in the form of beginning, middle and end that shapes the meaning of both history and fiction. The challenge to these representations has been given a new term and that is to challenge the mode of “totalizing representations”. The function of totalizing is to make the material coherent and unified and there is always a desire to have a full control over that material that puts history and fiction at the risk of violence. This totalized representation has a strong link to power and domination. Hutcheon quotes Dominick La Capra who believes that the dream of totalizing historical events confirms historian’s own urge to master the documentary collection. Hutcheon then quotes Braudel’s statement as he believes that everything in historical events must be repositioned and recaptured as it shows our respect for history and for life (*The Politics* 63).

She believes that postmodernism is one of the cultural theories and contemporary writing that is over and under defined. There are a lot of disruptions, dislocations, anti-totalizing events, decentralization, discontinuities and indeterminacies. It is a contradictory phenomenon and its purpose is both to use and abuse, to establish and challenge the art in its many forms like literature, painting, film, video, architecture, philosophy, music, dance, psychoanalysis, linguistics and historiography. It is a cultural activity that is basically contradictory, historical and undoubtedly political. Contradictions are based on the realization of the presence of the past. Most of the Postmodernist work has been applied to history, theory and literature and historiographic metafiction also works in all these three domains. Theorists of postmodernism are highly concerned with the fact of cultural dominance as this theory is cultural in nature. They all agree that this cultural domination is the result of development of mass culture. This mass culture is responsible for the totalizing forces and postmodernism challenges these totalized notions. One thing is important to note that it just tries to challenge but to deny by emphasizing on the difference. It stresses on the difference not on the hegemonic identities. The difference is highlighted on the basis of otherness and ‘we system’ or ‘they system’.

Hutcheon quotes Lyotard who argues that postmodernism is characterized on the basis of disbelief towards master narratives. Postmodernism challenges the notion of consensus. Previously, people had trust and agreement on narrative system and universalism and they were not problematic. Public agreement is questioned and challenged now on the basis of the differences. The difference converts consensus into illusion of consensus (*A Poetics* 3-7).

Hutcheon gives an example of a man who wants to write his history as well as the history of his country. The man remains desperate to find out the ultimate meanings. He always remains preoccupied with the thought of challenging the impulse that totalizing destroys the continuity of historical events and its writing. She further states that a postmodern fiction underlies the stories out of chronicles and it creates the plots that do not follow any sequence. It is based on paradoxical arguments in historical representation. It provides the readers with the strategies to find out hidden meanings of the texts but that does not mean it denies the existence of past events. It refuses the importance of contextualization and it shows that it is the direct response of postmodernism against strong totalizing and universalizing impulses. It makes the readers believe that historical meanings and interpretations are not stable and they are always contextualized and relational. One of the contradictions of representation of postmodern fiction is the relationship between the present and the past and the task of the historian is to establish a relation between both of them. Most of the times, past events confuse the readers because of their plural and unstructured nature. Historiographic metafiction does not give the readers a hint that it is obsessed with the present or the past but it denaturalizes temporal relationships. There is a lot of self-consciousness in historiographic theory and postmodern fiction. The readers remain conscious in the narrative of the past that has been presented in the present and the present circumstances that are responsible to shape the past event (*A Poetics* 65-71).

Postmodernism challenges the principles of value, order, meaning, control and identity. The universalizing and totalizing are no more unchallengeable and eternal. This does not mean that postmodernism destroys their value of truth but the focus remains on the conditions of their truth. It challenges and questions the system that has been constructed by human beings keeping in view the needs of the time. It gives a different perspective of philosophy, aesthetics and ideological constructs in a different manner. Hutcheon quotes Lionel Gossman in making her statement about ideal of representation. Gossman believes that postmodern history and literature raise the question about the ideal representation because it has been dominating both of them. But now both history and literature have started to explore, test and create new meanings. Postmodernism is based on differences and these differences are binary opposites created on the basis of present and past; modern and postmodern. It creates paradoxical identity that de-centers previously constructed identities. It brings an end to myths of totalizing and gives a new perspective to look at the things. Hutcheon believes that Lyotard's theory about metanarratives doubts metanarratives and Foucault's concept of anti-totalization doubts totalization. "These are typically paradoxical: they are the masterful denials of mastery, the cohesive attacks on cohesion and the essentializing challenges to essences that characterize postmodern theory" (*A Poetics* 20).

She states that narrative structure is always made by human beings. It is not given by nature. Historical and fictional representations both have a structure in the form of beginning, middle and end that shapes the meaning of both, history and fiction. The challenge to these representations has been given a new term and that is to challenge the mode of "totalizing representations". The function of totalizing is to make the material coherent and unified and there is always desire to have a full control over that material that puts history and fiction at the risk of violence. This totalized representation has a strong link to power and domination (*The Politics* 63).

Hutcheon quotes the example of Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight Children* for presenting the aspect of historiographic metafiction. She suggests that in postmodern story-telling technique, there is no mediation to develop a relationship between narrative form and social ground. They both exist simultaneously but remain separate. Rushdie's paradoxically anti-totalizing totalized image for his historiographic meta-fictive process is the 'chutnification of history' (*The Politics* 65). Rushdie's each chapter serves a metaphoric purpose of a pickle jar that preserves the historical events (Rushdie's historical account). "... yes, I should revise and revise, improve and improve; but there is neither the time nor the energy. I am obliged to offer no more than this stubborn sentence: It happened that way because that's how it happened." (qtd. in *The Politics* 65)

2.4 Historicizing the Postmodernism : A Challenge to History

Linda Hutcheon states that postmodernism is 'Ahistorical'. The very term ahistorical firmly rejects the authenticity of history. Hutcheon writes that history has become a problematic issue in this present era because people challenge the history by questioning the limited knowledge of human beings. The intellectual issues like challenging the historical events are not new and we have been hearing about them since centuries but now we have many challenging discourses that make us think in a different manner and see the things which have not been highlighted earlier. Hutcheon writes that it was only in 1970 when these problems of authenticity of history were highlighted by the historians openly. Fischer is quoted as saying:

Novelists and playwrights, natural scientists and social scientists, poets, prophets, pundits, and philosophers of many persuasions have manifested an intense hostility to historical thought. Many of our contemporaries are extraordinarily reluctant to acknowledge the reality of past time and prior events, and stubbornly resistant to all

arguments for the possibility or utility of historical knowledge. (qtd in *A Poetics* 87).

Hutcheon believes that postmodernists seem to have an urge to think historically and in postmodern perspective, thinking historically is basically thinking contextually and critically. There is a mark difference between the thinking process of modernists and postmodernists. Previously, history meant to be absolute and final. And there was no other option for a reader except to believe in it but times have changed now. There has also been a great shift from blindly trusting history to challenging the reality and truth about it. She believes that there is a possibility that some writers have chosen to deny the truth about history just to escape from the burden of tradition. She rejects the idea to deny historical knowledge. She takes it as misunderstanding on the part of those writers who clearly reject the truth of history at first place. She counters the belief of Gerald Graff about history. He takes history as ‘dishonest refuge from truth’. To her, it is misunderstanding if we take history as dishonest refuge from truth because postmodernism takes history and fiction as discourses. Both are the discourses and both have different characteristics and both the discourses have different systems of significance that makes sense to us and we read a postmodern work keeping in mind the importance of both the discourses. The truth and meanings are not in past events but they are basically in the system that converts these past and historical events into present facts about history. Hence it is not at all a dishonest refuge from truth but it is basically the acknowledgment of human understanding of past events in a critical manner (*A Poetics* 88-89).

Raddeker writes in his book thus: “Postmodernists often contest the underlying implication of many works of mainstream history . . . storyline, plot and central meaning” (10). Kaya Yilmaz in his research paper argues that postmodernism challenges historian realism. He writes that postmodernism dismantles and rejects the importance of center and it is complete death of center and the focus is given to the margin. Everything

on margin bears the same importance as possessed by center and the central objects are pushed to margin (180). In his book, Christopher Butler states: “We now live in an era in which legitimizing ‘master narratives’ are in crisis and in decline” (24). Beverley Southgate states that “people now challenge the widely accepted ‘march of progress’ narrative” (42). Perry Anderson rejects the objectivity of history and focuses on the more subjective approach while analyzing the things. He dismantles the active sense of history and memory. “Among the traits of new subjectivity, in fact, was the loss of any active sense of history, either as hope or memory” (56).

In his research treatise, Ihab Hassan endeavors to define postmodernism. He compares postmodernism with human life. Our life has many facets identical to postmodernism which too has several interpretations, manifestations and representations; hence defining postmodernism is as complicated as defining human life is. Hassan concurs with Nietzsche who also believes that the things without any history can be defined. Since human lives and postmodernism share the element of history, they cannot be defined. Hassan believes that history has always been in a state of flux. He writes, “. . . and it will be open to change: interpretation, reinterpretation, misinterpretation” (“Postmodernism Revisited” 143). He asserts that the world has paced in postmodern world. There is no significance of history in this era. In this world of post history, traditional theories, political ideas and worldviews will have no importance. “Many believed that a decisive break with the past had taken place, that a revolution in moral, politics and perception was underway, and that a new era of history was dawning” (*The Postmodern Turn* 4). In his research paper, Péter Csató says no one exactly knows what is beyond postmodernism. One can ask about it and one can answer as well but no one truly knows the answer. He agrees with Hassan’s concept of postmodernism and writes that “All this, I realize, will satisfy no one who requires a more exact ‘definition’ of postmodernism. But human actions trace no perfect circle or square” (94).

Hayden White argues that historians have never claimed that history is a pure science. It depends upon intuitions and analytical methods both simultaneously. Experimental and mathematical disciplines should never be the ultimate criteria to judge history. History is an art like other arts and it is written by literary artists as well but when a literary artist approaches history sometimes he fails to narrate it correctly because he remains preoccupied with human consciousness and he remains unwilling to utilize contemporary modes of literary representation.

Here comes the point, when historians interrupt and suggest that history is a semi-science which cannot be taken freely for literary artistic manipulation. The form of historical events cannot be taken as a choice as it also depends on the historical events themselves. This gives historians a liberty to move between art and science. Thus they claim that it is only history that allows historians and artists alike to meet science and art simultaneously. This relaxation assigns historians a special task, apart from moving between the past and the present; they coordinate with artists in order to comprehend past events and present circumstances. There are clear evidences that historians have been criticized a lot for taking the advantage of art and science in narrating history. There has been serious allegation level against them by non-historians that instead of being the mediators between science and art, they have destroyed both and they are the worst enemies of both because they are not providing their readers with critical standards of both the disciplines (28).

White further writes that modern day writers do not like historians as they portray them to repress historical events in their theatres and novels. These writers term history a nightmare; they advise Europeans to circumspectly guard themselves against the insidious influence of history. In many modern novels, scientists have been portrayed in negative light because they are shown to betray positive spirit of everything and they want to control the world; whereas, the artists are portrayed in a positive way and they have been shown to have sense of forgiveness that scientists strongly

lack. Nietzsche is quoted as saying that history is destructive. In his book *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche writes that history has contributed to the destruction of individual as well as to the communal destruction of selfhood. Two years later, Nietzsche wrote another book titled *The Use and Abuse of History*. In this book, he sharply contrasted the imagination of an artist and a scientist. He says that history pushes to logical extremes and tries to decide on the future as well; in this way, it destroys all the illusions of man and it robs all the existing things of the environment in which they can live. “Nietzsche hated history more than he hated religion. History promoted a deliberating voyeurism in men, made them feel that they were latecomers to a world in which everything worth doing had already been done” (32).

White further argues that theorists of historiography have a consensus on the fact that historical narratives play a very important and irreducible role in the process of interpretation. The task of a historian is very tough; he has to incorporate all the important information into the process of interpretation. Historical record is too full of significant events. There are always more facts in that record and therefore it is not possible for the historian to include all the facts in his narrative representation in the historical process. So, naturally, the historian excludes certain facts from his historical account considering them to be irrelevant and unimportant to his narrative purpose. In this way, he reconstructs historical events of a specific time period of history. He includes some reasonable explanations about those events; in such cases, he may ignore some critical facts because they do not relate to his own reconstruction of historical events. Thus, historical narratives become a mixture of adequately and inadequately narrated events which are a blend of established and inferred facts. It is representation that is basically an interpretation and this interpretation is the explanation of the whole process that had been shown in that historical narrative. Interpretation becomes one of the aspects of historiography and the theorists know this fact very well. “Once it is admitted that all histories are in some sense interpretations, it becomes necessary to determine the

extent to which historians' explanations of past events can qualify as objective, if not rigorously scientific, accounts of reality” (51-52).

White argues that the objective reality for historians is not scientific but it depends on their interpretation. He believes that Nietzsche insists on interpretation. To Nietzsche, interpretation is very important element in historiography and the reason behind it is the objectivity of which historians talk about. They struggle very hard to achieve objectivity in their process of historiography. This objectivity is not scientific and it also cannot be judged in a court of law but this objectivity belongs to the artists specifically the dramatist. The task of a historian is to reflect dramatically in the process of historiography.

Nietzsche professed to be able to imagine a kind of historical writing that had no drop of common fact in it and yet could claim to be called in the highest degree objective. To him, the generalizations are the most important things, as they contain the laws. But if the historian's generalizations are to stand as laws, he pointed out, then the historian's labor is lost; for the residue of truth contained in them, after the obscure and insoluble part is removed, is nothing but the commonest knowledge. The smallest range of experience will teach it. On the contrary, he concluded, the real value of history lay in inventing ingenious variations on a probably commonplace theme, in raising the popular melody to a universal symbol and showing what a world of depth, power and beauty exists in it (53-54).

SECTION II

2.5 The Native American Account of History

Postmodernists do not believe in the authenticity of one history. They are of the opinion that writers have the power to marginalize certain historical facts to deny the truth. They believe that history is manipulated for certain reasons and hence it cannot be objective. At times, winners and powerful nations manipulate history to marginalize certain facts but most of

the time they desire to promote their own agendas. Therefore, historical accounts may lack authenticity. Porter and Roemer in their book quote George Santayana: “History is always written wrong, and so always needs to be rewritten” (qtd. in *The Cambridge Companion* 153). They further second Vine Deloria’s stance that winners have the right to write history. Their conquest allows them to cover their shortcomings under the cover of their biased history as this is a strategy to avoid further discussion about those historical events. He says that manipulation is a very important element involved in the formation of history since it helps Amer-Europeans to legitimize their perpetual presence on this continent; he argues that Amer-Europeans rightly know that they are alien to America and North America belongs to Indians. Deloria also endorses Luther Standing Bear’s view about Euro-Americans’ failure to understand Indians. The reason is obvious: they do not understand America because they do not belong to America. They have no connection with the early processes and facts about America because they do not have their roots in America. Euro-Americans are still aliens and foreigners to America and they hate the people who question their legitimacy of the history of discovering America (153).

So, the authenticity of Euro-American historical records that have been written to promote their superiority over American Indians is open for investigation. American Indians refute the discourse of the discovery of America pitched by Euro-Americans; Indians claim to be the legitimate ruler of the continent, saying they have been dwelling there for the past five thousand years. They had their sovereign territories. They had been living in tribes. There had been different languages, cultures and religions even among different tribes. There is no written record available about the origin of American Indians as they used to believe in the oral tradition of preserving their past. Thousands of years later, when Euro-Americans invaded the continent, they took the advantage of Indians’ inability to write their history and therefore they concocted the history of American Indians’ origin and of their own discovery of America for their own good. James

Adair states that there is a great deal of uncertainty about the origin of tribes and history. He argues that some of the past historians were ignorant while others were biased as they failed to present the true picture of the past and the origin of American Indians to the rest of world. Some nations have no written or even engraved records and for tracing their origin, we can only rely on their oral tradition. All the tribes of Indians are descent of Yanasa, and they have similar customs and religious rites. Their language is very expressive and full of rhetorical devices like the language of orientalists. They also change the sense of words in different situations like orientalists. Their oration is always strong and concise. They also use the ancient standard of speech in their oral tradition that is conveyed from father to son, and it keeps on circulating and is conveyed to present generation as well (72-73).

Devon A. Mihesuah in his research article argues that the issue of historical fact is not just addressed by Native Americans but it is also a point of debate among anthropologists and historians. The representation of others is very sensitive issue and historians also debate the definition of the new Indian history. The ability or inability to write down their own history is also a point of debate among the historians and anthropologists. The writer states that there is a great deal of historical information stored in the hearts of American Indians and it is not justified to ignore their perspective about their past events. The writer challenges all the historical events narrated by people in power to question their authenticity by calling it fantasy with the use of exaggeration and calls the historical statistics as illusions.

Many historians and anthropologists also argue that Indians cannot accurately recount their past through oral traditions. They refuse to use informants, believing modern Indians' versions of their tribes' histories are 'fantasies'. But are not some written records fantasy? Are not some writings of army officers, missionaries, explorers, and

pioneers who encountered Indians also exaggerated and biased? Are not some uses of statistics illusory? (93).

American Indians are working hard to reshape their identities which are opposite to what Euro-Americans have projected. Euro-American's presentation of Native Americans' identity is based on misconception and misrepresentation . They have promoted only what American Indians are not, silencing the truth that tells what American Indians really are. In his research article, Vine Deloria Jr. states that it is a misconception about American Indians that their culture consists of only pottery, snake dance, war practices and feathers. In today's world, American Indian culture is much more than these misconceptions. After the incident of Wounded Knee, in 1973, a national movement was sparked to preserve American Indian culture in its true sense. They have the realization that they have a language and a strong culture. They teach their new generation, language, crafts skills, religious ceremonies and tribal histories. They teach their young generation singing, dancing and pure tribal culture. They have even designed their ceremonial calendars according to their festivals and their important social events. Many American Indians have been imparting education to their people residing in the isolated and far off villages with the help of television and radio programs; they have developed the technology to own personal radio and television stations. They have realized that they need to preserve tribal stories and they use cassette tape recorders to save tribal stories and songs ("American Indian Today" 148).

2.6 The American Indian Story (History): An American Indian Historical Perspective

The present study is based on a standpoint that history does not always tell the truth. The word truth is speculated in the world of postmodernism. There is no ultimate truth, so, history also cannot articulate the truth. For different people, same historical event can have different understanding. It is also reality that there are many versions of history on

the same event written by different historians. They can have different perspectives on the same historical event. Similarly, the same difference could be observed between the historical perspectives of American Indians and Euro-Americans. The present study finds that that both the peoples have totally opposite viewpoint about the same historical events. American Indians contest Euro-Americans' version of history. They claim that their history is based on lies and misrepresentation s. Dee Brown highlights the facts about the history of reservations from American Indians' perspective. He discovers that American Indians of the present world have made impressive advancements in all branches of knowledge as compared to their ancestors who probably had not enough aptitude for knowledge. He discusses the reasons behind poverty, hopelessness and the squalor of a modern Indian reservation. He states: "This is not a cheerful book, but history has a way of intruding upon the present" (xvii). He states that he has tried to tell American Indians about their relationship with the earth and there is a fair chance that they get surprised to "hear the words of gentle reasonableness coming from the mouths of Indians stereotyped in the American myth as ruthless savages" (xvii). He asserts that American Indians had the awareness that life had a close link to the earth resources and "America was a paradise but they could not comprehend why the intruders from the East were determined to destroy all that was Indian as well as America itself" (xvii).

American Indians had been marginalized by powerful Euro-Americans. They had no resources to represent their true self to the rest of the world that gave Euro- Americans opportunity to misrepresent them. Euro-Americans ruined the civilization and cultural value of American Indians by creating myths about them. These myths were based on misrepresentation s and it was an effort to convey to the world that American Indians were primitive. In his book, Dee Brown noted that 1860-1890 was the era during which the civilization of American Indians was destroyed and all the myths of American West were brought into the

knowledge of people. The myths created by West America included mountain men, cowboys, gold seekers, gamblers, gunmen, missionaries, fur traders and schoolmarms. The voice of American Indians was marginalized and on the occasions when it was recorded, it was recorded by white man. It was a dark era for American Indians as they did not know how to write English. It was not the only hurdle because learning the English language was possible but the great hurdle in their way was that they did not have printers and publishers. All the record of American Indian history was not lost because they managed somehow to record the authentic proofs of their history in photographs, pamphlets, or in some obscure journals and in the books of small circulation. In the late nineteenth century, the curiosity of white men about American Indian chiefs and survivors of wars reached to its high point and then the newspaper reporters gave them the chance to share their experiences. “Among the richest sources of person statements by Indians are the records of treaty councils and other formal meetings with civilian and military representatives of the United States government” (Brown xvi). The majority of Indian leaders spoke freely in the councils and during 1870’s and 1880’s they demanded their rights to choose their own interpreters and recorders. In the later period, a few older American Indians started to recount and restate the history of their people telling the truth of their side (xvi).

2.6.1 “The Invasion of America by Christopher Columbus”: A Native American Stance on the Great Discovery

In their official documented history, Euro-Americans claim that Columbus had discovered America. Native American historians have a different truth about the great discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. For them, Columbus did not discover America but he invaded the continent blinded by the lust of power and wealth. American Indians’ story focuses on the invasion of America by Columbus rather than the discovery made by Columbus. They strongly disagree with the historical

version of Euro-Americans. They state in their version of history that Native Americans had sovereign states before the invasion of their country. It nullifies Euro-Americans' claim of discovering America. Native American historians pen down harsh realities about the greed and cruelty of Euro-Americans. They claim that the hospitality and polite nature of Native Americans encouraged Euro-Americans to invade their places. They warmly welcomed Euro-Americans that gave them the reason to invade their territories. De Brown started his narration of the event of Christopher Columbus' invasion with the letter that Christopher wrote to the King and Queen of Spain. Columbus told them in the letter that they were very generous people and they had the custom to receive the strangers in a very good manner. They treated him and his men with honor and presented them the gifts that showed their hospitality. He named them as Indios which was spoken differently in different dialects spoken by white men. They were pronounced differently in different dialects like, Indien, Indianer or Indian. He wrote in his letter the qualities of the people of New World and their difference from white ways of life.

So traceable and peaceable are these people . . . that I swear to your Majesties there is not in the world a better nation. They love their neighbors as themselves, and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle . . . it is true that they are naked, yet their manners are decorous and praiseworthy (1).

He writes that their good qualities were taken as their weakness and Europeans were convinced that they should be made to work and they should be taught to adopt their ways. The next four centuries from 1492-1890 several million Europeans tried hard to impose their ways of living on the people of New World. "Columbus kidnapped ten of his friendly Taino hosts and carried them off to Spain, where they could be introduced to the white man's ways" (2). They baptized them and one of them died. The Tainos and other people from that island did not resist conversion to

European religion but they could not remain silent when these Europeans started to explore precious stones and gold on their island.

The Spaniards looted and burned villages, they kidnapped hundreds of men, women and children and shipped them to Europe to be sold as slaves . . . whole tribes were destroyed, hundreds of thousands of people in less than a decade after Columbus set foot on the beach of San Salvador, October 12, 1492 (2).

Jace Weaver is a Native American writer. He states that so called conquest of Euro-Americans, American discovery by Christopher Columbus, their claim about lost tribes of American Indians and the way they have defined the identity of American Indians as nomadic savages are all myths created by Euro-Americans and the motive behind such concocted stories is to eliminate them from the world of powerful people. March 1493 is a very significant day in the history of Americans as Christopher Columbus reached back to Spain with the captives who appeared to be human but they were not among those Euro-Americans. It was very difficult to believe that these people belonged to Americas. As Bible clearly mentions three continents Europe, Africa, Asia and all these continents are populated with three sons of Noah after flood. Initially, they believed that these dark skinned people are lost tribes of Israel but later, in 1512, Pope Julius II declared that they were the descendants of Adam and Eve. Weaver further writes that the myth of conquest by Euro-Americans clearly depicts their psyche and law to rule the world. The reality was totally different from the picture presented to the world. America was a populated place where many tribes of Native Americans used to reside. Weaver seconds the study of American historian Francis Jennings, who has deconstructed the truth behind the discovery of America. He confirms that America was a populated place where many tribes of Native Americans lived.

The American Land was more like a widow than a virgin. Europeans did not find a wilderness here; rather . . . they made one. . . . The so-called settlement of America was a resettlement, a reoccupation of

a land made waste by the diseases and demoralization introduced by the newcomers (qtd. in *Other Words* 19).

Weaver proclaims in the above lines that America was projected to be a virgin place by Euro-Americans that was discovered by Columbus where there were some savages roaming around as they were lost and could not find their way. The reality is totally different because America was not a virgin place as Native Americans had already been living there. The place turned as a widow because Euro-Americans created wilderness here and misrepresented the place and the people. So, in reality it was not a settlement, but a resettlement of Euro- Americans. He further says that the myth of discovery by Euro- Americans never conveyed the real story behind this discovery because they have omitted the facts of slaughtering Native Americans. He quotes Terry Goldie who supports Jennings stance and claims that Euro-Americans killed indigenous people just to tell the world their story of discovery and it was a strategy to be on the safe side because they killed most of the indigenous people and there were just a few number of people who survived could not raise their voice against the power which was also greater in number. Therefore, the extinction of indigenous people was used as a camouflage to hide the truth about Natives' authentic claims about their history (qtd. in *Other Words* 18-19).

2.6.2 Discovery/ Conquest and the Treaty Making

Native Americans contest the claim of discovery and conquest of America by Euro-Americans. According to Native Americans, they were natives to America and they were legitimate owners of their lands so they were not discovered. They are also reluctant to admit the conquest of America by Euro-Americans because they claim to be peaceful people. They did not fight any war against Euro-Americans in response to their invasion. When there was no war between Native Americans and Euro-Americans, logically there could not be any conquest. Vine Deloria Jr. and Clifford M. Lytle trace out American Indians' historical perspective in the book *American Indians, American Justice*. They have differentiated the

discovery of America from other discoveries and conquests in the history of the world. They are of the view that during the course of history, different countries had adopted different fashion of dealing with the people as a result of discovery and conquest. The defeated people could be treated as slaves by the conquerors. They could also be banished from their lands to some other lands. They could also be forced to imbue themselves with the cultural colors of the societies of the conquerors. The human history carries many stories of conquests and discoveries but “the discovery of America was different” (2). In their book, they have quoted Felix Cohen, who has highlighted religious concern of the emperor of Spain at the time. The emperor of Spain wanted to make sure that country had followed the dictations of religion very strictly. He sought the advice of a prominent theologian Francisco de Victoria. He asked: “Should Spain claim the rights to the New World as per the teachings of the religion or not?” Victoria concluded that Natives were the true owners of their lands and thus no one else could claim the title through any kind of discovery. She told the monarch that there were certain conditions required to be met for claiming the title through an act of discovery. If the land had been ownerless, they could claim discovery but since the land was owned by Natives their claim would lose legitimacy. According to theological precision, waging war on Natives could serve their cause of acquiring the continent. The other way to justify their claim to the land could be if the Natives voluntarily handed over their lands to the emperor of Spain. There was also a hurdle in waging war against Indians as they respected natural rights of the Spaniards and they let them travel and trade in their lands so there was no reason for waging the war. Consequently, “they could not claim any rights by conquest” (qtd. in *American Indians, American Justice* 3).

They further state that Europeans adopted much, but certainly not all, of Victoria’s philosophy. The Indian tribes of North America were considered capable to deal with the treaties by the European nations. “Treaty making was a feasible method of gaining a foothold on the

continent without alarming the natives”(3). It brought civility and legitimacy to the white settlers’ to establish their terms with Natives. It was a good strategy to avoid retaliation by the tribes. They purchased Indian lands and the right to settle in the certain areas at formal treaty sessions. Treaty making became the most important strategy to establish political relationships between Europeans and Natives. Then the young colonies became the United States, the treaty making strategy was assumed by Americans. The reasons behind treaty making was not just to establish good relationship with Natives but there was a hidden motive to transfer the ownership of the lands from the tribes to the United States.

In 1778 the United States government entered into the first treaty with the Indians- the Delaware tribe. In the course of the next century over six hundred treaties and agreements were made with the tribes and the nations of North America (3-4).

In 1823, U.S Chief Justice John Marshall adopted and amended Victoria’s theory with major amendments for the domestic law of United States. He declared “Indian nations as domestic dependent nations” (4). Natives could not understand the complexity of Marshall’s revisions and there was no international forum that Natives knew to object the amendments in property rights. It raised frequent conflicts between the U.S government and Natives. The government of United States realized in the initial wars with Natives that fighting with natives was very expensive. So, they planned to prolong the wars and conflicts by more treaties. Indians had major disadvantages of signing the treaties as the documents were written in English language and Native didn’t know that language. The interpreters were also given high stakes in successful outcome of proceedings, therefore, they were not told the truth during the sessions. The senate also amended the treaties completely. Natives had a clear disadvantage of signing the treaties because they were deceived by the government. Then there was a long process of assimilation and relocation and both were undesirable by Natives. Dee Brown has also highlighted the deceits of United States

government. He has quoted Red Cloud who was the chief of Oglala Sioux. De Brown shares the gist of the invasion by Euro-Americans of Native lands in the last chapter of his book. He presents Native American version of history articulated by Red Cloud in the following sentence: “They made us many promises, more than I can remember, but they never kept but one; they promised to take our land, and they took it” (449). American Indians fought many wars against the United States government to gain their land back. An unfortunate incident happened in the process of relocation in the history of Native American known as the Wounded Knee Massacre.

2.6.3 The Wounded Knee Massacre

The Wounded Knee Massacre happened because of Euro-American insecurities about American Indians and their lands. They were well aware of the fact that they had invaded Natives’ places and Native Americans could act in response to get back their lands. The ill-fated incident happened because the U.S army wanted to disarm Native Americans. One of them resisted surrendering his weapon and it became the reason for hundreds of deaths of Native Americans. Dee Brown recounts all the battles that were fought between Euro Americas and Native Americans. The last chapter of the book traces one of the unfortunate incidents in the history of Native Americans that is remembered as the Wounded Knee Massacre. Major Samuel Whitside had orders to arrest Big Foot (the Sioux Chief) and take him to Wounded Knee Creek. Big Foot was suffering from pneumonia at the time. He agreed to go with him as he had already planned to protect his people and took them to Red Cloud at Pine Ridge. De Brown quoted Red Cloud’s words on the massacre in this manner: “There was no hope on the earth, and God seemed to have forgotten us” (439). Big Foot and his followers camped near Wounded Knee Creek. Their camp was surrounded by the U.S troops. In the morning, Colonel Forsyth told American Indians to get disarmed. They all surrendered their weapons but the soldier chief doubted that there were still some more weapons with them. So, they sent their troops in the tepees to search for the weapons. The soldier chief

ordered them to remove the blankets for more detailed search for the weapons but Black Coyote resisted and shouted that he had paid for the rifle and that rifle belonged to him. He was reluctant to give his rifle to the troops. Turning Hawk was an eyewitness who told that “Black Coyote fired his gun and immediately the soldiers returned fire and indiscriminate killing followed” (444). In few seconds, the air was full of powder smoke of fires and hundreds of men, women and children were killed. “Among the dying who lay sprawled on the frozen ground was Big Foot” (444). Louise Weasel Bear, yet another eyewitness, reported that “They shot us like we were a buffalo . . . the soldiers must be mean to shoot children and women. Indian soldiers would not do that to white children” (444). Dee Brown states brutal killing in the following manner:

When the madness ended, Big Foot and more than half of his people were dead or seriously wounded; 153 were known dead, but many of wounded crawled away to die afterward. One estimate placed the final total of dead at very nearly three hundred of the original 350 men, women and children (444).

2.6.4 Euro-Americans and Their Struggle for Power

Euro-Americans have always tried to suppress and misrepresent American Indians. They have always promoted stereotypical images of American Indians that make them savage and brutal. misrepresentation is the tool of Euro-Americans to suppress American Indians by declaring them inferior and primitive beings. There is logical relation between the projection of American Indians as inferior, primitive and brutal beings and Euro-Americans’ lust of power and material things. Euro-Americans know that they have invaded American Indian territory but they want to convey to the world that they have discovered it or at times they pitch the discourse of conquering it. The promotion of knowledge-based lies and misrepresentation makes Euro-Americans the legitimate ruler of America and their lands. The historical account of Native Americans is different from

Euro-Americans' version of history. They have narrated another story which has been silenced by Euro-Americans. Native American stories about past events are based on Euro-American slyness, brutality and lust for power. Their version of history conveys the message that the brutality is character trait of Euro-Americans that has been wrongly associated with American Indians. American Indians have always been a challenge to Euro-Americans. The most important problem for Euro-Americans was the settlement of American Indians onto reservations. Native Americans used to be owners of their lands, thus, it was not an easy task to convince them to leave their legal lands and move to the reservations. Paul Francis Prucha is an American historian who argues that one permanent issue for the United States since two centuries of its existence was to place American Indians in American Society because they were not in minority and they claimed the whole land in which they had been living unlike minorities who came to get settled in the New World. They claimed the lands in which they had been living since their own migration from Asia.

They laid claim to the land of the entire continent, which they had inhabited since their own migrations from Asia twenty-five to forty thousand years ago. By the time Europeans came to settle permanently in the New World, the Indians had developed a remarkable diversity of languages, political organizations, and other cultural patterns, but the European invaders lumped them all together as 'Indians' and then devised political, economic, and often military arrangements for intercultural contacts (1).

He further states that the result of United States' existence after two centuries was that they replaced American Indians on the whole continent and they transferred the ownership of the lands of American Indians to Euro-Americans. Then they tried to suppress them by creating the stories. "The story was about a conquistador mentality that sought to eliminate Indians physically in order to fulfill covetous desires of Euro-Americans for Indian lands" (2).

A scholar of the early national period has written: Jacksonian Indian policy was a blending of hypocrisy, can't, and rapaciousness, seemingly shot through with inconsistencies. Inconsistencies however are present only if the language of the presidential papers is taken seriously. In removing the Indians, this historian says, the federal government had to display tact, cunning, guile, cajolery, and more than a hint of coercion (3).

Prucha, then argues that some practitioners of Psychohistory have tried to relate this invasion by Euro-Americans to other psychoanalytical theories, especially to Freudian theory. He terms America a young and growing country to emphasize the claim of American Indians to be the original people whose lands were snatched from them by the invaders. He intensifies the brutality of Euro-Americans by relating them to animals that kill and eat weak animals to live their lives. He uses very harsh language to narrate the story of the invaders and their false claim about the lands.

The rhetoric of Manifest Destiny pictures America a young and growing country; it expanded through swallowing territory, just as an animal eats to grow. Savagery would inevitably be swallowed by civilization. Whites imaginatively regressed, as they described expansion, to fantasies of infant omnipotence. They entertained the most primitive form of object relations, the annihilation of the object through oral introjections. In this view, whites infantilized Indians in order to regain parental authority (4).

2.7 Native Americans' Standpoint on Euro-American Myth of Scientific Facts

Native Americans contest the authenticity of the scientific knowledge of Euro-Americans. They opine that science is not about divine knowledge. It is also based on certain principles which are formulated by human beings. They contest the legitimacy of scientific knowledge, saying that scientific principles are established by the people who are at the helm of the institutes of scientific study. On the one hand, these people use their

power to promote certain type of scientific knowledge and research, but on the other hand they leave no stone unturned to undermine the scientific research conducted by their adversaries. Such kind of approach on their part questions the legitimacy of scientific knowledge and research. Vine Deloria, Jr. argues about the authenticity of scientific knowledge. He claims that all the scientific knowledge is based on opinions of the “scholars and scientists who occupy the prestige chairs at Ivy League and large universities or even dead personalities of the past” (*Red Earth White Lies* 28). He is of the opinion that the scientists are notorious to obey the consensus opinions of their profession. They work very hard by publishing the articles to reinforce the study of the scientists who occupy the dominant positions within the hierarchy of their profession. Many important subjects remain prohibited because they do not confirm the long standing beliefs. Nothing could be published without the consent of the prestigious personalities. He claims that journals do not represent human or scientific knowledge but they promote the information which reflects the opinions or research of the people who claim to be the custodian of the world of intellect. He contests the authenticity of scientific knowledge by establishing that the readers rarely get a chance to read newspaper accounts introducing new theories but they are always heavy with the same repeated phrases which are agreed upon by most of scientists (*Red Earth White Lies* 29).

He draws a comparison between the scientific knowledge of West and the scientific knowledge of Non-West. He establishes that the “Non-Western, tribal equivalence of science is the oral tradition, the tradition that has been passed down from generation to the next over uncounted centuries” (*Red Earth White Lies* 36). According to the scientific knowledge of Non-West (tribal people), the physical world contains the facts that have been directly experienced by the people in the historical journey of events. He also draws a comparison between the Old Testament and the oral tradition, saying that “ the Old Testament was once an oral tradition until it

was written down” (*Red Earth White Lies* 36). He states that in larger American Indian communities, the function of scientists has been performed by tribal elders. “There is no one person who could remember all the information about the trivial past, the religious revelations and the complex knowledge of physical world” (*Red Earth White Lies* 33). They ask the people to carry on the specialization of different beliefs on the basis of vision quest and once they are done with their specialization, they are called to perform the ceremonies gathering their communities to share their information. “The difference between non-western and Western knowledge is that the knowledge is personal for non-Western and impersonal for Western scientist” (*Red Earth White Lies* 33).

American Indians believe that their tribal knowledge is more authentic and superior to the scientific knowledge of Euro-Americans because tribal knowledge is based on morality and respect for the physical world. Vine Deloria claims that American Indians believe that everything that exists in the universe is alive including the universe itself. So, they all should be treated well. He states that the knowledge of American Indians regarding the universe being alive “is as useful as anything that Western science has discovered or hypothesized. When understood and made operative by serious and sensitive individuals, it is as reliable a means of making predictions as anything suggested by mathematical formulas” (*Spirit and Reason* 50). He takes the knowledge of American Indians superior and more authentic than Western study on the basis of morality which is the focus of Native American study of physical world. “The Indian knowledge has an edge over Western scientific knowledge. A truly wise person can appear to cause the things to happen because the person can participate in emerging event in a way that rarely occurs in Western science” (*Spirit and Reason* 50).

Vine Deloria Jr. points out the limitations of scientific knowledge regarding the interpretation of the doctrine of evolution in its true sense. He states that Western science seems to be preoccupied with the theory of

evolution and it talks about the changes in plants, animals, birds and human beings. The theory declares that the changes occurred due to time and environmental are responsible for the evolution; in essence, it has failed to trace out the causes. It believes that the changes are permanent without knowing the mechanism. He contrasts American Indians' spiritual knowledge with scientific knowledge and asserts that the important thing in evolution is the spirit of the creature. "It can and does change aspects of its physical change but basically it remains the same entity" (*Spirit and Reason* 58).

Vine Deloria, Jr. states that each body of knowledge has moral framework of understanding. He opines that American Indians are aware of their limitations and they act with humility in sharing their knowledge. The morality is very important element of their study of physical world. He claims that American Indians are not ignorant of the principles of physical world as they have also studied it in detail. "We are in the truest sense possible, creators or co-creators with the higher powers, and what we do, has immediate importance to the rest of the world" (*Spirit and Reason* 47). He writes that American Indians take all forms of life (creatures and objects of nature) as their brother and they consider themselves the younger brother of all life-forms. They learn from nature and other creatures.

SECTION III

2.8 Literary Deconstruction of History and Grand Narratives

American Indian fiction writers have made an effort to deconstruct American Indian identity misrepresented by Euro-Americans. They have ruined Native Americans' identity by attaching stereotypical tags. Gerald Vizenor is one of the Native American writers who strongly rejects the term Indian. He believes that Indian is the invention of Euro-Americans to behave in static and fixed manners. Kimberly M. Blaeser writes in her essay

Gerald Vizenor: Postindian Liberation that Vizenor is the most prolific and versatile contemporary American Indian writer who has devoted his whole life to deconstruct the term Indian and to redefine it as postindian. His political pose during the American Indian Movement (AIM) was Invented Indian. He published a collection of fiction and non-fiction pieces under the title *Word Arrows: Indians and Whites in the New Fur Trade*. He worked for the true identity of American Indians and this effort turned into cultural word war for American Indians and Euro-Americans. In his collection, he writes: “Language determines culture and dimensions of consciousness” (qtd. in *The Cambridge Companion* 261). Blaeser asserts that Vizenor takes his characters from tribal history, contemporary situation and his personal experiences with some people and he uses many sources for his stories like history, myth, personal experience, current situation and above all he adds his imaginations to all these sources. In the acknowledgement of *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart*, he says: “Real people with fictional names and fictional characters with real names” (qtd. in *The Cambridge Companion* 262). He constructs a very complicated relation of his characters within and between his novels and his characters reappear in his other novels as well to reinforce his theme of community system and tribal unity. In this way he also reinforces his postindian characters. Scholar Alan Velie in his *Four American Literary Masters* writes about the style of Vizenor to redefine American Indian identity that “the same characters scuttle in and out” (qtd. in *The Cambridge Companion* 262).

Blaeser argues in her essay that Vizenor has presented his stories by mixing tribal myth with contemporary politics for raising the slogan of survival and liberation. Vizenor’s *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* is a great effort towards the deconstruction of American Indian stereotypical identity. He focuses on terminal creed that is static belief that prevents life and prescribed identity. “Ultimately, the terminal creeds of the characters in the novel lead to their deaths and only those who relinquish word poisons wend their way to the fourth world, to symbolic liberation and survival”

(263). Blaeser is of the opinion that Vizenor believes that terminal creed is responsible for the deaths and destructions of fictional characters of his novel. Terminal creed of the characters leads them to death while those who mend their ways, reject imposed identities and struggle in their life enter the fourth world. The new life of these characters symbolizes liberation and survival; these two things were not easy to achieve. These characters worked hard and refused to accept their forced identity and liberated themselves from stereotypical identities and by doing this they survived. Blaeser writes that “the plot of Vizenor’s *Bearheart* is episodic, secondary to the ideas and the perspective is distinctly postmodern” (263).

Blaeser proclaims that Vizenor presents new ideas and new ways of living of American Indians. He denies accepting their stereotypical image by assigning them new identities. Blending myth with reality about contemporary politics makes his works postmodern. Blaeser has pointed out that Vizenor’s fiction is postmodern but she has not pointed out specific features of postmodern theory traced in his fiction. Vizenor’s fiction can be studied to show how he has mixed myth (imagination) and reality in his fiction. It raises a question mark in the minds of readers whether the incident is real or a creation of Vizenor. This liberty of mixing fiction and reality helps him to shape new Native American identities of his characters. He has deconstructed identity of his characters under the cover of fiction very successfully. He has portrayed his characters very powerful, unlike the stereotypical image of American Indians. He has used his fiction as a tool to improve the tarnished image of American Indians and to give them new identities for their ultimate survival and liberation.

Blaeser admires Vizenor’s works for deconstructing American Indian identity. He has introduced in his book *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* Bioavaricious Regional Word Hospital. This is a government funded hospital where scientists are tasked with fixing the language and freezing the meanings of the words to prevent language play in the future. Louis Owens writes: “In such a hospital, the life of language is consumed

and destroyed” (*Other Destines* 237) Blaeser states that Vizenor’s language reshapes American Indians’ identity. He uses language to change fixed meanings and to shake thinking of his readers on preconceived notions about American Indian identities. He has coined many words and phrases to intensify new perspective about American Indians like postindian, cinema and survivance. She gives another example from Vizenor’s *Earthdivers*. “He employs earth diver myth in the collection, but gives it a Vizenor twist suggesting the new earth divers are ‘mixedbloods’ and ‘tribal tricksters’ who ‘dive into unknown urban places’ in order to build a ‘ new urban turtle island’ ”(264).

Blaeser states that Vizenor’s *The Heirs of Columbus* presents a challenging history and alternate scenarios about Columbus’ religion, actions and lineage. He claims that Columbus is Mayan descendant who brought civilization to the Old World. He also claims that Columbus’ discovery of America was not a misguided journey but it was a return to his homeland. Vizenor’s stories revolve around the borders of fiction and reality to blur these borders. His stories not only question the truth about history but also present the motives behind those historical events. He focuses on cultural and personal survival that is both symbolic and actual. He believes that identities and meanings are confined and they can only be liberated by language and literature. He debates that the survival of postindian is in the liberation of language from its colonial influence (267).

Blaeser has pointed out that Vizenor has presented alternative scenario about the American discovery but she has not discussed how he has coined the term postindian by deconstructing the term Indian. She could have presented a detailed analysis on the deconstruction of Native American identity and history because Vizenor has not only deconstructed American Indian identity to give it a different meaning but he also has deconstructed American Indian silenced and marginalized history in his fiction to give Native Americas’ perspective on these issues. He has presented American Indians’ perspective on history in his fiction that is a great contribution

towards the promotion of American Indian truth about history knitted in fiction. He also addresses Columbus's discovery of America in his fiction. His revised version of Columbus' discovery is different from mainstream history of Euro-Americans. Blaeser's argument can be improved by connecting it to Huchean's theory of historiographic metafiction that blurs the boundary of fiction and history. There can be another argument of Blaeser's study to highlight Lyotard's postmodern perspective on the subversion of grand narratives to show how Vizenor has deconstructed stereotypical image of Native Americans (grand narrative) to present their true identity as postindians (mini narrative) in his fiction.

2.9 The Ultimate Truth: A Myth in the Postmodern World

Postmodernists believe that reality about events is subject to discussion as there are no fixed meanings in the world. The reality about certain events and meanings of things is invariably different with different people. People interpret the given knowledge according to their comprehension and this is because of the limitation of human knowledge. McPherson and Rabb call Natives' theology polycentric as it has a diverse culture. They explain it in a very different way. According to them, human knowledge and understanding of things is quite finite and limited. We cannot understand all the truth and philosophy of metaphysical affairs. It does not mean that philosophical system is not based on truth but the thing to be noted here is the limitation of human understanding. Human beings cannot have a perspective that is completely based on truth because there are always some flaws in understanding these metaphysical affairs. Every culture has different worldviews and different metaphysical systems and this property of difference provides human beings with a chance to make a complete picture of any phenomenon or metaphysical system (qtd. in *Other Words* 36).

In his research paper, Gerald Vizenor argues that there are no final and last words, no closure in tribal stories and there is no concept of terminal creeds to fix the meanings of things. Tricksters are also used in his work to

represent the language that is not fixed. If tricksters signify the language that is not fixed then the tribal stories can also have no fixed meaning and ultimate end. Vizenor's point relates to postmodernists' belief; there is no ultimate truth about knowledge in the universe. Vizenor confronts Columbus' discovery and Euro-Americans' habit of creating stereotypes of Native Americans. His claim that tribal stories have no closure also relates to postmodernism because meanings have always been fluid.

He writes about the historical event of this so-called discovery of America by Euro-Americans. He argues that Christopher Columbus has been given a great place in European history because of his mistaken discoveries. He discovered America and the people already living there and thought their nicknames to be their real names. Vizenor states that the way Columbus' discovery was a mistake because it was not at all a discovery and same was the case with his comprehension with the names of American Indians. The names of American Indians that he thought to be real were also not real. Columbus's attitude represents a clear denial of tribal identity and tribal consciousness. The same has been done to the tribal stories which have not been listened to carefully. They were heard just once and then they were interpreted, revised, and in the process of interpretations and revision, they were finally abused in the name of discovery. Tribal nicknames were taken as surnames and in this mistake the real stories attached to them were also lost and this was a literal exile. He then gives an example of distorted name Ishi. It was a new nickname given to a tribal man but he had not heard this name earlier in tribal stories. It was the word from Yana language and meant one of the people. It does not make any sense about the reason for giving this nickname but later Alfred Kroeber, an anthropologist, suggested that this was significant as this nickname would have been given to the tribal man at the museum. He was given a lot of respect by the people who discovered him because they took him as the last man of his tribe. He states: "An awesome representation of survivance in a new nickname. His natural

mountain man had evaded the barbarians and then endured with humor the museums of a lonesome civilization” (“Manifest Manners” 225).

Vizenor opines that Euro-Americans’ claim of discovery is unjustified and they have made a false representation of American Indians. He quotes Rennard Strickland, a legal historian of Osage and Cherokee heritage, and writes that “the process by which the Indian became landless is part of the dark chapter in white Oklahoma's relations with its Indian citizens” (qtd. in “Manifest Manners” 232). He narrates that millions of acres of lands were taken from American Indians by fraudulent deeds. He further writes that Christopher Columbus has given a new heritage to his newly discovered place and he insists on his discovery because many of his habits and attitudes are found in Euro-Americans who are associated with the white civilization. The misrepresentations of American Indians have no historical truth in them and these misrepresentations bear the burden of sins (“Manifest Manners” 233).

In an article, Sharon M. Bailey also shares the same viewpoint. He states that Thomas King has used oral tradition to disable written authority. King’s fictional characters and Coyote work on the basic assumption that oral text can convey the true reality that written text is unable to represent (46). Each time a written text is represented orally in the novel, its meaning is shown to be different from what was supposedly intended. By placing a cleft between the written text and its historical meaning, the text becomes, so to speak, arbitrary (46). Bailey asserts that King has subverted the authenticity of the most sacred written document of western civilization. “The Bible is the first written text whose authority is sabotaged” (46). He views King’s *Green Grass, Running Water* as a serious attack on Christianity and its belief systems. He supports his argument with King’s creation story, where G O D is released from one of the dreams of Coyote. At the start of the novel, he states that even the authority of the most sacred book has been transformed into a joke when “Coyote grants the dream the name Dog” (46). Bailey believes that King’s challenge to the authenticity

of Bible removes the sacred book from the position of ultimate truth. “In Christian doctrine, the primacy of God is the foundation of the belief system. By placing the creation of God after the creation of Coyote, the narrator has already displaced Christianity from its position of Ultimate Truth” (46).

Bailey’s attack on written authority of Euro-American is significant because the purpose of this confrontation is twofold. Firstly, she has rejected the authenticity of Euro-Americans’ written documents. Secondly, she has placed Native American tradition of story-telling as authentic and true account of history. Bailey has not pointed out in the article that this is in fact the subversion of grand narrative where the grand narrative of Bible is replaced with mini narrative of Native American oral tradition. Lyotard points out that there is no ultimate truth in the postmodern world. Different people interpret the same event differently. Her argument about Bible is innovative as she has written that King has challenged the authenticity of Bible that removes the sacred book from the position of ultimate truth. It is in fact, the promotion of a mini narrative in King’s fiction. In *Green Grass, Running Water*, Thomas King has created mythical stories in his fiction that focus on American Indian religions, American Indian culture and American Indian perspective on truth. He has highlighted that there is no authentic truth even in the most authentic document in western culture. He has presented Biblical stories in comical way to remove them from authenticity.

John Zerzan writes in his book that previously, people were not aware of the fact that there could be a sense of domination among the civilizations but later they knew exactly about the domination structure. He argues that John Fowlett and Thomas Wynn have the opinion that the people in the past also had the same intelligence level and this argument dismissed the false belief that years back, people were ignorant and unintelligent. This perspective introduced a new way to look back and study origin (2). He further writes that a trickster is the oldest figure in all the mythologies and Native American stories. Zerzan asserts that in the basic Native stories,

tricksters served the purpose of early gods and these gods were not afraid of chaos rather they fixed the earth. These stories have a specific purpose and that is to tell the origin of the universe. Coyote, a trickster in Native American stories, serves the purpose to tell local origins. It encourages local people to explore their true heritage. “The Trickster would return to make the happy world that once was” (130). Trickster is presented in different forms in different stories. As Zerzan notes:

A trickster may seem to be animal, human, animal-human, even a shaman's invaluable assistant. Generally disrupting and subverting social and cultural norms, but often with compassion and humor, illustrating the fact that laughter can open doors and allow us to see reality differently (131).

Tricksters do not follow any limitations and they are not time bound. They can easily move from modern time to mythical time and from mythical time to modern time. American Indians have also shifted to cities and therefore tricksters in their stories are also shown to be city dwellers to signify adaptive skills of American Indians. These tricksters are clever, firm and mysterious, symbolically relating these character traits to American Indians in general. Postmodernism allows seeing all the creation stories to look in more general sense and it allows accepting depthless realities of mass society. His mention of Bioavaricious Word Hospital is very ironic because in this hospital, the government tries to fix the meanings of the words. According to Vizenor, there cannot be the fixed meanings of the things. He relates trickster to the use of language that has no fixed meaning and that keeps on changing. Vizenor's tricksters have no fixed identity they keep on transforming from animal to human and from human to animal or animal-human. He uses word game and this word game is basically trickster that has no fixed meaning and that keeps on changing. Vizenor like postmodernists strongly rejects fixed meanings and terminal creed. Terminal creeds were created in Bioavaricious Word Hospital to give fixed meanings to words (128-135).

Zerzan's discussion on Vizenor's fiction is about postmodernism but with a limitation of specification. He asserts that postmodern writing is not the place to look for meaning or truth. He has not discussed specific issues of postmodern fiction. He has generally discussed that Vizenor's fiction rejects ultimate meanings. Vizenor's novel *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* conveys that there is no fixed reality. Vizenor's fiction traces a process of undermining, subverting, and exploding almost all parts of Native identity in the form of their origin and history. The belief that Native American tricksters can make the world happy again is also important because it relates to Native American perspective on history. In their history books, they have written that they had been living in harmony with the earth before Euro-Americans invaded their lands. Thomas King has also highlighted the same conception in his *Green Grass, Running Water*. His fictional tricksters are shown to work hard to create balance on the earth after the chaos created by Euro-Americans. This is a fictionalized deconstruction of history and grand narratives that these writers have conveyed to the readers to introduce a counter point of Euro-American documented history and grand narratives.

2.10 Misrepresentation of Native Americans by Euro-Americans

In his book, Paul Francis Prucha argues that all human beings are created equally and they all belong to Adam and Eve then the superiority complex of Euro-Americans is not justified. He quotes Thomas Jafferrson for this argument, "I believe the Indian then to be in body and mind equal to the white man" (qtd. in *The Indians in American Society* 6). Prucha states that American Indians have always been considered inferior to Euro-Americans on the basis of misrepresentation. It is strongly believed that their culture is inferior to Euro-Americans and they have expanded this difference of their cultural superiority at different levels.

They saw cultures with primitive technologies, engaged in some limited agriculture yet dependent to a large extent upon hunting and gathering for

food and apparel. It was common for white Americans to refer to Indian communities as hunter societies as opposed to white societies engaged in agriculture and domestic industries (8).

They have made progress in agriculture and technology so it makes them confident to term American Indians as hunters. Euro-Americans then judge American Indian on the basis of language. They draw a comparison between their language and the language of preliterate American Indians who did not have written language and again they term American Indian language to be worthless. They do not stop here, Prucha writes,

They saw the increasing dependence of the Indians upon trade for the goods they had come to rely upon—guns and ammunition, kettles, knives, and other metal implements, and woven cloth—and they saw their own rapidly multiplying population overwhelming the static or declining numbers of the Indian tribes (9).

Prucha highlights different levels on which Euro-Americans have termed Native Americans primitive people, savages and warriors. Prucha's interpretation of Euro-American way to see Native Americans depicts that everything that Native Americans do is seen in a negative light by Euro-Americans. This is ironic that Euro-Americans are responsible for the decline in Native population and they take it too as an inferiority of Native Americans.

Euro-Americans have also misrepresented American Indians by attaching negative connotation to mixed-bloods. They take mixed-blood Indians as the people who have lost their true identity, ancestry and culture. Jace Weaver states that Vizenor believes that oral tradition and postmodernism are strongly connected with each other. Postmodernism provides American Indians with a chance to challenge the fixed authority which defines the identities on personal, racial or national level. Mixed-blood Indians remind the world of the history of American Indians. Euro-Americans represented these mixed-bloods with a negative view as they

made them a symbol for tragic loss of Indianness but postmodern ideas give a bright chance to reinvent identities. “On the other hand this itself can be seen as imposing universalist values, as downplaying Indian specificity and cultural uniqueness, and insisting on white centrality and authority (bad thing)”. (*The Cambridge Companion* 81).

Jace Weaver argues that the characters of Vizenor’s fiction are mostly crossblood who dwell in cities and suffer identity crisis and try to recover their true identity. He believes that white-stream has full control over the present and the future of American Indians. Still they have great urge to rewrite their past as well. He makes satirical comments on Euro-Americans that they are in the habit of defining American Indians and one who does not fulfill the criteria to be Indian is not at all Indian because they have set the criteria for them. They have invented Indians and thus they have the right to decide whether someone is Indian or not.

In cities, Natives are forced to become the invented Indians of popular imagination, wearing long hair, beads, plastic ornaments, and imported leather. And not to play the invention game is to become utterly invisible. Yet even in such a place, Vizenor sees possibilities (*Other Words* 58).

The significant thing is that even in such circumstances there are exceptions where American Indians also play the game of invention and they try to reconstruct their identities. Weaver states that Vizenor’s works contain truth and this truth transcends mere facts about the events. “A character, in one of his stories states, ‘in a world of lies, the best deception is the truth’” (*Other Words* 58).

Weaver’s study shows that Euro-American have always given unfaithful and false representation of Native Americans by defining the term Indian. Many Native American writers contest this term because they are of the opinion that Indians are inventions of Euro-Americans. For Native Americans, Indian does not exist as it is just the invention of Euro-Americans to suppress them and prove them to be primitive and inferior.

Native American fiction writers have started resisting against such inventions because they take their difference from Euro-American as their strength. They do not acknowledge universalism and they have started to highlight their difference from Euro-Americans to show their complex cultural and religious values. Fictional characters of Native American writers are not stock characters. They do not behave in stereotypical way which has been promoted by Euro-Americans.

2.11 Centering Marginalized Voices of Native Americans

Michael Hardin, in his research paper states that a few American Indian and Latin American writers have tried to construct a new response to the colonial victimization by giving their own perspective on the historical events. They have refused to be the victim of history anymore. These writers have challenged historical events by rewriting the events against hegemonic structure of the dominant culture. The history written by the United States and Western Europe has been constructed in a way to validate existing authority of Euro-Americans. Vizenor, in his novel, *The Heirs of Columbus*, breaks the myth created by Euro-Americans and announces Columbus to be of Mayan descent. He establishes a new perspective on the historic event of the discovery of America because he believes that American Indians should not accept being victims of Euro-American's false discovery. Hardin quotes an interview of Vizenor in which he states that the story of Columbus by Euro-Americans is not a good story in which they have victimized American Indians. Then he creates American Indian perspective of Columbus' story and makes it a good story (qtd in "The Trickster of History: *The Heirs of Columbus* and the Dehistoricization of Narrative" 26). Hardin further claims that when an individual is presented with a history by a dominant culture in which there is a lot of subjugation and repression, he has two options: either to start believing in that version of history or move beyond that conventional history and challenge that version of history. If one wants to escape the consequences

of conqueror's history, one must forget the history presented by conquerors because it is necessary to forget the history if one wants to challenge it (26).

Hardin's article reflects that American Indians have realized their responsibility to bring into the center the marginalized truth about their true identity. They have realized Euro-Americans' desire to dominate them. American Indians have started to de-center their history written by Euro-Americans in order to challenge their misrepresentations. They have found creative ways to negate whatever has been promoted about them by Euro-Americans to suppress them. They have not only rewritten their history in their non-fiction and history books but they also have used literature as a tool to convey their truth about history, culture, traditions and identity in order to refute Euro-Americans' version of history based on white domination and misrepresentations.

Andrew Widget writes in his book that *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*, *Bearheart* is marked by its bizarre violence: characters are strangled, castrated, poisoned, immolated, and torn limb from limb - - in many ways *Bearheart* fits the description of what Gerald Graff ('The Myth of the Postmodernist Breakthrough,' 1973) and others have called the 'postmodern novel': it refuses to take art seriously, attacks cultural pretensions, stretches language to its limits, departs from traditional realism, and employs ritual and visionary experience (*Dictionary* 549).

Widgets' understanding of Vizenor's novels shows that American Indian fiction writers have started to share their true culture and experience of life in their works. They have started to raise their voices against static character traits associated with them by Euro-Americans. They have a rich culture and civilization that has always been silenced by Euro-Americans. They have always shown an opposite picture of American Indians that represents what American Indians are not. American Indian fiction writers have started to challenge their misrepresentation to show their real identities.

In his research paper, Robbin Ridington writes that “the real deities, in King's story, are four female creators who have masked themselves with the names of White men from Western literary tradition. Each one of these White men is famous for having been paired with an aboriginal person” (*Dictionary* 351). Ridington’s article depicts that Native Americans have started to follow Euro-American tradition when they make an effort to take central place and give marginalized place to Euro-Americans. Thomas King is among those American Indian writers who have contributed much to centering marginalized voice of American Indians. His fictional characters are superior to Euro-Americans. His *Green Grass, Running Water* traces the events of four American Indian characters who keep on changing in the present-day story of the novel from American Indians elderly men to American Indian women in four creation stories by the writer. Ultimately, these women wear the masks of white men just before their imprisonment. He gives a central place to four American Indian female characters of his creation story and named them as First Woman, Changing Woman, Thought Woman and Old Woman. These women have been portrayed superior to four important prophets of Judo- Christianity. They are Adam, Noah, Gabriel and Jesus respectively. Ridington has missed an important discussion in his article that King’s *Green Grass, Running Water* is not only about centering marginalized voices of Native Americans but it is mainly about the subversion of grand narratives. King’s narration has not spared the grand narrative of Christianity in dealing with his subject of the subversion of metanarratives where he promotes mini narrative about religion of Euro-Americans in a comic way.

William Willard, in his research article, argues that invisible American Indian nations also have their living style and they possess a great civilization as well. He corrects the traditionally believed concept of minor literature and redefines it with a new concept. He defines minor literature as a literature that is produced by minority and it does not come from a minor language. It is the literature produced by a minor population with a

major language. It is literature of hidden nations in which they provide their readers with the true representation of their cultural histories. He writes that Gerald Vizenor is not happy with hegemonic versions of myths, legends or stories in which truth gets suppressed. Vizenor is quoted as saying:

Native American identities bear the tribal memories and solace of heard stories. The shadows of tribal names and stories are the ventures of landscapes, even in the distance of translation. Tribal imagination, experience, and remembrance are the real landscapes in the literature of this nation; discoveries and dominance are silence (qtd. in Willard 38).

He concludes his article with a positive note that at present, the majority of American Indians are urban people because they have left their reservations and they have acquired education. They have become postindians who have a strong chance to represent themselves and create their own stories of survivance with their own perspective. They can write about their old homelands, reservations, traditional historical places and their authentic stories of simulation. Willard's study shows that Euro-Americans have always misrepresented American Indians in their history and literature. They are misrepresented on the basis of stereotypes to project them inferior to Euro-Americans. The article highlights that Euro-Americans have promoted a narrative that American Indians are stoic and they are unchangeable but the characters of Vizenor are not Euro-American inventions. They are not stereotypical Indians but they are civilized and educated. Willard seems to have consensus on Vizenor's point of view as Vizenor personally believes that some upsetting is necessary in the creation of Native American fictional characters.

Jace Weaver states that *Green Grass, Running Water* is the most ambitious effort of Thomas King to rewrite historical event with American Indian perspective in a very bold manner. He has mixed satire, myth and magic in his story and the storyline moves smartly from Canada to Wounded Knee to Hollywood and then to a place beyond time. Fiction is

mingled with real historical events. Fictional characters are also mingled with historical characters. Weaver states in his book that “. . . these people are not dead. They are very much alive, and they are in positions of power” (*The People Might Live* 154). Weaver is right in saying that American Indians have not only started to work on centering their silenced or marginalized identities and culture but they also have put great effort to rewrite their history. They believe that Euro-Americans have written biased history about the origin of American Indians and about other past events which favor Euro-Americans. Apart from American Indian historians, American Indian fiction writers have also contributed to rewriting their history to bring into the center the silenced truth about the past. Native Americans have not only rewritten their history but they have started promoting their history in fictional works as well. Native American writers have given marginalized space to Euro-Americans and they have taken a central position. Weaver has pointed out that history and fiction are mingled in King’s fiction. He could have improved his argument by discussing that this hazy boundary of history and fiction is historiographic metafiction that allows authors to promote their perspective under the cover of fiction.

2.12 Reshaping the Native American Identity

In his research paper, Paul L. Tidwell states that the representation of American Indians and their history by Euro-Americans is tragic. He agrees with Cornel West by saying that the aim of philosophy should be to become the part of social movement and it should become the voice of the people who have been oppressed because it is the only way by which we can bring social change. He admits that it is not an easy task for the critics to write about Others and about the late past events of these Others. He states that it is really complicated but not impossible to reshape and redefine past events. He then gives the idea of reciprocity. He argues that it gives the space to understand the difference of some other perspectives of things and to correct previously acknowledged information. The important thing is to use this space correctly to make rest of the world understand about your

point of view about the things differently. This is the only way by which binary opposite relationships of West/Rest and Us/Them can be abolished. This power relationship between dominant and dominated forces the marginalized class to occupy the place of otherness (622).

Tidwell's article traces the role of power to understand the difference between the true American Indian identity and the misrepresented American Indian identity by Euro-Americans. This difference can be understood in the context of the relationship between dominant and dominated/ oppressor and oppressed. Power plays an important role in promoting certain knowledge. Euro-Americans had the power to spread their biased knowledge about American Indians. The oppressed and dominated American Indian nation has learnt the ways to reshape their identities by comparing their side of truth with the version of knowledge promoted by a dominant nation. In the context of his study, Native Americans dominated by the dominant Euro-Americans have to take a marginalized position in the world. He encourages critics to write back to colonial masters to reshape the identity of the Other.

In his research article, Devon A. Mihesuah states that American Indian stories are authentic. He argues that American Indians have very rich culture and history and they have a very strong sense of responsibility to remember those stories to convey them to the next generations. When they have a sense of responsibility to convey the stories to the next generations, they are expected to repeat the stories with original version and accuracy. These stories are very important for their survival and cultural identity. To them, it is not only the responsibility of the story teller to narrate the stories with accuracy but it is also the responsibility of the listener to listen to those stories carefully, to reproduce them in future (93). Mihesuah's opinion about tribal stories being authentic relate to Native American historians and fiction writers. They also share the same opinion about tribal stories. American Indians mainly rely on their tribal stories for their representation of culture, history and identity. Stories are important for them as they

consider them equal to written records. Their stories contain their historical truth and they take it as their responsibility to remember tribal/ancestral stories to narrate them to their next generations. American Indian fiction writers narrate these tribal stories in their works to reshape their identities and to promote their historical truth in the world. They seem very positive as they take traditions of writing American Indian stories, a step to open up new world of imagination.

In their research article, Pauline Turner Strong and Barrik Van Winkle write that some American Indian writers have decided to highlight and refigure the true American Indian identity and their emphasis is on these two aspects rather than on deconstruction and displacement of the very term 'mixed-blood'. They quote Krupat to support their argument because they feel it is racist to find out the true meaning of being a mixed blood. Memory in the blood has been criticized as absurdly racist in an influential volume of literary criticism by Euro-Americans. The focus of many American Indian writers remains on Indian blood instead of on mixed-blood because to them, the true identity of Indians is important and being mixed-blood does not matter. They give the example of Scott Momaday and Gerald Vizenor. The fiction of both writers represent the true American Indian identity and their writings clearly show that the focus remains on being Indian and memory in the blood rather than finding the identity being mixed-blood. Both writers seem to be preoccupied with the effort to redefine the true meaning of Indian blood. "Dismantling the intricate edifice of racism embodied in 'Indian blood' is not simply a matter of exposing its essentialism and discarding its associated policies, but a more delicate and complicated task: that is, acknowledging 'Indian blood'" (565). Pauline Turner Strong and Barrik Van Winkle's discussion on Native American identity shares the opinion of many Native American fiction writers. Native Americans have the realization of their unfaithful and dishonest representation by Euro-Americans and they have started to reshape their true identities. American Indian writers are of the opinion that Euro-

Americans have distorted the identities of American Indians who are mixed-blood. They believe that the promotion of American Indian identity being mixed blood is not justified because it silences all their positive character traits by only emphasizing on the distorted and misrepresented identities. American Indian writers have different stance on mixed-blood American Indians. They take it positively by focusing only on American Indian blood that is prestigious for them. They have taken American Indian blood as a symbol of respect and have promoted its silenced and unique qualities to reshape their identities.

Porter and Roemer are of the opinion that the twentieth century American Indian has now refused to vanish from the history of the world and has started to challenge the stereotypes associated with them that make them savage and unauthentic. Now, they claim to be authentic and civilized and have started to fight for their true identity (19). American Indian writers have started to promote their cultural history in writing. They claim to be a civilized nation by promoting their cultural and tribal history. They have used the language of dominant white (English language) to rewrite their history and to reshape their true identities. They have challenged white superiority and have established that there are always some facts that the powerful never talk about. The contemporary American Indian writers have started to create texts to delegitimize the influence of Euro-Americans.

In the introduction to his book, Roemer takes the start by writing that invisible, marginal, expected- these words trace the path of recognition for American Indian Literature. He further says no significant academic specialization was offered in American Indian literature before 1969. However, then anthropologists, historians and folklorists occupied the territory of American Indian country and they acknowledged the work of American Indian writers. It gave a way to the increase in visibility to this literature following the growth of criticism that is worthy of praise and recognition. When American Indian literature earned the fame, it was taught in class rooms and it was uploaded on internet as well. From here, American

Indian literature started to progress from invisible to marginal and then to expected. This is a step-by-step progress of this literature as it was totally invisible and unrecognized before 1969. When it was read by historians, anthropologists and folklorists, it was highly praised and they started to promote this literature and this effort gave it the status of marginal. So it was a step ahead of invisibility. It received a lot appreciation from critics and achieved the status of the expected literature. Expected has been used by the writer as the substitute for the required literature to leave the readers with their own choice of interpretation. It seems that the choice of words is also important as the writer has followed the tradition of postmodernism and of American Indian writers who chose to take human beings free to interpret the meaning. The expected literature can also be the most wanted, most admired literature for the readers but later Roemer writes that this literature has achieved success. It is written, “from ignored to required- the rise of American Indian literature deserves much attention and praise” (3).

Roemer further writes that Euro-Americans have given many typical labels to American Indian literature just to marginalize and degrade it. These typical labels include Native American literature, American Indian literature, Indigenous literature, Native literature and Amerindian literature. American Indians have a very complex intercultural history and these are much diversified people but the tags given to them by Euro-Americans are very biased and they misrepresent the people who possess a very rich culture and literature. Gerald Vizenor believes that the word Indian signifies Columbus’ confusion about the geography. There is nothing wrong with the word Native as native can be anyone born in the United States of America but the way Native is written with capital “N” is very important as it contains a very negative connotation and all such labels attached to American Indians suggest that they are primitive. (9-10). Weaver’s concern here is that the stereotypical image of American Indians portrayed by Euro-Americans is inhuman as it conveys that they are uncivilized and uncultured. A lot of efforts have been made to find out alternate names

given to Natives to minimize the bias of Euro-Americans. One suggested term is American Indian instead of Native Americans. This alternate minimizes the negative connotation associated with primitive. Vizenor suggests a different tag for American Indians and that is postindian warriors as in the new stories they accomplish their survival. His representation of American Indians is very strong and positive

Roemer writes that American Indians have suffered from nuclear disaster but the people who survived showed bravery and courage. American Indian writers have shown this picture in many works where the statements revolve around family, survival and a sense of loss. The statements vary in different works but they all are about the same issue of nuclear disaster. Roemer asserts, "I am not afraid, I have relatives" to either "I am afraid, I have relatives" or "I am afraid, I have lost my relatives" (14). "Alexie's recovering alcoholic who cares for a child no one wants" (14). This shows a great sense of responsibility to the community and this cannot be done by ordinary people, so calling them primitive is unjustified. This is the reason Vizenor suggests the title postindian warriors for American Indians because they have showed bravery and they have survived in the worst situation.

Weaver presents Deloria's views about the subjectivity and personhood of American Indians. Deloria personally believes that there is no harm in using such tools for writing their own perspective on the events because for American Indians their sovereignty is very important and they cannot compromise it. In his book, Weaver quotes A. Robert Lee, who has contributed to the introduction to the book *Shadow Distance: A Gerald Vizenor Reader*; Lee says that Vizenor's writing gives postmodern perspective on the events. He further writes that it is commonly believed that American Indians are stoic and unchanging but the work of Vizenor does not affirm this belief rather "bravura unpredictability" is specialty of his work. During one of his interviews with interviewer Laura Coltelli, Vizenor said, "You can't understand the world without telling a story. There

isn't any center to the world but a story” (qtd. in *That the People Might Live* 137). Vizenor is of the view that stories reflect a true identity of American Indians and if we lose our stories, it makes us lose ourselves. Telling a story is spiritual and essential for American Indians. It is linked to spirituality because it gives them the power to make their communities and form their identity. Then story telling is essential as well because it is a way to claim representational sovereignty and that is not an easy task to go against the invented identities by dominant people. . . . “The telling of stories is both spiritual and essential...and essential as a means of claiming representational sovereignty against the forces in the dominant culture that suppress them and collapse the diversity and richness of Native lives into homogenized banality” (*That the People Might Live* 140).

Weaver argues that American Indian’s stories and their culture are not static and unchanging. He seconds Louis Owens’ viewpoint; Owens writes that in oral tradition, American Indians define themselves and their culture and places with the use of their strong imaginative power. Their definition about the stories and culture is dynamic that makes a constant change in their stories. Vizenor’s fiction has a dynamic view and he believes that the tragedy of lifeless stories is basically the standardization of these stories like scriptures. Weaver describes Vizenor's first novel *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* as fundamentally paradoxical novel among the Indian Authors that presents dynamic values about the culture and traditions and it focuses on individuality rather than on community.

Thomas King’s work shares many themes of Vizenor’s work like a true depiction of American Indian identity, cultural alienation, the role of trickster and the true meaning of historical reality. Weaver quotes from King’s introduction to *All My Relations*. “The trickster is an important figure for Native writers for it allows us to create a particular kind of world in which the Judeo-Christian concern with good and evil and order and disorder is replaced with the more Native concern for balance and harmony” (qtd. in *The People Might Live* 148)

Weaver states that King dismisses the stereotypical image of American Indians in his *Green Grass, Running Water*. He has portrayed very powerful characters as reservation shamans from whose mouths great truths have been spoken. King's work presents a consistent struggle against stereotyping of American Indians. His short story *A Seat in the Garden* is a parody of Kinsella's novel *Shoeless Joe*. Kinsella has written many stories in which he has created stereotypical American Indians and he has been greatly criticized for this reason. He quotes Terry Goldie who argues that Kinsella's work about American Indians is restricted because he has created only a few characters in all his stories that deviate from traditional American Indians. They have been given very limited roles because the number is very limited so the white world immediately rejects the change. He further criticizes him, saying that "the obvious problem for such characters in overtly 'Indian' texts is that an Indian who does not fit within the semiotic field loses the shape identifiable as an Indian, an important element of the 'exotic' in Kinsella's fiction" (*The People Might Live* 149).

Weaver is of the opinion that the subject of pan-Indianness is very important in Thomas King's fiction. Hultkrantz, a Non-Indian scholar, gives a description of pan-Indianness as: "a late idea, formed under the pressure of white domination" (150). The dominated nations have their legitimate right to dismantle stereotyping and Euro-Americans believe that they have the power to present American Indians in a stereotypical way. They created an image of these original people long ago but it has lasted in their minds even today. Weaver feels a strong need to recreate the image of American Indians to highlight their rich culture. He wants American Indians to highlight their culture and move from stereotypical Indian to pan-Indian who enjoys a strong cultural background.

The literary stereotypes...laconic chiefs in full regalia, dusky, raven-haired maidens, demonic shamans with eagle-claw rattles and scalping knives are all picturesque and exciting images, but they are, more properly, servants of a non-Native imagination. Rather than

try to unravel the complex relationship between the nineteenth-century Indian and the white mind, or to craft a new set of images that still reflects the time, but avoids the flat, static depiction of the Native and the two-dimensional quality of the culture, most of us have consciously set our literature in the present, a period that is reasonably free of literary monoliths and which allows for greater latitude in the creation of characters and situations, and, more important, allows us the opportunity to create for ourselves and our respective cultures both a present and a future (*The People Might Live* 153).

In reality there are a lot of Indians who go off the reserve, who come back to the reserve, who work, who go off the reserve again, who keep going back and forth, and they manage. King is very familiar with the fact that to speak the truth and to get it legitimized needs a powerful background. He has intentionally identified him as of Cherokee, Greek and German descent. “. . . the dominant culture will not misunderstand that in him they are not getting their romanticized image of an authentic Indian” (*The People Might Live* 149). Weaver believes that to be a mixed-blood is basically an advantage given to him that allows him to highlight the issue which may have not been addressed by other American Indians. This belonging to Greek and German descent allows him to ask some of the really nasty questions that need to be asked.

So I think there are questions that are important to ask: ‘Who is an Indian?’ How do we develop this idea of Indianness? I like to show Indians in different positions, different blood quantum if you will, but a mix. So that there are Indian people out there who see that and say, ‘Oh, OK, I don't feel so bad now that I'm not a fullblood Indian on the back of a pinto pony, living in the 19th century’ (*The People Might Live* 150).

2.13 Exploring the Narrative of Resistance in Native American Literature

Native American fiction writers have started resisting misrepresentations of their nation and mainstream traditions of writing. Their fiction does not follow fixed pattern of writing and static representation of fictional characters. Joni Adamson in her book focuses on the differences that shape diverse cultural and literary representations. She highlights the challenges that Native American writers have presented to mainstream American culture, literature and environmentalism. She has made an effort to put a human face on the environmental and social justice issues raised by American Indian writers. She is of the view that Louise Erdrich's *Tracks* is a narrative that consistently breaks the rules of boundary between oral narrative and written narrative. It also questions the authenticity of the past and the present. She creates new stories from the old elements. Erdrich choses Pauline to address resistance of Native Americans in her novel. She is shown to embrace white ways of life. She turns her back from the inferiority and reluctance of Native culture. She also decides not to follow Native religion as she has been presented by Erdrich to take the vows of a nun, embracing religion of Euro-Americans. She decides to lead the people to the right path. She points out how mainstream theological belief has been questioned in *Tracks* by a fictional character that enters the church to lead the people to the right path. She believes that Fleur is a hinge on the door that keeps on swinging to open or close the door and she is the one who does not let the people enter Christ's path. "So, Pauline appoints herself door monitor and gives herself the responsibility of preventing Fleur from swinging the door open" (105). She highlights the challenge that Erdrich has given to mainstream theological belief system with her fictional character Pauline.

Aligning herself with the authority of Church, she begins to speak as if she herself were greater than Christ- a disembodied Voice of Authority. She molds her interpretation of Fleur story to fit single

minded vision of theological certainty, linking Fleur-and her bear power-to traditional Chippewa ceremonies, cures, dances and love medicines (105).

Adamson connects Pauline's mission to appoint herself as a door monitor to the abstract logic of Western culture setting hierarchy placing civilized "above those considered primitive" (106). Adamson discusses the challenges that Native American fiction writers have given to Euro-American culture and literature. She has presented a counter discourse about the religion of Euro-Americans that has been highlighted by Erdrich in her fiction. Adamson uses a sarcastic tone as she discusses the hypocrisy of Church authorities. This two-facedness of Church authorities reminds me of *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer. Chaucer also attacks the immorality and the hypocrisy of the Church Authorities. Pauline has been given the authority of Church but she manipulates the stories and molds them as they suit her. She considers herself greater than Christ. This is the point where Adamson could have improved her discussion on the hypocrisy of the Church authorities by pointing out that Native American fiction writers have subverted the grand narrative of Euro-American's religion by introducing a mini narrative. This is the same thing that Euro-Americans have been practicing since the time they invaded Native American territories.

In his book, Louis Owens writes that Vizenor has followed the approach of deconstruction in his texts. He is of the view that Vizenor has missed the stoic stereotypical characters in his novels. "Vizenor, who, in his rapid-fire approach of deconstruction, is fond of such theorist as Foucault, Derrida . . . among the multitude of others, has insisted that some upsetting is necessary" (*Other Destinies* 15). He states that Vizenor has not followed the paradigm of mainstream American gothic as he has made an effort to replace it with postindian identity that does not conform to traditionally accepted beliefs of Indianness. "Vizenor inverts the inherited paradigms of

American gothic, substituting what Vizenor himself calls a postindian perspective” (*Other Destinies* 229). In one of his books, Louis Owens views Vizenor’s work in the following manner:

The Indian’s unwilling role in the drama played out along Americas receding frontier and upon centre stage in the drama of Americas mythmaking is inexorably epic and tragic. Once the Indian is free to imagine his own destiny or plot . . . he escapes the gothic dialect that demands nothing less than his doom (*Mixedblood messages* 83).

Louis Owens’ critique of Vizenor’s fiction is a remarkable effort to highlight Native Americans’ consciousness about their true identity. He postulates that Vizenor’s fictional characters are not stereotypical in nature. Owens has differentiated between Indian and postindian identity. He discusses how Vizenor has confronted mainstream belief of Euro-Americans about Native American identity. He has talked about the deconstruction of Native American identity in Vizenor’s fiction but he has not discussed the historical background of Native Americans. It could have added another dimension to his study if he had discussed Euro-Americans’ invasion of Native territories and the history of reservation. This discussion is important because if we want to understand who a Native American is today and what the reasons are behind his sufferings, it is very important to know what he was in the past.

Roemer asserts that the perspective of Non-Indian and Indian readers on the reality of things is different. Roemer reminds his readers of about Arnold Krupat’s view about American Indian literature. For Krupat, American Indian literature is complex and readers need to read it from new historical and poststructuralist theories in order to fully grasp the information.

In *Voice in the Margin* (1989), Arnold Krupat challenges interpreters of Native literature to abandon their aversion to literary theory. He argues that the complexity of Native American literature calls for the types of new historical and poststructuralist theories (notably Mikhail

Bakhtin's concept of polyvocality) that are being applied to mainstream literatures around the world (20).

Roemer asserts American Indian literature is rich with a sense of belonging to the lands owned by these people and their writing strongly shows that they have the realization of absence of the possession of their former Indian lands. He writes that the word power and a sense of place are closely connected in American Indian literature. Non-fiction American Indian writers also highlight the importance of place in their writing. Roemer gives the example of *God is Red* by Vine Deloria, Jr. in explaining the relationship between their place and American Indians. "*In God Is Red*, Vine Deloria argues that one of the fundamental differences between Native American and Western Christian worldviews is that the former is grounded primarily in spatial relationships; the latter is historically ("linear time") grounded" (16).

Roemer has quoted the book written Vine Deloria, Jr. In this book, Deloria has made a comparison between the world views of Native Americans and Euro-Americans. This is in fact the real problem with these two nations. Euro-Americans are interested in writing a version of history that can legitimize their so-called discovery of America and Native Americans are interested in their sense of belonging to their Native lands. Native American fiction and non-fiction writers highlight their concern about their lands. Apart from *God Is Red*, Deloria, Jr. has written many history books where he shows his concern about Native Americans' lands which have been snatched from them by Euro-Americans because he takes this issue of Native American's lands very seriously. He has written about the same issue in his other books as well including *Custer Died for Your Sins*, *The World We Used to Live In*, *American Indians*, *American Justice* and *Red Earth, White Lies*. Many contemporary American Indian writers have established a sense of place for their people by stressing on the paradoxical presence of absence of their lands. This paradoxical presence of absence of lands has been taken as a painful consciousness about the loss

of their former lands. American Indians have had very a strong affiliation with nature as well. Therefore, they have very a strong sense of belonging to their lands but unfortunately, they have lost their lands and the pain is unforgettable that is reflected by the prominent writers of their community.

Roemer quotes example from Silko's *Ceremony*; in which the writer highlights American Indians fears created by Euro-Americans for their lands. The major characters in this novel wake up every morning to see their stolen lands and to see the lands which still belong to them. It says a lot about American Indians' realization of their property that was stolen from them. "The crucial link between landscape and community identity . . . All these sense of place challenge modern Indian and Non-Indian readers to reconsider their concepts of the American landscape" (18).

Roemer postulates that the powerful expression of the sense of belonging to the lands in American Indian literature heightens the sense of loss for the readers worldwide. Native American works show that Native Americans have also a very strong sense of survival and sovereignty that is reflected in the works of fiction and non-fiction writers. For this purpose, it is important for the readers to upgrade their information about American landscape. Because Native Americans have been deprived of their Native lands by Euro-Americans and this issue has been highlighted by fiction and non-fiction Native American writers.

Weaver contributes to a new dimension about Euro-Americans by terming their understanding of the things regarding American Indians "myth". He seconds Ngugi's opinion in saying that every myth has a character and purpose. Native American myths are about their community. They contribute to define their identity and their sense of belonging. Weaver wants to bring those motives into limelight by saying:

They serve as a counter mythology to Amer-European myths that serve colonial interests—myths of discovery, conquest, lost tribes, nomadic savages perpetually involved in the chase and then quietly

receding into the shadows until vanishing entirely from the stage of the New World Drama (*Other Words* 18).

Weaver postulates that the ultimate truth that has been acknowledged worldwide about the depiction of American Indians is now challenged and is termed myth. It is the same way like these powerful people term anything and everything to marginalize Native Americans. But the time has changed now and Native Americans have also raised their voices and termed the judgment of dominant whites “their myth”. He has rejected all the myths of Euro-Americans about the discovery, the conquest, the lost tribes and the nomadic savages because they all suit to their colonial interests. Weaver has adopted Euro-American way to raise his voice against them. He writes Gerald Vizenor that he has challenged Euro-Americans in his novel *Dead Voices*.

The “dead voices” are those heard by non-Natives. Divorced from nature, they have lost the stories that liberate the mind and hold the world together. Now they are only “wordies,” hearing the dead voices of the printed page and the university lecture. The results are disastrous both for their personal lives and for the environment (*Other Words* 55)

Weaver is of the opinion that these dead voices are heard by Euro-Americans. The voices are dead because these people are detached from their roots but their roots are definitely in nature. They are far from nature. They just hear dead voices from the pages of the book as they do not have any other connection with them. These voices liberate human minds from disastrous effects but Euro-Americans have no connection with the natural world so it is alarming for their personal lives as well as for the environment. Weaver’s interpretation of dead voices is related to the fact that Euro-Americans have not only deprived Native Americans of their lands but they have also destroyed ecological system by cutting trees and mining uranium. Weaver has presented the truth about Euro-Americans’ myth of discovery, their injustice with Native Americans as well as with nature. He has also

highlighted the reason for this indifference. He could have improved his argument by relating to the historical facts behind the discovery of America and the relocation of Native Americans on reservation.

In his research article, James H. Cox writes that Thomas King presents histories and narrative landscape of American Indians that is totally different and rebellious from Europeans. “In *Green Grass, Running Water*, King . . . constructs as a revisionary and subversive presence of his First Nation’s characters in other narrative landscapes and histories articulated and defined for many centuries almost exclusively by European/European North American authors” (“All This Water Imagery” 222). He further states that the theme of almost all the Euro-American storytelling traditions is the conquest of America. They create characters of American Indians just to show them to be destroyed in the stories. This clearly shows that their literary expression indicates the colonial domination by Euro-Americans. In most of the stories, they are shown to give their lands to Euro-Americans and then they are defeated by them, they die, and the tribes disappear. One thing is important that Euro-Americans project in their stories that the tribes disappear voluntarily in the forests leaving everything. On the contrary, American Indian storytellers give a different perspective. Normally, the survival under difficult circumstances, the resistance against Euro-Americans’ domination and the protest against colonialism are the main themes traced in Native Americans’ stories. They also write about their absence in the invader’s stories in which they are ignored as if they never existed. He writes that in last two decades of twentieth century, colonial literature got revision and many scholars like Vine Deloria, Robert Berkhofer, Jr. and Harvey Pearce revised the image and representation of American Indians in the stories of invaders. The stories of Thomas King explicitly mention the absence of American Indians in the stories created by Euro-Americans. His fiction conveys a message to the readers that the culture and belief system of American Indians is historically marginalized

and dominated by Euro-American dominative discourses (“All This Water Imagery” 219).

James H. Cox states in his book that Native American storytellers and Euro-American storytellers have different perspective on Native Americans. Native Americans imagine in their stories that they have very strong communities and they see their future in the form of healthy Native people. They write about their survival and resistance against invader’s stories. They protest against the stories of invaders about them to highlight their absence in their stories. “Native novelists have always recognized that texts produced by Non-Natives can be dangerous and even deadly” (*Muting White Noise* 23). He further states that King’s novels are revision of history. “. . . he also blurs the boundaries between sacred literary and historical discourses throughout his novel” (*Muting White Noise* 70).

Cox states that Gerald Vizenor challenges the traditional ways in which the authors have presented American Indians. “In novels such as *Darkness in Saint Louis Bearheart* (1978) and *The Heirs of Columbus* (1991), therefore Vizenor revises Euro Western storytelling traditions that are hostile to Native people” (*Muting White Noise* 102). He asserts that Vizenor has made great revisions of Euro Western texts of emigrants to the West and the narrative of discovery and he has given American Indian perspective of the discovery and emigrations. He writes that Thomas King has also revised Euro Western novel tradition in his *Green Grass, Running Water*. He points out that Vizenor’s texts are the major acts of liberation from colonial discourse of the dominant culture that encourages violence.

Cox has dealt with history and fiction at the same level. He raises his voice against the misrepresentation of Native Americans in the stories written by Euro-Americans. This is because Native American fictional writers strongly reject Euro-Americans’ perspective on them. They challenge Euro-American mainstream writings by voicing their true history and true identity in their fiction. Cox is of the opinion that King’s revision of history through his novels minimizes the authority of Euro-Americans’

historical perspective. He opines that Euro-Americans' perspective on stories is destructive; it incites violence. Cox asserts that the language of Euro-Americans' stories is dominating and the language itself is also diseased language. He has declared the language used by Euro-Americans as diseased that reminds me of Louis Owens' concept of the language creating terminal creed. Cox shares the same point of view but he has not directly said that the language is terminal creed that misrepresents Native Americans.

Jace Weaver states that Vizenor's fiction generates the discussions on: "Science, translation, and the discoveries of otherness in tribal cultures are the histories of racialism and the metanarratives of dominance" (*The People Might Live* 141). Weaver postulates that Vizenor's fiction is postmodern that subverts power structures based on dominance. He takes his fiction as postmodern because Vizenor's characters do not behave in fixed manners. Postmodernists also do not believe in fixed and static meanings. Vizenor's has also followed postmodern tradition to deconstruct static identities of American Indians. Weaver sees postmodernism in relation to two great sciences of the nineteenth century known as Sociology and Anthropology. He studies sociology for the cultural dominance of Euro-Americans and anthropology for attacking the false outside view predicate. He claims that Anthropology is Vizenor's favorite subject of discussion. Postmodernism is powerful tool for Vizenor to break dominant structures. He uses this powerful tool to deconstruct the false outside view predicate to create a new cultural identity of American Indians. Weaver quotes one of the interviews of Vizenor in which he told Joseph Bruchac:

Philosophically, I think we should break out of all the routes, all the boxes, breakdown the sides. A comic spirit demands that we break from formula, break out of program, and there are some familiar ways to do it and then there are some radical or unknown ways. I suppose I am preoccupied with this theme because of characters. I admire in my own imagination and the characters I would like to

make myself to break out of things. They break out of all restrictions. They even breakout of their blood. They break out of the mixture in their blood. They break out of invented cultures and repression (qtd. in *That People* 141).

Gomez-Vega also asserts that humor in King's fiction is the laughter that emerges from the reconstruction of American Indian identities (2). Thomas King has reshaped American Indian identity in his fiction. His characters are not stereotypically helpless, gloomy, primitive and inferior American Indians but they are confident, optimistic, educated and superior people. *Green Grass, Running Water* traces the lives of American Indians from a different perspective that reshapes their identities. Gomez-Vega states that Thomas King has revised the stereotypical constructs of American Indians. In the research paper, Ibis Gomez-Vega states that "King is able to rewrite many of the stories that the dominant culture has imposed on the Native Americans, beginning with the story of creation and culminating with the John Wayne cult of supremacy over the 'evil' Indians" (1). In her analysis of *Green Grass, Running Water*, Gomez-Vega has missed the most important point when she writes that King ends his novel with John Wayne cult of supremacy over the 'evil' Indians. The matter of the fact is John Wayne has been presented as the chief of white forces of Hollywood movies in the narration of King's fiction. He is also the real actor of Hollywood movies. He was among the top box office draws for three decades. He is the protagonist who defeats Indian forces. In the unfixed version of the Hollywood movie, Portland was the chief of Indians who was surrounded by John Wayne and his soldiers. Eventually, Native Americans were defeated by them. The fixed version of movie by four elders of King's fiction presents an opposite ending of the movie tracing out the victory of American Indians.

In his book, Andrew Widget writes that American Indian trickster wears a variety of masks. At times, it is presented as animal and sometimes it is presented as human being. However, it is always considered as human

being even if it is mentioned as an animal. It has the ability to transform itself into human from animal and vice versa. Vizenor's trickster is used to deconstruct order of things and it has got the negative capability of which Keats talks about. He uses language as a tool to deconstruct accepted beliefs and there is no fixed meaning of his creation. Vizenor's recurring tricksters do what he calls a cultural striptease that exposes nothing because to him there is nothing to reveal about American Indians. He uses the concept of trickster as a language game (98). Widget's analysis of Vizenor's fiction is based on the narrative that Euro-Americans consider themselves colonial masters of Native Americans. These colonial masters know their subjugated people. These colonizers have a strong urge to tell the world about these conquered people. They want to represent them as they cannot represent themselves. However, their representation is actually based on misrepresentations. Widget's examination of Vizenor's work concludes with the fact that there is nothing to reveal about Native Americans. 'Nothing to reveal' for Widget is a negative image of Native Americans which has been promoted by Euro-Americans since the time they have claimed their discovery.

In his article, Vizenor writes that the tribal trickster is a comic character that has been used in American Indian stories to deconstruct tribal history. He seconds Lyotard's opinion and writes that transformations have taken place and they have altered the game of rules for science, literature and arts and these transformations have put the narratives in severe crisis. He also believes in Ihab Hassan's concept of postmodernism, stating that postmodernism gives the readers a chance to deconstruct narratives. Vizenor says, "The word postmodernism is a clever condition, a narrative wisp in a new language game, and an overture to amend the formal interpretations and transubstantiation of tribal literatures" ("Trickster Discourse" 277). Vizenor states that postmodernism is playful and deconstructionist; Native Americans' literature has a tribal discourse which is based on language games and the tone of this literature is comic.

Language-play makes the writers to project what they cannot openly say. He quotes Stephen Tyler, expressing his judgment in this fashion:

Tribal literature is maker of the world, not its mirror...Tribal narratives are discourse, and in this sense, tribal literatures are the world rather than a representation... The function of the text is not to depict or reveal within itself what it says. The text is 'seen through' by what it cannot say. It shows what it cannot say and says what it cannot show (qtd. in "Trickster Discourse" 278).

Vizenor has tried to deconstruct tribal history under the cover of his fiction. He has shown agreement with Lyotard's concept of postmodernism that revolves around the subversion of grand narratives and the impossibility to know the ultimate meaning of things. His opinion on deconstruction makes him rewrite tribal history in his fictional stories to subvert Euro-American's history and grand narratives that they have promoted to suppress and misrepresent Native Americans. The trickster discourse is a language game for Vizenor. Through word play, he highlights Native Americans' perspective on history.

W. Lawrence Hogue writes that Gerald Vizenor highlights the trickster narrative in a different way. "It has a distinct subjectivity, its own history, logic and agency with variable degree of complexity" (169). Hogue asserts that Vizenor has taken a different stance on history with his own subjectivity and logic. For Hogue, this subjectivity makes Vizenor's fiction as postmodern. Hogue postulates that the trickster narrative of Vizenor is complex. He does not mention the reasons for complexity. The close reading of Vizenor's trickster discourse makes this point clear because the narrative carries language game and word play. Through this word play, Vizenor promotes his subjectivity under the cover of his fiction to highlight Native Americans' perspective on history. In his article, Carlton Smith writes that *Green Grass, Running Water* by Thomas King is a postmodern novel in which the literary technique of playfulness is used. He further writes that it merges history, myth and tribal folklore. "Multistoried,

multivoiced, playfully postmodern, *Green Grass, Running Water* presents mutually informing stories that merge myth, history, tribal folklore . . . all of which circulate like running water within the shifting frame of King's trickster story" (518).

In his essay, Joy Porter writes that "literature tells the truth about the past that history cannot articulate" (39). He states that Vizenor has deconstructed history to introduce different aspects of it. Vizenor's *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* shows that he has escaped all the boundaries of the history and through his imagination, he has created a wonder. He has given a postmodern perspective on history to see the things from a different and unconventional angle. Porter also believes that Thomas King in his *Green Grass, Running Water* has followed the tradition of renaming the way Christopher Columbus renamed all the people who met him on the island because when he first encountered Indians, they could not speak his language and he renamed all of them by calling them Indians. India was name of all the East Asian Indus River. His character Ahdamn renames everybody and everything he meets or sees. For example, he tells Elk that he is a microwave oven and tells old Coyote that he is a cheese burger. Porter states that William Apess in his biography *A Son of the Forest* has shown a great anger towards Euro-Americans' desire to rename American Indian by giving them the humiliating names and recontextualizing American Indian history. He says the sole purpose is just to humiliate and disgrace American Indians. Euro-Americans have differentiated Indians into good Indians and bad Indians. Good Indians are innocent and bad Indians are warriors. Euro-Americans believe that they are civilized and dynamic but American Indians are uncivilized. They have created a biased history of American Indians portraying them to be savage (44-45).

Porter's understanding of Euro-Americans' historical perspective is that Euro-Americans have written a biased history. The representation of Native Americans that they have promoted is also concocted. They were

misrepresented by conventional histories. Native Americans have given a counter truth about the version of history articulated by Euro-Americans. Porter's discussion of giving names to the things is ironic. He has ironically highlighted Euro-Americans' habit of controlling Native Americans. He has not directly mocked the religion of Euro-Americans but he has highlighted the important issue of the humiliation of Native Americans at the hands of Euro-Americans who gave them derogatory names. Again, he has not pointed out what he really means when he writes these names like Indian, innocent Indian, and bad Indian. The discussion indirectly highlights Euro-Americans' habit of attaching stereotypes to Native Americans to brand them as primitive and savage warriors.

In his research article, Iping Liang writes that "Vizenor is enlisted in the forum of postmodern" (123). He further says that Vizenor is among those writers who not only want to possess the world but they also want to change it. He argues that the literature produced by Gerald Vizenor is a contribution to the change in the world with its innovative and subjective views (123). Iping Liang looks at Vizenor's fiction from a postmodern perspective; he appreciates Vizenor for his innovative and subjective outlook on the prospects of changing the world. He is right in saying this because subjectivity is the most important feature of postmodern literature. In the article, Iping Liang has not mentioned that Vizenor has written about historical events and the lives of American Indians with a different perspective that is opposite to Euro-Americans' angle. His fiction is postmodern because he does not conform to the static identities of Native Americans and highlights marginalized facts about their history and traditions.

In his research article, Florian Schwieger states that in *Truth and Bright Water*, King has tried to lessen the depression caused by the painful existence of American Indians by creating Utopian counter-geographies for his characters. These Utopian counter-geographies destroy ideological constructs of American Indians based on inferiority that lock them into an

eternal cycle of poverty, addiction and abuse (31). Schwieger further writes that “King's spaces of Native American cultural resistance form an alternative geography of the West that cuts through the master-narrative of Westward expansionism that formerly sanctioned the destruction of indigenous cultures” (32).

Schwieger's study of *Truth and Bright Water* focuses on a Utopian world. Thomas King has created a narrative of resistance in his *Truth and Bright Water* to challenge the grand narratives legitimized and promoted by West. He has deconstructed the stereotypical identities of Native Americans based on ideological constructions. Schwieger's argument could have been stronger if he had related this Utopian world to some theoretical framework for King's fiction as this Utopian world is a parody of a real place. Schwieger asserts that this revision in his fiction is deliberate by King to lessen the depression of Native Americans. The matter of the fact is other way round. King's focus is to reshape Native American identity for the knowledge of Euro-Americans and for the rest of the world. Native Americans already know their true identity. However, he has rightly said that King's fiction subverts master narratives. But still, his study falls short of the fact that King's fiction serves two purposes. He not only subverts metanarratives in his fiction, but also writes it in a way that his work promotes mini narratives.

2.14 The Way Forward

I have selected postmodern theory for the analysis of the selected Native American fiction. My argument has four main concerns; to cater for one is to trace the history of Native Americans from their own perspective to understand their fictive history; the second concern of the present study is to look for the subversion of grand narratives in Native American fiction; the third concern of the study is to evaluate the instances where fictional authors have promoted mini narratives, and the last concern of the present

study is to highlight the tag of certain monolithic notions which are associated with Native Americans.

The chapter has carried out a comprehensive study of the related literature to find out gaps and missing links in the previous studies. The chapter was divided into three sections. The first section of this chapter dealt with the theoretical aspect of postmodernism. The second section explored the historical background of the discovery of America as well as Native Americans' subjugation by Euro-Americans as portrayed in the former's version of history. And the final section analyzed the literary subversion of history and the grand narratives found in the Native American literature.

The works that I have reviewed in this chapter are noteworthy in terms of highlighting the Native Americans' consciousness about their history and true identity. I have quoted from several books and research articles to review Native American fiction. These scholars and critics have hardly evaluated Native American fiction in relation to their actual history that has been documented by Native American historians, anthropologists and critics. I believe that Native American literature has deep roots in the history of Native Americans. The fiction written by Native American writers starts with the mistaken discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. It has been extensively reviewed in the chapter that the main concern of Native American fiction writers is to restore and reshape Native American identity. If the purpose of Native American literature is to write back to their colonial masters (Euro-Americans), it becomes necessary to understand the history of Native Americans from Native American historians' perspective instead of completely relying on the fictive history of fiction writers. Without knowing the history of Native Americans, any analysis of the fictive history seems superfluous. My prime concern in this thesis is to evaluate Native American literature in its true sense instead of studying Native American history in isolation. For that matter, I have

studied and quoted from major Native American historical facts and events in my review in a bid to better analyze the Native American Fiction.

My evaluation of the related literature shows that Native American fiction writers have challenged the mainstream belief of Euro-Americans about Native American identity. Many critics and scholars have talked about the deconstruction of Native American identity in Native American fiction but they have not discussed the historical background of Native Americans. One cannot reshape an identity without knowing the original identity. I believe that it will add another dimension to the present study when it will be discussed in relation to Euro-Americans' invasion of Native territories and the history of reservation. The misrepresentation of Native Americans started with these historical events. To know his past, we have to return to history and therefore my study will refer to these historical facts and events to highlight the Native American identity. This part of my thesis will show the subversion of grand narratives and the promotion of mini narratives in the selected works of fiction.

In the subsequent chapters, I have furthered my discussion by specifying postmodernism in relation to Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction and Jean-François Lyotard's concept of the subversion of grand narratives. Before the analysis chapters, the methodology and theoretical framework for the study have been explained in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Research Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature. I have framed specific research questions to avoid the element of arbitrariness in the study. I have linked research questions to postmodernism. These questions cover two important concepts of postmodern theory. The first and third research questions deal with subversion of grand narratives; whereas the second research question describes historiographic metafiction. Framing the research questions with the help of the theory is an important aspect of my study which aims to interpret the selected literary texts. Keeping in view the context of the fiction written by the selected novelists, the analysis of the selected novels has been carried out to meet the objectives of the research. The study has adopted both inductive and deductive reasoning approaches to analyze the themes and the topics. In the context of inductive reasoning, a few themes and categories are created from the information through the researcher's careful analysis. With the help of deductive reasoning, the concepts and themes are generated on the basis of postmodernism and previous research and studies.

I read the selected literary texts to carry out the present study. Then I studied postmodern theory. After a thorough study of the relevant features of postmodern theory, I carefully read the selected literary texts again and highlighted the relevant portions. Finally, I carried out the analysis.

To carry out this research, I read Native American fiction in general, besides closely reading the selected literary texts in particular. The initial study of Native American fiction shows that most of the authors refer to the history of Native Americans. An analysis of their works offers a rare insight into the history of Christopher Columbus' discovery, Euro-Americans' unjust act of depriving Native Americans of their lands and the forcible resettlement of Native Americans in reservations. A common feature found in the works of the majority of Native American authors is the voice raised against the cruelty, discrimination and injustice meted out to Native Americans at the hands of Euro-Americans. They all take the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus as the invasion of their lands. They also bring forth that Native Americans have been stereotyped as a primitive and uncivilized nation by Euro-Americans. Their works also reflect that the false knowledge spread about Native Americans helped Euro-Americans legitimize the usurpation of their lands.

The research attempts to track the footprints of the history of misrepresentation of Native Americans; the misrepresentation of Native Americans has been the main key point of the history officially documented by Euro-Americans. In order to construct a narrative that the Native Americans were misrepresented by Euro-Americans in their history, it was imperative to gain the requisite historical background of Native Americans. Therefore, a detailed study of the history of the Native Americans was carried out to know the factual truth of history from Native Americans' perspective. At this stage, the researcher endeavored to read and record a few tragic incidents recorded in the history of Native Americans, which consequently deprived them of their true identity and their Native lands. A close reading of Native American history conveyed that Euro-Americans, in their officially documented history willfully silenced certain facts and misrepresented Native Americans for their greed of wealth.

The selected literary texts advocate a counter narrative of the history of misrepresentation of Native Americans. Gerald Vizenor and Thomas

King have rewritten Native American history under the cover of fiction to refute misrepresentation based on stereotypes and have made an effort to bring into the limelight the Native Americans' perspective on their history. After gaining understanding of the relationship between history and the selected fictional texts, I read postmodernism with my singular concern of exploring the ways of employing the theory to investigate the selected literary texts. I selected two concepts of postmodernism given by Linda Hutcheon and Jean Francois Lyotard. I selected Linda Hutcheon's theory of historiographic metafiction to develop an argument that Historiographic metafiction works to situate itself within a historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction. In historiographic metafiction, the intertexts of history and fiction take on parallel status in the parodic reworking of the textual past of both history and fiction. Thus, taking this concept ahead by materializing Lyotard's concept of the subversion of grand narratives, I tried to investigate if the grand narratives associated with Native Americans had been subverted to promote mini narratives in the selected novels; in order to tarnish the image of Native Americans, these grand narratives based on stereotypes were promoted by Euro-Americans.

The descriptive method has been applied to answer the research questions through the lens of postmodernism; this method mainly states a phenomenon as it is. The descriptive method of investigation helps the study outline the features of postmodernism in line with the history and fiction of the selected authors.

The researcher has also used the biographical method of investigation as it traces the life story of the writers in fictional narratives. This method is used for the investigation to see how Native American novelists have depicted their life stories in portraying various characters in their novels. This method especially assists in understanding the writers' resistance to the misrepresentation of Native Americans, besides delving deeper into the silenced facts of their history.

One of the approaches to this research has been interdisciplinary in nature because the present endeavor draws heavily from history as well as from literature. The study time and again refers and alludes to history, and then goes on to see if these fictional accounts, analyzed with the yardstick of postmodernism, go on to add something to history which is a completely distinct discipline in itself.

The researcher, then, looked for and recorded the incidents of Native American history after the invasion of their lands by Christopher Columbus to highlight the fact that their misrepresentation started after the invasion. The researcher, then, evaluated the selected novels to check whether they qualify for the subversion of history grand narratives or not.

Keeping in view the postmodernist features of historiographic metafiction and the subversion of grand narratives, the researcher approached the selected novels by Native American writers under consideration. In this manner, the study carried out a thorough perusal of the subversion of history and grand narratives in the selected literary texts. The study is an extensive qualitative research to study and analyze the novels. The MLA style of referencing with in-text citations has been used throughout this research endeavor.

3.2 Theoretical Framework for the Study

I have analyzed the selected texts of the two contemporary Native American novelists through the lens of postmodernism.

3.2.1 Historiographic metafiction

The research is designed in accordance with the postmodern feature of historiographic metafiction presented by Linda Hutcheon. The research aims to cite instances which reflect how the use of historiographic metafiction blends the boundaries of history and fiction. Hucheon presents some techniques of historiographic metafiction which help fiction writers rewrite history by using the technique of fiction writing. I have selected the

following techniques of historiographic metafiction for the analysis of the selected texts.

- Intertextual Parody
- Self-reflexivity

3.2.2 The Subversion of Grand Narratives

The second postmodern feature under the study is Jean Francois Lyotard's concept of the subversion of grand narratives. The study highlights examples from the selected texts where grand narratives are dismantled by the writers to promote mini narratives. The present study aims to bring into the limelight Native Americans' perspective on the grand narratives promoted by Euro-Americans. Native Americans' perspective had always been kept on the margins by Euro-Americans.

3.3 Historiographic Metafiction

The present study is designed to analyze the selected works of fiction through the lens of historiographic metafiction. The study deals with a historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction. Historiographic metafiction is based on serious ironic parody. In parodic rewriting of the past in the fictive histories of the selected Native American novelists, the intertexts of history and fiction take a parallel status. The intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction takes certain views of historiographers and offers a sense of the presence of the past but this is a past that can only be known from its literary or historical texts for the purpose of the study.

Linda Hutcheon coined the term historiographic metafiction; she also explained the purpose of historiographic metafiction. She argues that historiographic metafiction fictionalizes actual historical events and figures. Fiction is made history and history takes the place of fiction and the boundary between them remains unclear because readers have their own perspective on postmodernism and therefore, they can interpret the text with their own subjective point of view.

Historiographic metafiction is written today in the context of a serious contemporary interrogation of the nature of representation in historiography. There has been much interest recently in narratives- its forms, its function, its power and its limitations- in many fields, but especially in history (*A Politics* 50).

Hutcheon believes that historiographic metafiction provides the reader with an opportunity to take new perspectives on past events which have been marginalized previously. It is in fact the process of rewriting history with the help of fiction. “Storytellers can certainly silence, exclude, and absent certain past events—and people—but it also suggests that historians have done the same: where are the women in the traditional histories of the eighteenth century?” (*A Politics* 107).

Hutcheon asserts that historiographic metafiction creates a blurred boundary between history and fiction. It rejects the view that only history can claim truth. She takes historiography and fiction as discourses which are based on human constructions to highlight a particular system but the focus of both the discourses remains on the representation of identity. Both the discourses construct the identities in the process of textualizing past events. The truth and reality of their side is conveyed to us by the means of accessible textualized form of documents or eye-witnesses. The return of postmodernism to history becomes nostalgic and revivalist. Historiographic metafiction contents the power of history to abolish the formalism of fiction. It prevents the suppression of formal and fictive identities in the discourse of fiction (95). Hutcheon quotes M. White.

Every history is a history of some entity which existed for a reasonable period of time, that the historian wishes to state what is literally true of it in a sense which distinguishes the historian from a teller of fictitious or mendacious stories (qtd. in *A Politics* 107).

In her research article, Barbara Z. Thaden states that historiographic metafiction is a term that has been used by Linda Hutcheon for the specific genre of literature and that is novel. She has used this term for the novels

which have been written in the context of the past; these novels have enjoyed the fame to be best seller novels for academic study. The researcher, then, claims that postmodern novels written in the context of irony and parody are marked with the concern that whose truth gets told in historical background (756).

Hutcheon addresses the paradox in her study that is the most important characteristic of postmodernism. Postmodernism reinstalls all the historical contexts and gives it huge significance. At the same time, it does not discard history to keep its focus on the thinking process of individuals; however when it gives a lot of importance to the individual perception about history, it creates the problem of the authenticity of historical knowledge. This paradox characterizes all postmodern discourse because it believes there is no single truth about history as truth is subjective in nature. It is different with every individual and there is no concept of 'genuine history' in postmodern discourse. She writes, "Postmodern historicism is willfully unencumbered by nostalgia in its critical, dialogical reviewing of the forms, contexts, and values of the past" (*The Poetics* 89). She does not believe in discarding history but to her, subjective truth and individual understanding about that history is also important and in postmodern discourse both the things move side by side (*The Poetics* 89).

The present study takes its inspiration from postmodern turn. In today's world, finding objective reflection of reality and faithful representation of reality in language is quite a hard task. In postmodern discourse, language plays an important role as it is an opaque and multi-dimensional phenomenon. The author can hide certain facts from the reader and at the same time, he can bring a new mystery to the limelight that he intends to solve. In postmodernism, language is an independent and self-contained system which generates its own meanings. The relation of language with the world is highly problematic and complex because language regulates its relations with the world often conventionally. As Waugh notes, "Metafiction sets up an opposition, not to ostensibly

‘objective’ facts in the ‘real’ world, but to the language of the realistic novel which has sustained and endorsed such a view of reality” (11).

3.3.1 Intertextuality in Historiographic Metafiction

Intertextuality is one of the features of historiographic metafiction. Historiographic metafiction projects the relationship between history and fiction in a way that the boundary between fiction and history is no longer visible. In my study, intertextuality extends its frontiers from one discipline to another (history to fiction) to involve itself with the problems of the new discipline where one can find a combination of both disciplines. This extended involvement produces an interdisciplinary environment where established grand narratives are undermined. In such a disciplinary mixture the discourse is consequence of cultural, social and self-consciousness. It raises greater awareness about everyday reality. “The intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction enacts, in a way, the views of certain contemporary historiographers. It offers a sense of the presence of the past, but this is a past that can only be known from its texts, its traces-be they literary or historical” (“historiographic metafiction” 4).

Intertextuality works on the philosophy that each text implies that it stands in relation to another text. Ronald Barthes takes it as “any text is an intertext”. Roland Barthes once defined the intertext as "the impossibility of living outside the infinite text" (36). His intertext is an omnipresent text to which all texts are related in the environment of which they are present. These texts are related to each other structurally and thematically.

Young quotes Barthes perspective in the following fashion:

Any text is a new tissue of past citations. Bits of code, formulae, rhythmic models, fragments of social languages, etc., pass into the text and are redistributed within it, for there is always language before and around the text. Intertextuality, the condition of any text whatsoever, cannot, of course, be reduced to a problem of sources or influences; the intertext is a general field of anonymous formulae

whose origin can scarcely ever be located; of unconscious or automatic quotations, given without quotation marks (39).

The study of the selected fictional works help the present research promote the concept presented by Barthes. The omnipresent history and grand narratives documented and promoted by Euro-Americans always remain in the background that affect the ways in which fictional texts are read. In intertext, allusions have compelled me to participate in textual discussions for better understanding. In intertextuality, the echoes from the past make the reader to recall past events and these echoes call for the sympathies of the reader. There are certain devices used by the author which parody a previous system for the replacement of a new system. Intertextuality establishes the ground to read the selected text in the light of its relations to other texts.

Speaking up for Hutcheon, the writers of *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory* proclaim that the paradox of postmodernism lies in its "use and abuse of history" (208). For them, Intertextuality is more than reproducing "the past in the form of a shallow and comprised nostalgia" (208). They believe that there is always a possibility for "revealing its past construction in discourse and ideology" (208).

Intertextuality discovers the relationship between one literary text and other texts. Intertextuality has pluralistic nature that frees the reader from the grips of any certain and autonomous work to employ the capacities of a number of texts. The reader interacts with a long file of texts with an aftermath of critical innovation. In this sense, intertextuality is the solution to the contemporary intellectual reader who reads voraciously to know everything and be everywhere.

3.3.2 Historiographic Metafiction: Parody and the Intertextuality of History

In her article, Hucheon asserts that "postmodernism in contemporary literature is characterized by intense self-reflexivity and overtly parodic intertextuality" ("historiographic metafiction" 3). In fiction,

this means that it is usually metafiction that is equated with postmodernism. She states, "My model here is postmodern architecture, that resolutely parodic recalling of the history of architectural forms and functions" ("historiographic metafiction" 3). To her, postmodernism, when used in fiction, should be described as metafictional and historical in its echoes of the text and context of the past. "In order to distinguish this paradoxical beast from traditional historical fiction, I would like to label it historiographic metafiction" ("historiographic metafiction" 3).

She further states:

But it seems to have found that it can no longer do so in any innocent way: the certainty of direct reference of the historical novel or even the nonfictional novel is gone. So is the certainty of self-reference implied in the Borgesian claim that both literature and the world are equally fictive realities. The postmodern relationship between fiction and history is an even more complex one of interaction and mutual implication. Historiographic metafiction works to situate itself within historical discourse without surrendering its autonomy as fiction. And it is a kind of seriously ironic parody that affects both aims: the intertexts of history and fiction take on parallel (though not equal) status in the parodic reworking of the textual past of both the "world" and literature. The textual incorporation of these intertextual past(s) as a constitutive structural element of postmodernist fiction functions as a formal marking of historicity—both literary and "worldly." (4)

Huchon states that "To parody is not to destroy the past; in fact, to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it. And this is the postmodern paradox" ("Historiographic Metafiction" 6). Intertextuality replaces the challenged author-text relationship with one between reader and text. According to Huchon, literary work can no longer be considered original if it has no meaning for its reader.

In historiographic metafiction, other art forms parodically refer to intertexts of both history and fiction. Historiographic metafiction contests the boundaries that separate history and fiction. “While postmodernism, as I am defining it here, is perhaps somewhat less promiscuously extensive, the notion of parody as opening the text up, rather than closing it down, is an important one: among the many things that postmodern intertextuality challenges are both closure and single, centralized meaning” (7).

Typically contradictory, intertextuality in postmodern art both provides and undermines context. But its usefulness as a theoretical framework that is both hermeneutic and formalist is obvious in dealing with historiographic metafiction that demands of the reader not only the recognition of textualized traces of the literary and historical past but also the awareness of what has been done-through irony-to those traces. The reader is forced to acknowledge not only the inevitable textuality of our knowledge of the past, but also both the value and the limitation of that inescapably discursive form of knowledge, situated as it is "between presence and absence" (“Historiographic metafiction” 8).

Hucheson proclaims that "there is no one writable 'truth' about history and experience, only a series of versions: it always comes to us 'stencillized'" (“Historiographic Metafiction” 10). The inscribing of both historical and literary intertexts make historiographic metafiction particularly doubled. Its specific and general recollections of the forms and contents of history writing work to familiarize the unfamiliar through (very familiar) narrative structures, but its metafictional self-reflexivity works to render problematic any such familiarization. And the reason for the sameness is that both real and imagined worlds come to us through their accounts of them, that is, through their traces, their texts. (Tennyson 11) The ontological line between historical past and literature is not effaced but underlined. The past really did exist, but we can only know that past today through its texts, and therein lies its connection to the literary.

When its critics attack postmodernism for being what they see as ahistorical (as do Eagleton, Jameson, and Newman), what is being referred to as "postmodern" suddenly becomes unclear, for surely historiographic metafiction, like postmodernist architecture and painting, is overtly and resolutely historical-though, admittedly, in an ironic and problematic way that acknowledges that history is not the transparent record of any sure truth (Historiographic metafiction¹⁰).

Hutcheon further states, "Historiographic metafiction, therefore, represents a challenging of the (related) conventional forms of fiction and history through its acknowledgment of their inescapable textuality" ("Historiographic metafiction" 11). The formal linking of history and fiction through the common denominators of intertextuality and narrativity is usually offered not as a reduction, as a shrinking of the scope and value of fiction, but rather as an expansion of these. "Perhaps because parody itself has potentially contradictory ideological implications (as "authorized transgression," it can be seen as both conservative and revolutionary" ("Historiographic Metafiction" 11). Parody not only restores history and memory in the face of the distortions of the history of forgetting but also, at the same time, puts into question the authority of any act of writing by locating the discourses of both history and fiction within an ever-expanding intertextual network that mocks any notion of either single origin or simple causality.

As Edward Said argued that there is a relationship of mutual interdependence between the histories of the dominators and the dominated (qtd in "Historiographic Metafiction" 12). Historiographic metafiction, like the nonfictional novel, however, does turn to the intertexts of history as well as literature. From these intertexts, Barthes writes history, taking considerable liberty sometimes inventing characters and events, sometimes parodically inverting the tone and mode of his intertexts, sometimes

offering connections where gaps occur in the historical record (“Historiographic metafiction” 15).

3.3.3 Self- Reflexivity of Historiographic Metafiction

Hutcheon takes historiographic metafiction as a way to rewrite and subvert history in postmodern fiction. Postmodernism strives for plurality of truths and subsequently history is no longer objective. She believes that postmodern fiction is highly self-reflexive and contains overtly parodic intertextuality.

Self-reflexivity is a feature of historiographic metafiction that has been used as a tool to study the selected fictive texts discussed in the present study. W.H. Gass, an American novelist, has called self-reflexivity as metafiction. Metafiction is a literary subgenre which is self-reflective, self-criticizing, and inclined to address its readers that they are reading a work of art. Patricia Waugh defines it as a kind of inherent nature in all novels which “self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose question about the relationship between fiction and reality” (2).

The critics of postmodernism believe that historiography plays an important role in the formation of the postmodern and they relate it to postmodern architecture. Hans Bretenz proclaims that postmodern architecture “combines historicist awareness, a new representational impulse, and an ironic self-reflexivity” (qtd. in Paul Auster’s New York Trilogy as “Historiographic Metafiction” 1909).

Tod F. Davis writes that Linda Hutcheon claims that texts have the power to dismantle meanings and the unified human subjects having the reason to legitimize their point of view in the name of left wing defamiliarizing critique or left wing irrationality. According to Davis, problem arises from this claim of Hutcheon because it is troublesome for those people who believe in positive political action of postmodernism. “If postmodernism has no shared system of values, then the possibility for

abuse by fascists or racists remains open, and such groups of course, establish conditions, that Lyotard among others, would find intolerable” (143). He is of the view that it is not possible for the people to establish any judgment about the other communities who are not local. He believes that even as postmodernist, we cannot attack the practices we consider inhumane that are outside the locality that establishes the standards and values by which we make judgments. Hutcheon writes that self-consciousness in postmodern metafiction is revolutionary in its true sense. The art of postmodernism suggests that the revolutionary value of self-reflexivity is also uncertain. All the interpretation is done on the basis of the deconstruction and analysis of the reader. Historiographic metafiction teaches that the use of language can have many uses and abuses so the faith in power of language turns against itself because this is also possible that language has limited power to express then the reader will have his own view about the things and he will deduce the meaning from the text (*The Poetics* 184).

Postmodernism suggests that truth is only linguistically fabricated hence questions the systems and perceptions the systems and perception which believe in the objectivity of history. The postmodernists demonstrate that everything is fabricated, intervened and created for some reason. So, there is no single reality and ultimate reality but there are various accounts of reality. Brian MacHale asserts that postmodern fiction solely focuses the ontological questions as he contends “Postmodernist fiction differs from modernist fiction just as a poetics dominated by ontological issues differs from one dominated by epistemological issues” (199). For him, the modernist fiction is marked by the epistemological questions which implicate the absolute quest of definite knowledge. The modernist epistemological questioning favors the logical reasoning and rationality and argues that truth could be known and explained as it really exists thus favors the grand narratives. On the other hand, postmodernism exclusively favors different version of reality. MacHale asserts that “the various stories

(Enlightenment ,Marxist, Hegelian) about human emancipation and progress that once served to ground and legitimate knowledge are no longer credible”(5). The ontological question of postmodernism are the initiator of variability, unsteadiness and uncertainty. They challenge the fixed epistemological knowledge of modern world in a self-reflexive manner .The ontological nature of postmodernism favors the possibility of other worlds.

A description of *a* universe, not of *the* universe; that is, it may describe *any* universe, potentially a *plurality* of universes. In other words, to “do” ontology in this perspective is not necessarily to seek some grounding for *our* universe; it might just as appropriately involve describing *other* universes, including “possible” or even “impossible” universes-not least of all the other universes, or heterocosm, of fiction (27).

Brain MacHale favors the “dominant” of postmodernist fiction which ontologically questions the status of reality. The postmodernists accept the versions of reality as a constructed discourse as it is entrenched with extreme self-reflexivity which instead of reflecting the external world and reality wraps in upon itself to investigate its literary and linguistic conventions. Self-reflexivity is a counter-construct which poses questions to its own status and interrogates its own reality. The self-reflexive writing is intensely aware of its own status as a construct as well as it deliberately vaunts the fact of its existence as an artifact. Patricia Waugh explains the concept of self-reflexive metafictional writing as “fictional Writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality”(2). By drawing attention to itself it doesn’t claim that it represents the real life rather it exhibits itself as an art which represents the representable. Metafictional writing blurs the traditional concept of the distinction between the linguistic world and the textual world of the novel and by doing so highlights the issues concerned to construction and

representation. Metafiction hence inspects its own connection to the realistic world and consequently exhibits that the fact and fiction both exist to us as illusory and textual constructs. The concepts of “reality” and “truth” are questioned as relative concepts thus metafiction takes the problematic connection between the “fictional worlds” versus the “real solid world” as its subject matter. Mark Currie argues about this aspect of metafictional writing and says “it is a way of giving the novel a critical function, the ability to explore the logic and the philosophy of narrative without recourse to metalanguage” (52). Metafiction therefore is solely about the “aboutness” of its own status as a work of art and the literary tools employed in its construction. It integrates various critical discourses into its artistic frame hence is a locus for creative, artistic and theoretical imbrications.

Historiographic metafiction is a genre by which Hutcheon means “those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxical also lay claim to historical events and personages” (A poetics 5). To speak up for Hutcheon again, the contradictoriness of historiographic metafiction makes it into a mode of writing which is simultaneously exhausting and formative, because as a form of metafiction, it searches “within conventions in order to subvert them” (5).

3.4 Historiographic Metafiction and Tradition of De-centering Universalism

Linda Hutcheon states that Historiographic metafiction, casts a question mark on the firm guarantee of meanings. This question mark also sides Foucault’s challenge on the impossibility of human knowledge to allow the final and authentic truth. Derrida also shares this concept of the authenticity of ultimate truth because he believes that human beings include their own discourse in these realities to uncover them. Historiographic metafiction intends to rethink about everything and raises questions about the representation of identity. It highlights the problem of representation of

narrative. Hutcheon also agrees with Lyotard's concept of postmodernism that is based on questioning the legitimacy and legitimating power of narratives to make them totalized. The concept of absolute truth is not possible so is the case with meta-system. Lyotard explains postmodernism as a war against totality; it stands witness to un-presentable and it activates the difference to question totality. Postmodernism questions the authenticity of history, subject and reference. The standard for the judgment of postmodernism follows the questions such as: who sets them? When? Where? Why? These questions are developed to de-center traditionally accepted truths. Hutcheon writes that Derrida believes that postmodernism arises when universal totalization begins to destroy and the complexity of contradictions begins to be evident in the discourses. It believes in the change of fixed individual subjects, contextualized identities shaped by class, race, social role, sexual preference, ethnicity or any genre. The subjects of postmodernism remain anti-totalizing, uncertain and hybrid (*The Poetics* 55-59).

She further argues that historiographic metafiction dismantles the centers of both history and fiction and marginalized facts and edges gain the value of center. "The 'ex-centric'—as both off-center and de-centered—gets attention" (*The Poetics* 130). She further states that in the American context of postmodernism, the difference of center and margin is traced in terms of nationality, gender, ethnicity, race and sexual orientation. In reformulating and appropriating inter-textual parody of American background, the significant changes in the modes of appropriation are about the dominant white, male, Eurocentric culture and middle class. Postmodernism reveals the rebellion against the traditional pattern to fix the meanings of margin through ironic abuse of de-centering pattern. Hutcheon agrees with Edward Said's point of view about this power relationship of dominated and dominant. He takes this relationship as mutual dependence of the histories of dominators and dominated (*The Poetics* 130). Postmodernism denies the notion of self-sufficiency in narrating historical

events and fictive elements. It dismantles mastery and universal truths about both the discourses. The meanings of sexual identities are also fixed with the use of representation of identities. Historiographic metafiction rejects the illusion of transparency because representation is never real rather it is constructed and it destroys the notion of individual and coherent subject that has the roots in history, social practices and in its own unconscious (*The Poetics* 166).

3.5 Parody and Politics of Representation

Linda Hutcheon sees postmodernism as a parody, saying that “postmodernism at large is resolutely parodic” (*The Politics* 125). In her research article, she argues that the supporters and critics of postmodernism both want to discuss it in the context of art. She is of the opinion that the critics want to discuss it in relation to all forms of art like literature, painting, architecture, dance and music. It focuses on the parodic relation of art to history. It discusses the paradoxical meanings in the ideological construction of history. She believes that all the forms of art share some characteristics and they are being historical and political. They become political because the nature of art in terms of history is parody and parody is most of the times political. She further states that postmodern works mostly are based on the paradoxes and they are contradictory. Its study of past is ironic because it believes that history is always constructed and is highly political. Postmodern history is not nostalgic and it is not decorative and it is also not based on ultimate objects. It contests against all these features because it is based on the belief that there is no ultimate object in the history and it gives the liberty to the individuals to interpret the meanings (“The Politics” 80-182).

3.5.1 Parody: A Tool to Re-contextualize History

In her article, Linda Hucheon discusses the importance of parody. “It is said that the other literary genres (types) originate from parody. It imitates an original literary work of a previous time in a way that it preserves the form of the original work while its content it ridiculously

belittles.” (“Historiographic Metafiction” 1911). She explains the effects of ridiculing approach. She states that it makes the content of original work less valuable and belittling way of analysis can arouse a dislike in the reader towards the ridiculed work. To arouse a dislike in the reader, a parodist can use different techniques including hyperbolic statements or ugly gestures which the onlooker cannot understand. It becomes reason to present the subject or the hero of original work worse than what they really are. Parody, thus, works in an in-between situation in a bipolar area. On the one hand, there is an original work of literature, but on the other hand there is parodic work. She asserts that the quality of bipolarity is the basic for producing comparative study between original and new work because through parody new literary experiences are generated.

She discusses another perspective through which bipolarity is significant. She states that the meaning of parody is generated on two levels; surface level and under-level. On the surface level, there may be the application of a series of downplaying techniques like joke, ridicule, lampoon, derision, even invective and sarcasm; whereas on the under-level, there is a goal oriented and conscious literary criticism. It helps the reader to transcend his mentality and makes himself accustomed to the new era, to the norms and standards of the new social strata. On the one hand, the formal similarity of the original and parodying works, but on the other hand the thematic difference of these works makes the parody into a satirical imitation which guarantees the mental excitement of the reader. “So, it is admitted that parody is an extended literary genre and a fertile field for productive literary negotiations” (Historiographic Metafiction” 1911).

Another feature of parody is its subtlety. In addition to its bipolarity, its subtlety is rooted in the fact that the parodist should create a sense of equilibrium between similarity and difference. Parody is similar to the original work in form but in content it should be different from the original. This equilibrium renders parody faithful to its original work, while it projects parody as a divided work also. This policy of difference and

sameness in parody is a genuine translation why the postmodern historiographic metafiction should be so interested in it. Metafiction is the program of a time situation when a literary genre or a system of codes should be neutralized, decoded, for the emergence of a new system, because the previous system is no longer functional, because, it means, it has gotten stale and therefore the new generation does not appreciate it (“Historiographic Metafiction” 1911).

In postmodern fiction, Parody works for projection and cancellation because it attempts to repeal a previous intelligibility. On the other hand, it tries to propose an innovative mode of perception to make for the disintegration of the previous one. The author of historiographic metafiction uses parody to guarantee that the canonical works are critically revised, re-evaluated, through a mechanism that puts a previous work, author, or ideology under consideration for the inauguration of new readings of history, for the proposition of new modes of cultural criticism. In the hands of the parodist, such works are imitated not only in their intentions but in their intertextuality also. In this regard, Linda Hutcheon notes that “parody is not to destroy the past; in fact, to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it” (“Historiographic Metafiction” 6).

Hutcheon believes that postmodernism has a specific process of production and understanding and it has a strong relationship with the art of the past and the relationship is specifically based on parody. Parody has its own system of creating meaning and the nature of this system remains political and historical. Parody works for a public discourse that avoids modernist aesthetics and its self-marginalization. Postmodernism does not offer genuine history. It contests the possibility of human beings to know the ultimate reality of the past. The reality of the past in social and historical context is based on only the discursive reality when it is referred to art. The same is true for genuine history but it also depends on its discursive identity. History was believed to be inevitable, but postmodernism gave it a new perspective and emphasized on the point that there is no concept of being

inevitable and it is not eternal but learned through discursive practices. Modernist belief has been to discard history and to move on towards the machine age but postmodernist belief is to return to history and Hutcheon calls this history, a parody, to give the architecture a new view that makes it to relate it to its tradition, past and history. Hutcheon's concept of parody is different from the traditional concept of parody. This kind of parody is actually one of the ways to establish a link between art and the world. She articulates her view in this way:

It is significant that postmodernist architects do not often use the term parody to describe their ironically recontextualized echoing of the forms of the past. I think this is because of the negative connotations of trivialization caused by the retention of an historically limited definition of parody as ridiculing imitation (*A Poetics* 34).

She further states:

What I mean by “parody” here—as elsewhere in this study—is not the ridiculing imitation of the standard theories and definitions that are rooted in eighteenth-century theories of wit. The collective weight of parodic practice suggests a redefinition of parody as repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of similarity. In historiographic metafiction, in film, in painting, in music, and in architecture, this parody paradoxically enacts both change and cultural continuity (*A Poetics* 26).

3.5.2 Irony: A Combination of Wit, Humor and Comedy

In her article, Hutcheon introduces another feature of postmodernism and that is irony. She states that one of the important features of postmodernism is irony and the meaning of irony has been expanded in recent times. It is not just saying something and meaning another thing but it has been expanded and made rich with the inclusion of

wit, humor and comedy. It has many types like dramatic irony, the irony of fate, situational irony and tragic irony. The purpose of irony is playful and it means that irony is all about wit and humor. She calls it a positive characteristic of language as it is close to pun and it can be metaphoric as well (“Functions of Irony” 219).

3.6 A Rejection of Ideological Identity Constructions

Hucheeon asserts:

In the postmodern “history-like,” the ideological and the aesthetic have turned out to be inseparable. The self-implicating paradoxes of historiographic metafiction, for instance, prevent any temptation to see ideology as that which only others fall prey to. What postmodern theory and practice has taught is less that “truth” is illusory than that it is institutional, for we always act and use language in the context of politicodiscursive conditions (Eagleton 1986, 168). Ideology both constructs and is constructed by the way in which we live our role in the social totality (Coward and Ellis 1977, 67) and by the way we represent that process in art. Its fate, however, is to appear as natural, ordinary, common sense. Our consciousness of ourselves is usually, therefore, uncriticized because it is familiar, obvious, transparent (qtd. in *The Poetics* 178).

She further explains the concept of ideology prevailing in the postmodern world in this manner:

In other words, all social practice (including art) exists by and in ideology and, as such, ideology comes to mean “the ways in which what we say and believe connects with the power-structure and power-relations of the society we live in” (Eagleton 1983, 14). Much of the impetus to this redefining of ideology and to its newly important position in recent discussions of art has come from a reaction against the liberal humanistsuppression of the historical, political, material, and social in the definition of art as eternal and

universal. Postmodern theory and practice have worked to contest this suppression, but in such a way that their implication in the underlying humanism value system cannot be ignored. (*The Poetics*179).

In her research article, Barbara Z. Thaden claims that postmodern fiction tries to challenge historical events because one cannot trust them completely as these events are also constructed by human beings on the basis of ideological knowledge. She agrees with Hayden White who believes that the representations of the past have some ideological background (755).

Hutcheon further quotes W.J.T. Mitchell, saying: “Criticism and interpretation, the arts of explanation and understanding, have a deep and complex relation with politics, the structures of power and social value that organize human life” (*qtd. in The Poetics 181*). She states that self-consciousness in metafiction is not new; the way self-reflexivity and ideological constructions in relation to the presence of the past is not new and innovative. Shakespeare’s history plays capture the self-conscious critical involvement of the audience who are always seen to question social action and authority in terms of the present and the past. The return of postmodernism to content suggests that it is also about the return of politics and social practices. (Katharine 04) The theorists of postmodernism challenge the canon of ideology to expose and highlight the system of power which authorizes some representations, but at the same time, it also prevents some other facts to surface. It raises some ignored questions about ideological power behind representations to challenge the reality behind those presentations. She quotes Bakhtin: “The study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract ‘formal’ approach and an equally abstract ‘ideological’ approach” (*qtd. in The Poetics 183*). She believes that the subversion of any school of thought by art can be taken as a healthy sign but it is also important to note that it can also highlight offensive things. Texts can feasibly play their role to dismantle the

meanings of any subject in the name of right wing irrationality and left wing defamiliarizing critique.

Hutcheon states that postmodernism focuses on its own context and it has made us aware of the discourse which makes us believe that everything that we do in the form of conversation and writing has some social, political, historical and institutionalized framework. She also agrees with Collin Mac Cabe, stating that the use of language has become an ideological flag in film and criticism that signifies that the writer has accepted to challenge to analyze it independently ignoring its political and ideological address. In the discussion of postmodernism, the term discourse becomes very important because art and theory, both cannot neglect social practices and the historical background in finding the meanings and the positions from which the texts are produced or received. Hutcheon quotes Terry Eagleton who believes that power is important element behind discourse.

Discourses, sign-systems and signifying practices of all kinds, from film and television to fiction and the languages of natural science, produce effects, shape forms of consciousness and unconsciousness, which are closely related to the maintenance or transformation of our existing systems of power (*qtd. in The Poetics* 184).

3.7 Jean-François Lyotard and the Selected Theoretical Framework

The second selected theoretical framework for the present study is based on Jean-François Lyotard's concept of the subversion of grand narratives or metanarratives. He asserts that metanarratives present an absolute and monolithic cultural phenomenon and account of history. It has a high tendency to the universal truth. He proclaims that postmodernism is skeptic towards the authoritative grand narratives like nationalism and even Christianity because they try to suppress other social or individual voices. I have analyzed the selected works of fiction to subvert these universal truths

to bring into the limelight mini narratives addressed by Native American fiction writers.

In their article, Lyotard and Niels Brügger highlight Lyotard's concept of postmodernism. His book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* is basically an effort to discuss the change in the forms of knowledge and the legitimation of knowledge by the most developed countries. His understanding of postmodernism is based on six points. Firstly, the condition of the knowledge in developed societies. Secondly, the condition of this knowledge in a postmodern society is specifically related to history. Thirdly, the term postmodernism serves as a point of departure for redefining the question of legitimation of grand narratives. Fourthly, it serves the purpose to discuss the truth and grand narratives in the context of scientific knowledge that is based on legitimized truth and institutional control with reference to social bond that is based on justice. Scientific knowledge and institutional control are used to legitimize all the knowledge; this knowledge is named "grand narrative". Scientific knowledge and social bonds support the legitimation of grand narratives but Lyotard believes that this legitimation is "untrustworthy" and the concept of Lyotard about postmodernism is based on this "untrustworthiness". Finally, Lyotard says that the consequences of the untrustworthy grand narratives are negative. "Fifth, the untrustworthiness becomes apparent by the grand narrative losing its functions, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal" (78).

3.7.1 Disbelief in Grand Narratives

Jean-François Lyotard in his book suggests that importance should be given to mini narratives in order to dismantle grand narratives. According to him, there is no ultimate reality and truth about the knowledge presented in a particular context. He argues that it is true that there is an objective truth of all the things around the world but human beings have limited knowledge so they cannot understand and grasp all the knowledge of the universe to find out one and absolute objective truth about their

required questions. “For lack of eschatology . . . leave thought suffering for lack of finality. This suffering is the postmodern state of thought” (*Postmodern Condition* 100). Lyotard’s concern is to rethink metanarratives. He strongly contends and rejects all the political ideologies including metanarratives that exclude minorities from society and harms social reality by creating violence in suppressing minorities. He challenges political ideologies that assert principles and values of a society and make them universal and unquestionable truths. The present research also works within the same parameters established by Lyotard. An in-depth study has been carried out to find out the instances where Native American fiction writers have dismantled grand narratives to promote mini narratives.

He maintains that in postmodern culture, the legitimation of knowledge in many terms carries question marks. He is of the view that grand narratives are not trusted in a way they used to be trusted in the time elapsed. Postmodern culture is different because it speculates traditionally accepted knowledge. “The grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation” (*Postmodern Condition* 37). The fall of narrative started after the Second World War with the emergence of new techniques and technologies. (Farhadi 13) The prominence shifted from the end of actions to the meaning of action. Lyotard further states that the tool of speculation creates ambiguity in knowledge because it creates many doubts in the reader’s mind about the legitimized knowledge. Speculation breaks classical lines to divide various fields of science from other disciplines are called into question. It gives way to overlapping between the borders of science and other disciplines and all this delegitimizes previously accepted knowledge.

Lyotard argues that whatever happens in the past cannot be trusted by the people who narrate it. He starts his argument with an example about the origin of language. He states that the situation that has been believed and narrated about the origin of language is under question because human

beings have told us the sequence of events which were involved in the origin of language but none of them survived till this moment. How can one believe in the situation presented to the human beings who have not seen the actual situation? There is no eye-witness who can verify the situation and the actual events. The situation presented to the human beings of this age can also be the fruit of the imagination of the informer. There is also a possibility that the situation is based on the complete imagination and there is no truth in it at all. Or even if the situation existed there are also many questions about its authenticity. He says:

Or else it did exist, in which case your informant's testimony is false either because he or she should have disappeared. Or else because he or she should remain silent!. Or else because if he or she does speak, he or she can bear witness only to the particular experience he had, it remaining to be established whether this experience was a component of the situation in question (*The Differend* 3).

Lyotard gives many examples in this book to explain his concept of differend. His most important example is about Faurisson's view about the Holocaust in which he demands a proof of the existence of gas chambers from the eyewitnesses who have been the victims of the gas chambers. Faurisson is a revisionist historian who views past events from a different perspective and who challenges these past events for their authenticity. He looks for the real eyewitnesses of the Holocaust as he believes that there can be no authentic information if it is provided by the people who themselves have never experienced the situation which is presented. Since all are dead and they are unable to testify, Faurisson's demand for meeting the eyewitnesses of the Holocaust could not be entertained. Faurisson concludes from this absence of eyewitness that there were no gas chambers at all because if there were no gas chambers, it tells that there were no eyewitnesses and if there were gas chambers even in that case no eyewitness survived to produce the evidence since they would be dead. The present study takes its inspiration from the concept of Lyotard. The analysis of the

selected fictional works shows that Euro-Americans have distorted the historical facts to promote the grand narratives which suited them to gain power and other materialistic objectives. I have quoted from history books written by Native American historians to challenge the grand narratives promoted by Euro-Americans in their accounts of history.

In his research paper, Joseph Dan also argues that the concept of metanarratives is based on ideology. He states that Lyotard and other postmodernists believe that postmodernism has caused the downfall of metanarratives. He argues that in narrating historical events, there are always some forces behind them but one thing is for sure that the final results of history cannot be predicted. He believes that the past can never happen again so there is no authenticity in the narration of history by historians. "Historians, therefore, are the worst prophets. All they know are the configurations of the past and the past is the one certain thing never to happen again . . . There may be similarities, analogies, approximations, but never an identical occurrence" (197). He further writes that a narrative means something has been predicted but the concept of metanarratives is totally different. A metanarrative is basically the claim that reality always repeats itself in some particular structure that can never be changed and it evolves in cycles which are very systematic and are based on repetitive models. Dan claims that a historian is not an honest narrator. He suggests that there should be two pertinent elements in the real study of history. The first element should be the unending quest to find out truth and the second element should be the collective effort to find out the truth and hence history should not be an individual achievement to write about realities. Subjective statements and individual prejudice against history can only be avoided if history is written by a community of historians. He states that individual version of history is more like an autobiography reflecting writer's individual agenda. It makes historians as novelists who use history to present their own fictional account.

A historian in the full sense of the term can be defined as a scholar who does not know history. Anyone who claims full knowledge does not refer to history but to his own meta-narrative concerning history. Historical truth is a goal, not an achievement; once it is declared "achieved" it is an imposed, motivated by the ideological agenda of the writer (202).

3.7.2 Promotion of Mini Narratives

Lyotard emphasizes on promoting knowledge that had been kept on the margins previously. He not only talks about dismantling grand narratives but his aim is to promote mini narratives. "The aim is not only to refute the other but to persuade a third party" (*Postmodern Condition* 49). My study of the subversion of grand narratives follows this concept of Lyotard. The purpose of the study is twofold. It not only aims to dismantle grand narratives established by Euro-Americans but also aims to promote mini narratives established by Native Americans. Lyotard focuses on the limited knowledge of human beings and he strongly believes that human beings can never find out absolute truth and absolute realities about any of the issues prevailing in the world. He claims that there is no certainty of ideas but there is a way to get these ideas through interpretation and different people have different interpretations about the same issue. So, human beings can never achieve certainty due to their limited knowledge. "It is clear that what is meant here by 'the people' is entirely different from what is implied by traditional narrative knowledge" (*Postmodern Condition* 30). He writes that people of contemporary age ask the questions about just or unjust, true or false and the very term "the people" gives the readers a clear idea that the writer wants to dismantle knowledge.

Olson conducted an interview of Lyotard and penned down it in an article. He talks about master narratives; he opines that if we are neutralizing or countering master narratives, then we are trying to make an effort to highlight the mini narratives of a particular group. There are a lot of grand

narratives about myths, religion and belief system. He emphasizes that it is also possible that there may be some grand narratives for small communities and these narratives disturb overall view of the grand narratives that is traditionally linked to the Western countries and Christian tradition. This whole discussion offers a different perspective on the meanings of communities of South Asia, North America, India or Asia; we must be cognizant of the fact that there should be multiple ways to comprehend such meanings. The stories can be narrated in several different ways if we see grand narratives vigilantly. “It's not destroying these narratives, and it's not necessarily protecting them; it's just respecting them” (401).

3.7.3 Postmodern View of Power and Legitimacy

Jean-François Lyotard argues that science and technical knowledge are never questioned because they are complemented by socio-political power. Since scientific knowledge is not ultimate and it does not represent totality, truism in relation to science and technology is just a set of fallacies. Lyotard further says that it always conflicts with other forms of knowledge and he links these other forms to narrative knowledge. Lyotard uses a term “legitimation” for this purpose. He defines legitimation as, “Legitimation is the process by which a legislator is authorized to promulgate such a law as a norm” (*The Postmodern Condition* 8). He states:

Now take the example of a scientific statement: it is subject to the rule that a statement must fulfill a given set of conditions in order to be accepted as scientific. In this case, legitimation is the process by which a "legislator" dealing with scientific discourse is authorized to prescribe the stated conditions (in general, conditions of internal consistency and experimental verification) determining whether a statement is to be included in that discourse for consideration by the scientific community (*The Postmodern Condition* 8).

He states that “knowledge and power are two sides of the same question: who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided?”

The question of knowledge is now more than ever a question of government” (*The Postmodern Condition* 9). According to Lyotard, the relation between power and the legitimacy of science is called language game; he takes the concept of language game as his methodology to convey his point of view about legitimacy. He asserts that today the problem of legitimation is no longer considered a failing of the language game of science. It would be more accurate to say that it has itself been legitimized as a problem. (*The Postmodern Condition* 9)

A crude proof of this: what do scientists do when they appear on television or are interviewed in the newspapers after making a "discovery"? They recount an epic of knowledge that is in fact wholly unepic. They play by the rules of the narrative game; its influence remains considerable not only on the users of the media, but also on the scientist's sentiments. This fact is neither trivial nor accessory: it concerns the relationship of scientific knowledge to "popular" knowledge, or what is left of it. The state spends large amounts of money to enable science to pass itself off as an epic: the State's own credibility is based on that epic, which it uses to obtain the public consent its decision makers need (*The Postmodern Condition* 27-28).

He takes scientific knowledge as narrative because he believes that the language game of science has a strong desire to legitimate its knowledge but it is not possible for it to do it independently, it needs a platform. To legitimize the truth, it needs some resources and history is considered a legitimized truth about the past. Lyotard further highlights the need to write history and ironically, its need is not to remember past events and project them but the need behind writing those events of history is to forget.

It is not inconceivable that the recourse to narrative is inevitable, least to the extent that the language game of science desires its statements to be true but does not have the resources to legitimate their truth on its own. If this is the case, it is necessary to admit an

irreducible need for history understood, as outlined above—not as a need to remember or to project (a need for historicity, for accent), but on the contrary as a need to forget (*The Postmodern Condition* 28). Lyotard tries to find out the meaning and purpose of totalization and he quotes from Hegel's Encyclopedia:

It is the mechanism of developing a Life that is simultaneously Subject, that we see a return of narrative knowledge. There is a universal 'history' of spirit, spirit is 'life', and 'life' is its own self presentation and formulation in the ordered knowledge of all of its forms contained in the empirical sciences. The encyclopedia of German idealism is the narration of the '(hi)story' of this life-subject. But what it produces is a meta narrative, for the story's narrator must not be a people mired in the particular positivity of its traditional knowledge, nor even scientists taken as a whole, since they are sequestered in professional frameworks corresponding to their respective specialties (*The Postmodern Condition* 34).

In his article, Muller writes that politics and postmodernism are inseparable. History carries the burden of domination of elites that is practiced through money or power but it does not make it universal because it does not provide real and equal chance. Literature has a great role to play in history and its participation is through the movement of language. Literature shows two alternatives. One is used to highlight universalism, while the other is used to highlight silenced voices (57).

In her research paper, Donna Merwick writes that postmodernism gives liberty to play with words and this play is taken as a dangerous weapon against the fundamental set of European certainties. It has created unease among scholars, for they feel it is very offensive because it questions powerful positions that remained outside the margin of questions. It mocks science and all the statements which convey certainty. It focuses on individual meanings even in historical events. It takes history just as a set of events from the past with no certainty. It demands a discourse to be

double coded which should have a possibility of change. The writer further argues that Lyotard also shows a strong disbelief in metanarratives and his writing is basically to twist the accepted interpretations of European history. In traditional societies, oral traditions used to be very important to decide on the ways of doing things and charting the ways of the first and last things. The ultimate authority used to be the community but then a shift took place and modern societies started to rely on science and it discarded communal system. The focus of science was on legitimizing things and the truth for it was to be sterilized from ignorance, barbarity, prejudice and superstitions. Lyotard takes scientific knowledge as totalizing narratives and the purpose of it is to suppress. He states that Jacques Derrida is of the opinion that the philosophers have a misconception that whatever they say, they say real and whatever they represent, their representation is real and true and they give a lot of importance to the identities and certainties but they cannot handle unreason. The writer further quotes Nietzsche as saying that there is a form of everything and the form is also invented by us. We construct facts and we invent meanings of things and but only those representations are true which are drawn after ignoring archeology. Deconstructing accepted realities is important in postmodernism and to deconstruct a traditionally accepted certainty, one must know the spaces of the disciplines and those spaces are basically the margins (5-8).

3.7.4 Argument about Silenced Knowledge

Lyotard asserts that postmodernism is all about a way of placing or displacing knowledge into the limelight and the purpose remains to debate the modernist claim about the legitimacy of science and technology (*The Inhuman* 35). His book is about a challenge to humanism because he states that it depends upon the definition of human which is exclusive of difference. He challenges the notion of humanism by contrasting it with human nature and the education system to produce acceptable human beings. He questions the existence of humanism; we are not born humans if we don't pass through educational system. According to Lyotard, The term

“inhuman” has two meanings. The first one is the dehumanizing effect of science and technology on society and the second meaning is that the idea of being human tries to repress or exclude which results in disaster.

In one of his books, Lyotard tells us how injustice takes place in the context of language. He presents the term “Differend” that is basically a conflict. He gives an example of political parties to explain this term. He states that a differend can be elaborated with the help of a situation in which two political parties are embroiled in a conflict. Differend can be taken as a point of dispute in a situation where two political parties cannot agree on one point because the point of dispute cannot be fairly resolved due to lack of a rule of judgment and differend is opposite to litigation. He then gives two terminologies known as the victim and the plaintiff to explain the differend. He states that the plaintiff represents the wronged party in litigation, while the victim is the wronged party in differend. Lyotard is of the view that the victim is not only someone who has been wronged but he is also someone who is deprived of the power to present and highlight what is wrong. There can be many ways in which this disempowerment can occur in the case of the victim. There is a possibility that the victim has been silenced through the use of threats or he has been barred from raising his voice. There is another possibility as well as highlighted by Lyotard in terms of the rule of judgment. It says that there is also possibility that the victim may speak but the speech remains unable to present the wrong for many reasons. May be the victim is not believed or may be the victim is taken as mad who cannot present the wrong.

It is in the nature of a victim not to be able to prove that one has been done a wrong. A plaintiff is someone who has incurred damages and who disposes of the means to prove it. Once becomes a victim if one loses these means. One loses them. For example, if the author of the damages turns out directly or indirectly to be one's judge. The latter has the authority to reject one's testimony as false or the ability to impede its publication (*The Differend* 8).

3.7.5 Postmodern Deconstruction

Jacques Derrida's concept of deconstruction is closely related to postmodernism as it offers many strategies to read and write a text and to extract multiple meanings from a given text on the basis of their differences from each other. It calls for creativity. This creativity relates to Hutcheon's self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction because both focus on creativity and subjectivity. Derrida takes a written sign as purely the matter of its function ignoring the meaning of that sign. "It comes to perform vicarious function" (365). He views the signs as producing a chain of different meanings that are spread in all the directions. Lynn also conveys the same view of deconstruction and creativity for the text. He believes that there are certain functions of deconstruction and creativity is fundamental to deconstruct the text. "Thus, deconstructing a text calls for careful reading and bit creativity" (9). McCulagh in his book writes, "People are able to deliberate and exercise their will in new, creative ways" (26).

Lyotard states that postmodernity encourages us to think deeply about language and challenge the shallow notion of information to remove the lasting ambiguity within language because language is not just an instrument of communication but it is a complex system of phrase and in this complex system of phrases, there are different regimes of phrases and one cannot translate phrases from one regime to another regime as it is not possible to translate a descriptive phrase into an evaluative phrase. The comparison between different regimes of phrases is discussed in postmodernism as paradoxes. He is of the view that some incommensurabilities are not possible and for postmodern perspective, these incommensurabilities are paradoxes, deconstruction and the effects of power on language. Lyotard states that postmodernity stresses on the notions of deconstruction and the use power behind some discourse. ". . . this is because it has also stressed incommensurability, through its reflection

on the deconstruction of writing (Derrida), on the disorder of discourse (Foucault)” (*Political Writing* 28).

Michel Foucault focuses on the meaning of language, power and social behavior in a given society. He opines that it is merely the power of thought of human beings that makes them to get meanings and to interpret knowledge according to their circumstances and society in which they live. He takes the power of thinking as the power that makes human beings to think differently instead of believing in the legitimized knowledge that is already known to people. He further states that “. . . in the Classical age, languages had a grammar because they had the power to represent; now they represent on the basis of that grammar, which is for them a sort of historical reverse side” (258).

3.7.6 Lyotard and Limitation of Human Knowledge

Lyotard states that there are always the limits of reason. His point of view relates to postmodernism as it draws our attention to the limits of human knowledge. The subject of his book offers a postmodern perspective on sublime. He relates it to the differend as he writes that differend is an experience of inability to find out the words to express something. This concept signals Lyotard’s terminologies of language game and phrase regime which try to overlap one another which he terms an experience of limits of reason. “. . . differend that constitutes the sublime feeling: of fear and exaltation. A differend, which, in turn, is the subjective state of thought at the mercy of the differend of its powers to present and to conceive” (*Lessons* 149). He seconds Kant’s opinion about sublime because in Kant’s philosophy, sublime is a mixed feeling of pleasure and pain that we feel when we encounter something great and magnificent. He is of the view that human beings can have just the idea of sublime but their sensory intuition is not capable of grasping it as sublime surpasses sensory intuition. Lyotard believes that sublime is a great to all things and it stuns our abilities to express it in knowledge and words. It places us in a position to stand between pleasure and pain in frustration of inability to express it in words

knowing it very well that this is something really great which should be produced in words. Lyotard's philosophy about postmodernism is the sublime feeling that indicates the limits of reason and representation.

If, however, we accept along with Kant that their dissonance and not its resolution attests to a finality, a supreme consonance of thought with itself, then we have to conclude that it is essential for thought to feel reflexively its heterogeneity when it brings itself to its own limit's (*Lessons* 149-150).

3.7.7 Speculation of Meanings

Vincent Leitch asserts that there is no concept of literal language because there is no fixed meaning of words. It is just an illusion to talk about literal language. In a sense, she informs her readers that there is no objective truth and reality in literal translations and representations. So, the literal translations and tribal representations can never be objective and correct. In a way, these literal translations and representations of tribal text are also illusions in dominant culture. They can be taken as pleasurable, energetic and interesting texts but not objective and correct because there is no concept of literal language in the world (59).

In his interview with Olson, talking about his work, Lyotard is found to be preoccupied with the relation between culture and writing. He is very conscious about the meanings. His philosophy about meanings is based on the openness of meanings which is central to postmodernism. It rejects the certainty of meanings because to him, true writing attempts to resist cultural networks which can influence the knowledge in that particular writing. My study also highlights that deriving meaning is a subjective phenomenon.

Lyotard believes in the contradictions to the traditional notion of writing. There should be new questions regarding the traditional system of writing. "Lyotard claims to have taken up writing and scholarly work as a kind of 'mourning' brought on by the realization that "militant activity was no longer effective" (392). His resistance is very organized and it seems to be his policy and politics against traditionally accepted social realities.

When asked about his views about universality losing its function and the emergence of speculative hierarchy which is making new ways for learning, he briefly answered, saying that in postmodern culture, the purpose of knowledge had been completely changed. He has elaborated this very point in his book *Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. He believes that people question every aspect of knowledge now-a-days and there is no universal reality in the world but in every traditional reality, there is a hierarchal speculation.

In this chapter, the research methodology and the theoretical framework of the present study have been described in order to lend an interpretive innovativeness to the reading and investigation of the selected fictional works in the next chapters for analysis. Far from viewing the issues of Native Americans as merely emanating from a subjective outlook, the analysis of the selected literary texts for the present study is contextualized in the historical, social and cultural dimensions of the ideas discussed in each text about Native Americans.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYZING FICTION BY THOMAS KING AND GERALD VIZENOR: SELF-REFLEXIVITY AND INTERTEXTUAL PARODY OF HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION IN FOCUS

The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full-stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network.
(Micheal Foucault)

This chapter aims to explore the marginalized truth about the history of Native Americans in the selected novels of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King. The study of this chapter is based on the comparison of the officially documented history and the historical characters bearing the fictive history of the selected novels. Linda Hutcheon's postmodern theory of historiographic metafiction has been used as a tool to achieve the first research objective. The analysis is carried out through the lens of the two techniques of historiographic metafiction: Intertextual parody and the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction have been employed to blur the

boundary between fiction and history. The study is designed to show how the selected writers have rewritten the history of Native Americans under the cover of fiction to fill gaps and to address the topic of the marginalized truth about their history. Primarily, the chapter presents the Native American view on history to give central importance to the silenced truth about the oppressed nation. The study is designed to place history and fiction on the same margin; the analysis of this chapter establishes that the selected writers have fictionalized history by giving their fiction the same place as enjoyed by history. To emphasize, the selected writers assert that both fiction and history deserve equal significance and treatment in every respect. Enough evidence has been provided from the selected works to lend credence and support to the Native Americans' narration of fictive history to highlight their marginalized version of history. They contest the history of Native Americans documented by Euro- Americans , maintaining Euro-Americans' version of history contradicts factual truth. The study shows that Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King have produced an antithetical version of history under the cover of fiction to culminate the silenced facts about the history of Native Americans.

4.1 A Confrontation with History: *The Heirs of Columbus*

Gerald Vizenor starts his novel *The Heirs of Columbus* with the historical account of the discovery of America in a self-reflexive and parodic way. The novel highlights a new perspective on that historical event purely from the Native Americans' standpoint. Linda Hutcheon's concept of historiographic metafiction plays a very important role in making the readers believe in Vizenor's account of history under the cover of fiction. For him there is no neat dividing line between the texts of history and literature and therefore he feels free to draw on both. The question of originality obviously has a different meaning within the framework of the postmodern theory. Vizenor has narrated the story very tactfully, using intertextual parody that blurs the boundary between fiction and history. For this purpose, he highlights American Indians' perspective on the discovery

of America that is totally contrary to Euro- Americans' historical account of the discovery. The novel opens with the story about the discovery of America that is told to the readers with the help of two sources. One of the sources originates from the journal of Christopher Columbus that he writes to the Crown; and this source is Euro- Americans' historical perspective. The other source flows from the narrator of the novel; the second source projects American Indians' perspective of history. The Native American perspective asserts that Columbus did not discover America but he returned to his native place after a few years. While he was on route to his native home, he forgot the direction and saw a blue light that indicated a call to the New World. In fact, the light was a torch held by the silent hand talker who was a native to that island. Columbus is considered a trickster healer by Native Americans. Vizenor writes that Christopher Columbus is a tribal trickster, who is a crossblood and belongs to the Mayan civilization. Columbus belongs to the tribe named Anishinaaba, which is considered to be the oldest tribe in the New World of Native Americans. Vizenor writes, ". . . he was an obscure crossblood who bore the tribal signature of survivance" (3). Columbus unfurled royal banner, wrote Guanahani and named the tribe he encountered on the island. He thought he had discovered a new island and he started misrepresenting tribal people in the beginning but later on he realized that he belonged to them. "He misconstrued tribal pose and later traced his soul to the stories in blood" (4). Vizenor's intertextual parodic twist of Columbus' discovery is not to destroy the past but it is to enshrine the past and to question it from the standpoint of Native Americans to create postmodern paradox in his fiction.

Another perspective is given in Christopher Columbus' journal that he wrote on October 13, 1492 for the Crown. He started his narration with his confusion about the island. He informed the Crown about the light. There was no clue whether the light was the indication of a new land or it was something other than the sign of discovering a new place. However, he started following the direction of the light and finally reached an island.

Columbus further stated that the island was full of people who had been living like a tribe. And he named the tribe as Guanahani. “They all go naked as their mothers bore them” (4). Columbus showed his sword to a tribal man whose body was painted and he had no idea about that instrument so he grabbed that sword by its blade and injured himself. Vizenor’s fiction traces the actual incident from history. The intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction blurs the boundary between history and fiction. Howard Zinn explicates Columbus’ first encounter with Native Americans in the following lines.

Arawak men and women, naked, tawny, and full of wonder, emerged from their villages onto the island's beaches and swam out to get a closer look at the strange big boat... They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword, they took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance (3).

Vizenor writes that the situation became hostile for him, and he decided to stay there to win their hearts. In order to win their friendship, Columbus gave them red caps and glass beads which they hung around their necks. Seeing their simplicity, he was sure they could be converted to Christianity easily because they believed in the language of love and friendship rather than cruelty. “They ought to make good and skilled servants, for they repeat very quickly whatever we say to them” (4). Vizenor asserts that Christopher Columbus misconstrued the hospitality of Native Americans; without any sense of guilt, he invaded their sovereign states. Vizenor highlights Columbus’ Eurocentric mentality to subjugate Native Americans. For me, the intertexts are many books written (before and after the novel) on the great discovery of America.

Vizenor rewrites the history of Christopher’s voyage. Furthermore, he points out that American Indians are the real descendants of Columbus. To emphasize his point of view, he employs various ways. Vizenor’s use of intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction is evident here from his

deep distrust of the objective presentation of history. It is his ironic intermingling of the factual and the fictive and his deliberate anachronisms that underline this mistrust. As Barbara Foley notes, *USA* implies that historical reality is knowable, coherent, significant, and inherently moving. After narrating the story himself as an omniscient narrator, Vizenor takes help from his characters who have been presented to tell about the true identity of Columbus as Mayan. He introduces a character named Stone Columbus who is presented as the descendent of Christopher Columbus. Stone Columbus holds late night radio shows in which he repeats stories about Christopher Columbus. Vizenor tells that Stone Columbus is also a crossblood and he carries stories of genetic signature in his blood. By genetic signature, Vizenor does not mean the genes of Christopher Columbus, but he relates it to stories in blood. Ancestral stories are a source of survival for American Indians. Stone tells his audience on radio shows that truth is there in the genes of American Indians in the form of stories. “‘We are tribal heirs of great explorer’, said stone” (10). He repeats his claim, “‘Columbus was Mayan’, said Stone” (9).

Vizenor reinstalls all the historical context of Columbus when he claims that Columbus was Mayan. In doing so, Vizenor does not discard history because his focus remains on the thinking process of his readers. The way Vizenor has given a lot of importance to the individual perception about history, it questions the authenticity of historical knowledge. He conveys American Indians’ point of view about their history with special reference to Columbus. Stone tells his listeners that Christopher Columbus is back to answer the questions of American Indians. This is very important because American Indians believe that Columbus belongs to a culture that will never die because they keep it alive by remembering the stories and they relate it to the resurrection of human beings. Vizenor’s theme of resurrection can be related to the revival of the history and culture of these Native people in a different way. He challenges Euro- Americans’ historical account of the discovery of America by telling the readers that the

truth about this historical event has been shrouded in the dark. “Columbus is back to answer your questions and mine tonight. Here we go once more with the truth in the dark” (9).

This claim signifies that American Indians are now all set to rewrite their history and their past to reject the history written by Euro- Americans and in this effort, the center is going to take the place of the margin and the margin takes the place of the center. The symbolic language used by Vizenor lends a striking and unique feature to his fiction. The name of Stone Columbus is also very symbolic that tells the readers that American Indians have a strong affiliation with stones as well. They give stones importance to the extent that they have been named after stones. Since they claim that Christopher Columbus also belongs to them and he is Mayan. So, Columbus must be linked to stones as well. The silenced voices of American Indians have been heard by these stones and they are the witness of the heirs of Christopher Columbus. “Stones hold our tribal words and the past in silence” (9). Vizenor further strengthens his claim about the ancestors of Columbus with the help of the conversation taking place between Stone Columbus and another character; the character asks Stone Columbus about his ancestry. “How can you claim to be direct descendant of Christopher Columbus?” (9). Stone answers steadfastly that he is sure about his ancestry and he knows Columbus belongs to him because Columbus belongs to Mayan and he is also Mayan. Vizenor’s intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction extends a story about the great explorer in a way that it casts doubt on the previous historical account about him and gives a new viewpoint about the story in a self-reflexive way. This postmodern self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction encourages the readers to develop a link with fiction and trust the author.

By presenting history something as paradoxical and uncertain, Vizenor makes his readers believe that there is nothing fixed in history because history is also written by human beings who are prone to committing error. There can be intentional changes in the process of writing

down history or it can happen by chance and by mistake. Gerald Vizenor uses the same character Stone Columbus, the descendent of Christopher Columbus, to achieve his objective. Vizenor's narration of Native American story is self-reflexive as it is loaded with fantasy and imagination. At the same time, it contains postmodern subjectivity as well. Stone narrates the story of Christopher Columbus on radio. He hosts a late-night radio show with Admiral Luckie White. Admiral Luckie White asks questions about Columbus and Stone answers them for their listeners. While narrating the story of Columbus, Stone purposefully keeps on changing the dates and places of the same incident. This is very important and unusual way adopted by Vizenor to tell the readers that there is no ultimate reality and truth in history. This uncertainty highlights postmodern ambiguity and creativity to assert that there is no fixed reality of things in the world. He narrates Columbus's first encounter with Samana. Samana has been portrayed as a tribal woman who is also known as a golden healer. Samana is a hand talker and she heals the people with her golden hands. Stone tells the listeners that Columbus found gold and Samana on the island and he narrates this encounter by changing the dates every time he repeats this encounter. He not only narrates his meeting with Samana but also tells the readers that Samana healed Columbus. He tells "Samana is our hand talker . . . she touched his soul and set the wounded adventurer free on October 28, 1492 at Bahia de Bariary . . . he said, and smiled over the dates and names" (10). Then during their discussion, Stone repeats Columbus' encounter with Samana and changes the date and place. "October 29, 1492, at Rio de la Luna" (11). Admiral objects to his move of changing dates and places but he replies, "Columbus is ever on the move in our stories" (11). This change in places and dates indicates that history keeps on changing as conveyed by Stone; besides, it suggests that there are many perspectives on Columbus given in American Indians' stories. Vizenor has dealt with the dates very carefully that shows the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction. The idea of altering dates aims to give subjective point of view about history.

Postmodernists also believe that there is no authenticity in historical account as they are produced by human beings and Stone Columbus reinforces this concept of postmodern ambiguity.

Vizenor deals with his characters differently in order to complement the notion of the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction introduced by Hutcheon. He is very innovative in dealing with his characters. His characters are human beings, at times animals and sometimes they are even non-living things. His method of introducing his characters in an uncertain and ever-changing way conveys the same impression that there is no certainty and fixed reality of things in history as anything is possible and anything can happen in an unexpected way. He tells his readers that Columbus is back to answer the questions. Here he owns Columbus as Native American. "Columbus is back to answer your questions and mine tonight. Here we go once more with the truth in the dark, so, how do you expect our listeners to buy the stories that your brother is a stone, a common rock?" (9). Stone tells the listeners that he is a stone and this earth is created by the brother of the first trickster (Christopher Columbus) and that the creator is also a stone. "Stone is my name, not my brother and we are not common," said Stone Columbus - - - "The stone is my totem, my stories are stones, there are tribal stones, and the brother of the first trickster who created the earth was a stone, stone, stone" (9). Apparently, it seems to be quite weird to find that a stone is talking like a human being and hosting a radio show. The postmodern intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction plays an important role in creating authenticity and an element of truth in Vizenor's fictional account of the creation of earth. Historiographic metafiction rejects the view that only history can claim the truth about anything. Hutcheon takes historiography and fiction as discourses which are based on human constructions to highlight a particular point of view. Admiral asks Stone about the truth in his stories, pointing out that stones do not speak as they are non-living objects. However, Stone repeats that he is a stone and all the important characters in their history are

stone. “Stones hold our tribal words and the past in silence” (9). Vine Deloria Jr. in his book *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* establishes the same relation between human beings and other objects of nature. He asserts that American Indians work in coordination with nature. They respect all other forms of life by considering them their brothers or relatives. “The phrase all my relatives is frequently invoked by Indians performing ceremonies” (84). According to Deloria Jr, the reason for starting every ceremony with this phrase revolves around the concept of according equal importance and respect to other forms of life. To tell them that they are also part of this ceremony, Native Americans also invite other forms of life to participate in the ceremony.

Vizenor proceeds with his plan for giving equal importance to all forms of life through another character Samana, who has been presented to have all the human qualities because she is portrayed as a hand talker. At times, he tells us that she is a woman; whereas on another occasion, he tells that she is not human being. To emphasize, he makes Stone his mouthpiece who tells Admiral that Samana is a gold fish. “Samana is our hand talker, the golden woman of the ocean seas and a sister to fish” (10). Stone tells that she met Columbus on waters, healed him but in his story she remains sister to a gold fish. Stone also tells that Samana is a silent hand talker with a golden braid and she carries two wooden puppets. Samana discovered that the great explorer Christopher Columbus was Native American who was a tribal man and he carried stories in his blood. Here, she is presented as a mysterious lady with two wooden puppets who is blessed with silence. While healing Columbus, she discovers that he belongs to them. Then, Samana is presented as crossblood like Christopher Columbus. The term of crossblood has been coined by Vizenor to convey that mixed breed has a negative connotation and therefore he has invented a new term to give it a positive meaning. He takes it as an advantage to have the qualities of two races and the very term indicates that Samana must be a human being, however in the same line Vizenor tells us that she is a black bear that creates

postmodern uncertainty. “Samana, the crossblood black bear and lonesome hand talker on the island” (12). All these characters create ambiguity in the fiction of Vizenor because he presents them differently every time, confirming uncertainty about history as it is also written by human beings who have full authority to write it the way they want.

Hutcheon asserts,

Far from being just another form of aesthetic introversion, parodic intertextuality works to force us to look again at the connections between art and the "world." Any simple mimesis is replaced by a problematized and complex set of interrelations at the level of discourse—that is, at the level of the way we talk about experience, literary or historical, present or past. The fact is that, in practice, intertexts unavoidably call up contexts: social and political, among others. The "double contextualizability" (Schmidt) of intertexts forces us not only to double our vision, but to look beyond the centers to the margins, the edges, the ex-centric (“Historiographic Metafiction” 25).

The title of the first chapter of the book also gives a different perspective on the traditionally accepted history. Vizenor’s use of intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction provides him with the opportunity to re-write the history of Columbus. The title is *Santa Maria Casino* and it has been chosen very carefully to challenge Euro- Americans ’ historical truth. It is the parody of the officially documented history because in the official history authored by Euro- Americans , Santa Maria was the largest of three ships used by Christopher Columbus during his first voyage to the island. Vizenor has dealt Santa Maria ship in a self-reflexive way by converting it into a casino. This casino has been presented as a flagship casino for games on international borders. Vizenor has very tactfully adapted Santa Maria from the largest ship among the three ships to the largest casino on international border. “The casino was an enormous barge that has been decked for games” (6). By making Stone Columbus his mouthpiece,

Vizenor tells the readers that Santa Maria Casino earned millions and it was beneficial for American Indians. Vizenor has not only converted the largest ship Santa Maria into a casino but he has also challenged the history written by Euro- Americans by giving the different meanings to the two other ships Nina and Pinta. Vizenor has adapted Nina to a restaurant and Pinta to a tax free market in his novel. The names of the ships have been used to name the Casino, the restaurant and the tax free market. Native Americans used to earn a good profit from them but one night, in a thunderstorm, all of them were destroyed. This destruction reminds the readers of Euro- Americans ' version of history that states that all three ships were in a pathetic condition and consequently they inconvenienced Christopher Columbus during the long voyage.

Vizenor's idea of naming the casino, the restaurant and the tax free market after the names of the ships attests the notion that history does not convey an objective truth. Therefore, this side of the fictional story, which is totally different from the traditional story of the historical event presented by Euro- Americans, blurs the boundary between fiction and history. Vizenor has rewritten the historical account of Columbus' voyage from Native Americans' perspective and the intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction provides the liberty to the writer and the reader to believe that there is no ultimate truth in history. If Euro- Americans ' account of history can be authentic, then American Indians' perspective can also be authentic. With postmodern disbelief towards the reality of ultimate truth, we have also been conveyed a message that the officially documented history was also biased and there was no truth in it. Vizenor has recontextualized Euro- Americans ' historical account with his parody in *The Heirs of Columbus*. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book *Red Earth, White Lies: Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact* also establishes the same concept about the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus. He opines that truth is always marginalized by dominant societies and they push the truth to the margin to legitimize their concocted truth to their own

advantage. Vine Deloria Jr. criticizes Western dominance and their written records about the historical event. He states that the written records are made authentic by the people who wield power, who decide what should be written and what is prohibited. He gives the example of Samuel Eliot Morison regarding the officially documented history of Columbus and pre-Columbian period. "Samuel Eliot Morison was a singularly devoted worshipper of Columbus, and while he was alive it was virtually impossible to discuss pre-Columbian expeditions to the Western Hemisphere in any academic setting" (30).

Vizenor in his novel narrates a unique version of the creation story of the earth, claiming that the earth has been created by a stone. The creation story is self-reflexive in nature. He has mentioned many a time that Native Americans give special importance to stones as we are told that the earth has been created by a trickster and the first trickster was also a stone. He presents his version of the history of Native Americans in a very different manner. While giving his account of the Native Americans' history, he narrates magical events that seem to be unrealistic. However, he proves his point by giving many references to the same incident. Stones are the heirs of the trickster stone who created the world in the fiction of Vizenor. He emphasizes on his historical account of stones by mentioning it many a time in his fiction and I, as a reader, believe in his perspective of the historical events because he proves it with the help of many evidences. Hutcheon's theory of postmodern historiographic metafiction is evident in the creation story in Vizenor narration as it asserts that there is a blur boundary between history and fiction due to postmodern self-reflexivity. She takes historiographic metafiction as a way to rewrite and subvert history in postmodern fiction. Vizenor has strived for plurality of truths and subsequently history is no longer objective for him in his creation story. His fiction makes the readers feel that they are reading a work of art.

Historical truth and subjective imagination do not have fixed border and this fact becomes the reason to give equal importance to history and

fiction. Vizenor persists with his claim that the first trickster, who was a stone, had created the earth as well as tribes. The tradition of storytelling has also a great importance in Native Americans' culture. Vizenor tells his readers with the help of omniscient narrator of his novel *The Heirs of Columbus* that in the history of Native Americans, stones used to tell stories to the people and these stories were about the tricksters who created the earth. According to the novel, all those stories are heard by stones because the stories were about the first Stone who created the earth. Now it is the responsibility of the stones of the present time to remember those stories because in Vizenor's fiction, stories run through the blood and genes of Native Americans. The trickster stories are basically the creation stories of the earth and the tribal people. The trickster stories reveal that history and past are cherished by Native Americans who want to remember them as well as transferring the same to their next generations. Another point is noteworthy here that the theme of the novel revolves around the heirs and ancestry of Columbus with special emphasis on the first stone who created the world and tribes. The stones from the Native American history by Vizenor convey the same theme of heirs and ancestry. The way tribal people own Christopher Columbus is the same way in which these stones own the historical stones and the trickster stone who created the world. The stories run through the blood of Native Americans. Similarly, the stories of the stones are echoed among the stones of the present era who listen to the echoes of their ancestor stones. They consider it their responsibility to remember those stories to narrate them to their new generations. "The stones once told the stories, trickster stories; now the stones listen at the mount" (13).

The recurrence of the themes of ancestry, belonging and legitimate heirs in the historical account presented by Vizenor underscores the responsibility and significance of remembering the stories and history. He has narrated the story of Samana, a tribal hand talker, who healed Columbus in a very beautiful and mysterious way that seems to be a magic. Samana,

who is presented as a tribal woman carrying two wooden puppets, touched Columbus to heal him and those puppets turned into blue color producing blue radiance all around to confirm that the great explorer had been healed. Vizenor tells his readers the same story later on but the purpose changes the second time. When he purposefully repeats the same story of Columbus' ancestry accompanied by the magical episode of Columbus' treatment, he aims to highlight the responsibility of tribal people to remember their stories for the sake of their future. It evokes postmodern way to look into the things differently. The same story has been narrated again in order to make the readers realize that history can be revisited to protect and secure political or personal agendas. He conveys this message through the heirs of the first stone, who created the world. The readers are told that the stones listen to the creation stories from the echoes of the past and remember them. They also remember the episode of Columbus' treatment by a hand talker that produced blue radiance with the help of blue puppets to confirm the heredity and convey a sense of belonging to the healer and Columbus simultaneously. "The stones heal and remember the radiation of creation and resurrection" (13).

Vizenor tells the readers another story about Columbus, which covers the lineage of Columbus as well as a new aspect of resurrection. Vizenor employs the technique of parodic intertextuality with the help revision of history in order to distort the boundary between fiction and history. The theme of resurrection is highlighted in multiple ways; different characters and stones give various references to the process of resurrection. The revised historical account provided by Vizenor tells that Columbus was suffering from a sexual disease. A tribal woman named Samana, the hand talker, healed him. It was not just his healing, it was his resurrection. It parodies the officially documented history of Columbus' voyage. The use of the word resurrection conveys a very different story about the explorer as it says that Columbus died and she was the one who gave him a second life. Vizenor has provided the readers with this new story by furnishing

many references and proofs. Stone tells Admiral Luckie White that “Columbus escaped from the culture of death and carried our tribal genes back to the New World” (9). Truman Columbus also confirms the resurrection of Columbus at Stone Tavern. “The stones heal and remember the radiation of creation and resurrection” (13). There is no mention of Columbus’ disease or recovery or even death during his first voyage in the historical account of Euro- Americans but the history presented by Vizenor, under the cover of fiction, provides a very different aspect of Columbus’ life which blurs the line between history and fiction. He claims that Native Americans healed him and gave him a second life. This fictional account of his death can also be taken symbolically. It also can be metaphorical death. There is also a possibility that Vizenor takes his recovery from the disease as his resurrection carried out by Native Americans. There can be even another meaning of the metaphorical death of Columbus. There is also a possibility that Vizenor considers Columbus’ belonging to Euro- Americans as his death and when he returns to his homeland he escapes the culture of death and this return to his place bestowed on him a new life. Vizenor has mentioned this many a time in his novel and his claim of Columbus’ resurrection evokes the postmodern concept of historiographic metafiction. The same theme of resurrection also brings to light self-reflexive intertextual parody that distorts the boundary between fiction and history in order to make it self-conscious. Patricia Waugh takes the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction as a kind of inherent nature in all novels which “self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose question about the relationship between fiction and reality” (2).

Vizenor highlights the act of resurrection by Native Americans with the help of historical background of Stone Columbus. He is mentioned as the brother of the first trickster who created the earth. In his fiction, he narrates the magical incidents about the historical account of these Native people. He emphasizes on each extra ordinary thing about these people with

a lot of details from several characters in his novel who confirm the same incident. He also repeats these unusual things to make his readers believe in his own historical account that casts a doubt on the previously accepted account about Native Americans. Vizenor in his fictive history repeats the process of resurrection. Sometimes, he relates it to Christopher Columbus, sometimes linking it to Stone Columbus and sometimes even connecting it to the other historical characters in the novel. In the fiction of Vizenor, Stone Columbus escaped death thrice and got back to life. Each time he died, he was brought back to life by a woman as women in Native Americans' culture hold a powerful position and they are portrayed very strong in the fiction of Native Americans. When Stone Columbus died the first time in the government school, he was a child. The grandmother of Stone Columbus named Truman Columbus tells an anthropologist while narrating the story of stones and tribal history that Stone Columbus is the first tribal man who has escaped the death thrice. She tells that "He died in a thunderstorm at reservation school" (14). Stone Columbus died with another school child and Truman Columbus tried to bring both the children back to life but she could save only her grandson. "I touched them both and blew on them but the other child would not hold me in his dreams" (15). She continues to tell the anthropologist that Stone Columbus responded to her and he was brought to life again. ". . . and then he came back to the headwaters" (15). Then there is a mention of Stone's second resurrection. Stone Columbus narrates his story of his second resurrection to Felipa Flowers. He tells her that ice woman brought him back to life after his death. He sank deep in the cold water and died when the ice woman reached there to help him. "The ice woman brought me back and that was my second resurrection" (11). Then the readers are told by an omniscient narrator about the third resurrection of Stone Columbus that was done by Samana who was known as the tribal hand talker. He died the third time due to the storm that hit Santa Maria Casino and destroyed everything around it. He also died there but then Samana blew on his eyes and mouth and he felt the blue

radiance and he was brought back to life with that blue radiance. “She teased his ears with her nose and blew on his eyes and mouth... Samana touched his head and the bears pushed him back from the death with a blue radiance” (12). In his fiction, Vizenor gives a different account of the history of Native Americans by mentioning the episode of resurrection. The postmodern historiographic metafiction could be seen to be at its peak as history has been rewritten in a self-reflexive way and in a very unique manner with the subjectivity of the thought process. The writers’ and extreme imagination makes his fictive events look magical. Vizenor, whose fiction is self-reflective, self-criticizing, makes his readers feel that they are reading a work of art.

Vizenor makes Truman Columbus his mouthpiece and narrates the story of the first stones who were tricksters in the history of Native Americans. Truman Columbus tells an anthropologist that the three trickster stones have been stolen since the creation of earth and tribal people. She tells the anthropologist a very mysterious fact about the incident of stone robberies. One thing was common in all the three robberies that the people found near those stolen stones lost their vision, fell ill and died in just a few months after the robbery. She narrates the first incident of the stolen stone and reveals that the first trickster stone has been stolen by a missionary. When the members of the church touched the stone they not only got blind but also got frightened and threw the stone in the ocean sea. The stone could never be recovered. Then, she delineates the happening of the second stolen stone. She tells the readers that the second stone was stolen by an anthropologist who kept that trickster stone in a the display case of the university and tried to tell his students about the stone but the students withered in no time and the anthropologist died. A wave of scare spread among all the students who suggested that the stone should be returned to the tribal people and it was returned. The third stone was stolen by a blond shaman. She stole the warm stone which happened to be a trickster healer. She broke the stone into pieces to sell each piece of it to the head healers of

California in order to boast about her great deed of stealing a very important trickster stone. Vizenor has created the historical background of Native Americans in his self-reflexive fiction that assists the readers in understanding American Indians in a different way and it can be related to the advantage of historiographic metafiction that shows that history is always in a state of flux.

Vizenor, under the cover of fiction, claims that Native Americans are the heirs of Christopher Columbus and the number of heirs is a tribal secret to create a haze between actual history and fiction. He wants to foster the postmodern ambiguity among his readers by keeping the number of heirs a tribal secret. He gives the names of some heirs with their brief description.

The number of heirs is a tribal secret, but there were nine who told stories that autumn evening at the stone tavern. Truman Columbus, the shouter, and her spouse with the same names; Bin Columbus and her son Stone; Memphis, the black panther; Gracioso Browne, the panic hole historian; Felipa Flowers, the gorgeous trickster poacher; Caliban, the great white mongrel; Samana, the shaman bear from the Big Island in Lake of the Woods. Miigis, the luminous child, and Admire, the healer who whistled with a blue tongue, were there with Stone and Felipa (14).

Vizenor creates the postmodern ambiguity in his account of the secret number of tribal heirs of Columbus. It's not only that he tells his readers that the number is a tribal secret but he also creates ambiguity by giving eleven names of the heirs after announcing that there were nine heirs who told the stories in the evening at stone tavern. In above lines from his fiction, the readers can see postmodern historiographic metafiction that deals with self-reflexivity accompanied by ambiguity to leave the number of heirs for the reader to assume. One more significant thing in these lines is the fact that there were nine heirs of Columbus who narrated tribal stories. Vizenor writes nine names in continuity and puts a full stop after the mentioned

number of heirs. Then he adds two more names, making it eleven, to create ambiguity in his fiction. This uncertainty about the exact number of the heirs of Columbus takes back the reader to the claim of Vizenor's fictional characters that the actual number of the heirs is truly a secret of Native Americans.

Postmodernism does not believe in one objective truth and fixed meanings. Vizenor has mentioned that there are nine tribal heirs but I have deduced from the above extract that Vizenor has purposefully kept the exact number of the heirs of Columbus vague. The feature of postmodern historiographic metafiction can also be highlighted by the claim of Caliban, the mongrel (a mixed-breed dog), about the creation of human beings. The claim relates to self-reflexivity as it involves imagination and creation. This claim of Caliban is repeated many a time for emphasis to underline the role of mongrels in the creation and origin of human beings. "Mongrels created the best humans, we had that crossblood wild bounce in our blood, but we never imagined that on two feet the beast would lose their humor in memories, and turned against those who hauled them from the muck" (16).

Vizenor challenges the origin and historical background of human beings under the cover of fiction, saying they were created by mongrels. Caliban regrets that human beings have turned against their own creators and saviors. Caliban repeats the claim by announcing the eyewitness of this creation, "the trickster remembers that we created humans" (17). He proceeds by telling that creating humans with two legs was also on purpose as animals have four legs and they run. "We created humans, put them on two legs to slow them down, and then they pretend their blood and bone is the survival of the best" (18). Caliban distorts the boundary between history and fiction by casting a doubt on the true origin of human beings. Through the character of Caliban, Vizenor asserts that human beings are the creation of crossblood dogs. Vizenor lends a new meaning to the term crossblood by projecting crossblood mongrels' superiority to their creation. He removes

negative connotation associated with crossblood by giving it the central position.

Vizenor also challenges the historical background of human beings through another claim of Caliban, who declares in his stories that the mongrels have not only created human beings but they have also inspired human beings to write. There was a crossblood who started to write in the imagination of mongrels. Consequently, they call him the trickster mongrel or the healer mongrel in their stories. Caliban further claims that mongrels have also healed a priest by licking his back. Caliban narrates a story of a shaman healer who used to heal mankind with the help of her paws and her tongue. “She attended a priest, pawed the lonesome, licked the sick back to health. She liberated and healed the animals and birds that were held in humans, silent prisoners in bone and blood” (18). The mention of healing is twofold here. She healed a human being (priest) and she healed the animals who were imprisoned in the human beings. She treated both animals and human beings alike. The animal which is a mixed breed is shown as the cause of comfort for animals as well as for humans. This has never been mentioned in the history of human beings written by Euro- Americans; however, Vizenor has given a new perspective on the origin of human beings. He keeps a mixed-breed animal in a high esteem by showing its superiority over human beings. Caliban then challenges the historical written account about human beings by arguing that mongrels inspired human beings to write. It laments that the publishers willfully avoided the truth about the origin of human beings and conceal the reality that mongrels created them. To emphasize, Vizenor maintains that “and then they pretend their blood and bone is the survival of the best” (18). It highlights the postmodern concept that says that there is no ultimate reality in history and history is subjective in nature. By making Caliban his mouthpiece, Vizenor challenges the human claims about their origin and historical background. The author’s attempt to blow the lid off the deliberate concealment of the truth about the creation of mankind serves a key objective here as his

attempt helps him cast doubt on man's claim about his so-called superiority over all other forms of life. From Caliban's claim, it can be inferred that human beings willfully hid the facts about their creator. Vizenor inscribes that human beings willfully hid the fact that they were created by mongrels and now they pretend that they are the best creation and superior to all the creatures. Vizenor has employed the postmodern intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction in a self-reflexive manner to rewrite the history of human beings. His fiction shows his self-consciousness as it systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose question about the relationship between fiction and the reality of history.

Vizenor introduces a new history of Columbus by narrating his story in a different way that parodies the officially documented history written by Euro-Americans. Binn Columbus, the mother of Stone Columbus, tells some facts about Columbus which have never been addressed by Euro-Americans. Binn states that "Columbus was a bad shadow, tired and broken because he lost most of his body parts on the way, so the old shamans heated some stones and put him back together again" (19). This is something really interesting that Columbus was broken when he arrived at the island and he was put together and healed by Shamans. Vizenor continues to give the details of Columbus' creation at the island by Native Americans to prove that Columbus belongs to them. Vizenor uses Binn Columbus to reveal the details of the shamans' role in the creation of the great explorer. The historical perspective on Columbus' physical health issues is unique in the sense as it has never been addressed by Euro-Americans. Furthermore, the narration of the story about Columbus' healing seems to be magical. This historical perspective conveys the details of his health issues which have never been highlighted by Euro-Americans. The process involved in the creation of the explorer presents Columbus as a plastic object that was mended at island by Native Americans. Their claim about the ancestors of the explorer challenges the traditionally accepted knowledge about the voyage of Columbus.

. . . a new belly for the explorer, and shin, the bone shaman, called in a new leg from the underworld, and he got an eye from the sparrow woman, so you might say that we created this great explorer from our own stones at the tavern (19).

According to Stone Columbus, even after a lapse of five hundred years, Columbus' arrival and presence at the tavern could be felt by Native Americans. Stone also claims to be the tribal heir of Columbus. Stone Columbus adds that even after five hundred years when Columbus reached at tavern, he is still there and can be seen by Native Americans because he belongs to them. "The Maya created Columbus" (20). Vizenor gives the parodic intertextual revision of the history of Christopher Columbus by stressing on the claim that Columbus belongs to Native Americans in many ways. He establishes that Columbus did not discover that island but he came back to his own place and his own people. He argues that Native Americans are the tribal heirs of Columbus. The Mayan civilization and Native Americans created him by healing him. It was not a simple healing as he was broken like any object. However, the shamans put him together again and created different parts of his body which were lost during the voyage.

Vizenor's novel blurs the boundary between history and fiction to create intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction. Vizenor claims that the Mayan and the Native Americans share the same genetic signature in their blood and the great explorer shares the same genetic signature. Now, he claims that Maya also share the same genetic signature. This is the American Indian perspective that has been conveyed to the readers by Vizenor, under the cover of fiction that distorts the historical perspective about American Indians, Maya and Christopher Columbus. "The Maya were on our time and we got the same genetic signature from the hand talkers" (26). After owning Christopher Columbus and the Mayan, Vizenor claims that Jesus Christ also belongs to Maya. "Jesus Christ and Columbus are Maya" (26). If Jesus Christ is also a descendant of the Maya, it means that he also belongs to American Indians and it challenges the historical

account of Christ and Christianity documented by Euro- Americans . This historical perspective makes American Indians socially and religiously superior to Euro- Americans. The claim also helps the researcher understand that there is also possibility that fiction could be based on reality and truth. Understandably, the researcher also gains access to the information pertaining to the historical and religious perspective on Jesus Christ, the Maya and American Indians through people and written accounts. With the help of his fiction, the writer strives to blur the boundary between history and fiction. He further states that the accounts presented by fiction and history should be treated and trusted alike. American Indians believe in stories and the authenticity of knowledge is also based on remembering tribal stories rather than fragmented data arranged with the help of some rational speculations. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book, *Red Earth, White Lies: Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact* states that Native Americans believe in the knowledge that comes from the stories. “It was simply the distilled memory of the people describing the events and the lands they had lived in” (36). Vizenor follows the same tradition of tribal elders who do not care about the mainstream knowledge and encourage their people to believe in their stories and remember them.

Vizenor’s claim highlights the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction by owning Jesus Christ with the help of his important characters in the novel who have been presented as the heirs of Columbus. They repeat the same claim for the readers that Jesus belongs to American Indians. In the first chapter of the novels, Vizenor made a claim that Christopher Columbus did not discover the island but it was his own place and he returned to his people. He adds to his historical perspective by claiming that Christ also returned to them and to his place with blue radiance. “Jesus returned in a burst of blue radiance” (26). This time the claim has been made by Felipa Flower who heals the people with the help of her blue radiance and blue wooden puppets. Stone Columbus also reiterates the same claim by saying that “his shroud bears our stories” (26). Stone asserts that the

shroud of Jesus Christ bears their stories and he conveys the same message to the readers that the stories are very important part of Native Americans' lives and if Christ's shroud bears the stories of Native Americans then he must belong to them. Native Americans consider it their responsibility to remember the stories in order to narrate them to their future generations. They think that they must be conveyed to their future generations with all the factual details. Therefore, they keep on repeating their stories to narrate them honestly to the next generations. Stone's claim that the shroud of Christ bears the stories of American Indians is also significant because a shroud is considered the last and eternal piece of cloth for the people and it always remains with the body. For this purpose, the stories are embedded in their minds perpetually. As the stories invariably keep themselves alive in the hearts and minds of Americans, in the same way a shroud eternally stays on a body. Sherman Alexie is another American Indian writer, in his collection of poems *First Indian on the Moon* makes a similar claim. He claims that Jesus Christ is American Indian and he has returned to his native place. "He called himself Crazy Horse" (11). Vizenor and Alexie make the same claim and own Jesus Christ by maintaining that he belongs to Americans Indians to give central position to American Indians.

Vizenor's fiction maintains the point that Euro- Americans in their historical account have misrepresented tribal people. When they wrote about the tribal people, they had the authority to write the way they wanted, highlighting negative things and at the same time marginalizing the positive things about them. His fiction endorses Linda Hutcheon's argument about history. Her main contention is that human beings manipulate history as per their whims and fancies to bring certain issues to light as well as marginalize certain facts which do not suit their agendas. This marginalization can also be intentional or the error of the writer. Hutcheon asserts, "In the postmodern "history-like," the ideological and the aesthetic have turned out to be inseparable. The self-implicating paradoxes of historiographic metafiction, for instance, prevent any temptation to see ideology as that which only

others fall prey to” (*The Politics* 178). The ideology used for stereotyping Native Americans misrepresents them as primitive and uncivilized. Consequently, their positive image is marginalized/tarnished. In his fiction, Vizenor shows that Euro- Americans have misrepresented Native Americans as primitive and uneducated who are not familiar with calendar and civilization. These people have shamans and since they are tribal, they possess a camel culture. “The New World presented the Old World with camels, bioshamans, zero, the touch of civilization, and calendar time, and created the first cultural debt that has never been paid on time” (26). Vizenor takes this misrepresentation very seriously and calls it a cultural debt. His choice of words satirizes Euro- Americans’ historical account of Native Americans. Further, the author argues that the history of Native Americans documented by Euro- Americans is a mere subjective creation. The subjective misrepresentation is cultural debt for Vizenor and this is unjustified and morally an undesirable act. He states that the consequences of this act are long lasting as he has compared it to a debt that has never been paid on time. The misrepresentation of culture is an unpardonable act; nothing could ever compensate for this cruel and unjust act. Having branded them as tribal people, it became imperative for Euro American to prove that Native Americans were primitive and uncivilized, and to this end they purposefully promoted Native Americans’ association with camel culture. The world was told that Native Americans were not even familiar with the conception of calendar. To challenge Euro American’s version of history, Vizenor rejects stereotyping of Native Americans with the help of parodic intertext. Vizenor gives another perspective about the Native American history of origin to challenge the history presented by Euro- Americans and it confronts the stereotypes about tribal history to provide parodic intertext. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* addresses the same issue about the misrepresentation of American Indians by West that confirms that there is reality in Vizenor’s fiction. “Experts

paint us as they would like us to be. Often we paint ourselves as we wish we were or as we might have been” (2).

The novel *The Heirs of Columbus* is a historical fiction authored by Vizenor in which he narrates the stories of the past and links them to the present making the characters his mouthpiece. Vizenor traces the historical background of Felipa Flower, the hand talker shaman and the heir of Christopher Columbus. He narrates her story in a way that readers find themselves confused about the boundary dividing fiction and reality. It is the same confusion that Linda Hutcheon calls historiographic metafiction which blurs the boundary between history and fiction with the help of different techniques like intertextuality and self-reflexivity. He states that Felipa Flower remembers the stories of the land of the dead. She dreams that she is the last survivor in the tribal world. She loses one of her hands when she raises it to salute the dead hand talkers. After having lost one of her hands, she fails to save the remaining one as well. Ultimately, her whole body crumples near the bronze statue of Luster Browne. She wakes up from the dream that breaks her. Later, she realizes that she is in another dream in which a shaman with a golden mask heals her and carves two wooden hands and she is able to move both her hands. The hand talker tells her that “you are dead in our dreams to learn the secrets of the bear codex” (24). He also prints the two-word phrase *Le Plongeon* as a name on the back of her wooden hand. The surname echoes in the memories of Felipa Flower when she wakes up and she remembers it for the rest of her life. The story narrated by Vizenor seems magical; he leaves it to the choice of the readers to consider the historical background of Felipa Flower fiction or reality.

Bear codex has also historical significance for the heirs of Columbus in the fiction of Vizenor. They consider this book a historical book which traces the history of tribal people and Christopher Columbus. And they believe that bear codex was destroyed during the storm that hit Santa Maria Casino. Vizenor further states that Felipa Flower becomes a fashion model a decade later and one day, on a book store in London she finds bearcodex

by chance. “The codex was hand written and disguised in book entitled Pearls in Shells, by Augustus Le Plongeon . . . She brought the book and discovered later that the bear codex was an incredible revelation from the ancient Maya House of Cocom” (25).

In his fiction, Vizenor argues that Felipa Flower comes to know later that the writer of the book is an eccentric scholar. The term eccentric is also significant as Vizenor is also an eccentric fiction writer who introduces unconventional and unique things in his fiction. Vizenor makes La Plongeon his spokesperson to bring marginalized things to light. “Le Plongeon . . . who believed that the Maya were the original civilization in the New World. The Maya founded world civilization” (25). It is the same claim that Vizenor has conveyed to his readers through his different characters establishing that the Maya brought civilization to the world and Native Americans are the Maya.

Vizenor asserts the historical background of bear codex by telling the readers that Felipa Flower and the heirs of Columbus are convinced that bear codex is the translation of the original picture codex. He matures the claim by referring it to the interview of Augustus Le Plongeon as his wife interviewed a tribal man named Yucatan, who was one hundred and fifty years old when the interview was conducted. The tribal man told them through a translator that he had a sacred book and no one can read that book. “Augustus decided that the book old man remembered was the picture codex of the Maya House of Cocom” (25). Vizenor further explores the importance of storytelling by highlighting the need to remember the stories in blood as the heirs of Columbus believe that the original codex was destroyed during the storm which also damaged Santa Maria Casino. So, it is the responsibility of the heirs to remember the stories to narrate them to the future generations.

The story of tribal people’s sacred book narrated by Vizenor contains the element of the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction. He keeps his focus on the subjectivity while narrating the historical

background of the book. The content of the book also comes under discussion. He frequently uses the term bear signature of survivance in his fiction and he explains the term with the help of omniscient narrative who tells about some content of the original bear codex. The bear signature of survivance has nothing to do with the genes of the heirs. In fact, it is about the power of resurrection and the tribal stories which have been bestowed on tribal people. Besides, the term also elucidates the conception of civilization.

The bear codex revealed the bear signature of survivance, the inheritance of a nonesuch genetic code, was the measure of civilization and the power of resurrections. These inherited stories in the blood and the picture codex were carried by tribal hand talkers to the Old World and remembered by a hundred tribal generations. The silent balams, the shaman hand talkers, were honored as the eccentric healers and emissaries of civilization (26).

Native Americans' historical account has been presented by Vizenor in a unique manner. He presents them as the people who enjoy some extraordinary powers. By doing so, he inserts the notion of the postmodern subjectivity of history into his fictive history. Vizenor uses the terms eccentric healers in this novel. These healers heal people through their extraordinary powers; their method is also rare and unique. Vizenor's fiction contains the healing from death, the healing of broken body parts and the healing of sexual disease. All types of healings are carried out in a very different manner. For example, Samana, the hand talker, heals with the help of blue puppets and wooden pets. Then, Vizenor uses another term for his tribal heirs: emissary of the civilization. Being one of the heirs of his ancestors, he seems to be obsessed with the responsibility to represent the civilization of Native Americans.

Vizenor continues explaining the historical background of American Indians' sacred book entitled *Bear Codex* and also tells readers about the final destruction of the book. His narration of the story of the book

can be linked to historiographic metafiction floated by Linda Hutcheon as there is no clear boundary drawn by Vizenor to indicate the difference between the historical facts about the book and the fictive details about the book. His move to blur the boundary between history and fiction is highly self-reflexive and intertextual parodic. According to Vizenor, in the *Old World*, the original bear codex was burnt but the tribal people remembered the stories in the blood so they made copies of the original bear codex and then the book was translated in the New World for the other people to know about the origin of tribal people. Unfortunately, the original book was burnt by conquistadors in the New World to eliminate the history of Native Americans from the world and the last translation of bear codex kept at Santa Maria Casino was also destroyed in a thunderstorm. The historical account narrated by Euro- Americans does not mention that they burnt the historical and sacred book of Native Americans. However, Vizenor, under the cover of fiction, makes a claim that encourages the researcher to give careful consideration to the truth about the book presented in his fiction. “The original bear codex and the copies were burned once in the Old World, and once more by the conquistadors in the New World. The last translation of the bear codex was lost in a thunderstorm” (26).

Vizenor’s narration of moccasin game lends the self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction to his novel. The Moccasin game is played between the wiindigoo, a water demon and the tribal people and tribal people can survive only if they win the game. Maternal grandmother and grandfather of Stone Columbus are given the same name as Truman Columbus. They remove their moccasins to create a balance and keep four coins under each moccasin. One of the coins bears the image of the great explorer. It was considered that no one could beat the wiindigoo in the moccasin game. There were three rounds in total in the game and tribal people had already lost two rounds and they were left with the last chance to save them and their children from the water demon. It was summer and the wiindigoo could only survive in summer season because in winter he

used to freeze. Tribal people needed the cold of winter in the summer season to win the game. Vizenor then narrates the story of the ice woman who lived in a cave and she was the only hope for the tribal people but tribal people blamed her for the death of thousands of men in winter, who were lost in a storm. Tribal people believed that it was the ice woman who sighed in winter and caused a storm with severe cold that ate thousands of tribal people. The ice woman is also a hand talker who is presented as an ancient silent woman as she has been leading a silent life in the cave. Tribal people were left with no choice but to convince the ice woman to beat the wiindigoo at the moccasin game in order to save their lives. The wiindigoo turned the coins and the last round started. "Winter in the summer was their last chance to survive the moccasin game" (21). The wiindigoo could win the game if she succeeds in turning the moccasins in the last round but the ice woman did not let him turn the moccasins. "The ice woman leaned closer to the wiindigoo and blew on his hands as he reached to touch the moccasin; the circle turned colder and colder. Frost covered the moccasins, and the blond demon stiffened over the game" (22). The story of the ice woman and the wiindigoo seems to be magical and it creates the element of historiographic metafiction in his novel. Hence, the readers could observe the existence of a vague boundary between his fiction and the reality. In his fiction, the concept of supernatural evil is represented by the so-called Evil Gambler, an Indian evil spirit called a wiindigoo, who is used by the federal government to disrupt Point Assinka. Federal agents thaw out the water demon who then challenges tribal members to a game of chance in which their lives are at stake. In the final showdown, the future of the world itself hangs in the balance. In the end, however, the Evil Gambler loses his nerve, Miched is arrested and put in prison, and good triumphs over evil. Columbus, Pocahontas, and the courageous Felipe Flowers are all buried on Point Assinka, a reminder of the rich heritage on which this fearless future is built.

In his novel *The Heirs of Columbus*, Vizenor laments that Euro-Americans cheated Native Americans while allotting them lands. Consequently, the treaties signed between Euro-Americans and Native Americans were violated. He deconstructs the history of American Indians' plight by giving it a different dimension. Vizenor's narration of this historical event is based on the intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction. Vizenor does not take this fraud in a negative sense in his fiction but he considers it a positive sign for tribal people. This history of broken treaties in the fiction of Vizenor has been presented in a very different way. He has presented Luster Browne as the victim of Euro-Americans' fraud. However, later on, the fraud became a source of the spiritual growth of the tribal old man who could not do anything about the cheating but shout. In great frustration, he started to shout in the holes of the meadows or even in the concrete holes and his shouts contained evident pain for the listeners. "The old men cheated out of their land, became tricksters, and some shouted into panic holes" (23). Luster Browne was one of those people who had been cheated by Euro-Americans on the issue of land allotments. He shouted at priests, federal agent and at everybody he could find in his access but there was no use of it. Finally, he started shouting into the holes in meadows and deserted places and these shouts were panic as they were outcome of his great frustration. The people on the reservation remembered the anxiety that he suffered from but with the passage of time, he and the tribal people realized that plants and flowers grow with his shouts. He became noble among the people for healing the plants and flowers. Vizenor presents it in the following lines,

The Baron of Patronia, a distant great uncle who became a noble man in a land allotment hoax, was the original shouter on his reservation. Luster Browne, as he was known to the tribe, mediated with shouts over panic holes, and he became a gardener by chance because flowers bloomed on the beds and meadows that heard his shouts (23).

He became so famous for healing plants and flowers that Euro-Americans also realized his worth and his spiritual powers. They also requested him to record his shouts in tape and give the tapes to them for handsome amount of money. It is worth mentioning here that he earned both money and respect from Euro- Americans who had been the reason for his agony. After having acknowledged Browne's spiritual powers, Euro-Americans made him the first Baron on the reservation. In his other book *Hotline Healers: An Almost Browne Novel*, Gerald Vizenor states: "He became the noble man and the first baron in reservation histories and by the order of the president of United States" (12). The point that deserves a mention here is that he has been made the baron of Patronia with the order of the president of United States. Euro- Americans were the same people who previously deprived him of his rightful land. However, afterwards, they honored him with the title of Baron of Patronia for his unusual and extraordinary powers. Receiving such an acclaim was an example of a great accomplishment. It is evident that Vizenor does not consider Euro-Americans' fraud to be destructive but constructive. The same fraud helped Luster Browne acquire great healing powers by mediating on his shouts. To pay homage to Brown for his spiritual powers, Euro- Americans erected his two statues in two different states of America. Vizenor reveals that the statues also healed human beings. The striking point for the researcher is the power of man who has died but even after his death, his spirit wanders around his statues to heal not only human beings but foliage as well. The historical account of Native Americans documented by Euro- Americans markedly differs from Vizenor's fictional history. It is true that he also talks about the unjust of Euro- Americans but his dealing with the injustice with Native Americans is reasonably optimistic. Vizenor's intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction highlights many things which do not seem to exist in reality. He willfully decides to create uncertainty among the readers in order to present his fiction as history based on real events. Only postmodern historiographic metafiction gives such kind of liberty to

readers. Vizenor's intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction highlights many things which cannot be believed in reality. He willfully chooses to give liberty to his readers to take his writing either history or fiction. This liberty has also been given to the readers in postmodern historiographic metafiction.

Clearly, Vizenor puts too much emphasis on history to present his novel *The Heirs of Columbus* as a historical book instead of a work of fiction. His treatment of history also urges the readers to consider this particular novel a historical work. One of the most important features of postmodern historiographic metafiction is that it replaces the position of fiction with the position of history. Fiction takes the place of history and history takes the place of fiction. Vizenor depicts a detailed historical background of Christopher Columbus. He not only highlights his first voyage that was political in nature but he also has mentioned it in the novel that the king and queen sent him to discover gold and shorter route to Indies. He has shared all details about the personal life of Columbus, starting from his birth to his child's birth. Columbus' strong association with Native Americans could be attributed the fact that both Columbus and Native Americans share the same signature in their blood. Vizenor states that Genoa, a rich republic, was Columbus's place of birth. The port city banked on the trade of clothes and spices for generating its income and revenue. When Columbus was two years old, Muhammad II, who was the founder of Ottoman Empire, overthrew the Byzantine Empire. The trade from the East ended after this incident because the ships from Genoa could not sail to the Black Sea. "Genoa shuddered with the fear of becoming poor from one moment to the next" (30).

Columbus spent his childhood on the natural pitch of the sea. At the age of fourteen, he sold wool on the Western coast that his father had weaved. Vizenor, then gives physical description of Columbus quoting the son of Columbus from his book *The Life of Admiral Christopher Columbus*. "The Admiral was a well-built man of more than medium stature, long

visage with cheeks somewhat high, but neither fat nor thin” (qtd. in *The Heirs of Columbus* 30). Vizenor also gives the information about the marriage of Columbus with Dona Felipa Perestrello e Moniz, who was belonged to a noble family. She bore Columbus a child who died five years after their marriage. Then he spent eight years in Lisbon and learned sailing a caravel into the wind and how to trade with the coastal tribes from Portuguese who were the master mariners. “Soon he became the chart maker and a seaman” (32). Columbus was eager to learn and he learned about the earth from a marine expert. Afterwards, he was able to study maps and charts. “Columbus was not an educated man, but he learned that the earth was round from Francisco de Oliveira” (32). Vizenor then writes about the study that Columbus made to discover a short route between China and India. “He lace the bonnet and navigated a politic course west to china and India” (32). To support his claim, he quotes the statement of Aristotle. The great Greek philosopher stated: “There is the possibility to cross the ocean to the Indies.” “The end of Spain and the beginning of India are not far distant but close, and it is evident that this sea is navigable in a few days with a fair wind” (32). He studied and made maps, drew routes and worked really hard to discover the short cuts to the Indies and finally he became successful in his efforts.

Columbus returned to Spain. He sailed with his son Diego from Lisbon to the Port of Palos in Andalusia. Later, he presented his warrant of a new and shorter sea to the Indies, which at that time included Japan to China, to Ferdinand and Isabella, the Sovereigns of Castile. He waited seven years for a decision (33).

Vizenor’s fiction is the deconstruction of the officially documented history and he points out many things to give them the central position which have previously been placed on the margin. In Vizenor’s intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction, the most important thing is not the discovery of America but the ramifications of the discovery on Native Americans. He opines that Euro- Americans ’ lust for wealth and power challenges their

own notion of civilization. In a satirical manner, Vizenor ridicules the discovery of America made by Columbus, telling his readers that human beings were considered mere objects by the so-called great explorer. Taking advantage of the docile nature of Native Americans, Euro- Americans started harboring a burning desire to tame them like animals. In this respect, the writer endorses his vantage point using a statement passed by Christopher Columbus. The explorer had said, “Good servants of good skills indicates the desire of power to practice on the people and take them as commodities.” Columbus did not consider Native Americans free human beings but slaves who would comply with whatever instructions and commands given to them by their masters. Columbus, who represents Euro- Americans in the official history of the discovery, has been declared greedy by Vizenor because he has mentioned his greed for wealth and other possessions of Native Americans. Euro- Americans wanted to get all what Native Americans had been in possession of. The broken pieces of glass are significant in the following lines as they indicate the deceitful nature of Euro- Americans that has never been mentioned in their officially documented history of the discovery. Vizenor’s unexplained use of deceit reinforces the idea of postmodern uncertainty and subjective point of view that gives the importance to the concept of individual interpretation. The notion of deceit (in return of broken pieces of glass) can also be linked to the treaties breached by Euro- Americans as after the violation of those treaties Native Americans were forced to live on the reservations leaving their own lands.

I cannot get over the fact of how docile these people are. They have so little to give but they will give it all for whatever we give them, if only broken pieces of glass and crockery... Ought to be good servants and of good skill, for I see that they repeat very quickly all that is said to them (38).

Vizenor satirically fills the gaps in the officially documented history under the cover of his fiction to push the Eurocentric claims of the discovery and

civilization to the margin while presenting a different side of the story that has been marginalized previously. He rewrites the voyage of the great explorer to highlight the negative aspects of his voyage in terms of greed for wealth and power. In the official documents, Columbus has been called the representative of Euro- Americans who sent him to discover gold and wealth but Vizenor, ironically, calls him an unvarnished slave. This unvarnished slave of the Old World was sent to discover wealth and enslave the people. "Columbus was delusional... his mind was burdened with his vision and pursuit of wealth and stature" (35). In his parodic account of history, by adding a few more details about the explorer, Vizenor strengthens his arguments about the greed and lust of Euro- Americans for wealth and gold. Once he had discovered the island, his lust never ended there but he wanted more wealth and gold. He kept asking the innocent Native Americans about the gold mine. While portraying his vision of history, Vizenor maintains that Euro- Americans' greed for wealth knows no bounds. "I flattered him, and asked him to go with me to show me the gold mines. The colonial conceits of the gold hunt" (42). Vizenor not only highlights Euro- Americans' ulterior motives for acquiring more power and wealth but he also claims in his self-reflexive version of history that Columbus carries the signature of survivance and secret stories in his blood which helped him hide his real motives for getting more wealth and power. Vizenor maintains the argument about the unvarnished slave of the Old World who has been sent to get wealth and power. Vizenor tells his readers about the renounced death of the great explorer who has been a slave of the Old World. Both the terms for Columbus have been carefully chosen by Vizenor that give his historic version a new perspective that has never been previously highlighted. For serving the Old World as a servile servant, Columbus has been called "an unvarnished slave". Interestingly, Vizenor does not stop here and he terms Columbus' death "the death of a renounced slave". The life and the death of the great explorer could not change his status as the slave of the Old World. They took him a slave and he spent all

his life to fulfill his duties towards his masters. Vizenor deconstructs the official history using intertextual parody. Besides, he tells his readers about the selfish behavior of Columbus' masters for whom he worked selflessly. According to his version of history, the unvarnished slave's life ended in the form a renounced death. Vizenor deconstructs the official history. Intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction plays an important part when Vizenor highlights selfish behavior of Columbus' masters because in the version of Vizenor's fictive history, an unvarnished slave died a renounced death.

Columbus could have been remembered as the unvarnished slave from the Old World; he avouched his mission to the monarchs, and at the same time he carried the signature of survivance, the unrevealed stories in his blood, and his passion; even so, his search for wealth would never be realized. He died a renounced slave to the monarchs in Valladolid, Spain (38).

4.2 Fictional Experience of History in *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*

The novel *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* by Vizenor traces the adventures of four Proud Cedafairs who are ceremonial bears in American Indian mythology. Along with many characters and events in the novels, Vizenor uses four Proud Cedafairs to deconstruct the historical events to give a new perspective by filling the gaps in the officially documented histories. Vizenor starts his novel by giving a new perspective to the history of the creation of the earth. Vizenor's fiction seems to be implementing postmodern historical view of Linda Hutcheon, which is based upon the historiographic metafiction which gives liberty to the writer to give the officially documented history, the place of fiction and to fiction, the important place that has been enjoyed by officially documented history, to blur the boundary between history and fiction through intertextual parody and self-reflexivity. As Hutcheon proclaims

History and literature provide the intertexts in the novels examined here, but there is no question of a hierarchy, implied or otherwise. They are both part of the signifying systems of our culture. They both make and make sense of our world. This is one of the lessons of that most didactic of postmodern forms: historiographic metafiction (“Historiographic Metafiction” 28).

Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles is historical fiction which has been written in the context and fallout of the fuel crisis. The major theme of the novel also revolves around the same subject and Vizenor highlights the madness of Western civilization for the dire need of fuel. Vizenor’s text is the best use of Linda Hutcheon’s historiographic metafiction to replace the officially documented history with fiction. The storyline is so strong and imaginative that it engulfs the reader into the story and make him believe the history that has been presented by the writer. This is a satirical fiction which is full of statements for Euro-Americans to question their notion of civilization. Vizenor’s fictive history highlights the brutal acts of Euro-Americans in return of Native American’s resistance to save nature.

Vizenor brings into limelight the historical details which have been marginalized previously to raise the slogan of Euro-American civilization. He fills the gaps of the history that have been spread all over the world about the fuel crisis and the response of Euro- Americans . They behaved like insane to get back the luxury they had been enjoying. The fuel crisis ended with the result that all the vehicles became useless as they had been left idle in the streets as there was no fuel to make use of them. Euro- Americans went to every extent to get back the luxury and they were ready to pay any price even if it was on the cost of Native Americans’ lives. Vizenor presents his side of history on the behalf of Native Americans that tells that Euro-Americans behaved like mad to cut the trees in order to fulfil their need of fuel but Native Americans resisted against it to save the nature. In the effort to resist, they lost many lives in the hands of Euro- Americans and many brutal acts of so-called civilized Euro- Americans have been highlighted in

the course of the story. Vizenor pushes Euro- Americans to the margin in the academic field of knowledge by pointing out their barbaric attitude towards nature and American Indians. The fiction of Vizenor that has been written in the context of fuel crisis highlighting the historical event, creates postmodern ambiguity as it can also be related to the present-day fuel crisis. *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* presents that historiographic metafiction is based on serious ironic parody. While parodically rewriting the past in the fictive history of the novel, Vizenor maintains that the intertexts of history and fiction take a parallel status. The intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction takes certain views of historiographers in the novel and offers a sense of the presence of the past to create fuzziness between history and fiction.

For the researcher, there is a fair possibility that Vizenor has written the novel to address the present issue of fuel crisis in his fiction. The novel takes place in the time when the world has consumed all the fossil fuels, resulting in making vehicles useless. The dire need for fuel makes the government collect as much wood as they can get to fulfil the need. The main character of the novel is Proude Cedafair, who has been portrayed as a fourth generation's chief of the Cedar nation. Vizenor maintains that the four generations of Native Americans have been fighting against the tribal and the federal government to save nature. The fiction traced out the information that despite a great effort of tribal people to save trees, they could not resist and eventually lost the fight. He narrates the incident of the lost fight with his major character fourth Proude Cedafair and his wife Rosina. They left the sovereign state even though once, it was announced for the tribal people with seven clown crows to find a new home for them in the South.

Vizenor narrates the story of the creation of earth by dividing it into four worlds. He narrates the stories of all four worlds separately by highlighting the important event of each world. The first world was hit by a great flood and the turtles emerged from that flood. Vizenor declares the

second world to be alive “in the magical voices and ceremonial words of birds and healing energies of plants” (5). He asserts that the third world has become evil due to the hatred of life and fear of death. The fourth world is the most intelligent for Vizenor as it has outwitted the evil spirits through language. He creates one Proude Cedafair in each world as the tribal representative of American Indians to add historical elements in his fiction by narrating the stories of each Proude Cedafair with important events of their lives. Postmodern historiographic metafiction becomes evident in the first chapter of the novel when Vizenor fictionalizes the original Mississippi river by giving it another name Misisibi. He narrates the story of fourth Proude Cedafair who is the last old man of the cedar nation who stops near misisibi to smile. “The Misisibi flows from the west into the red cedar and then South through pollution storms to the deserts” (6).

In the fiction of Vizenor, misisibi replaces the original historical river to give his fiction the place of history. Vizenor narrates the story of first Proude regarding the great river misisibi. He claimed a large circle of cedar trees. He constructed houses in a circle to declare the sovereignty of his place. The story is narrated in the backdrop of fuel crisis of the United States and the government needed the trees to meet the requirement. It was not acceptable by the tribal people and the first Proude decided to resist against the federal government and he made a circular boundary with cedars to declare the sovereignty of that place to stop the white man from cutting the trees. In Vizenor’s version of the history, the first Proude received the white man with courtesy when they came for the very first time to mark the trees for cutting. “The first Proude greeted white men but they were rude” (8). The affiliation of the tribal people with nature is highlighted by Vizenor through first Proude who retraces the path and talks to each tree by removing the death marks on their trunks and assuring them the protection. The officials came back the next morning with the purpose to cut the trees but they found the cedar posted in a wide circle to declare sovereignty. “The cedar circle had been declared a sovereign nation” (8). The first Proude

becomes firm and stands bravely in the way of white men to stop them from invading the sovereign state. “We have the power of the federal government to cut the trees” (8).

The conversation between the first Proude and the federal official that took place on the issue of cutting down the trees is very important in relation to the intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction. The fiction of Vizenor can be taken as a tool to highlight the historical truth about Euro-Americans. It presents American Indians perspective of history with a satirical tone to sideline the slogan of civilization promoted by Euro-Americans. They behaved very rudely with the first Proude and threatened him in case of resistance. The federal official dealt him with disgraceful manner. “Seize that goddamn black savage” (8). It was easy for the federal official to raise his voice against a man who was alone that time and he shouted at him badly. Vizenor has portrayed the character of First Proude as a powerful warrior in his parodic version of history. He became a warrior because he was forced to be the one. He was left with no other choice except to be the warrior and to announce the sovereignty of the state that he makes for the tribal people. He became the warrior to protect nature and in the long run to protect his tribal people. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book, *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* establishes the same responsibility of human being to take care of all forms of life. He states that in tribal religions the relationship of human beings is not limited to the other forms of life but it “extends to plants, rocks and natural features that Western consider inanimate” (89). He also quotes Waling Buffalo who has explained the nature of the human being’s unity with all creations and establishing that the communication with them is also possible. “Do you know the trees talk? Well, they do. They talk to each other, and they all talk to you if you listen. Trouble is, white people, don’t listen. They never learned to listen to Indians, so I don’t suppose they’ll listen to other voices in nature” (qtd. in *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* Deloria, Jr. 89).

Native Americans are very close to nature and they think it is their prime responsibility to save the nature from the evils of human beings. The historical fiction of Vizenor adds a very important historical fact about Native Americans by highlighting the fuel crisis. It traces the history of both the Native Americans and Euro- Americans to maintain the truth that has been marginalized in the officially documented history. Euro- Americans are always very eager to talk about the primitive, savage and warrior nature of Native Americans but they have never mentioned in their official histories, the reasons and the forces that have made them the way they are. They have always been misrepresenting Native Americans. Vizenor has not only raised his voice against the misrepresentation of Native Americans but his fiction is also self-reflexive that focuses on Native American perceptions about Euro- Americans. The loud slogans of civilizations take a peripheral place in the fiction of Vizenor with the narration of the historical facts behind real incidents. Vizenor's fiction claims that Native Americans were forced to be warriors because they wanted to protect the trees. It also conveys to the readers that Native Americans have tried their level best to resolve the issue with dialogue but the behavior of Euro- Americans has been very disgraceful and rude. The federal official called him a black savage and threatened him that he would be removed from the place in case of resistance. He also tried to make him realize the power of the government. I believe, it is a great achievement of Vizenor, to highlight the truth to uncover the dark civilization of Euro- Americans that represents Native Americans as villains and take a central position to claim the heroism by raising the slogans of their civilization.

Linda Hutcheon's historiographic metafiction serves as a tool in the historical fiction of Vizenor to highlight the brutality behind the slogan of Euro American civilization in his parodic intertextual revised history. Vizenor draws the attention of the readers to a very violent act of the federal government, that serves to fill the gap in the officially documented history, where the notion of savage and warrior is associated with Native Americans

hiding the cruelty of Euro- Americans. Vizenor narrates the history of the first Proude Cedefair and his war against the federal government. He fought against them and did not surrender. Many of his family members were killed in the war. Vizenor narrates an unfortunate event of the war. One of the wives of the first Proude was raped by the white men. The details of the Euro American brutality are heartbreaking, and they have the power to make a normal human being cry over malicious act.

Vine Deloria Jr. in his book, *The World We Used to Live in: Remembering the Powers of Medicine Men*, writes about the uniqueness of American Indians from all other people of the world. He states that the spiritual heritage of American Indians makes them different from other people. “In past recognizing their unique relationship to the world and its creatures, most tribes described themselves as the people or the original people” (xxiii). They had the realization of their uniqueness based on spiritual powers. As they were close to nature and they followed the commands of spirits, they had also the realization that other people had the same rights and freedom as they had. Deloria argues that fighting with such people over traditions by which they lived is not comprehensible. Vizenor’s story of the First Proude conveys the same message. The Cedar nation was living peacefully while they were always interrupted by the federal and tribal government. Vizenor’s fiction conveys a message that it is all the representation that makes the people civilized or uncivilized, savage or cultured. Euro- Americans have never worked on the stereotypical identities for themselves that will create the permanent image of Euro- Americans being savage, brutal, uncivilized and barbaric. Vizenor gets the advantage of his fictional works to address the marginalized facts in the history of Native Americans and Euro- Americans. “One of his wives, the mixed blood, was raped by white men. Her blue eyes were burned with hot coals. Her flesh was pinched and torn. The soft brown hair on her pubic arch was cut and stuffed into her broken mouth by officials of the federal government” (Vizenor 9).

Vizenor continues with the same theme of the barbaric attitude of Euro- Americans with a bit difference. He highlights another fact that never has been addressed in the historical accounts of Euro- Americans. Vizenor tells the readers about the misfortune of the surveyor who does not leave with the federal government's officials even after their multiple warnings and stops to share the victory of the first Proude Cedafair for his bravery. For me, the federal government represents Euro- Americans who did not spare even their own people and targeted them in the same way without showing any sense of belonging to them. The surveyor was captured by the government and he was punished for admitting the superiority of Native Americans and for having a friendly relationship with them. They made him pay a very heavy price for that sin and he had to sacrifice his life for the innocent act of humanity. He was shot several times that reinforces my judgment about Euro- Americans, proving them to be barbaric, uncivilized, brutal and savage. These marginalized facts about Euro- Americans have always been hidden because they have the power to hide them and they also have the power to attach stereotypes to Native Americans, which in fact represent the typical characteristics of Euro- Americans in the fictive history of Vizenor. "The surveyor loosened his bonds and ran through the stumps into the darkness of the cedar. He was shot nine times in the back, three times in the head and impaled on a cedar stake facing the circus" (9).

Euro- Americans have always been so eager to make stereotypes of Americans Indians by misrepresenting them. In the fictive history of Vizenor, he has addressed another important issue regarding misrepresentations of Native Americans. Vizenor's fiction is a tool against the historical account in a self-reflexive way that has never highlighted the truth about Euro- Americans and Native Americans. Vizenor has presented revised historical events in his fiction by filling the gaps in the prejudiced version of history by Euro- Americans. Vizenor's fiction is solely about its status as a work of art to depict Native American stance of history. The literary tools employed in its construction are locus for creative, artistic and

theoretical imbrications. Vizenor's use of historiographic metafiction plays an important role in the formation of a hazy boundary that separates history and fiction. Hans Bretens proclaims that the postmodern architecture "combines historicist awareness, a new representational impulse, and an ironic self-reflexivity" (qtd. in Paul Auster's *New York Trilogy* as "Historiographic Metafiction" 1909).

The first Proude Cedafair won the war against the federal and tribal government and he was successful in resuming the sovereignty for his nation. He also told them clearly that he would not follow the instructions of the government in his sovereign state because he did not believe in any government other than his own. The federal and tribal government did not bother to pay any attention to his words. Instead, they picked the meanings of their own choice to misrepresent him. He was a true patriot who fought against the federal government to protect nature and his people but they misrepresented him as a selfish man with a selfish possession. "His words were misunderstood and his sovereign circus was misrepresented as a selfish possession" (10).

Vizenor narrates the story of reservation governments and the policy behind The Indian Reorganization Act in creating constitutional governments on reservations. Linda Hutcheon's concept of intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction can be seen to interpret the events that took place on the reservation that has never been addressed in the officially documented history. Vizenor fills the gaps of those documented histories by highlighting the serious problems and flaws in the policies of Indian Reorganization Act that was designed by Euro- Americans and the hidden motives of Euro- Americans to destroy the sovereignty of the state. White anthropologists designed the constitutions that created serious problems during the election. "The elections of tribal people were manipulated by the colonial federal administration. Men of evil and tribal fools were propped up in reservation offices to authorities the exploitation of Native Lands and natural resources" (12). The cedar nation realized the evil intentions of

Euro- Americans and they decided to fight for their rights. The second Proude Cedafair declares war against the federal and tribal government and highlights the evils and corruption of both governments. He became firm and took bold steps to prevent the government from interfering in his state affairs. “Second Proude ordered arrest and detention of government officials who had violated the sovereign sanctions of the circuses” (12). The issue got serious between Native Americans and the federal government when three drunk officials chopped down a tree in the middle of cedar nation, which infuriated the sovereign nation. “The sound of the chopping and their grim laughter was heard for three months” (12). This was an unbearable act of the government officials and the second Proude Cedafair declared war against them. They won the war and the second Proude Cedafair was able to maintain the sovereignty of the cedar nation.

“WARNING

Declaration of War
 Against Evil
 Oppressive and Putrescent Officials
 Federal and Tribal Government
 By
 Allied Tribal Circuses . . .
 Allied Circus Commander
 Proude Cedafair” (13).

Vizenor establishes the superiority of American Indians to Euro-Americans based on their relationship with nature. American Indians have a strong relationship with natural objects and all other forms of life. They take care of all natural objects. Vizenor asserts that Second Proude Cedafair declares war against the federal government because three officials chopped down a tree in his territory. For American Indians, even a tree is equally important as a human being because they respect nature and they acknowledge that nature provides them with many necessities of life. They consider it as their responsibility to do something in return for the nature. The Second Proude Cedafair decided to declare war against the federal government in reaction to the brutal chopping of a tree because it was the

responsibility of American Indians to protect nature. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book, *Spirit and Reason: A Vine Deloria Reader* states the same give and take relationship of human beings with the universe. “In seeking something for ourselves, we must recognize that obtaining at what we want from other forms of life or of the earth itself is shortsighted and disrupts the balance that the whole fabric of life requires” (51). Vizenor has tried to drag Euro-Americans to the margin in the academic field of knowledge by highlighting their cruelty for nature. He has established the superiority of American Indians based on their good relationship with the nature that is reverse with Euro-Americans. They take many benefits from nature but in return, they do not acknowledge nature rather they harm nature. Vizenor’s use of history as an intertext is omnipresent throughout the selected fiction for this study. These texts of history and fiction are related to each other, structurally and thematically. Vizenor gives the reference of the historical place Wounded Knee in his fiction to trace out the facts behind the murder of the second Proude Cedafair. The fiction of Vizenor becomes his instrument to highlight the historical facts which have been marginalized by the powerful Euro-Americans.

Vizenor brings into focus the brutality of Euro-Americans and the historical facts that their officially documented history avoided to mention. The researcher takes the event of murder of the Second Proude as Linda Hutcheon’s historiographic metafiction, where Vizenor, under the cover of fiction, highlights the marginalized facts about Euro-Americans, which give a central place to American Indians through parody, self-reflexivity and intertextuality of historiographic metafiction. The second Proude Cedafair decided to move to Wounded Knee in South Dakota to participate in the American Indian Movement because it had declared a pan tribal political nation. “The policeman shot him in the face and chest with a shotgun . . . the policeman shot him a second and third time in the back of the head. . . there were no witness but dreams” (14). The murder of the second Proude Cedafair by a policeman questions civilization and the

perfect government policies of Euro- Americans. The phrase, “there were no witness but dreams” is very significant as it metaphorically points out to the officially documented historical accounts of Euro- Americans on Wounded Knee in which they have silenced important fact by excluding them from their historical account, by putting the responsibility of the unfortunate incident of Wounded Knee Massacre on the shoulders of American Indians. Vizenor metaphorically relates the marginalized facts in his intertextual parody to the dreams which have no witness, no evidence, but they do exist.

Vizenor rewrites the history of Wounded Knee in his fiction. He uses his fiction as a tool to mingle the boundary between history and fiction. In the officially documented history, the historian Dee Brown traces the tragic massacre of the brutal killing of innocent Native Americans including men, women and children. Wounded Knee is considered the most tragic place that will be remembered by the world forever and the Wounded Knee Massacre will always remind the world about the barbaric killing of Native Americans by Euro- Americans. Vizenor has dealt with this incident differently in his fiction. He has mentioned the tragedy of Wounded Knee with the murder of the second Proude Cedafair but he has not emphasized on the tragedy much and made it a tragic place like the history has declared it to be. Vizenor’s *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* is the best example of historiographic metafiction where there is no definite boundary between history and fiction and the researcher believes in his fiction to take Wounded Knee as a divine place instead of a catastrophic place. The historical account has been waved aside in his fiction as he has rewritten the history of this place beautifully. He has tried to make Wounded Knee a heavenly and magical dwelling from where one can enter the fourth world to escape the evils of the third world. In the process of deconstruction of the officially documented history, he makes it a place where Belladonna Darwin Winter Catcher, who is one of his characters of the story, has been conceived and born. She is the daughter of Darwin Winter Catcher and

Charlotte Darwin. Belladonna narrates her story to Inawa Biwide and tells him about the belief of his father who believes that Wounded Knee is the place that can take to the fourth world. “We drove through the darkness because he wanted to enter the next world through Wounded Knee” (185).

Vizenor conveys the same message to his readers about Wounded Knee with his major character, the second Proude Cedafair of *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* that it is a place for survival, not a place where the disastrous massacre has happened. The second Proude Cedafair was travelling to Wounded Knee where the American Indians Movement had declared a pan tribal nation. In an intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction, Vizenor’s novel takes the echoes from past and makes the reader recall past events and these echoes call for sympathies of the reader. There are certain devices used by the Vizenor which parody a previous system for the replacement of a new system. Intertextuality establishes the ground to read his fiction in the light of its relations to other texts. Vizenor wanted to go there and witness the sovereignty of Native Americans. He has rewritten the history of Wounded Knee differently and cheerfully that makes his fiction as an intertextual parody of history. He attributed positive things to Wounded Knee, to eliminate the tragedy from it. “It had taken him three weeks to walk to Wounded Knee in South Dakota where the American Indian Movement had declared a new pan tribal political nation” (14). He has not denied the fact about the massacre that happened at Wounded Knee. He mentioned the brutal murder of the second Proude Cedafair who was travelling to Wounded Knee by the policeman. He was travelling to Wounded Knee to enjoy the achievement of the American Indian Movement which had recently declared a pan tribal political nation. The murder of the second Proude Cedafair symbolized the massacre by American Army at Wounded Knee. Vizenor fictive history is not the complete denial of the tragedy, but he has tried to shift the focus of the incident that took place at Wounded Knee, from tragedy to something

positive, something related to bravery and achievement of Native Americans.

Belladonna Darwin Winter Catcher also tells Inawa Biwide that her parents worked for the American Indian Movement and they spent time together at Wounded Knee. It was the place where she was conceived and months later, was born under the stars. "Their spirits came together again and I was born that night under the stars. I was conceived and born at Wounded Knee" (186). The revised history of Vizenor makes Wounded Knee a center for survival, symbolizing life to eliminate the element of death by making it a place of birth of Belladonna. Vizenor discards the gloomy aspect of Wounded Knee and he rejoices the bravery of Native Americans who were killed in response to their defense. He makes Belladonna his mouthpiece to subvert the historical account of Wounded Knee, that has been spread all over the world about the tragic fate of Native Americans in the Wounded Knee Massacre. He deconstructs history and eliminates the dark and gloomy part for his readers because he avoids portraying tragic characters in this novel. He repeats the event of birth of Belladonna in slightly different words for emphasis in his chapter of the book entitled, "Conceived at Wounded Knee" (185). "I was conceived there on that spiritual battlefield. Conceived in love where brave people died" (186). Her parents, Darwin Winter Catcher and Charlotte, were the activists of American Indian Movement and for official purpose, they were there at Wounded Knee when she was conceived. Vizenor avoids mentioning the tragic incident here to discard gloomy impact from his fictive history of the historic place. He names it as a spiritual battlefield. He attaches an attribute to Wounded Knee, a place where brave people died. I believe that he does not deny the factual history of Wounded Knee by admitting, a place where brave people died but his way of dealing with the history is entirely different. He does not focus on the tragedy but emphasizes on bravery of the Native Americans who sacrificed their lives for their people. The fact remains there about the catastrophic massacre but Vizenor wants his readers

to recollect fearlessness of Native Americans, not the barbaric attitude of Euro-Americans.

Vizenor narrates that Belladonna's mother, Charlotte Darwin, was killed by the racist people. She was a journalist and the activist of the American Indian Movement. She wrote about racist behavior of Euro-Americans and was killed for highlighting racism. Vizenor's intertextual parody of Wounded Knee is presented in a disparate manner. His use of intertextuality is more than reproducing the past in the form of a shallow and comprised nostalgia. Vizenor's intertextuality challenges closure and a single, centralized meaning of the text. He does not emphasize on the massacre but he does convey to his readers the tragedy of the massacre symbolically by denoting the massacre with the deaths of his fictional characters. He conveys to his readers that the bravery is more important to recall than the assassination. Whenever he mentions Wounded Knee, he relates it to the fortitude of Native Americans. Every time he talks about Wounded Knee, there is some tragic incident of murder that is denoting to a character in an attempt to do something courageous. The mother of Belladonna Darwin was killed to write about racism of Euro-Americans. "She was tall with golden hair and fire on her breath . . . she was killed writing about the race wars. Too white and too blonde to survive third world colours" (185). Belladonna tells Inawa Biwide about her birthplace as a dwelling where brave people died. The second Proude Cedafair was killed by a policeman when he was walking towards Wounded Knee to witness the declaration of a political nation by the American Indian Movement at Wounded Knee.

Vizenor criticizes the government and blames its policies for killing the people slowly and gradually, in an unseen and unnoticed manner. He rewrites the history of the United States of America highlighting its flaws and evil. He makes the evil gambler, his mouthpiece to highlight the government failures in his novel. Evil Gambler admits that he has killed hundreds of people. He killed them because it gave him pleasure. He

confessed the murders but then he also admitted that killing did not give him pleasure when he realized that killing was so easy. He needed something challenging to do that could give him pleasure. He wanted to have some adventures and do some challenging things and killing was too easy to be enjoyable. He traces the history of fuel extinction and blames the government for its failure to maintain a balance. It could not maintain a balance of fuel consumption that became the reason for fuel extinction that was considered as a disaster because the value of material possession became useless.

Vizenor's novel traces a fictive history of oil extinction from the world that resulted in the imbalance of good and evil. The Evil Gambler is a very important character of the story who is obsessed with creating a balance in the world. He believes that he is capable to create a balance by killing people as it requires more evil to create a balance. He admits that the evil prevails in him, but he condemns the government for being more evil than him. He draws the comparison of his evil with the evil of government and he concludes that the evil in government is more powerful because it cannot be seen. It remains there, it attacks the people, it destroys them and the process of killing is slow but continuous. He is of the view that the death given by the government is unnoticed and is more dangerous. He points out some evils of government that result in killing the people. Firstly, the corruption in government kills the people. Secondly, the role of government in killing the people because people suffered from severe depression during the economical collapse that was resulted in oil extinction. Thirdly, the pollution created by industry, because for government, the private business of running the industry is more important than the public business and saving the people from pollution. People do not expect from the government that it can kill them. The type of killing the government adopts always remains unnoticed. The government never takes its policies and actions seriously which harm the public because the people never raise their voices against them, as the killing is not obvious, it is slow, and it remains

unnoticed. It kills them slowly with corruption, pollution and the economical crisis and the government always remains indifferent to the murders. Vizenor fiction traces out his account of history to make the readers know the evils in the government. There is no boundary between fiction and history in the novel that makes a good work of historiographic metafiction that specifically deals with self-reflexivity and intertextual parody.

Look at what happens to the values of people and the corruption in government . . . The business bigger than the government, started this indifference toward death with their pollution and industrial poison . . . I learned about slow torture from the government and private business . . . Thousands of people have died slow death from disfiguring cancers because the government failed to protect the public. . . The worst part of the government killing public is indifference (127).

Vizenor's dealing with history and imagination in his fiction shows that there is no one writable truth about history and experience. There are only a series of versions of history or stories which depend on subjective interpretation of readers. The inscribing of both historical and literary intertexts makes historiographic metafiction particularly subjective. Vizenor's text creates the quality of being subjective and self-reflexive because history and fiction in the novel go parallel to each other.

4.3 Voicing Historical Truth in *Green Grass, Running Water*

Thomas King's novel, *Green Grass, Running Water* traces many historical events, political figures, literature and films to fictionalize the historical events and to give his imaginative creation, the place of history. He has blurred the boundary between fiction and history. His creation stories are postmodernist and totally based on his imagination along with the Native American perspective but he has given them the place of history. He has started the novel with the creation story of earth, giving the impression that Coyote has created the earth. He keeps on moving with

different imaginative stories through the course of the novel including four women. They were called as First Woman, Changing Woman, Thought Woman and Old Woman. He relates them to the historical characters, Lone Ranger, Ishmael, Robinson Crusoe and Hawkeye respectively. The fictional characters of the story know them with four elderly Indians and each elderly Indian narrates the story of four women (First Woman, Changing Woman, Thought Woman, Old Woman) ending them by relating each woman to four important men from the history (Lone Ranger, Ishmael, Robinson Crusoe and Hawkeye). The confusion about the gender of the four elderly Indians, in the minds of readers as well as the minds of fictional characters of the novel highlight postmodern speculation of meaning. Postmodernism does not believe in fixed meaning. Four elderly Indians are women for some characters in the novels and men for the rest of the characters. It asserts postmodern subjectivity that gives importance to the individual thought process. Each time when the stories end abruptly, telling the readers that the women have been imprisoned in Fort Marion, that is also a historical place of the United States. King has made a great effort to rewrite the historical events to legitimize his imaginative creation by mingling it to the history in his parodic version of the creation story.

Linda Hutcheon's intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction plays a very important role in blurring the boundary between history and fiction. In King's novel, it is evident throughout the historical events. Fort Marion is situated in Florida and it has been used for a military prison. The United States Army imprisoned many Native Americans who were blamed to create disturbance for the army. They imprisoned many Native Americans including some of the chiefs of tribes. King has made this fact a tool to criticize U.S Army for imprisoning innocent Native Americans with satirical and ironical interpretations coated with humor, wit and wordplay. U.S Army imprisoned innocent Native Americans who resisted the enforcement of army to get settled on reservations leaving their homes and lands. He established in his novel, with the help of one of his characters

Alberta Frank, that those Native Americans were innocent and their crime was being Indian. He has revised the history of Fort Marion in a parodic way by introducing his historical facts in his fiction to highlight marginalized history. Barthre writes history, taking considerable liberty sometimes inventing characters and events, sometimes parodically inverting the tone and mode of his intertexts, sometimes offering connections where gaps occur in the historical record (qtd. in “Historiographic metafiction” 15). King has made an effort, under the cover of his fiction to assert that Western history has marginalized the facts about Fort Marion. King has also found gaps in the historical record and has rewritten the history of Fort Marion. The fort is considered as the symbol of bravery of U.S Army but there are other marginalized facts as well which have never been mentioned in the history of the dominant race. King gives his version of history, making his fiction a tool to communicate the gaps of Western history that has produced heroes from U.S Army.

In 1875, the U.S Army began a campaign of destruction aimed at forcing southern Plains tribes onto a reservation. The army systematically went to the village, burning houses, killing horses and destroying food supplies. . . Starvation and freezing conditions finally forced the tribes to surrender (14-15).

Alberta told her students, the number of tribal people who were imprisoned by the army. Seventy-two people were imprisoned with the allegation of being dangerous, trouble makers, involved in raids, and others were simply leaders opposed to the reservation system. The tribal people who were considered dangerous and were imprisoned on the basis of simply to oppose the reservation system is satirical in nature. They called tribal people dangerous and trouble creators because they did not want to be settled on the reservations leaving their homes and lands. King stated that seventy-two people were imprisoned who resisted and others were forced to move to reservations. Alberta tells her students that Lieutenant Richard Pratt was responsible for the imprisonment of the tribal people in Fort Marion. He

provided the prisoners with pencils, ledgers books and drawing material to kill the time and the drawings they made were given a name Plains Indian Ledger Art. King has repeated the incident of Fort Marion imprisonment at the end of each of his creation story to highlight the brutality of U.S Army, who killed many tribal people, imprisoned some of them who resisted, declared them dangerous and forced rest of the people to settle on the reservations. King's fiction draws the attention of the readers to the marginalized facts of history.

King's use of historiographic metafiction intends to rethink about everything and raises questions about the representation of identity. Linda Hutcheon states that Historiographic metafiction casts a question mark on the firm guarantee of meanings. This question mark also sides Foucault's challenge on the impossibility of human knowledge to allow final and authentic truth. Derrida also shares this concept of the authenticity of ultimate truth because he believes that human beings include their own discourse in these realities to uncover them. Historiographic metafiction intends to rethink about everything and raises questions about the representation of identity. King's fiction questions the stereotypes that Euro-Americans have associated with Native Americans that make them savage, primitive, warriors and barbaric. If one can believe in all these stereotypes then where does U.S Army stand for killing innocent people for their resistance to leave their ancestral places? King has raised such questions in the reader's minds to challenge universalism with his re-contextualized version of history.

Thomas King's imaginative stories of four women end with the imprisonment of all four women in Fort Marion. King has made Fort Marion, a symbol of cruelty and injustice where innocent people have been imprisoned for many years and no one is there to question them. All the stories end with the knowledge that each woman has been brought to Fort Marion by giving them a different name. King has presented the story of First Woman who has been living happily with Ahdamn in a garden until G

O D imposed on them certain rules to follow. She leaves the garden with Ahdamn to find another nice and peaceful place. They find a beautiful canyon and decide to live there but they notice that at the bottom of canyon, there are some dead rangers. They wonder and question each other who have killed them. Soon, they realize that there are live rangers as well who blame Indians for killing them without any evidence. "It looks the work of Indians" (75). King has used irony as a tool to highlight gaps in Eurocentric history. Live rangers blamed Indians because of legitimized ideological construction of Indian identity that makes them warrior, savage and trouble creator. The live rangers point their gun at Ahdamn and First Woman, meanwhile, she takes out a black cloth and wraps it around her head and all the live rangers shout "It's the Lone Ranger" (75). Then they decide to kill Ahdamn because he is "Indian". First Woman tells them not to kill him as he has saved her life and he is Tonto and she puts off her mask. They grab Ahdamn and First Woman and tell them, "You are under arrest . . . what's the charge? . . .being Indian, says those soldiers" (77). They took them to Fort Marion and imprisoned them. King has fictionalized the actual history of Native Americans by relating his fiction to the historical television serial, radio series and film serial *Lone Ranger and Tonto* each time with slightly different title and story. Lone Ranger was a fictional character who used to wear the mask and he hired Tonto who was his American Indian friend to fight with him against the outlaws in American Old West. King has beautifully related First Woman to Lone Ranger and Ahdamn to Tonto. In this effort, he has legitimized his creation story by relating it to a fictional story that traces the history of Native Americans. His fiction criticizes the stereotypical mentality of Euro-Americans with his fiction. He points out that when the live rangers notice that there are some bodies of dead rangers, they immediately blame Indians without any investigation and clue. It also signifies the historical incident that happened many years ago which forced American Indians to move to reservation and others to be imprisoned and that unfortunate incident also took the lives of many innocent people. The

history written by Euro-Americans did not highlight what they had done to the innocent people. They declared them dangerous for fighting for their rights because they were involved in many riots at that time. King's *Green Grass, Running Water* fills the gaps of the history by taking the advantage of fiction to bring into the notice of readers, his point of view about the history of Native Americans. The story ends with the crime of Lone Ranger and Tonto being Indians at Fort Marion, Florida.

The second imaginary self-reflexive story of Thomas King revolves around Changing Woman. She meets Moby-Jane that is a big black whale and asks her about some warm place and the whale offers her to land at its back and tells her that she will take her to Florida that is a warm place. When they find that warm place, Moby-Jane tells her that she needs to go back to sink the ship and leaves. Changing Woman watches her friend leave, and does not notice soldiers who grab her. She tells them that she is Ishmael but they do not believe her and tell each other, "this is not Ishmael, this is an Indian" (249). They take her to Fort Marion, Florida in charge of being Indian where she sees other Indians as well who are busy in drawing the pictures. Through this imaginative story, King has maintained a fact that in white society being an Indian is a serious crime. There has been nothing wrong and serious that has happened to anybody because when Changing Woman reaches at the shore, the soldiers grab her for no reason, they just talk to each other that she is Indian. This is the greatest satire on European societies because being an Indian is considered a crime. Changing Woman keeps on telling them that she is Ishmael but they do not listen to her. Again, King has chosen Ishmael which is a novel that addresses the subject of mythological thinking behind modern civilization. In the backdrop of postmodern, being Indians is an ideological construction based on universalism and totalization to represent the identity of Native Americans. In white society, Native Americans are considered to be the warriors and trouble creators. If anything wrong has been seen in society, it is understood that it has been done by Indians. King relates his creation story to that novel

to assign her an imaginative character named Ishmael. King reinforces the significance of Ledger Art as it is the creation of Native Americans that show their creativity by giving his individual meaning to American Indians. His second imaginative story also ends at Fort Marion, Florida with the mention of Ledger Art to blur the margin between fiction and history. It also highlights the brutal act of U.S Army that was behind the confinement of American Indians.

Third imaginative story of Thomas King revolves around Thought Woman. She swims and winds up on the beach of Florida. As soon as she reaches there, the soldiers with flowers in their hair arrest her. They talk to each other about the crime of Thought Woman. It was to decorate their hair with flowers. They blame her for the flowers in their hair and grab her. In the postmodern perspective, King's language play is at its peak with the mention of the crime to decorate the hair. This is very ironical that the soldiers arrest her after blaming her for decorating their hair. Meanwhile, she tries to convince them that she is Robinson Crusoe but they do not listen to her and they keep on saying that she is Indian. They take her too, to the Fort Marion, Florida. This time, the irony does not only arise from the crime of being an Indian but King intensifies its effect by highlighting European prejudice in another way. Before the arrest of Thought Woman, Coyote and G O D discuss the good points and the bad points. Coyote tells G O D, "the good point is soldiers have flowers in their hair" (361). According to Coyote, having flowers in the hair is good and he terms it under the category of good points but soldiers arrest her for the good point. The prejudice against Native Americans is twofold here. First, having the flowers in the hair is good, still, they arrest Thought Woman for a good thing. Second, she has not decorated their hair at all. As, being the readers, we know she has just winded up on the beach. They arrested her as soon as she reached there, without any investigation just because she was an Indian. She insists that she is Robinson Crusoe but they did not listen to her. Robinson Crusoe is a historical novel and it is considered a realistic history. King's choice of

Robison Crusoe is also very careful in renaming Thought Woman to relate his imaginative story to a historical novel that has been adapted for films and television. It reinforces that the King's novel is also a historical novel and this time, the history is written in Native American perspective. The third story also ends at the Fort Marion, Florida to associate the injustice and cruelty to that historical Fort again.

The fourth imaginative story of Thomas Kings traces the adventures of Old Woman. She is hungry and wants to eat something. She digs a hole to get a tender root. The hole becomes very large and Old Woman falls into it. It takes her to the sky and then to the water. She helps a young man in saving his people and floats in a lake. There she meets a young boy with a leather jacket. King has brought many historical characters from fiction and films in the last story to link them to his fictive history. Old Woman encounters a young man who calls her Chingachgook. He carries a big riffle with him. He becomes very excited to see her as he thinks she is his American Indian friend, Chingachgook. She tells him that she is not his friend Chingachgook but she is Old Woman. He tells her that he is Nathaniel Bumppo. He repeatedly calls her Chingachgook. "Chingachgook is an Indian. You are an Indian. Case closed" (432). King's addition of historical characters in the last story reinforces the historical events that took place between Euro-Americans and Native Americans and resulted in the enforced settlement on reservations. These historical characters also impose their power on Old Woman that signifies white dominance and power. Old Woman keeps on telling him that she is not Chingachgook but he imposes his opinion on her and announces the decision as if it is the hearing in a court to prove something. Chingachgook is a very famous fictional character of Fenimore Cooper's novel series entitled as *Leatherstocking Tales*. He was a chief of the American Indian tribe. The young man who claims to be Nathaniel Bumppo is also a fictional character of same Cooper's series. He was the protagonist of that novel series. He tells Old Woman about the Indian gifts and the white gifts. King's words play is

important here to highlight the prejudice of white against Native Americans. He tells her that Indians have a good sense of smell and this is an Indian gift. Whites are compassionate and that is a white gift. He continues with the same gifts, “Indians can run fast. . . endure pain. . . have good eyesight. . . have agile bodies” (434). “White are patient. . . cognitive. . . philosophical. . . sophisticated. . . sensitive” (434). Coyote calls him “Nasty Bumppo” and Old Woman passes a satirical comment on stereotyping and ideological constructions identities of Nasty Bumppo. “So, says Old Woman. Whites are superior and Indians are inferior” (435). “Exactly right, says the Nasty Bumppo” (435).

The gifts that have been mentioned by Nathaniel Bumppo signify the misrepresentation and stereotypes that have been spread worldwide. When he tells the gifts of whites and Indians, Old Woman immediately passes a comment that is also based on stereotyping that makes whites superior and Indians inferior. Then he announces that he wants to kill someone. It is also symbolic, as he has been presented as a warrior in historical movies. King’s presentation of historical characters from fiction and film is important because they are confirming stereotypes and misrepresentations that have been promoted through film and fiction all over the world. Nathaniel Bumppo reproduces stereotypes that have been presented through misrepresentations. His “desire to kill someone without any reason” is also important as this is the typical image of American Indian Warrior and savage presented in fiction and theatre. He wants to kill Coyote but he tells him that he cannot kill him as he is alive in another story then he decides to kill Old Woman if she is not her Indian friend. She assures him that she is Old Woman and not his friend so he points his rifle at Old Woman. When he shot at her, there was a big explosion and he fell down blaming Old Woman that she had shot him. She denies his blame and he asks her name again and tells her that Old Woman is a stupid name and there should be some better name for her. He follows the same tradition of dominant society to make the rules and renames her as Daniel Boone. She

disapproves this name and then he names her as Harry Truman. She does not like that name. He suggests her name as Hawkeye. She approves the name and likes it. Meanwhile another man appears who claims to be Chingachgook and he asks who killed Nathaniel Bumppo and suddenly some soldiers appear and ask the same question. They arrest Old Woman when Chingachgook tells her name is Hawkeye. She asked if they arrested her for killing Nasty Bumppo and they replied, “No. . . for trying to impersonate a white man” (439).

The allegation on Old Woman in the last story is also important. She did not ask for renaming her name. Nasty Bumppo renamed her and she was arrested for a crime she did not commit at the first place. All the names suggested by Nathaniel Bumppo have been taken from history. Daniel Boone is an archetypal character of Cooper’s fiction and Harry Truman is the 33rd president of the United States of America. Hawkeye is also the nickname of Nathaniel Bumppo. He is the fictional character of Cooper. The soldiers take her to the same Fort Marion where other three women have been imprisoned.

King’s dealing with the fourth imaginative story is important in historical context. He has incorporated many fictional characters from films and literature which is the indication about the presentation and misrepresentation of both Euro-Americans and American Indians in his fiction. He has also mentioned James Fenimore Cooper who is an American writer. Cooper has facilitated Indian stereotypes in his fiction series and has given the impression that the civilized Indian rarely exists and if it happens to exist, he will die soon. Though his protagonists are Indians in *Leatherstocking Tales* but they are represented as savage and uncivilized as compared to Euro-Americans. The comparison drawn by Natty Bumppo/Nathaniel Bumppo between Indians and Euro-Americans based on Indian gifts and white gifts highlights those stereotypes promoted by Cooper in his fiction series in which he has misrepresented Indians. Natty Bumppo also suggests Old Woman the name of 33rd President of USA

named Harry Truman. It is also symbolic because it shows that the unfortunate and tragic incident that happened with American Indians resulting in multiple deaths, destructions, enforcement of American Indians onto reservations and finally the imprisonment of the innocent people at Fort Marion was not the independent decision and plan of U.S Army but the government was also involved.

Historiographic metafiction is a tool in King's novels to highlight all these events that have been misrepresented by Euro-Americans and King has tried to show his readers the other side of the picture. All the imaginative stories of King end up at Fort Marion, Florida and all the four protagonists of the stories have been arrested for being Indian, sometimes with the clear mention by the soldiers, sometimes blaming them for the crime. All the four protagonists are innocent but still, they have been forcefully moved to Fort Marion to signal the actual historical event in which U.S Army imprisoned American Indians for resistance against forceful settlement on reservations. Intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction can be traced out with King's elderly Indians who have been imprisoned by soldiers because they have the power to escape the prison when they want to set on the mission to fix the world. Whereas, the real historical characters could not escape prison once they were captured. Alberta, during her lecture on the historical event of Fort Marion, tells her students about Native American prisoners. "Did any of them escape from Fort Marion? . . . No. They just sat around and drew pictures" (17-18). King has addressed silenced facts about the innocence of Native Americans, highlighting the brutality of U.S Army that has been marginalized by Euro-Americans. It de-centres the superiority of whites/Euro- Americans for being civilized as King has brought into the light the true face of whites for being barbaric, uncivilized and savage for killing innocent American Indians and burning their homes to force them to move to reservations. I have deduced from King's novel *Green Grass, Ruining Water* that Euro- Americans have always misrepresented Native Americans by stereotyping their identities but the historical truth is opposite

to what Euro-Americans have promoted. The notions like barbaric and savage suit Euro- Americans for their barbaric and savage invasions of Native American territories and killing them and removing them from their places forcefully. Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book, *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* also communicates the same opinion by establishing a difference between Euro- Americans and American Indians. He quotes Chief Luther Standing Bear and states that American Indians do not take open plains and beautiful rolling hills as wild. Deloria, Jr. is of the opinion that all the wild and savagery started with the invasion of Euro-Americans because before this, they had been living in harmony with nature. Deloria, Jr. fills the gaps of history by telling his truth about the invasion of whites on Native American's lands and he states that whites term Native Americans as savage and wild but in fact, they brought the wild West civilization with them along with unjust.

Only to the white man nature was a wilderness and only to him was the land 'infested' with wild animals and savage people. To us it was tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of Great Mystery. Not until the hairy man from the east came and with brutal frenzy heaped injustices upon us . . . when the very animals of the forest began feeling from his approach, then it was that for us the 'wild west' began (qtd. in *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* 90).

King's presentation of four elderly Indians, Lone Ranger, Ishmael, Robinson Crusoe and Hawkeye is also symbolic. They all set out to fix the world. They start fixing the world with a Hollywood movie that has been watched on the television screen of all the major characters of the novel. The movie is also based on misrepresentation and stereotypes of American Indians ending with the defeat of indigenous people. It has been presented in the Hollywood movies that Euro-Americans are always the winners because they are brilliant, intelligent and civilized and they cannot be defeated by dull, savage, uncivilized and inferior American Indians.

Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book, *Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* also makes a satirical statement on the urge of West to represent American Indians by making their stereotypes. “Easy knowledge about Indians is a historical tradition. After Columbus discovered America he brought back news of a great new world which he assumed to be India and, therefore, filled with Indians” (5).

Hollywood movies have a bitter and inhuman racist depiction of American Indians and King has made an effort to show the readers the true American Indian. In all the historical movies of Euro-Americans, stereotyping is evident and King has conveyed this reality with his fictional character named as Latisha. The discussion of Latisha with her son is important. He asks his mother about Hollywood movies and the reason behind the defeat of American Indians in all the movies. “How come the Indians always get killed?” (King 216). She tries to convince her son that in reality it does not happen and it is just the movie and not the reality. He asks again about the possibility of American Indian’s triumph in the movies and her response is important in highlighting Western misrepresentation of Native Americans. “If the Indians won, it probably would not be a Western movie” (216). Four elderly Indians make a plan to fix the movie by changing the end of it. The last scene of the movie is based on an American Indian chief, who leads his men to the river and they are surrounded by John Wayne’s soldiers. The unfixed version of the movie presents the defeat of American Indians but the fixed movie by four elderly Indians traces the victory of American Indians that results in the defeat of John Wayne and his soldiers. John Wayne has been presented as the chief of white forces and he is also the real actor of Hollywood movies. He is the protagonist who defeats the Indian forces. In the unfixed version of the Hollywood movie, Portland was the chief of Indians who was surrounded by John Wayne and his soldiers. Eventually, Native Americans were defeated. “None of the Indians moved. They sat there as if they were resting or waiting for a bus”

(356). The fixed version of the movie presented an opposite ending of the movie tracing out the victory of American Indians.

And then Portland and the rest of the Indians began to shoot back, and soldiers began falling. . . John Wayne looked down and stared stupidly at the arrow in his thigh, shaking his head in amazement and disbelief as two bullets ripped through his chest and out the back of his jacket. Richard Widmark collapsed face down in the sand, his hands clutching at an arrow buried in his throat (358).

King has deconstructed the archetypal Hollywood movies that misrepresent American Indians and he has filled the gaps of those movies with American Indian version of those movies. The fixing of the movie, done by four elderly Indians is symbolic because King has tried to make his readers see the other side of the story that has never been addressed. King has asserted in his novel that Hollywood has always misrepresented American Indians as warriors and savage and they have not let them win the wars. Through the conversation of Latisha and her son, the readers come to know about King's truth, about the historical events in Hollywood movies. King's dealing with the fixed version of the movie and unfixed version of the movie can be taken as intertextual parody because it has given King the chance to fill the gaps in the historical events in his version of fixed Hollywood movies in which American Indians are not defeated and they have been presented as conquerors. King's version of Hollywood movies also de-centres white's superiority as the central place has been given to American Indians and their conquest makes them superior to Euro-Americans.

King has rewritten the history of imprisonment of American Indians at Fort Marion. He has presented a different version of history in his novel. Intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction is evident in the fictive account of the history of Fort Marion. The real American Indians in factual history, who were captured by U.S Army were all men and there was only one woman. As readers, we come to know about the historical incident through the lecture of Alberta who has been shown to deliver a lecture on

the same incident. "I should mention too, that one of the prisoners was a woman. But she did not do any drawings" (18). King has taken the only woman which has been mentioned to be the prison who does not draw differently from the history. King has asserted in his fiction that four women had escaped the prison repeatedly to be the protagonists of King's imaginative stories and they all had ended up with Fort Marion. King has used the fiction as an instrument to rewrite the history of imprisonment of American Indians. The real historical characters were helpless to do anything against the U.S Army and they had to live their lives in the prison. King's prisoners can escape the prison whenever they want to fix the problems of American Indian characters of the story. Postmodern ambiguity of narratives also plays an important role to create uncertainty. In the plot of the real story, these four women are four elderly Indians who escape from the hospital. Only Babo, who is an African American lady, who works as a janitor in the hospital knows that those elderly Indians are women. King's fiction celebrates the liberty of American Indians to transcend time and space for their betterment. His characters are not the historical tragic American Indians but they have the power to change the circumstances according to their needs and they are not a prey to Western misrepresentation, unlike the real American Indians.

Vizenor's fiction does not follow a specific process of production and understanding of the text and it has a strong relationship which is specifically based on parody. Parody in King's fiction has its own system of creating meaning and the nature of this system remains political and historical. King's fictive history does not offer a genuine history. It contests the possibility of human beings to know the ultimate reality of the past. The reality of past in social and historical context is based on only the discursive reality when it is referred to art. History was believed to be inevitable but postmodernism gave it a new perspective and emphasized on the point that there is no concept of being inevitable and it is not eternal but learned through discursive practices. Modernist belief has been to discard history

and to move on towards machine age but postmodernism belief is to return to history and Hutcheon calls this history, a parody, to give the architecture a new view that makes it to relate it to its tradition, past and history. Hutcheon's concept of parody is different from the traditional concept of parody. This kind of parody is actually one of the ways to establish a link between art and world.

King has manipulated history in many ways in *Green Grass, Running Water*. It is not only that he has filled the gaps of history and the important historical incidents that took place in the lives of American Indians in different ways but he has also manipulated the historical stereotypical image of American Indians for a useful purpose. Thomas King has dealt with these images twofold. First, he has developed a conflict between the Euro American's invented Indian and the real Indian. Second, he has celebrated being Indian. American Indians have always been presented to have a tragic fate in the movies or literature of Euro-Americans and they have always been portrayed as the people who cannot be happy and who suffer in the end. The history books, novels, movies and media stresses on the stereotypical image of American Indians reinforcing how should they behave, walk, talk, eat and look like. American Indians have been bombarded with the fixed stereotypical images which have been promoted by Euro American. Thomas King has made a good use of the historical stereotypical image of American Indians in his fiction. He has asserted in his novel, that being American Indian does not all the time become the reason to suffer. He has taken it positive with some of his characters of the story. They have used that typical American Indian identity to earn their living. Latisha and Portland are among those characters who have manipulated the historical image of being Indian to earn their living. Latisha has been represented to be very clever to manipulate being Indian. King has celebrated the stereotypical Indian identity with these two characters, especially with Latisha. She has not only utilized the identity for earning her living but she has also used it to deceive the tourists claiming

that this is not deception. The tourists get attracted to her café because the name has been carefully chosen by Latisha as The Dead Dog Café. Rosemarie and Bruce love to eat at The Dead Dog Café because they like to experience real Indian taste at real Indian place because being Indian is an adventure for them. Latisha, on the advice of her aunt, Norma exploits Euro American myth of being Indian at her café. “Tell them it is dog meat. . . Tourists like that kind of stuff” (117). She appropriates her menu with stereotypical food of Indians. She makes the same beef burger with all different names on daily basis to trap the tourists and to manipulate them for their myth of real Indians. She converts her small café into a great trap for tourists manipulating being Indian. She also sells the menus and postcards of the cultural practices of American Indians to trap her customers by giving them a complete feeling of an Indian place. “Indians on their buffalo runners chasing down a herd of Great Danes” (117). Latisha can be seen to market the Euro American myth of being Indian for getting more profits at her restaurant.

Vine Deloria Jr. in his book, *Spirit and Reason: A Vine Deloria Reader* establishes the same popularity of being Indian. He states that being Indian is a new trend in contemporary American society. He states that Europeans showed their interest to know the religion and traditions of American Indians. The books and newspapers articles wrote a lot about Indian religious experience. He also gives the example of John Neihardt novel, *Black Elk Speaks* which is based on religious ceremonies. He asserts that the novel became immensely popular in the Western societies and “every summer caravans of young whites made their pilgrimages to Third Mesa and Pine Ridge in search of ultimate knowledge” (236). He notes down that after they knew the real Indian, “they adopted Indian names and proudly proclaimed their solidarity with Indians. Once accepted by Indians, there seemed to be no returning to the life of the ordinary American citizens” (236). Deloria Jr also claims that being Indian and adopting their names and culture has become trendy for Western civilization. Thomas

King conveys the same message to his readers by celebrating the Indian identity.

Portland has also been seen to do the same thing to earn his living. He also manipulates being Indians in his career in Hollywood. At the beginning of his career in Hollywood, he was not much successful and remained a B grade actor. It was only due to his enhanced Indian features that get him success in the career. He became more famous and that became the reason for his better economic condition. He worked on his outlook to be a true representative of stereotypical Indian. King states that Indians should look like in a certain way to work successfully if they need to excel in specific professions. He has made Portland to cash Indian identity, the way he has done in the case of Latisha. His nose created a problem in the physical outlook of Portland. It did not give him the image of real Indian.

Portland's nose wasn't the right shape. As long as he had been in the background, a part of the faceless mob of Indians falling off their ponies in the middle of rivers or hiding in box canyons or dying outside the walls of forts, things had been okay. But now that he was centre stage, playing chiefs and the occasional renegade, the nose became a problem (168).

Then he was given a rubber nose to put on his face but he refused to fix that rubber on his face because it was embarrassing for him but looking like a stereotypical Indian was also necessary. The only use of the rubber nose, according to him was for the clowns and he had no intentions to be a clown. He feared that the audience would not like him to see with his pointed nose and it would result in the end of his career in Hollywood movies. He gave it a thought and agreed to use the rubber nose. It made him more successful because he looked like real Indian. Years later, he could not find any role in Hollywood movies and he started to work at a restaurant. He told his son Charlie "remember to grunt because the idiots love it, and you get better tips" (235). He guided his son to get a better tip as grunting was important to present the real image of Indians as it was entertainment for white fools.

King has manipulated through Latisha and Portland, the mythical image of American Indians to use that image against Euro- Americans to befool them for earning their livelihood. King has not taken the historical stereotypical image of American Indians as negative but he has celebrated it by giving it a different perspective. Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book, *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* highlights the same issue that West has made stereotypes of American Indians and they have misrepresented them. “Indians are fierce, they wear feathers and grunt. Most of us don’t fit this idealized figures since we grunt only when overeating, which is seldom” (2).

Thomas King has addressed the historical Voyage of Christopher Columbus in a very different way in his novel, *Green Grass Running Water*. He has incorporated his discovery in an unlike manner to marginalize the historical discovery by focusing on the positive impacts of his arrival. He has not mentioned any ills that Western civilization brought with them after the discovery of the New World but he has emphasized on the three ships. His focus on the three cars which were lost and later they moved to the dam that was constructed against the will of Native Americans on the reservation is symbolic. King did not focus on the destructions that so-called Western civilization brought with it but his emphasis remained on American Indians to fix the problems for their survival. He has not presented tragic stereotypical characters in his novel. Rather his characters have the power to fight against the circumstances for the survival. King’s fiction is a revision of the historical discovery. In King’s version of the history of Columbus’s voyage, the three ships that Columbus was given by the King and the Queen are three cars and the characters of King’s fiction own those cars. Babo’s red Pinto is King’s version of La Pinta, Alberta’s blue *Nissan* is the modern version of La Nina and Dr. Hovaugh's white Karmann-Ghia Convertible is King’s modern version of La Santa Maria. They all disappear by floating away in their little puddles and end up on the location of the dam that has been constructed by the government. They start to float in their

small puddles and then start to move to the lake that has been made from the river by the government on the land of American Indians. They all floated until they fell into the dam, destroying it for the betterment of American Indians. These three cars which symbolically represent the three ships of Christopher Columbus have been used as an instrument to destroy the dam. The dam was constructed for the inconvenience of American Indians and they were upset for losing their lands and homes. But in the version of King's history of Columbus's voyage, the three cars have been made the symbol for the survival. The survival of American Indians was in the change and the three cars moved to the dam, fell into it and destroyed it, eventually changing the course of the river to save American Indians from the loss of their lands and homes. The three cars in King's revised history also symbolizes American Indian conquest over Euro-Americans in forcing them to leave them with their lands and homes.

The cars smashing into the dam, the lake curling over the top. Sifton felt it first, a sudden shifting, the snapping crack of concrete and steel, and in instant the water rose out of the lake like a mountain, sucking the cars under and pitching them high in the air, sending them in the dam in an awful rush. . . Babo watched the dam burst (454).

In the officially documented history of Columbus's voyage and discovery of the New World, these ships helped Columbus to reach to that place to conquer the indigenous people. That conquest brought destruction in the lives of Native Americans and they could not do anything against it. They could not protect themselves. They could not resist against Euro-Americans to save themselves from the evils of the Old World that raised the slogan of civilization and brought destruction for the New World. Thomas King has rewritten the story of Columbus' discovery with a different ending. The evils of Western civilization could not harm American Indians in King's fiction. American Indians have been successful in driving Euro-Americans back and restore their lands and homes to live happily ever after. The

element of document history of Columbus's discovery has been eliminated by King to convey to his readers the determination of American Indians and their strength to fight against the circumstances to survive. All the story of the novel revolves around the evils created by Euro-Americans to produce an imbalance in the lives of American Indians and the efforts made by four elderly American Indians to fix the problems. King has conveyed a good message in his story that man should make efforts to fix the problems of real-life instead of compromising on them and living an awful life. Columbus' episode is one of the examples in which American Indians have survived by destroying European civilization as the river, at the end, restores its natural course symbolizing Native Americans survival.

4.4 Fictive History in *Truth and Bright Water*

Thomas King has rewritten many historical events in a parodic way in his novel, *Truth and Bright Water*. He has deconstructed the actual historical events and with his power of imagination to discard historical realities. His novels provide the traces of history but he has written it in a different way with a new perspective that makes me believe in him and it seems to be a true account that has minimized the dark side of historical events which are heavy with the tragedies. There are many characters whose namesakes were actually important figures from the history. The protagonist of the novel named as Tecumseh has also been taken from the history. He was a Native American leader who fought for Native's self-government and for claiming their traditional lands back against the United States. King has presented Tecumseh as a teenaged protagonist and the narrator of the novel. In the novel of King, the role of Tecumseh who is Native American leaders has been changed. In actual history, he was a leader, a warrior but King has presented him as a teenage boy who is in search of many answers to his questions. Throughout the novel, he has been seen to find out the truth about the mysterious woman and the skull and answers to the questions of the past of Aunt Cassie. There are many questions in his mind and he wants to find out the answers to them. The

warrior becomes a peaceful explorer in the fictive account of King's imagination to minimize the dilemma that Native Americans have been suffering since centuries. In history, he was a warrior and a leader of his people to fight for their tribal lands and in the fiction of King, he is a young boy who is fighting against his own questions to get the answers for his own satisfaction.

King's story revolves around the two towns Truth and Bright Water which have been separated by Canadian borderline with the United States of America. On one side of the border, there is the United States (Truth) and on the other side of the border, there is Canada (Bright Water). The informal name of the border is forty-nine parallel. Canadian borderline that symbolizes Canadian politics and it also has the historical background and the strict rules of crossing the border have been dealt by King in a very different way. King's intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction has minimized the political significance of the border in his fiction. He has made it very easy to cross it whenever the characters of his story want to cross it to go to the other side of the border. The reality of the border and imagination has been blurred by King. History and literature provide the intertexts in the novels examined here, but there is no question of a hierarchy, implied or otherwise. They are both part of the signifying systems of our culture. They both make and make sense of our world. There is no hard and fast rule to cross the border in the novel. The characters often cross it very conveniently. We have been conveyed this convenience many times through different characters who keep on crossing the border through the course of the story. When the protagonist and his mother cross the border to go on the other side to see the grandmother and Aunt Cassie, we notice that there are no guards or security to check them. They conveniently crossed the border without any check and resistance. The protagonist and his father also crossed the border conveniently because they were also sent to the other side of the border without any resistance. King has made political things very easy in his fiction to negate the authority of the

government under the cover of his fiction. There is no hurdle for Native Americans in crossing the border and they are not controlled by the government. The present-day difficulties that Native American are facing and the difficulties and inconveniences that the history witnesses both have been negated by King under the cover of his fiction.

Thomas King has addressed the American Indian Movement (AIM) in a parodic way. He has not addressed historical problems, events or the policies of the movement but he has discussed it in an altogether different perspective. King's use of intertextual parody in his fiction is primarily paradoxical. History is given a new perspective that favors Native Americans but it infuriates Euro- Americans. As Hucheeon asserts,

In the postmodern novel, the conventions of both fiction and historiography are simultaneously used and abused, installed and subverted, asserted and denied. And the double (literary/historical) nature of this intertextual parody is one of the major means by which this paradoxical (and defining) nature of postmodernism is textually inscribed ("Historiographic Metafiction" 4).

The collective problems and the motives of Native Americans have been reversed in the fiction of King. He has associated the American Indian Movement with an individual character of his novel entitles as Aunt Cassie. The protagonist, who is in his teenage, sees the American Indian Movement with the relation of his Aunt Cassie. He has been told that Aunt Cassie left her college and joined the American Indian Movement. He notices the hand of his Aunt and sees the tattoo on it. He observes her hand and finds out that the tattoo on her knuckle contains some letters. He reads the letters and finds that the tattoo says AIM. "I don't know if Aunty Cassie had really been a member of the American Indian Movement or if she got the tattoo to be cool" (56). Since he is a teenaged young boy and according to his interpretation the tattoo must stand for AIM (American Indian Movement) because he has heard it many times that Aunt Cassie left the college and joined the American Indian Movement. We, as readers, come to know later

that the perception of the protagonist about the tattoo is reversed. The protagonist also writes on his knuckles AIM and asks her “‘Is this how you did this’? She replies ‘no’. ‘When I did this I was drunk and I did it in a mirror’” (229). She confirms that the letters of the tattoo on her knuckles do not stand for AIM. The tattoo of Aunt Cassie remains a mystery for the protagonist because he relates it to AIM but Aunt Cassie denies the relation between AIM that the protagonist has on his knuckles.

The understanding of the protagonist about the tattoo is the American Indian Movement that was a collective movement for American Indians to resolve their issues. King has given a very different perspective to AIM as in his fiction, AIM is not a political movement of history. AIM is totally reverse in meaning in King’s fiction as it is “MIA”. MIA is the lost daughter of Aunt Cassie and it also suggests “Missing In Action”. The context of AIM has been reversed by King as in his novel, the motives have been shifted from collective to individual. The historical movement which represented collective problems of Native Americans, now, stands for the personal agony of Aunt Cassie as she relates it to her lost daughter MIA. King has not discussed the policies of AIM, or the background or even the events of the movement in his novel, but he has deconstructed all the concept of AIM and has given it a new perspective that is personal for one of his characters. King has changed the meaning of the historical movement. He has not totally discarded the symbol of misery in his novel that is common in both present and historical scenarios. Historical AIM reminds the readers of the problems of American Indians which they faced in the hands of Euro-Americans. In the present scenarios, the fictive account AIM, it again is related to the misery and agony of Aunt Cassie because she relates it to her lost daughter named MIA. King has not only given a new perspective about AIM but he has also minimized the collective trauma of American Indians by reversing it to MIA.

Thomas King has deconstructed the meaning of a day in Canadian history in his parodic intertextual self-reflexive version of history. July first

is celebrated as Canada day and King has revised the meaning of first July in *Truth and Bright Water*. His deconstruction of first July is folded. Even within the deconstruction, he has given two meanings to first July. First, he has replaced the anniversary of Canada with the birthday of Cassie's lost daughter. Secondly, he has revised Canada day to Indian Days. King has replaced Canada Day with Indian Days in his novel to highlight the importance of American Indian cultural festival. The revision of Canada Day by King brings the marginalized Indian Days to the centre pushing Canada Day to the margin. The centre has taken the position of margin and margin takes a central position. Vizenor's parody not only restores history and memory in the face of the distortions of the history of forgetting but also, at the same time, puts into question the authority of any act of writing by locating the discourses of both history and fiction within an ever-expanding intertextual network that mocks any notion of either single-origin or simple causality.

King has also replaced Canada Day with the birthday of Cassie's lost daughter. The replacement with the birthday of a lost child further deconstructs the meaning of First July twofold. First, it is important because it is the birthday of a child who is Native American and for Cassie, it is her child's birthday. So the day is important for her. First July is important because it is Canada day. The center has been shifted from anniversary of Canada to a Native American child's birth. Secondly, since we know Cassie has lost her child, so first July is a source of grief for Cassie. First July becomes painful for Cassie in the memory of her lost child. As, for American Indians, First July means nothing because they have not been treated well by the Canadian government. So, King has given new meaning to Canada Day that belongs only to American Indians.

King, in his fictive account of the history, has dismantled the tragedy of Native American fate in the hands of Euro-Americans. His fiction is not a protest against the Canadian government or against the government of United States. He has given a new perspective to look into the history. His

fictive account of history is optimistic as it does not emphasize the tragedy of Native Americans in general. He wants his people to forget about the past and move forward. He links his fiction with history but he gives it a new and optimistic perspective. We know this through the discussion of the protagonist and his father. The father of the protagonist asks him if he knows what is wrong with the world and tells him that the problem of the world is “whites” (86). He points out the problem of the world, and in reality, whites are indeed responsible for all the problems and inconveniences of Native Americans. Then, he tells his son indirectly, not to stick with the dark side of history. The protagonist knows all the historical details that are responsible for the miseries of American Indians. He guesses the problem of the world by telling his father one by one, the historical reasons behind the problem of American Indians.

“That’s because they took our lands?”

Nope.

Because they broke the treaties?

Double nope.

Because they are prejudice? . . .

It’s because they got no sense of humour” (86-87).

The father of the protagonist tells him that it is true that Euro-Americans are responsible for the problems of the world but the real problems are not the lands which they took from Native Americans by cheating them. The real problem is not treaties that Euro-Americans violated and the prejudice that Euro-Americans have against Native Americans is also not the real problem of the world (Native Americans). He discards all the real problems of Native Americans which have been created by Euro-Americans and tells his son that the real problem of world is that Euro-Americans do not have a sense of humour. King has conveyed to his readers through Elvin, who is the father of the protagonist, that the real problem of the world and for Native Americans are not treaties, lands or the prejudice.

King has minimized the tragedy behind the real history in his parodic narration of the incident by filling the gap in form of humour. The actual historical problems have been discarded by King to introduce a new perspective. For Elvin, the survival of Native Americans depends on looking at the things differently and in this case, he tells his son that the survival is in a good sense of humour. He has advised his son to see the things in more than one way to survive as it is not always necessary to stick with the gloomy side of the situation. King does not mean here to survive by telling the jokes. As the father tells his son, “telling a joke and having a sense of humour are two different things” (87). King asserts that the survival of Native Americans lies in using the humour to outwit Euro-Americans. Humour can be useful to achieve their individual, cultural and economic motives. Euro-Americans can be outwitted through humour for the survival but they cannot achieve their motive by simply getting aggressive on Euro-Americans and by directly opposing them. This has also presented in border crossing of father and the son. Just before reaching the borderline, the father stops the truck and tells his son that to cross the border they need to look like real Indians. They should look funny, their truck should be full of smoke of cigarette and they should play the radio in high volume because Euro-Americans want to see Native Americans behave like this. It makes them successful to cross the border as the guard welcomes them to Canada happily. This is the way, King wants Native Americans to survive with humour by outwitting Euro-Americans.

Euro-Americans made railroads on the lands of American Indians that destroyed the ecology. American Indians resisted but they were never heard and the government did what it wanted, destroying nature. King’s words can be related to that in a different attitude of Euro-Americans. “They don’t blow their whistle and they don’t slow down . . . maybe they don’t care” (74). King has reconstructed the historical event in his fiction with his imagination with the victory of American Indians over Euro American. Lum has been portrayed to be obsessed with winning the race on

cultural Indian days. He practices to run with the train and to the readers' surprise, he wins. King has not highlighted the gloomy and dark aspect that is associated with the railroads and trains for American Indians rather he has highlighted the victory. He has made American Indians defeat Euro-Americans symbolically in his fiction with the victory of Lum. "He stays just out of the reach of the train" (74).

Euro- Americans have always misrepresented Native Americans. They call them savage, uncivilized and dark. In history, literature and films, Native Americans have always been misrepresented and have always been considered inferior to Euro-Americans. Hollywood has worked very hard to make stereotypes of American Indians with dark skin, ugly and more like animals because they have been contrasted with the Western civilization that proves them to be uncivilized. Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book, *Red Earth, White Lies: Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact* condemns Western bias against tribal people. He states that Euro-Americans do not consider the people a reliable observer other than West because if he talks about his people or his traditions, he can be biased as he is personally involved in those things. He makes a satirical statement on Western biased attitude towards Non-Western communities.

An urban educated white person, who admittedly has a deep personal interest in a Non-Western community but who does not speak the language, has never lived in the community, and visits the people only occasionally during summer, has a better understanding of the culture, economics and the politics of the group than do the people themselves (34).

Thomas King uses his fiction as a tool to deconstruct the historical image of Native Americans by comparing them with Euro- Americans. It is not only that he compares them with Euro- Americans but he has made a careful choice to make a comparison of real historical characters with his characters. He has not chosen ordinary Euro- Americans to draw a comparison with Native Americans. He conveys to his readers through the

protagonist of the novel that an ordinary Native American resembles with an American named John Wayne, a real actor of Hollywood who has always been presented as the hero of the movie. The most important thing to notice here is that John Wayne is a hero who was always presented as the chief of white forces who fight against Native Americans and he always defeats them. The protagonist tells the readers, “my father talks to the Indian guy who looks like John Wayne” (King 87).

This is very ironic, the most representative civilized actor of Hollywood, who has always been given the task to civilize the savage and the savage who is always ugly and dark, now he resembles John Wayne who is the superior civilized hero. The history loses its authenticity in an intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction of Vizenor when the same tool is used against the established knowledge. If an ordinary American Indian resembles John Wayne who is always presented as the chief in the movies then on what grounds Euro- Americans have always misrepresented them as dark and ugly? It also raises the question in the minds of the readers which attributes have been used to mark John Wayne a good-looking civilized hero of the movie? King has challenged the authenticity of Hollywood historical movies. He has also mentioned Marilyn Monroe who is an American model and actress. She was greatly appreciated for her beauty. Lucy is a Native American character in his novel who always thinks that Marilyn Monroe must be a Native American and not an American. This belief of Lucy also blurs the image of stereotyped Native Americans who should always look ugly and dark but Lucy believes that she belongs to them; the extremely beautiful actress and model. Where does the difference stand, if the difference is all about the colour of skin and beauty?

Thomas King deconstructed Trail of Tears that is an unfortunate historical incident of American Indians that killed many tribal people. According to the removal policy, the Cherokee nation was forced to leave the lands and homes to move to the reservations. They were settled on the East of the Mississippi river and they were forced to migrate to a place that

is known as Oklahoma today. They refused to migrate as it was a sovereign nation that did not want to leave the lands and homes. The government then forcefully moved them from their traditional lands and most of them migrated on foot. When they reached reservations, many people died of disease and there were an estimated four thousand deaths in that relocation. Rebecca Neugin was a child at the time when the Cherokee nation was forced that migration. She was the eyewitness of the tragic incident and her story was recorded officially. As a child, another tragic and vivid memory for her was her duck. She squeezed her pet duck so tightly during the journey that it could not survive. It died before they reached the destination. Since Cherokee nation suffered a lot and lost their loved ones along with the grief to leave their ancestral lands and places, the Cherokee nation called the relocation, Trail of Tears because it brought devastating and tragic effects on that tribe.

Thomas King rewrites the history of Trail of Tears and renames it to Happy Trail. Rebecca Neugin reappears in the novel of Thomas King to attend the cultural event entitled Indian Days and meets the protagonist. King has minimized the tragic elements in his deconstructed account of the historical event by replacing the tragedy with comedy. This time, Trail of Tears becomes Happy Trail and Rebecca Neugin does not kill the duck by squeezing it rather she has lost the duck giving the reader the liberty to interpret that the duck has survived this time to avoid the worst situation. The Happy Trail was built by the band for Indian Days to attract tourists to stay there during Indian Days so that American Indians can earn the profit from their business.

Thomas King has rewritten the history of Trail of Tears in a self-reflexive manner to create parodic intertext because the tragedy turns to be the celebration of Indian Days. Previously Native Americans suffered in the process of relocation, this time Natives and Non-Natives are seen to come to Happy Trail to celebrate the cultural event of Native Americans. King has taken historical characters and represented them differently. Rebecca

Neugin comes to Happy Trail with John Ross. John Ross was the principal chief of the Cherokee nation during the military removal. He struggled very hard to keep the ownership of the tribal lands in Georgia but all his efforts failed and he had to leave the place. Then he led his people from Georgia to Oklahoma because they had no other option.

King has updated the personal details of John Ross and he reappears as a person who owns a big red trailer and he moves with his community as nomads. It links to the history because at that time they were homeless and still in the fiction of King, he is homeless with his community but the purpose has been changed. This time, they are out for enjoyment and previously they were moved forcefully resulting in multiple deaths. Rebecca Neugin also is seen to be upset for losing her duck and she is presented to look for her duck that also signals the historical event in which she lost her duck by squeezing that hardly. In King's fiction, Rebecca is accompanied by another man named George Guess. She tells the protagonist, "He is Mr. George Guess, who reads the book" (102). We are introduced to Mr. John Guess as a reader in the fictional account but in history, he has a great contribution in Cherokee Syllabary. It was invented by George Guess based on the symbols to write Cherokee language. He devised a system to read and write Cherokee language and that is a great contribution for Cherokee nation. King has also included him in his fiction telling his readers that the person now reads the book that indicates his historical contribution.

King has also conveyed the miseries of Trail of Tears with the description of Rebecca Neugin's dress. "The girl is wearing a long dress that is torn and frayed at the hem and the sleeves, as if the material has been ripped rather than cut" (101). Her dress is very symbolic that links to the historical tragic event that led Native Americans to leave their places and lands abruptly. They were not ready for it and they did not make any preparations. Besides all the necessities of life, they also went short of cloths when they migrated. They did not have any tools to stitch the cloths so their

women ingenuity made the dresses for them and their families. They tore the clothes and hid the seams by pinning them. It involves much creativity on the part of Cherokee women. Rebecca's dress reinforces that historical misery that the tribe suffered because her dress is also ripped rather than cut because the women did not have the tools to cut the clothes. Rebecca Neugin tells the protagonist about her dress that relates to the tragic history in which Euro-Americans forced relocation on American Indians. "She had to tear the cloth because they wouldn't let her bring her scissors . . . my father says we'll buy a good pair of scissors once we get to Oklahoma" (148). When the protagonist notices her dress, he thinks that the dress seems to be old fashioned that relates the fiction to the history.

King has minimized the tragedy of the historical event by further comprehension of the protagonist about the dress. "It looked a little old fashioned, but it is probably a new style that has not gotten this far north yet" (101). He attaches another perspective to the dress using the protagonist who thinks that may be this is a new fashion in Georgia that has not been spread in North. It minimizes the tragedy of the actual history by mingling the boundary of fiction and history. In history, those ripped clothes used to be the symbol of tragedy, suffering and misfortune of Cherokee nation but this time king has replaced it with a symbol of fashion that makes them an advanced nation not a tragic and helpless tribe that was moved from their places against their will.

Historiographic metafiction plays an important role in the novel of Thomas King, *Truth and Bright Water*, in parodic intertextual self-reflexive version to blur the boundary between history and fiction with the addition of new perspectives to the historical tragedy. Rebecca Neugin has been seen to look for the duck that relates to her agony that she suffered in past. King reinforces the historical elements of tragedy by using different symbols for the kid. The protagonist goes to see her at the campground and notices "She looks tired as if she has walked long ways today and still she has long ways to go" (197). It conveys to the readers the history of the physical and mental

pain of the Cherokee tribe. They suffered the pain and became physically and mentally tired in the process of relocation when they were abruptly removed from their places. When the protagonist visits her at campground she asks him again about her lost duck. Here, King establishes his optimistic account of the history with the knowledge that there is some hope with Rebecca to get back her duck, unlike the actual incident in which the duck has been killed. The protagonist tells him that “your duck will probably be back” (197). It creates hope in his fiction that was missing in the history and here, in the fiction, it minimizes the tragedy of the history.

King has celebrated Indianness to give a new perspective to the historical image of Native Americans. Throughout history, American Indians have been shown to get annoyed on their misrepresentation and history stands the witness that Euro-Americans have never liked Indians and Indian ways. Thomas Kings has blurred the boundary between history and fiction by introducing a new school of thought about American Indians. He has promoted in his fiction that being an Indian is trendy. Euro-Americans idealize American Indian for being Indians. They copy their ways, they come to the places which look more Indian, based on stereotypes. It is no more tragic or inferior but the whole focus shifts from white to American Indians and they become more important and superior to Euro-Americans. The historical dislike has been converted into like and praise for Indian way and Indianness. The way King has presented a character, Latisha who runs a café with the name Dead Dog Café to catch the attention of the tourists as they believe that Indians eat dog’s meat. She cashes the stereotypical image and makes her restaurant look more like Indians and by doing this she earns more because tourists like Indian ways.

In *Truth and Bright Water*, King again asserts the same message with another restaurant. The protagonist and his father go out to have some food and the father takes the protagonist to a restaurant run by a Native American woman from Blood reservation. She also plans her menu card carefully. Like Latisha, she names her dishes with a dog’s name to give the

impression that it is made of dog's meat but in reality, they are not made of dog's meat. It is a way to trap the tourists by affirming the stereotypes, Euro-Americans have established for Native Americans. The protagonist of the story tells the readers that the dishes which were named after dogs were not actually made of dog's meat. "I have a Houndburger, which is really a cheese burger, and some fries with gravy. My father has a bowl of Dog du Jour, which turns out to be chicken noodles" (87). This is ironic that the dishes with dog's names turned out to be cheese burger and chicken noodles to use Indianness as a tool against white to get money from them. The characters of Thomas King are not stereotypical Indians who are dull but they are more intelligent than Euro-Americans who have learnt to outwit Euro-Americans by using the misrepresented identity against them. He has also re-written the history of Native Americans in a way that his characters are no more disliked and considered inferior because they are liked, envied and praised by Euro-Americans, leaving the historical image of savage far behind.

Thomas King has used Monroe Swimmer as an Indian artist to reinforce the same theme of celebrating misrepresented Indian identity to use against Euro-Americans. King has rewritten the historical account of misrepresentation in a positive light. He has made his character to get the benefit of their identity. When Monroe Swimmer used to live in the reservation before becoming a famous artist, he also used to earn with stereotypical identity. On the celebration of Indian days, he used to request his aunt to make a pair of short pants for him using elk hide. He used to march through tipis and booths when there were a lot of tourists for Indian Days. They used to enjoy looking at him wearing tradition elk hide. He looked like a joker while marching through the tipis in short pants but this was what German tourists wanted to see. The tourists only come there to see the real Indians with all the stereotypes attached to them. Monroe looked funny, and that was expected from the real Indian and it made him earn money by getting the attention of German tourists. "It was the least he could

do . . . seeing as how Germans were so keen on dressing up like Indians” (25). One thing is important to notice, there is no feeling of hatred for American Indians highlighted by King. Under the cover of fiction, he has tried to convey to the readers that the time has changed and people like to visit Indian places to get the feeling of true Indian culture. The tourists are eager to explore Indian culture in its true sense and that is the reason they spare some time to visit Indian reservations during summer vacation. Intertextuality discovers the relationship between one literary text and other texts.

Intertextuality parody of historiographic metafiction in King’s fiction has pluralistic nature that frees the reader from the grips of any certain and autonomous work to employ the capacities of a number of texts. The reader interacts with a long file of texts with an aftermath of critical innovation. In this sense, intertextuality is the solution of the contemporary intellectual reader who reads voraciously to know everything and be everywhere because the history and fiction go parallel with a hazy boundary between them.

Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King’s dealing with history and imagination in their fiction shows that there is no one writable truth about history and experience. There are only a series of versions of history or stories which depend on subjective interpretation of readers. The evolution of the selected literary texts also shows that history is not always based on factual truth. The selected texts create the quality of being subjective and self-reflexive because history and fiction in the novel go parallel to each other. The fiction of selected authors has been taken as a tool to highlight the historical truth of Euro- Americans. The analysis has also brought into limelight the American Indians perspective of history to marginalize the slogan of civilization raised by Euro- Americans. The study has also highlighted the reality of White civilization through the lens of historiographic metafiction that is contradictory to what they claim to have.

CHAPTER 5

SUBVERSION OF GRAND NARRATIVES AND PROMOTION OF MINI NARRATIVES IN THE SELECTED LITERARY TEXTS

This chapter explores the subversion of the grand narratives found in the selected works of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King. Not only the chapter aims to trace the subversion of the grand narratives, but also attaches equal importance to the promotion of mini narratives in the selected fiction. The research points out that the selected Native American writers in their fiction have highlighted mini narratives from the perspective of marginalized Native Americans. The writers have brought Native Americans to the center in order to subvert the legitimized grand narratives established and promoted by Euro- Americans. The selected Native American writers have addressed several social, political, religious and cultural issues, which have been on the margin previously, to prove American Indians' superiority to Euro- Americans. They have contested the grand narratives of Euro- Americans based on the promotion of white superiority by highlighting their subjectivity. The study reveals that the selected writers have challenged Euro- Americans' grand narratives in a way to show that there is no authentic reality behind those legitimized grand narratives. So, their claim has dragged them to the margin. The fiction of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King subverts the grand narratives of Euro- Americans; they have endeavored to promote mini narratives from

American Indians' perspective to highlight the difference between true and false, and just and unjust in the given society.

5.1 The Untrustworthiness of Grand Narratives in *The Heirs of Columbus*

In his novel *The Heirs of Columbus*, Gerald Vizenor has dismantled many grand narratives to promote mini narratives. The title of the book is about the heirs of the great explorer and Vizenor claims that Christopher Columbus belongs to Native Americans and these people are his legitimized heirs. This claim subverts one of the legitimized grand narratives of Euro-Americans; they claimed that Christopher Columbus was white and he belonged to them. Dismantling their claim in his fiction, he has come up with a new claim about Columbus' heirs and his ancestry. He has asserted his vantage point many a time in different ways by narrating the story as an omniscient narrator and with the help of the characters of his novel *The Heirs of Columbus*. We get an idea of the ancestry of Columbus from the omniscient narrator of the novel; the narrator tells the readers that Admiral, who is one of the characters of the novel, confirms that Columbus is a crossblood as he has the tribal signature of survivance in his blood. The narrator further says that Columbus misunderstood tribal people and their place; however, later on, he related himself to tribal people and their stories. “. . . was an obscure crossblood who bore the tribal signature of survivance” (3).

Vizenor dismantles another grand narrative of Euro- Americans, saying Columbus had not come to that place with missionaries to help him convert Native Americans. So, this claim confirms that there is no truth in the historical account by Euro- Americans about the conversion of Native Americans. “He landed at dawn with no missionaries” (3). Vizenor's dealing of conversion of things by using the same names from history also dismantles grand narratives. For example, the three ships used by Columbus on his first voyage called as Santa Maria, Pinta, Nina have been used

differently by Vizenor. He has changed Santa Maria into a casino, Pinta into a tax-free market and Nina into a restaurant in his fiction.

Euro- Americans consider Native Americans barbaric, inferior, savage, uncivilized, and uneducated, but Vizenor has presented them as a nation that is quite powerful, sophisticated and advanced in technology. He has dismantled another grand narrative of Euro- Americans by challenging Christianity; he claims that the earth has been created by Naanabozho, who is a trickster in Native Americans' belief system. He has conveyed this belief through the character of the omniscient narrator who narrates the historical background of a tavern. It is founded by a tribe named Anishinaabe and the narrator points out that this is the oldest place in the New World of Native Americans. “. . . Naanabozho, the compassionate tribal trickster who created the earth” (5). Therefore, this claim subverts the stereotypical image of Native Americans created by Euro- Americans to term them inferior and uncivilized. A nation claiming that the earth has been created by a trickster cannot be inferior to any other nation in the world.

The above mentioned claim conveys a new image of Native Americans that makes them superior in their fiction. American Indians' superiority is also highlighted with the help of the character of the tribal hand talker Samana, who healed Christopher Columbus. Euro- Americans' claim of superiority over Native Americans falls apart when Columbus, who belonged to advanced and sophisticated Euro- Americans, was healed by a person belonging to a nation considered inferior, savage and uneducated. Even if, Columbus belonged to American Indians as shown in their fiction, their ability to heal him prove their intellectual mettle. In his fiction, Vizenor portrays Native Americans as spiritually strong and superior due to their capability to heal people and hence he contests/shreds/dismantles the stereotypical image of Native Americans that presents them inferior and uneducated. The claim that the earth has also been created by these people also makes them a superior nation. Stone Columbus works as a mouthpiece of Vizenor, telling the people on a radio

show that Native Americans, who are also the heirs of Columbus, are working to change the false perception developed about them by the rest of the world. This assertion again dismantles the stereotype of Native Americans; being inferior as they are presented to maintain the system of the universe. “. . . the heirs come together at stone tavern... and the genetic signature that would heal the obvious blunders in the natural world” (4).

Vizenor uses fiction as a tool to subvert metanarrative that lends the pretext to Euro- Americans to make stereotypes of Native Americans as uncivilized and inferior. The metanarrative about Native Americans is automatically dismantled when Vizenor claims that the process of civilization had been initiated by Native Americans. He uses his character Truman Columbus as the grandmother of Stone Columbus to tell the readers that civilization started at their headwaters. “Civilization started right here in our stories at the river named the gichiziibi” (13). Euro- Americans have promoted a grand narrative about Native Americans that they are uncivilized and if they are uncivilized it makes them an inferior nation to Euro- Americans. Truman Columbus claims that the center of civilization is the river that is owned by Native Americans. This claim is a clear rejection of the stereotyping of these Native people by Euro American. They claim that the civilization started by them with the help of the discussion and efforts of the heirs of Columbus when they assembled in the headwaters. There is no point in considering them uncivilized, particularly, when they claim to be the people who brought civilization to the world.

The grand narrative about the superiority of Christianity and Euro- Americans has also been dismantled in the fiction of Vizenor when he calls the missionary a thief that steals the first stone of Native Americans that happens to be a trickster. The incident is narrated ironically as the writer not only dismantles the grand narrative of missionary as being pious and superior to Native Americans but he also mocks them in a very ironic tone. After having stolen the stone, they have to suffer the consequences of the theft. The stone starts blinding the members of the church. The people who

try to touch the stone are blinded by the trickster stone. And in a state of great confusion and fear, they threw the stone into the ocean, which was never recovered. “The first stone was stolen by a missionary; the members of his parish touched the stone and were blinded. The stone was thrown into the ocean sea and never recovered” (13). This appears to be quite ridiculous to the readers as they are not expecting to see the missionary losing senses and throwing the stone in an ocean. The people of church are considered brave, for they help the people facing the monster of evil spirits in their real lives.

Vizenor’s fictive history about Native Americans gives totally an opposite image of the missionary and officials of church that subverts Euro-Americans’ grand narrative of being pious, brave and the spiritual fathers of their people. Under such circumstances, they failed to resolve their own issue because they were frightened and they preferred to throw the stone into the ocean to get rid of its influence. Vizenor then contests the grand narrative of Euro- Americans that not only presents them socially superior to Native Americans but it also helps them showcase Christianity superior to every religion; however, this grand native too is dismantled when a mongrel claims to heal a priest. Caliban states that the mongrel has also healed a priest by licking his back. This claim subverts the metanarrative that allows human beings to consider themselves superior to animals, besides demonstrating the superiority of Christianity over other religions. Interestingly, the mongrel not only heals human beings but also superior people of church. “She attended a priest, pawed the lonesome, licked the sick back to health” (18).

Vizenor highlights the superiority of Native Americans, their belief system and their cultural practices by narrating the story of the first resurrection of Stone Columbus taken place at a government school; the story is narrated by Truman Columbus, the grandmother of Stone Columbus. Hence, Vizenor aims to subvert the metanarrative which shows Native Americans as inferior and uncivilized beings. She told the

anthropologist the story of Stone's first resurrection in which the windstorm hit the government school. Truman told the anthropologist that there were two children including Stone who died in that windstorm and she tried to bring both to life and she was successful in bringing Stone back to life but she failed to bring the other child back because he could not hear the stories about Native Americans in his blood. "That sweet child never turned to my hands, he could not come to me in dreams, he never heard our stories in the blood. Stone heard the bear in his blood, he dreamed he was a bear at his own death, and he came back to headwaters" (15).

The above excerpt subverts the grand narrative of declaring Native Americans and their culture inferior; the excerpt clearly reflects the superiority enjoyed by Native Americans. Vizenor has given them a great power in his fiction to even bring back the dead people which is not possible for advanced and acknowledged superior nation of Euro- Americans with all their advanced technology and educational achievements. The process of resurrection is only possible in the cultural traditions of Native Americans. In the above mentioned extract, Vizenor shows that the child, who could hear the stories in the blood and who could imagine in his death that he was bear, could be brought to life and all the efforts to bring back the other child were futile because he could not hear the stories in his blood and he could not imagine as if he was a bear in his death. The bear is a very important figure in the fiction of Native Americans as Natives give a lot of importance to bears in their story telling tradition. Vizenor asserts the belief in the relationship between human beings and other forms of life; his fiction conveys the idea that the bond between human beings and other forms of life should be strong for the survival of all natural objects. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book also highlights this relationship, stating that in many tribal religions, there is a belief that human beings can change their forms into birds and animals and the same is true for birds and animals as well. They can also change their form into human beings. "In this way, species can communicate and learn from each other" (89). Deloria, Jr. writes that such

ideas have been categorized as witchcraft by Westerns and their response is also natural as they do not have that kind of relation with nature. “What Westerns miss is the rather logical implication of the unity of life. If all the living things share a creator and creation, is it not logical to suppose that all have the ability to relate to every part of the creation?” (*God Is Red* 89).

The superiority of Native Americans has been highlighted twofold through the narration of the story of resurrection taken place at the government school; this very story subverts the metanarrative floated by Euro- Americans to brand American Indians inferior beings. The first proof of their superiority is that they are able to bring the dead people back to life which is not possible for Euro- Americans despite possessing many types of advanced technologies. The cultural tradition of storytelling and their religious beliefs about the sacred bears make Native Americans superior to Euro- Americans. Vizenor claims that the child who could hear the stories in his blood could be brought back to life; he could also imagine that he was a bear in his death. But a child who fails to experience such kind of ecstasy or divine elation could not be saved or brought to life again.

Euro- Americans consider American Indians primitive, savage, uncivilized and uneducated. However, Vizenor has tried to dismantle this grand narrative; he confronts Euro- Americans’ attempts to stereotype his people by showing that Native Americans are civilized, educated and advanced in the technology. His fiction not only makes American Indians to be civilized and advanced in technology but he also presents them as a superior nation to Euro- Americans. He emphasizes on the civilization and on the technology of American Indians in his fiction in many ways. He repeats this mini narrative that has been previously on the margin to make it grand narrative and in this regard, he has successfully pushed the previous grand narrative, which presented a stereotypical image of American Indians, to the margin. He claims that American Indians belong to Maya, who created the civilization in the Old World. And his advanced nation also created tobacco and introduced it to the rest of the world. This is a very

serious claim because this claim not only dismantles the stereotype of American Indians but it also dismantles the superiority claimed by Euro-Americans because Vizenor's claim asserts that civilization started with Maya and American Indians are Maya. It questions the claim of Euro-Americans that makes them civilized and superior. "The Maya created tobacco and civilization" (20).

Vizenor establishes another claim that shows that American Indians are educated and advanced in technology; this claim dismantles the stereotypical image of American Indians. "Now we got computers and fast food, so the old cultures must come to an end" (20). With the help of his fictional character Gracioso Browne, Vizenor promotes the advancement and sophistication attained by American Indians in the fields of education and technology. "He was educated in business and economics, wears a black suit and two wrist watches" (22). He records the shouts of tribal men and compares these shouts to Euro-Americans. He claims that the shouts of the heirs become the reason to make the flowers grow and he himself is one of them. "My shouts are thunder, my storms return to earth, a sound that restores the natural balance", he boasted. "The meadows hear my thunder, and the flowers grow" (23). This is something magical and it makes American Indians very special as they have the power to make flowers and meadows grow with their shouts and the earth also understands and loves their shouts. Vizenor subverts the grand narrative of stereotyping American Indians that makes them savage and inferior. He has presented Gracioso Browne to be educated and sophisticated by mentioning that he wears two watches. Gracioso Browne narrates the story about the experiments made on the shouts of a tribal shaman shouter to confirm the growth of plants with his shouts. "I was there, on time, and recorded the whole thing, and cut the best contracts as his professional panic hole agent" (23).

Vizenor has used his fiction as a tool to convey to his readers that American Indians are educated as well as advanced in technology that they are the important participants in the experiments that have been conducted

to discover novel phenomenon. They possess a unique skill to grow flowers with their shouts. The claim does not stop here because Vizenor strengthens this argument by giving another reference to a tribal shouter Luster Browne. He also has the power to make flowers and meadows grow with his shouts. Vizenor dismantles stereotypical roles of American Indians with this unique ability and then he continues to make them superior to Euro American Indians with a claim as he has presented in his fiction that Euro- Americans hire Luster Browne for their transportation department to shout over weeds and turn them to flowers. This shows that Euro- Americans need American Indians to help them in the tasks they cannot handle and they are not able to do. “The California Transportation Department paid him a tribal ransom to shout over the weeds on the highway medians, and sure enough the wild flowers bloomed the next morning” (23).

Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book claims the same ability of American Indians for the growth of foliage. He asserts that American Indians are more advanced in scientific ideas than Euro- Americans and he relates it to religions. He establishes that tribal religion is more compatible with contemporary scientific studies than Christianity. He asserts that it may seem an absurd idea but there is a solid ground for this idea as the people should also think and question the grounds on which the tribal religions has been considered superstitious and on what basis Christianity has been considered valid. Deloria, Jr. also claims the superiority of American Indians for their extraordinary powers that is the result of their harmony with nature.

Indian dances for rain; for example, were said to be mere superstitions; songs to make corn grow were said to be even more absurd. Today, people can make plant grow with music . . . the principles used by Indian tribal religions have tremendous parallel with contemporary scientific experiments (*God Is Red* 91).

Vizenor has tactfully discarded the grand narrative that makes Euro-Americans superior to American Indians and then portraying in his fiction

that American Indians are superior to Euro- Americans as they need these tribal people for the tasks which apparently seem impossible not only for Euro- Americans but also for the rest of the world. It establishes that American Indians are necessary for the world to make miracles and for making the impossible things possible in the real world. These people had previously been at the margin but Vizenor tactfully brings them to the center and the marginalized facts about them have been highlighted to make them important. The previous established beliefs about them have been dismantled in Vizenor's fiction as center takes the place of margin.

The stature of Euro- Americans has been depreciated to reflect the significance of American Indians. American Indians are shown to be superior in the fiction of Vizenor. In another way, he has drawn a comparison between Euro- Americans and American Indians on the basis of Native Americans' ability to shout to grow flowers. He states that California tried to be self-sufficient in the art of shouting that grows plants and flowers and it invited hundreds of inspired advocates to shout for this purpose but they failed to acquire desired results as it was the property of American Indian shaman to shout to grow plants and flowers. "California invited hundreds of inspired advocates to shout over the oleander, broom, and poppies on the medians, but there were no blooms" (23). It was something shocking for those people who were considered superior as they were expected to accomplish the same thing which was achieved by the people who were considered primitive. But now the same primitive people were hired to do that task for an advanced and superior nation. Vizenor has given American Indians the central place by mentioning their ability to produce foliage. He further argues that Euro- Americans needed tribal shaman shouter that much that they recorded their shouts to replace them with water to conserve it and for the speedy growth of plants and flowers on the roadside for greenery. Luster Browne who was a shaman of shouts was given handsome amount for the recording to broadcast it over the roads and parks and it made him the richest person on the reservation because

there was great demand of his shouts among Euro- Americans. “The governor and several state legislators copied the tapes and turned the tribal shouts on their private gardens, a minor scandal that became an oasis movement of the primal shout. Magnolias and wisteria matured in a few seasons” (24).

Vizenor has tried to give a central position to American Indians, their belief system, their culture and their practices. Their unique capabilities are useful for American Indians and the rest of the world alike. The death of Luster Browne is made memorable as he earned admiration from the tribal people as well as from Euro- Americans. He states that one afternoon, he died and at the time there were hundreds of tape recording of his shouts to grow the flowers and plants. “The trees and flowers waited but no other shouts would heal them in cities” (24). The use of the word cities is also significant here as it symbolizes the advanced cities of Euro- Americans because the stereotypical tribal people are always kept on reservations. Vizenor is building his argument and giving it strength step by step as previously he has just mentioned the power of American Indians to shout for weeds to convert them into plants and flowers. After having established his argument firmly, he endeavors to prove that Native Americans were superior to Euro- Americans. The services of American Indians hired after Euro- Americans’ unsuccessful experiments to grow flower and plants through shouts. Euro American realized that was beyond their capability and control to grow flowers and plants with the help of their shouts. He states Euro- Americans had to acknowledge the skills and services of the tribal man by erecting two statues of Luster Browne in the two states of San Francisco. “The Minnesota Headwaters Commission and Golden Gate Park in San Francisco erected two bronze statues of the tribal shouter, one in each state” (24). Vizenor states that even after the death of Luster Browne, his statues were haunted by his spirit and they performed the same task to grow the plants and flowers. “Shouts are heard at night, and the blooms are wild and rich near that statue. Everyday there are

lonesome people at the panic holes with their sick plants. Some of them are deaf, but they wait for the statue to shout and heal their plants, and even the old people are healed” (24).

It signifies the cultural tradition of American Indians to remember the stories in blood and keep transferring them to the coming generations. Vizenor states that the process of healing plants and flowers has not been ended with the death of the shaman shouter but it keeps on moving with his spirit that remains near his statues. It keeps on moving with the tape recording of his shouts and the recorded shouts are as effective as they used to be in the life of Luster Browne. In the above extract, Vizenor promotes the superiority of American Indians a step ahead by mentioning that the statue of Luster Browne not only heals plants and flowers but it also heals the old people. American Indians take a central position in his fiction to place Euro- Americans at the margin to dismantle grand narratives and promoting mini narratives in a very effective manner. Vizenor knows the art of giving many examples to endorse his points as well as conveying the same idea in many different ways. Luster Browne, a tribal shaman is portrayed in the fiction of Vizenor as the healer of foliage and human beings and the statue of the shaman is considered superior to the educated doctors who are also advanced in technology but the people prefer to come to the statue for their treatment is a great achievement by the writer to bring American Indians to the limelight and challenge the stereotypes attached to them.

Vizenor subverts the metanarrative that American Indians are primitive because in his fiction, he writes that they are Maya and the civilization also started with Maya. Then he argues that the process of writing also started with Maya. It is the great challenge to the stereotypes attached to the tribal people because if they are the pioneers of writing then they can never be primitive, savage and uneducated. He also claims that Maya were the first to imagine the universe and to think about its creation and this is something intellectual. American Indians are termed civilized,

educated and intelligent as they were the first who started meditating on the nature of the universe, besides writing their stories in blood. “The Maya were the first to imagine the universe and to write about their stories in the blood” (26). Vizenor also confronts the same stereotype attached to American Indians by claiming that the tribal people have taught the old world the rules of arithmetic naught and its use for measuring time. This is also a great achievement for the tribal people who are considered to be illiterate and primitive. Vizenor asserts that they have contributed to the advancement in education and they have also enhanced the intellectual level of the rest of the world by introducing new things and scientific phenomenon to them. It is also a great contribution of tribal people towards scientific studies and this cannot be done by uncivilized and primitive people. “The bear shaman and hand talkers touched an interior vision, and told the old world how to use the arithmetic naught in measures of time” (26).

Vizenor in his *The Heirs of Columbus* owns Sephardic Jews as well. Previously, he has made claims that American Indians are Maya, then he claims that Jesus Christ is Maya implying that Jesus Christ belongs to Americans Indians. His claims subvert the grand narratives that have been accepted by the world but he establishes his own point of view under the cover of fiction. Euro- Americans have never mentioned in their historical account that Native Americans belong to Jesus Christ, Jews or Maya; however, the historical fiction of Vizenor establishes a new perspective of the origin of all of them. “The Mayan shamans and hand talkers landed unused in the Old World and declared their heritable radiance in the shadows and spiritual causes of Jesus Christ, Christopher Columbus, and Sephardic Jews” (28). Vizenor uses the Mayan shamans and tribal hand talkers his mouthpiece to relate the inheritance of Jesus Christ, Jews, Columbus and Maya with the blue radiance as the blue radiance is very significant for the tribal hand talkers. Sherman Alexie is another Native American writer; he also makes the same claim in his collection of poems

First Indian on the Moon. Sherman Alexie writes in the poem *Year of the Indian* that Jesus Christ calls himself as Crazy Horse (161). Here, he challenges the preconceived notions about American Indians and Euro-Americans and their beliefs at the same time. He tells that Crazy Horse belongs to American Indians and if he belongs to American Indians, they cannot be primitive and uncivilized. Jesus Christ is the one who is a spiritual guide to Euro-Americans. If Jesus Christ is Crazy Horse, American Indians are supposed to civilize Euro-Americans.

Vizenor has claimed many a time in his novel *The Heirs of Columbus* that Christopher Columbus is a Native American. He did not discover the island but he returned to his native land after a voyage. He also gives the details of his original background and his ancestry in his fiction that subverts the grand narrative that makes him an agent of Euro-Americans who discovered them to make them his slaves. “He inherited the signature of survivance and tribal stories in the blood from his mother, and she inherited the genetic signature from maternal ancestors” (28). Vizenor adds the details about his ancestry to announce that Christopher Columbus is a Native American because his mother belongs to the tribal people. His mother and his maternal ancestors were Native Americans so he carried the signature of survivance and tribal stories in his blood. Vizenor matures his claim by adding the details of his ancestry and writes about the mother and father of the great explorer to give his arguments the strength. He mentions the names of his parents, the mother, Susanna di Fontanarossa, and the father, Domenico Colombo. He states that the mother was a dancer and a dreamer of wild seasons and the father was a wool carder and weaver. Vizenor in his fiction authenticates his argument by stating the facts and figures in the records of municipal archives. “Six years later in the winter she heard the stories in the blood and conceived a son. Cristoforo was newborn and baptized in October 1451 at Genoa” (28).

Vizenor repeats the claim that Columbus is a Native American throughout his novel to fictionalize history and to give his fiction the place

of history that is purely a postmodern element of his fiction to subvert the grand narrative that has previously been accepted about his ancestry. He has highlighted the mini narrative by emphasizing that he really belongs to Native Americans. He belonged to a tribal woman who gave him the birth and then he married a tribal woman who bore her child. His mother and wife both have been mentioned as tribal hand talkers. “He would bear the stories in his blood and a hand talker would bear his child at the headwaters of the great river in the New World” (29). He further writes to establish the same argument that “Columbus was a child of weavers, healers, and the sea in an unstable city” (29).

Vizenor promotes the same mini narrative about his ancestry in his fiction about Christopher Columbus that has been previously marginalized, by giving many justifications for the evidence. He narrates the story of his voyage and the political background that has been the main driving force behind it. He was asked to find out the shorter route to Indies and then to discover gold and wealth for worldly pleasures. He narrates the story of the king and the queen who sent him to the voyage providing him with the three ships but Vizenor twists the story by giving the hidden motive of Christopher Columbus that is purely based on his personal interest. He argues that it is true that there have been many reasons behind that voyage but the main reason has been his ancestry and his stories in blood. He belonged to that place and he had to go back to his place as there was a natural attraction for the blue radiance, puppets, the native land and his own people. “Other historical reasons prevailed, honor, wealth, a shorter route to the land of seductive aromas, but the mariner heard the stories in his blood and would return to the New World” (35). Vizenor establishes the story that is truth for him and that is new and has never been heard previously, but his perspective that rejects the traditional accepted truth about history is postmodern in nature that subverts accepted truths to introduce subjectivity and to emphasize on the individual truth.

Lyotard's postmodern concept is evident in the historical fiction of Gerald Vizenor. He narrates the story of the great explorer with a new perspective that subverts the historical account of his discoveries to give a different point of view about history. Vizenor has challenged many historical events in his fiction to introduce mini narratives in his work. In his novel *The Heirs of Columbus*, he narrates the story of the voyage and gives personal information to his readers that are different from the previous history of Columbus. He established in his novel that the King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella decided to sustain all the expenditure for the voyage and made Columbus the Admiral of the ocean sea. They instructed Columbus to discover gold, silver and pearls and return to them to hand over the things to them and they assured him that he would be given ten percent of all the things and there would not be any taxes on it. It was a great opportunity for the great explorer to earn wealth but a lot of caution, intellect and planning was needed for this purpose.

Vizenor chooses the vocabulary very carefully that conveys to the readers that he wants to give all the credit for the discoveries to Columbus as it was his individual effort and he made the discoveries possible because of his intellectual abilities and stories in blood. Vizenor does not exclude the king and the queen from the mission because they provided him with all the things he could need during the voyage bearing all the expenditure along with their major contribution in form of the ships, The Santa Maria, Pinta and Nina. They created a document to make him the Admiral of the ocean and giving him the responsibility of the merchandise and discoveries with term and conditions. "The document never mentioned the Indies"(34). The document of king and queen, which never mentioned Indies, say loudly that the discovery was the individual effort of Columbus as no one had informed him about the short route to Indies but it was his own intellect that helped him to find the shorter route to Indies because he had learnt from a mariner that the earth was round and he applied that formula to trace the shortest route to Indies.

When Vizenor argues that Indies has never been mentioned in the official document came from the office of the king and queen, he strives to prove his side of truth about the story of Christopher Columbus. He has established from the start of the novel that Christopher Columbus belonged to Native Americans and he was a Mayan. He repeats many a time throughout the novel that Columbus like other tribal people heard the stories in his blood. His repeated claim that Columbus did not discover the island but he returned to his native place and to his own people is also important and all his unique arguments can be linked together that subvert the main course of history to highlight mini narratives. He has questioned the established knowledge to give his readers another perspective that has always been placed on the margin. He also writes that apart from the urge to gain gold and silver, one of the motives to find out the shortest route to Indies was his stories in blood that used to call him back and he returned to his own land. "Other historical reasons prevailed, honor, wealth, a shorter route to the land of seductive aromas, but the mariner heard the stories in his blood and would return to the New World" (35).

Vizenor continues with the same claim, saying: "The Admiral of the Ocean Sea was touched with a vision to return to the New World; he would imagine the future and discover, at the same time, the stories in his blood" (34). The intuition of the queen Dona Isabel Moniz about the extraordinary powers of the great exploder can also be linked to the discovery of the shortest route to Indies because she sensed from the stories of his blood as she shared those stories in blood with him. "She sensed that the bearer char maker bore an uncommon vision. She determined it from his manner and countenance, his intensities and solitudes, and his obeisance to the blue puppets at the entrance to the convent" (33). Vizenor's claim that Christopher Columbus was Native American has been conveyed to the readers in different ways. He presents his perspective with the help of different characters directly and indirectly. At times, he leaves it to the readers to mediate on the details to deduce from the details and to link the

facts together to notice his origin to bring into the limelight his narrative under the cover of his fiction.

The arguments of Vizenor that insist on his truth about the origin of Columbus take the central place in his fiction because he mentions Columbus' agony and worries due to the failure to get the traces of land in his voyage. He was depressed because the people who were there with him started to distrust him and they insisted on returning to the king as it was not wise to risk the lives for the desire of an unknown place. When he got to know from one of his most trusted persons that the people had a plan to throw him into the ocean sea he became very upset but then he saw a light from a distance that was the indication of the land. He drew the comparison of the blue lights coming from a distance that the puppets produce on the shore of the sea with the sign of God to give him a signal that his ship was near the land. He established a divine comparison of the light coming from the island (that he told later is the blue light of puppets) to the religious account of Moses when he led the Jews out of Egypt and claimed that such a sign was not seen even at that time. This comparison of God's help for Columbus and his people through Native Americans hand talker's puppets is very significant for me as it discards Eurocentric superiority and makes Native Americans superior to Euro- Americans because God has chosen them to guide the people who had been previously considered powerful and superior. It highlights a mini narrative and brings it to the center that pushes the grand narrative of Euro American superiority to the margin.

I saw this as a sign from God, and it was very helpful to me. Such a sign has not appeared since Moses led the Jews out of Egypt, and they dared not to lay violent hands on him because of the miracle that God had wrought. As with Moses when he led his people out of captivity, my people were humbled by this act of the Almighty (35).

Vizenor claims that Columbus was saved with the help of puppets who produced blue lights. It subverts the grand narrative of the historical account that had been produced by Euro- Americans. They did not mention in their

history that Columbus was about to be killed and God helped him by sending him the blue light that was produced by the puppets. Vizenor does not believe in universalism and totalization. He has highlighted Native Americans' perspective about the discovery. Vizenor establishes the superiority of Native Americans over Euro- Americans by claiming that the blue radiance that Columbus saw was very meaningful and it was a message from God to guide him and his people towards the island. He states that since the birth of Christ, the blue light had been assisting the human race in looking for routes. This claim subverts Eurocentric superiority complex by giving a divine place to the blue light of the puppets, besides declaring it to be the most meaningful light to guide the human race. "Columbus saw the blue light of the hand talkers that night in the New World; he saw the radiance of healers from the stories in his blood. "Not since the birth of Christ has there been a light so full of meaning for the human race," wrote Morison in *The Great Explorers*" (36).

The puppets are associated with the mysterious tribal hand talker Samana, who possessed these puppets. Vizenor dismantles the stereotype about Native Americans that present them helpless, inferior and savage; he contests these stereotypes, claiming that the great explorer had been saved by Native Americans. The claim promotes a mini narrative that proves that Native Americans are the saviors of Euro- Americans. I believe that Native American are not just the saviors of the great explorer but they are the saviors of Euro- Americans as a whole symbolically for two reasons. Firstly, Columbus was not alone and he was accompanied by many people who were saved with the indication of land with the help of the blue radiance. And, secondly, Vizenor repeatedly states that Columbus survived the culture of death because he returned to his homeland. If that was the case, he symbolically helped Euro- Americans escape the culture of death, which makes Native Americans the saviors of all Euro- Americans.

Lyotard's postmodern concept of dismantling grand narratives to promote mini narratives can also be traced in the fiction of Vizenor when

he announces that the return of Columbus with Euro- Americans on his native land was destructive as they ruined the island with their so-called civilization. Euro- Americans have been considered saviors worldwide; however, Vizenor declares that their arrival on the island was ruinous as they ruined the nature by enslaving Native Americans. “Guanahani, the tribal name of the island, ended that ruinous morning with the return of the civilization” (Vizenor 36). Euro- Americans have made stereotypes of Native Americans and they have misrepresented them by calling them primitive and uncivilized. This stereotyping has become grand narrative for Native Americans but Vizenor has subverted this narrative by cursing the civilization that has been brought to the land of Native Americans. The use of the phrase a ruinous morning is very significant as it is a severe satire on the so-called civilization of Euro- Americans.

Vizenor subtly questions Euro- Americans’ concept of civilization, lending the readers the impression that the meaning of civilization is also subjective. The civilization of Euro- Americans civilization has been termed ruinous and destructive. He further challenges the metanarrative about Old World civilization in harsher words to highlight the marginalized truth about so-called civilization of Euro- Americans. He replaces Old World civilization with cruel and bitter ironies abound in the mission of wealth. The Eurocentric superiority for their claim of civilization is pushed with the revelation of the hidden truth about that civilization. Their civilization bears a secret mission to get wealth and Vizenor promotes a mini narrative about Old World civilization by associating it with the lust for wealth. Then he fills the gap of official history by adding the marginalized facts about the consequences of the discovery of the great explorer on Native Americans and their rich culture. Euro- Americans have made the stereotypes of Native Americans and that has created a grand narrative that American Indians are primitive and uncivilized but Vizenor subverts this grand narrative that is responsible for the stereotyping of Native Americans because he claims that the discovery made by Columbus reduced tribal cultures to the status of

slaves. It conveys to the readers that Native Americans have a rich culture but Euro- Americans have forced them to become the slave of their so-called civilization. Vizenor gives a central position to the culture of Native Americans by pushing Old World civilization to the margin by highlighting its hidden motives in terms of greed for wealth. “Cruel and bitter ironies abound in the missions of wealth and Old World civilizations. Overnight his discoveries reduced tribal cultures to the status of slaves” (41).

Vizenor has conveyed in his novels that the history of Columbus’ discovery has been written by the dominant people who have written it mainly to make the people forget the marginalized truth of Columbus’s Voyage, not to remember the history. Lyotard believes that the purpose behind writing such kind of history is actually to forget the truth as it is written by the powerful people who decide what knowledge is. This is what has happened in the official documented history of Columbus. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book establishes the same truth about the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus. He is of the view that truth is always marginalized by dominant societies and they push the truth to the margin to promote the created truth that suits them and then giving it the place of legitimized truth. He criticizes Western dominance and their written records about the historical event. He states that the written records are made authentic by the people who are in power who decide what should be written and what should be prohibited. He gives the example of Samuel Eliot Morison regarding the officially documented history of Columbus and pre-Columbian period. “Samuel Eliot Morison was a singularly devoted worshipper of Columbus, and while he was alive it was virtually impossible to discuss pre-Columbian expeditions to the Western Hemisphere in any academic setting” (*Red Earth, White Lies* 30).

Vizenor also subverts the official documented history about the discovery made by Columbus. He highlights the gaps that prevail in his fictional history to push the official documented history to the margin by asserting his truth that casts a negative light on the character of Columbus.

The official history makes Columbus a great explorer who has been chosen by the king and the queen for a great purpose, however Vizenor's fiction declares him a greedy invader. Vizenor challenges the documented history by re-writing his version of history in his fiction in which he highlights the lust of Euro- Americans wrapped in the slogan of civilization that they claim they have taken to Americas. Once Columbus discovered the island and got the possession his lust did not end and he wanted more wealth that Vizenor calls luck. Columbus remained desperately worried when he could not go ahead in the pursuit of gold mines due to unsupportive weather conditions. "The Santa Maria and the Nina remained at the anchor in the harbor for six days because of rain and contrary winds. He waited for his luck to return" (41). He invaded the land of innocent people for the lust for gold, pearls, wealth and power. He has been presented as a greedy fellow by Vizenor. His lust for wealth and gold didn't end with the invasion of the island but it increased with it. After having realized that he could seize more gold, his happiness had no bounds. The choice of words by Vizenor is very careful that presents him a lusty soul looking for opportunities to grab worldly wealth. God has not failed to provide one perfect day after the other indicates his increasing greed for wealth once he had achieved his targeted treasure. His so-called conquest in the official documented history that raises the slogan of civilization he brought to the island gets marginalized with Vizenor's detection of his lust for power and wealth. "He learned from the people that on another island to the south he could find a king who possesses a lot of gold and has great containers of it. Not only gold, he was told, but precious stones. God has not failed to provide one perfect day after the other" (37).

Vizenor subverts the grand narrative which term Native Americans illiterate, inferior and primitive by giving his perspective about the historical discovery. He argues that Columbus was a Native American as he had the signature of survivance in his blood. The claim declares Columbus to be a tribal man who was responsible for discover a shorter route to find

out wealth. He gives him all the credit for the most important shipwreck with a claim that he belongs to Native Americans who are stereotyped as illiterate, inferior and uncivilized. He rejects all the stereotypes attached to Native Americans by owning Columbus who had done a great task. It also conveys to the readers that Euro- Americans could not do that task because they did not possess the required intelligence to execute the task. They depended on a tribal man for the completion of the task to gain wealth by finding out a shorter route to Indies. “Columbus inherited the signature of survivance, discovered a new route to the colonial wealth, and was responsible for one of the most notable shipwrecks in the history” (42). All the boasted claims of the civilization of Euro- Americans are pushed to the margin with the conquest of a tribal man over so-called civilized, literate and superior nation and Native Americans take a central position in this discovery. He does not stop by just announcing that a tribal man who inherited the signature of survivance is the hero of the great shipwreck and he also claims the superiority of Native Americans by adding some other facts.

Vizenor claims in his novel that after having discovered the island, Columbus came to know about more treasures, precious stones and mine of gold. He learned about the wealth from Native Americans and asked many tribal people about the exact location to find out the treasure. Then he came across a tribal leader who promised to guide him to the route that leads to the wealth. “A tribal leader on the island would show the mariner how to discover gold, His directions would save the Old World mission and culture of death” (42). The sentences are very pertinent and the grand narrative is dismantled here twofold. Firstly, it dismantles the grand narrative that says that Native Americans are inferior, primitive, uncivilized, and uneducated. A tribal leader has been chosen to guide the great explorer to discover gold, which gives a central position to Native Americans and makes them superior to Euro- Americans in civilization, education, and intellect because Vizenor declares him to be the leader. Secondly, the tribal man becomes the

savior for the Old World mission. It also indicates the superiority of Native Americans because they have been presented in his fiction to be the reason to accomplish the mission of Euro- Americans for the pursuit of gold. Another thing that has been highlighted automatically here is the fact that if Native Americans are the leaders, the saviors and superior to Euro- Americans. They are the people who helped Euro- Americans complete their mission; this very fact pushes Euro- Americans and their grand narrative of being the center, civilized, educated and superior to the margin.

Lyotard's postmodern concept of dismantling grand narrative is evident in the above-mentioned sentences as his concept too is promoting mini narratives about Native Americans. It declares them to be civilized and superior and give them a central position. At the same time, a mini narrative about Euro- Americans is also promoted making them inferior, dependent on Native Americans and passive. These claims push Euro- Americans to the margin in academic field of knowledge. Vizenor under the cover of fiction highlights marginalized historical facts by rewriting his truth about their history and giving it a central position rejecting the authenticity of the official documented history and the creation of its grand narratives.

Vizenor rewrites the history of Columbus' voyage and his personal life in *The Heirs of Columbus* and some of his historical details are very different that makes me feel that Vizenor has filled the gaps of the official documented history by adding minute details to his personal life as well as official matters. He has not only mentioned those things which have never been addressed previously but he also repeats those things many a time to highlight those marginalized facts. Vizenor highlights the sexual disorder of Christopher Columbus in his fiction. He repeats his truth about the great explorer to make it a significant fact. He tries to promote it by telling the same fact in many ways, sometimes by the omniscient narrator of his novel, sometimes by his characters, sometimes by making a reference from the historical books and sometimes by the confession letter of Christopher Columbus. The very first time, he tells the readers about the disorder

indirectly, making Stone Columbus his mouthpiece. Stone Columbus narrates his dreams in which he has been made the captain of a spice ship. He metaphorically represents Christopher Columbus as he was sent on a voyage to discover wealth and the shortest route to Indies for the purpose of trade. There, he encountered blue puppets and an erotic woman who warned him about the curse of sexual disorder by the women who were burnt with bear codex at the library of Alexandria. “Stone was warned by the hand talkers that the curse of twisted penis had been laid on men as revenge by the women who were burned with the bear codex and other manuscripts at the library of Alexandria” (30). Vizenor then conveys the same secret of the great explorer by an omniscient narrator who tells the details of his sexual disease in a comic manner to ridicule him and add a mini narrative to the historical account of his discoveries.

Columbus was pained by persistent erections; his enormous clubbed penis curved to the right, a disease of fibrous contracture during an erection. He was born with a burdensome penis that once was presented as comic in ancient dramas. The smaller penis was a prick of endearment in some coteries; his was a torturous penis, a curse that turned the mere thought of sexual pleasure to sudden pain (31).

Vizenor repeats the secret disease of Columbus by the omniscient narrator who narrates the story of Samana, the hand talker. She has blue hands and golden breasts and thighs; she liberates the stories in his blood and heals him with her extra ordinary powers. She is the tribal woman who helps Columbus get rid of his pain. Native Americans, who are presented as primitive and inferior, have been seen in his fiction healing the disorder of the explorer and it highlights a mini narrative that makes tribal people superior and it discards the grand narrative that is based on the stereotyping of Native Americans. “She was a hand talker and eased his pain with lust and wild rapture. She released the stories in his blood” (37). He repeats the same claim with the omniscient narrator. “He summoned the torment of his enormous penis, teased the carnal memories of his pained pleasures, but the

hand talker healed him” (40). He reinforces his argument with the recurrence of the same story by adding the details. “That night he abandoned the curve of his pain in her hands and thighs and entered her maw” (40). Vizenor conveys the same fact in order to add it to their history by referring it to the scarlet letter of Columbus that has been written by him in which he admits that his sexual disorder has been cured by the tribal woman. “She had golden breasts and thighs and she was the first woman who moved me from the curse of my secret pain, he revealed in his letter” (31). She healed him from his disease on headwaters in the midnight and that was the time when her blue puppets produced blue light to declare the healing of Columbus.

Columbus overheard the chatter of wooden puppets... the moon, in the third quarter, rose at midnight; from the stern castle he was aroused and pained by the sight of a slender woman in a canoe. Her hands were blue and her breasts were golden, a radiance that was even more seductive in the light of the moon. He touched his crotch to hold the pain of his erection (37).

Vizenor promotes a mini narrative about Christopher Columbus by repeating the claim about his disease that has been cured by a tribal woman. This claim pushes Christopher Columbus to the margin by giving a central importance to the tribal woman. Vizenor also deconstructs the official documented history that declares that Columbus is the man who has brought civilization to the tribal people and presents him superior. All his slogans of civilization become marginalized by dint of Vizenor’s truth about the discovery that mere meant destruction of tribal people. After an in-depth study of the selected novels from American Indians’ perspective, I also take this destruction the great reason to highlight the flaws in Eurocentric notion of civilization. This in-depth study also reveals the discourteous nature of Christopher Columbus who only brings the destruction to tribal people despite the fact that he has been healed by a tribal woman. Showing an utter disregard for tribal people, he brings the culture of death to their land,

besides making them his slave. Vizenor calls him a “racial terrorist” for his invasion of Americas in order to destroy the rich culture of Native Americans. “Christopher Columbus was disinterred once more in the politics of racial terrorism and the shame of colonial fortunes” (116). Finally, Vizenor repeats the claim of Columbus’ disorder by discussing this in a courtroom and he chooses Binn Columbus, who is the descent of Columbus, to highlight the mini narrative which is legitimized with the discussion taken in the court room. The heirs of Columbus have been called in the federal court for the hearing of medicine pouches. His heirs claim that those medicine pouches have been stolen by a university student named Transom.

“Christopher Columbus and his heirs hear the stories in their blood, and his bones told me stories about the hand talkers and his twisted dick”.

“His what?” Asked the judge.

“You know, his twisted cock”, said Binn.

“What does that mean?” Asked Lord.

“Columbus had a twisted dick, he inherited a curse like the twisted mouth of the evil gossipers, said Binn” (74).

Vizenor rejects the stereotypes attached to Native Americans; he raises a loud voice against it by creating altogether different Native Americans who are civilized, intelligent, educated, and advanced in technology. He raises his voice against the process of shifting Native American to the reservation made for them. In this regard, he shows that his people are self-sufficient and civilized and they could make their own sovereign state named Point Assinika. Vizenor pushes the two grand narratives highlighted in his fiction to the margin. Firstly, the stereotypical image of Native Americans that makes them uncivilized and inferior people. Secondly, he deconstructs the history of the discovery of America by Columbus and his first encounter with the tribal people by comparing Point Assinika when it has been declared as a sovereign state. Historical documents present discovery by

Columbus as, “he unfurled the royal banner with the great green cross” (36). Vizenor deconstructs it by writing that Miigis unfurled the royal banner, and the heirs brought the flags which displayed a large blue bear paw.

Point Assinika was declared a sovereign nation on October 12, 1992, by the Heirs of Christopher Columbus. At dawn we saw pale naked people, and we went ashore in the ship’s boat, said the adventurer on an exclusive talk show radio broadcast. Miigis unfurled the royal banner, and the heirs brought the flag which displayed a large blue bear paw (119).

Vizenor claims that Native Americans are superior to Euro- Americans and he dismisses the grand narrative of civilization of Euro- Americans and their science by showing that that the natural methods of healing with the help of the blue radiance are far too superior. “Nothing is obvious to science, said Stone. Surely the blue is obvious, said the investigator” (152). Vizenor then establishes the superiority of Native Americans over Euro- Americans by comparing their Statute of Liberty with Native Americans’ Trickster of Liberty. They erected their trickster of liberty on Point Assinika to declare their superiority by willfully raising the height of their Trickster of Liberty from the Statue of Liberty. “The Trickster of Liberty faced west on the point and would be higher than the Statue of Liberty” (122). “The Trickster of Liberty, that marvelous copper giant dedicated to tribal humor, was moved from the reservation and now stands on shore near the marina , and more than hundred and eighty feet, head to toe, taller than the Statue of Liberty” (123).

Vizenor adds a lot of details in his fiction to tell his readers that Point Assinika is a developed state of Native Americans. They have an international bank, a radio station, a bingo and a manicure salon to heal their women and children. He asserts that the natural ways are better than so-called civilization that is a loud slogan of Euro- Americans to make public schools and get taxes. He promotes a mini narrative that the civilization of Euro- Americans is in fact the prison for Native Americans. “Point Assinika

is a natural nation... humor rules and trickster heals in our state and we have no checkpoints, or passports, no parking meters to ruin the liberty of the day” (126). He asserts that Native Americans have their own distinctive lifestyle that is based on nature and it is better than Euro American’s civilization that brings crime to people; he also establishes the fact that Point Assinika has no prison. It can be deduced that if their sovereign state has no prison, there is no concept of crime there as they are the people who are noble because they believe in nature, peace and co-ordination. The point is also conveyed through the argument of Luckie White who is presented in a conversation with the radio owner. “She praised the heirs for not being corrupted by their considerable cash and public attention, or ruined by political censure on the reservation” (129).

The point was claimed by the heirs as a free state with no prisons, no passports, no public schools, no missionaries, no television, and no public taxation; genetic therapies, natural medicines, bingo cards, and the entertainment were free to those who came to be healed and those who lived on the point (124).

Vizenor establishes the superiority of Native Americans over Euro-Americans in many ways. He has portrayed them more advanced in technology than Euro- Americans. At Point Assinika, Native Americans has made a salon known as Parthenon Manicure Salon. In this salon the tribal people have been presented to heal the wounded people with genetic therapies to regenerate the body parts of human beings that break down or become dysfunctional. It not only reflects their superiority in technology but it also shows that they are self-sufficient to the extent that the treatment is free along with food, stay and entertainment that has never been expected even from so-called civilized Euro- Americans. Vizenor dismantles both the grand narratives about Native Americans floated by Euro- Americans. The margin takes the place of the center as importance and superiority has been accorded to Native Americans. “The heirs and the blues were the masters of the energies that healed and regenerated lost limbs, the crushed,

tormented and those who were misconceived in wicked storms” (144). Vizenor in his fiction challenges another grand narrative by claiming that Native Americans possess an advanced technology which helps women conceive children without men at Point Assinika in Parthenon Manicure Salon. “This is serious, we’re talking about perfect children, women without men means more girls than boys in our nation” (149). Such kind of advancement accomplished by Native Americans manifests how far they have excelled in the field of technology. Vizenor’s claim about the scientific research at the salon gives a central position to Native Americans. “The Parthenon Manicure Salon became the New World pavilion to heal women, recount the ecstatic creation of children without men and their sperm, and to encourage the genetic research on the signature of parthenogenesis” (148).

Vizenor promotes the mini narrative of Native Americans’ superiority and their advancement in technology to give these people the central place that casts a shadow on Euro- Americans and pushes them and their created stereotypes to the margin. Vizenor highlights his mini narrative in his fiction by leveling serious allegations against Native Americans who use children for pornography and biological experiments. It is surprising for Euro- Americans to see the unique technological advancement possessed by Native Americans as they have always termed Native Americans primitive and savage.

Vine Deloria, Jr. in his book *Fact* also addresses this bias on the part of Euro- Americans; he states that it is very challenging to bring non-Western traditions within serious scientific scope because there is inherent racism in scientific circles and academia. “For a person or/and any community possessing any knowledge that is not white/Western in origin, the data is unreliable . . . non-Western people tend to be excitable, are subjective and not objective, and consequently are unreliable observers” (*Red Earth, White Lies* 34).

Vizenor proves Native Americans innocent in his investigation and he makes Euro- Americans admit the superiority and advancement of Native Americans to dismantle all the stereotypical grand narratives. Lappet Tulip Browne has been sent to the manicure to investigate the allegations and the activities of Native Americans at Point Assinika. “Lappet reported to the tribal government... there was no evidence of child abuse, and the rumors of the refugees at the new nation were unfounded” (Vizenor 156). Vizenor further affirms the appreciation for Native Americans for making a sovereign state by the same investigator. “Lappet concluded her report with praise for the heirs and the ideals of the new nation; such personal conclusions were unprecedented in her ten years as an investigator” (157). Vizenor makes Lappet his mouthpiece to praises Native Americans for their advanced technology. In a press conference, she makes her perception on the basis of her investigation; she tells a reporter of The New York Times that more developments in the field of science are expected from the people of the reservation. It gives the central place to Native Americans and marginalizes facts about them have been highlighted with the evidences in the fiction of Vizenor to promote mini narrative which have been previously marginalized. “One day this nation may provide more reliable bionic leaders on the reservations than the natural ration of male genes has produced in the past several hundred thousand years, she told a New York Times reporter at a press conference on biorobotics” (158).

5.2 Incredulity towards Grand Narratives in *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*

Gerald Vizenor in his *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* subverts the legitimized grand narratives. He uses his fiction as a tool to dismantle legitimized grand narratives to decenter them by introducing and promoting mini narratives to replace grand narratives. The beauty of Vizenor’s fiction lies in the deviant nature of his truth about history in general. His fiction does not introduce the marginalized facts particularly about Native

Americans and Euro- Americans but his great contribution to American Indian literature is basically the promotion of mini narrative that takes a central position in his fiction. He starts his novel with the creation story of the earth that has never been heard earlier. His perspective of the story is very different from the traditionally accepted account of history. He gives the account of four worlds in the creation story and the center remains Native Americans and their oral traditions. All stories of the creation of four worlds are about Native Americans and tribal people. Vizenor does not forget to add bears crows and other animals along with the references to nature in his creation stories. The stories have been carefully planned to give American Indians the central place in the world. In order to promote the mini narrative that the earth has been created for Native Americans, they have been presented as the center of the world. The superiority of Native Americans is highlighted with these unique creation stories to dismantle stereotypical tags from Native Americans who have been announced to be inferior.

Vizenor traces the history of the first Proude Cedafair who announces a sovereign state for the tribal people to protect the trees from the evils of Euro- Americans. Vizenor's character of the first Proude Cedafair is not a tragic one as Euro- Americans portray him to be. The first Proude Cedafair has been portrayed to be very brave, intelligent, courageous and a superior leader of Native Americans. He stood alone against the federal and tribal government to defend his sovereign state; he also stops them from cutting the trees for fuel consumption. Vizenor's first Proude is not a warrior but a savior of both nature and his nation (Native Americans). He is a savior who protects his land for his people to stop the evil of Euro- Americans who want to harm the ecological system. The grand narrative that makes Native Americans to be warriors and savage has been dismantled very tactfully by portraying the first Proude as the hero and making the federal official who represents Euro- Americans the villain.

“The cedar circle has been declared as sovereign nation. The long arms would not enter the circle to cut the trees” (8).

Vizenor asserts in his fiction another marginalized fact about Native Americans by announcing that Euro- Americans are responsible for encouraging Native Americans to fight against them; he says that Natives are left with no other option with them expect to fight against them to protect themselves and nature. The encounter of the first Proude Cedafair with the federal official is important in a way because it conveys to the readers the bravery of the tribal leader who has not only fought alone against Euro- Americans but he has also made them leave the place in great fear. When Proude Cedafair fails to negotiate with the federal government and they try to remove him forcefully from his place by threatening him and using foul language against him. It is the time when the first Proude Cedafair realizes that the issue could not be resolved through negotiations and it is the need of the hour to react against the mistreatment meted out to him by Euro- Americans. The character of Vizenor is not a typical tragic character or a typical warrior as misrepresented by Euro- Americans but he states that even in this tensed situation the first Proude Cedafair does not lose his nerves and behaves calmly. “Proude drew a deep breath and exhaled in a slow whistle” (8). “He raised his head high like an animal scenting his enemies on the wind, expended his chest and growled with great power of the bears. The sound was deep and wild. The federal official and the detachment turned and ran from the cedar circle” (8).

Vizenor narrates the event in a humorous way to satirize the so-called bravery and authority of Euro- Americans who have threatened the first Proude Cedafair boasting their official authority. It also subverts the grand narrative that considers Native Americans to be inferior who have been suppressed by the powerful government and who cannot do anything about the injustice, cruelty and misdeeds committed against them because the power relationship forbids them to do so. The first Proude alone fights against the representatives of the federal government and makes them run

away from that place. It does not highlight just the bravery and power of Native Americans but it also introduces a mini narrative about Euro-Americans that makes them weak and coward. It brings American Indians to the limelight by giving them the central place and at the same time it marginalizes Euro American superiority. Vizenor's first Proude Cedafair is not a typical warrior as it has a negative connotation because Euro-Americans use this term for Native Americans to term them savage and barbaric. Vizenor's first Proude Cedafair is postindian warrior who is the savior of his nation. The superiority of Vizenor's characters can be strengthened with the further narration of the event. One of the official surveyors does not run with them and stays there to share the success with the first Proude as he gets impressed with the courage and power of the tribal leader. This is also the subversion of the previously legitimized facts which has always presented Euro- Americans superior to Native Americans. However, Vizenor has marginalized the previously legitimized fact by showing his tribal leader superior. With the help of his work *The Heirs of Columbus*, he also highlights that the superiority of Native Americans has been accepted by Euro- Americans. "The surveyor told him that he wanted to share his courage and defend his sovereign cedar nation, and begging with words; he named the circle in the cedar circus, a civil and sacred parish, a circular arena of cedar wood, a fine place to name the whole world" (9).

The superiority of Native Americans is discussed in details by Vizenor with the narration of their victory over the federal government. Lyotard's concept of promotion of mini narrative in the fiction is evident because Vizenor has highlighted a marginalized account of history to give it a central place. "Proude had won the cedar war and preserved his sovereign nation in the circus" (9). The first Proude was able to preserve the sovereignty of his nation and he was highly praised by his tribal people because they admitted that he was a great warrior with a strong vision. "Proude had become a warrior, praised for his vision. Tribal people came to visit him, to share his courage" (10). The fame of the first Proude spread

all over and he became the hero of tribal people, at the same time, establishing many facts to declare Euro- Americans the villain. The focus of attention shifts from Euro- Americans to Native Americans with the fictive history of Vizenor to push Euro- Americans to the margin and bring Native American at the center.

The center has been reserved for Native Americans in Vizenor's *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* because of the recurring theme of Native American superiority. His fiction established that the first Proudé Cédafair did not compromise on the sovereignty of his nation. He stood firm to face the hardships and gave Euro- Americans very tough time to discard the American Indian stereotypes. He acted intelligently and the federal government also admitted his intelligence. The federal government was feeling insecure and they killed their own surveyor brutally only because he was convinced with the intelligence, courage and power of the first Cédafair. The surveyor even celebrated the victory of the first Cédafair. "Proudé told the leaders that he would recognize no government but his own, no nation but the cedar, and no families but his blood. We are sovereign from all tribal and religious and national governments" (10). The central importance still remains with Native Americans and the stereotypical tragic element in Native Americans has been dismantled with the creation of a very strong Native American character.

Vizenor's fiction is blunt in raising the voice of the margin to provide the readers with another version of history that has been placed at margin. The historical fiction of Vizenor declares Euro- Americans as the warriors of evil and the religious oppressors. The history of Euro- Americans has never highlighted the truth about the oppressed Native Americans and their religious oppressions by the missionaries that is an important fact about their history. Euro- Americans have always misrepresented Native Americans in their fiction and history; they have always presented Native Americans as stereotypical warriors. Vizenor rejects that misrepresentation by highlighting the historical facts that make

Euro- Americans the warriors of evil. He also highlighted that Euro-Americans were insecure with the bravery of Native Americans and they envied the glory of peaceful sovereign state of Native Americans. The grand narrative that makes Native Americans warrior has been subverted with the claim that Euro- Americans envied Native Americans peaceful places. Vizenor does not just subvert the metanarrative that declares Native Americans warriors but he promotes a mini narrative about Euro-Americans proving them to be the warriors of evil. Vizenor's fiction brings into the limelight the evil in Euro- Americans and in their government.

The warriors of evil, the religious oppressors, the leaders from tribal fears, envied places of peace and personal power. Proude contradicted their black hearted energies. He and the other families exposed the evil of tribal governments and taught people to control themselves and not to fear the political witching of shamans from the evil underworld and tchibai island (10).

Vizenor narrates the story of the second Proude Cedafair who seems to be obsessed with the idea of saving his nation and maintaining the sovereignty of tribal people because he has the realization that his father worked really hard to make their state sovereign. Apart from all the realization of his father's efforts for the sovereign state he handed over the responsibility of the state to women. The second Proude Cedafair has been portrayed by Vizenor in a very different manner. He breaks the stereotypical image of Native Americans who are very rigid in their cultural and social practices and one cannot imagine them to serve for Euro- Americans. His portrayal is not a typical Native American but he goes on a war for whitemen and fights it for them "I have been called as a leader to serve another nation threatened by evil aggressors" (11). He is not typical Native Americans warrior but he is the savior, the postindian warrior. Vizenor suggests a different tag for American Indians and that is postindian warriors as in the new stories they create survival. His representation of American Indians is very strong and positive. He goes on a war and fights the war for Euro-

Americans. Being an American Indian and fighting for Euro- Americans is the promotion of another mini narrative that rejects stereotypical image of Native Americans.

Vizenor has plotted the story of the second Proude Cedafair very carefully and his promotion of mini narrative is threefold. Firstly, he promotes a different Native American with a new identity which has never been addressed by Euro- Americans. Secondly, he promotes a mini narrative that the sovereign state created by the first Proude Cedafair is peaceful, it has developed, it is self-sufficient and there is no difficult task left for the leader to fulfill. To run the state was so easy that he handed over the state affairs to women because it did not have any difficulty of major problems. "I am failure here. There are no wars for me here. The nation has become the good work of women" (11). Thirdly, he promotes a mini narrative that Euro- Americans, who are considered brave, advanced in technology and superior to Native Americans need the tribal people to win the world war. "The wars of the whitemen will be my good wars until I find myself again" (11). So, the focus remains on Native Americans in all three mini narratives. Vizenor has given the central place to Native Americans to bring the marginalized nation to the center at the same time he has pushed the center to the margin as Euro- Americans have been presented less important.

Vizenor dismantles the stereotypical image of Native Americans that has always been highlighted by Euro- Americans that presents Native Americans as drunk. Drinking has always been associated with Native Americans and it is believed that they cannot quit drinking. Vizenor has broken this stereotype as well by presenting the character of the Second Proude who quits drinking to save his nation from the evils of Euro- Americans when he realizes that the federal government has again started to interfere in the affairs of the sovereign state. He prepares for the war again and plans the strategies against his enemies. "Second Proude stopped drinking to save his cedar nation. He was not romantic about the trees but

he was moved with the new challenge to defend the values and beliefs of his father and the creation of cedar nation” (12). The drinking of second Proude Cedafair carries another meaning as well.

The fiction maintains another view about Native Americans lifestyle. It maintains that the second Proude Cedafair has been in the habit of drinking in the peaceful days. It shows the luxury of Native Americans in drinking because there were peaceful days and there was nothing much to do in the state affairs so he used to drink. Then the time came, when the state needed him to fight against the government, he gave up drinking and wore the uniform to fight against the government to defend his people and his state. The second Proude Cedafair won the battle against the federal and tribal government and he maintained the sovereignty of cedar nation. Vizenor’s reinforcement of the claim is evident in the assertion of the victory of tribal people and when the state becomes peaceful, he starts to drink again because it is taken as the luxury and celebration instead of the stereotypical shame that has been attached to Native Americans by Euro-Americans. “Second Proude had won his war, he had fought in the word wars of the white men and for the sacred dominion in the cedar, with no more wars to know, he started drinking for pleasure rather for shame” (14).

Vizenor’s work for the subversion of legitimized knowledge can also be compared with Sherman Alexie’s screen play *Smoke Signals*. He also highlights the same theme of breaking the stereotypical image of Native Americans. He asserts in his screen play that American Indians can also quit drinking and there is also a possibility they do not drink at all. He conveys to his readers that Native Americans are human beings and they can be different from each other, they can have different character traits and they do not behave in a fixed manner. He has presented some characters who have quit drinking and some characters are never seen to be drinking to establish they are normal human being and not the invented Indians. Victor, the central character of the screen play, goes with Thomas to collect the remains of his father from Suzy Song and she tells him about his father and

the secrets about him that were only known by her. She tells him that his father stopped drinking before his death. This is not expected from a stereotypical American Indian. They are not supposed to quit drinking. Later, when the story proceeds, Victor has a road accident and he is arrested. The police chief accuses him of being drunk because of his American Indian descent and the readers realize that Victor has never drunk alcohol. "Victor: I've never had a drop of alcohol in my life, Officer. Not one drop" (128).

The superiority of Native Americans has been maintained in the fiction of Vizenor with the claim that he has made about the murder of the second Proudé by a federal policeman. Vizenor narrates the story in a way to make the readers realize the innocence of the second Proudé Cédafair. He did nothing wrong as he was moving to Wounded Knee in South Dakota when he was stopped by a policeman and shot dead brutally by that policeman. He shot him many times with his shotgun in his face, chest and in the back of his head. It leaves a question mark over the superiority of the civilization of Euro- Americans that is their loudest slogan all over the world. The second Proudé Cédafair is shot dead with no reason; it makes me to declare that the Euro Americas civilization has nothing to offer to humanity. And it is brutal, savage and barbaric. Euro- Americans have misrepresented Native Americans to associate them with the tags of brutality, savagery, primitive and barbarity; however, they all are the characteristics of Euro- Americans and their so-called civilization. Vizenor fiction brings into the center the marginalized historical facts under the cover of fiction that pushes the grand narratives to the margin and makes a room for the mini narrative in their promotion. The grand narrative that says that Euro- Americans are important and civilized takes a marginalized position on the periphery as Vizenor exposes facts under the cover of his fiction. The mini narratives have been promoted in his fiction that place Native Americans at the center to declare their superiority over Euro-Americans.

Vizenor subverts the notion of Indian or Invented Indian in his fiction with the help of portrayal of very different characters which are unlike the traditional Indian. The third Proude Cedafair is not a traditional Indian leader but he is a Native American leader with unusual character traits. Vizenor calls him “a warrior diplomat” (14). Lyotard’s concept of the subversion of grand narratives is evident from the character portrayal of the third Proude Cedafair who subverts the notion of an aggressive warrior leader. Vizenor introduces a mini narrative about Native Americans that makes them intelligent political diplomats who believe in negotiations rather than violence. “He abhorred violence more than evil and corruption” (15). His philosophy of life was different and innovative which subverts the stereotypical image of an Indian leader. He advises his children to become intellectual and stop behaving like invented Indians. “Evil men can be outwitted but never eliminated... The ghosts of evil men who have died through violence indict the living for their revenge” (15). According to the third Proude Cedafair, the elimination of evil is not possible through violence rather it is possible with word play and intelligence because if you kill evil, it remains always there to haunt people. “Outwit but never kill... evil revenge is blind and cannot be appeased by the living. The tricksters and the warrior clowns have stopped more evil violence with their wit” (15). The grand narrative about Native Americans that makes them warriors has been subverted by Vizenor with the claim that the tricksters and the warrior clowns have also stopped violence because they are witty. Vizenor’s claim rejects the notions of invented Indians by introducing different character traits in his characters.

Vizenor’s dealing with his character is not typical and he intentionally rejects the preconceived notions about Indians. He believes that there is no existence of Indians, it is just the invention and the credit of Invented Indians goes to Euro- Americans who have misrepresented Native Americans by attaching such stereotypes to them. Vizenor lends an impressive representation to the tribal leader the third Proude Cedafair to

reject the stereotypes of Native Americans. He does not believe in wars but he believes in diplomatic conversations and negotiations to avoid conflict and disputes that become the reason for wars and destruction. Since he believes that peace is more potent force than evil, he prefers good to evil. To him the elimination of evil is not possible as it always haunts the people who are involved in its eradication. Peace should be used as a tool to defeat and outwit evil.

The presentation of such a unique by the third Proude contradicts the previous notions attached to Native Americans. He further dismantles another grand narrative about Native Americans. They are believed to have strong faith in their cultural traditions and belief system, however Vizenor manages to dismantle the notion of invented Indians. "Peace must be as strong as evil powers and more clever...Beliefs and traditions are not greater than the love of living" (15). To him, love for the living beings and love for life is more important than beliefs and traditions. Vizenor conveys the same idea using another character of his fiction. It is the fourth Proude Cedafair of cedar nation who has also been represented as the pilgrim. He travels to get into the fourth world to avoid the evils of the third world. His conversation with his wife is very important. His wife gets annoyed for his careless attitude towards the medicine pouches. He makes her realize the illogical facts about the medicine pouches, saying that human beings should be given the central place in life due to the power of their spirit. He tells his wife that there is no significance of the secret pouches of medicine because there are no secret spirits in the bundles. He says the good spirits fly with birds in the sky. He also conveys another idea that history and other materials like history are not more important than the power of human spirit and love and hence another stereotypical image of Americans Indians has been dismantled. "The power of human spirit is carried in the heart not in histories and materials... good spirits soar with the birds and the sun not in secret bundles" (217- 218). Such subversion about Native Americans is unique that becomes the reason to promote mini narratives about Native

Americans. It conveys that they are not the way they have been invented by Euro-Americans but they are normal human beings with the tendency to have different traits, not the fixed ones. He has admitted the fact in his interview Published in MELUS in 1981 that he has made a conscious effort to reject all the stereotypes of Indianness and invented Indians by creating unconventional characters in his fiction.

I'm still educating an audience. For example, about Indian identity, I have revolutionary fervor. The hardest part of it is I believe we all are invented Indians... So what I'm pursuing now in much of my writing is the idea of invented Indian. The inventions have become disguises... In my case there is even a balance of white and Indian, French and Indian, so the balance and contradiction is within me genetically (qtd. in *Bearheart* 250-251).

Vizenor's dealing with his characters and Native American identity is different from the preconceived notions about Native Americans and their culture. He has tried to portray different Native Americans in his novel who do not mirror the stereotypical notions which have been associated with them. His third *Proude Cedafair* and fourth *Proude Cedafair* are not typical Native Americans. They are the leaders who prefer diplomacy to warmongering. The fourth *Proude Cedafair* hates the shallowness of the ceremonies and rituals; he finds them illogical. "Tribal religions were becoming more ritualistic but without vision. The crazed and alienated were desperate for terminal creeds to give their vacuous lives meaning" (16). Vizenor himself seems unhappy with the fixed attributes given to Native Americans that affirm Invented Indians. He challenges the fixed characteristics and belief systems associated with the identity of Native Americans. He has created different types of Native Americans who do not believe in the fixed ritualistic beliefs and ceremonies because to them, human beings, their lives, the love and the relationship among human beings are more important than these illogical fixed rituals. He also condemns both Natives Americans and Euro- Americans for their belief in

terminal creeds. “Hundreds of urban tribal people came to the cedar nation for spiritual guidance. . . lacking inner discipline, dreams and personal responsibilities, moved to find new word wars and new ideas to fill their pan tribal emptiness” (16). In these sentences, Vizenor condemns Native Americans who shifted to the cities for a better lifestyle. They continued to visit cedar nation for the ritualistic ceremonies to confirm the terminal creeds and to affirm that they are still Native Americans who believe in the religious ceremonies.

Vizenor uses the fourth Proude Cedafair as his representative to convey his point of view to his readers. The fourth Proude Cedafair is not a typical Native American head of cedar nation, but he is a different character who subverts the grand narrative of being Indian or invented Indians. He does not behave in fixed manners associated with Native Americans. He believes in diplomatic negotiations; he does not believe in the secrets of medicine pouches and in the logic of keeping them secret from Euro-Americans as he takes them human beings and does not associate evil with them. He does not take Euro-Americans or whites as his enemies. His three daughters are married to Euro-Americans. “When his four daughters left cedar nation, three marrying professional white men” (16). Vizenor rejects the static definition of Indian to subvert the metanarrative that gives fixed attributes to the term Indian. Vizenor challenges American Indian identities by redefining it in a different way. A typical American Indian will not easily and happily let her daughters marry Euro-Americans due to their prejudices against Euro-Americans but the fourth Proude Cedafair lives peacefully after the marriages of his daughters with Euro-Americans.

Vizenor subverts the grand narrative of the very term Indian. He strongly rejects the term in his novel to tell his readers that there is no existence of Indians. They have been invented to behave in a fixed manner and to have fixed character attributes. He has tried very hard to reject the term Indian by promoting a mini narrative that presents Native Americans as human beings. They have their own individuality, besides possessing the

tendency to behave differently under different circumstances. Vizenor makes the fourth Proude Cedafair, his mouthpiece to denounce such Native Americans who have affirmed the stereotypes given to them by Euro-Americans and they think it is necessary for them to behave like invented Indians. Vizenor also denounces Euro-Americans for believing in terminal creeds. He dislikes even those Euro-Americans who respect Native Americans for believing in their extraordinary spiritual powers because he wants the world to take Native Americans as human beings who can behave differently in different situations. They can have individual character traits and not the fixed ones as in case of invented Indians. “Bishop Omax Parasimo... had gone to the river to meet the new pilgrims from the tribes. He was obsessed with the romantic and spiritual power of the tribal people” (75). Vizenor does not appreciate Euro-Americans for respecting them for being American Indian because the term Indian does not exist but it has been invented.

Vizenor severely shakes the American Indian identity in his novel *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* by creating different Native Americans. He does not only remove the tags of stereotypes but he also creates evil characters to subvert the very term Indian in his novel. His dealing with the identity of Native American is different that makes me think about the possible reasons behind the new identities. He has portrayed very good characters in case of four Proude Cedafairs. He has also portrayed evil characters like the Evil Gambler. He has brave characters as well as coward characters. He has portrayed all types of characters to tell the readers that Native Americans should be taken as human beings and the world should stop expecting from them to be Indians or to behave like Indians. We as the readers know from the Evil Gambler that he and his siblings were involved in incest. Their mother was not the biological mother. She kidnapped thirteen children from the shopping mall and she made a trailer in a truck and all the thirteen siblings lived together on the back of the trailer. “No sex is more exciting than incest” (124). This is very unusual and really

upsetting if we imagine an American Indian involved in incest. As we know, the typical American Indian cannot do such a thing. The family bond is too strong to think about such a nasty thing about American Indians. They live in communities and they have very strong social and religious boundaries which do not allow them to even think about such a relationship. Vizenor has broken all the notions of being Indian to promote mini narratives about Native Americans to subvert the preconceived notions about Indians.

Vizenor strongly rejects the fixed and static beliefs, values and identities in his novel *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*. The main theme of the novel revolves around terminal creed. Louis Owens writes in the afterward of the book that “Terminal Creed in *Bearheart* are beliefs that seek to impose static definition upon the world. Such attempts are destructive, suicidal” (249). Owens does not support static definitions. Static definition in this context is stereotyping of people. Stereotyping destroys the identity of people so he takes it as destructive and suicidal. Vizenor gives the same message in different ways, from different characters and even with the overall main theme of the novel and with the context in which the novel has been written. He has presented terminal creed as belief systems that seek to impose static definitions upon Native Americans. The principle target of terminal creed in the novel *Bearheart: The Chronicles of Heirship* is Indian/Invented Indian. Vizenor has raised his voice against these terminal creeds, created and promoted by Euro- Americans in his novel. In the selected novel, he has used the context in which the novel has been set, as a tool to convey the same theme of termination of terminal creeds as they are damaging Native American identity.

The concept of terminal creed is conveyed to readers by Vizenor with his insistence on the power of words. He subverts the very term Indian in the process. He makes a satirical statement about Euro- Americans’ obsession with the habit of defining everything including “Indian”. He makes the satirical statement when he mentions the word hospital. This word hospital represents Euro- Americans’ mentality to give fixed meaning

to the things, providing different contexts to stimulate desired results with the provision of bioelectric energies. The federal government has established Bioavaricious Regional Word Hospital to fix the meaning of the words. The pilgrims in the novels visit the hospital and Vizenor makes fun of the hospital when the old man welcomes the pilgrims to the hospital. “Welcome to Bioavaricious avaricious. . . Did you hear that? Sounds like bishop bishop bishop” (163). One of the pilgrims makes a satirical comment; the government is thinking on the purpose of the word hospital that is to study the words to compare them with the words of wisdom. Matchi Makwa, another pilgrim, also disapproves the philosophy and the research of the word hospital. “Words cannot describe the feeling that our language is a labor of love” (165). The scientists of the word hospital told the pilgrims about the purpose of research that they conducted there on language with a brief historical background of the hospital that serves the basic philosophy of terminal creeds in the novel. “We are futuristic facilitators” (166). They told them that the government established the hospitals thirteen years back with heavy funds and they were asked to conduct a research on the public damage of research. They introduced them to the machines which were used in the study.

The ironic part of the briefing was that the government had given machines the names and the employees of the hospital used to address them personally, with their names. “The machines were humanized and the humans were mechanized” (167). Terminal Creed was the basic philosophy behind the hospital where the fixed meanings of the words were made sure and they were compared with the speeches of people. They made it sure to produce the desired results by getting the fixed responses in the speech to establish terminal creeds. Vizenor condemns Euro- Americans for fixing the responses of the people by creating the patterns after the scientific research to take the human beings like machines and robots who respond in fixed patterns. He says the meaning of the words remain the same for them.

The federal government wants to mechanize human response that can never be justified.

Vizenor adds the details of inhuman act of the federal government to make sure terminal creeds by giving the specification and the working of a machine named as diagnostic chromatic encoder. The machine was used to code the message and then resemble it with the standard language. “We have also encoded the speeches and writing of radical organizers and terrorists. For example . . . Dennis Banks from Old American Indian Movement” (167). This is something really ironic as the activists of the American Indian Movement had been called terrorists by the scientist. They were called terrorists because they did not behave and respond in the desired and fixed manner. They did not follow what they were given. They were expected to remain silent on the distorted identities of being savage and primitive who could not resist the unjust on the part of the federal government. For the federal government, the very term the American Indian Movement was deviant and unacceptable because it raised the questions about the federal government and as the whole of Euro- Americans and their fixed systems, fixed meanings of the words and the fixed responses in the fixed situations.

Vizenor highlights the prejudice of the federal government with the help of another room where the scientists studied the conversations. It was the room to demonstrate the stimulators of conversation. “With the regenerated bioelectrical energies and electromagnetic fields, conversations were stimulated and modulated for predetermined values. Certain words and ideas were valued and reinforced with bioelectric stimulation” (168). The scientist worked there to fix the responses of the people in the given situations. The most satirical thing about the machine was that it was specifically designed to stimulate the response of Native Americans to reinforce terminal creeds. The scientist tried negative bioelectric stimulation first and the response was fixed. It produced aggressive words. “Fantastic place to research tribal legal reasoning and meanings. . . we could

teach with colors and not words . . . who gives a good shit about color in legal reasoning. . . Fuck the color values” (169). The federal government needed a negative response from the people, in this case, the negative response from the tribal people, so they were given negative bioelectric stimulation to fix the response of the people. Vizenor strongly disagrees with the fixed notions attached to Native Americans; under the cover of fiction, he challenges these notions by making fun of the federal government for their obsession of fixing the meanings along with fixing the responses in fixed situations.

Vizenor’s fiction dismantles the pre-conceived notion and traditionally accepted beliefs and the stereotypes that create static identities and fixed meanings of the things. He reinforces the need for rejecting terminal creed with the help of one of his pilgrims Belladonna in the novel *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles*. She remains so much obsessed with her Native American identity and she wants to establish a definite differentiation of the tribal people from rest of the world. She is the most obvious victim of terminal creed as she loses her life in the process of justifying tribal identities and the typical characteristics of tribal people. Her death confirms the definition of terminal creeds given by Owens in the afterward of the novel. The beliefs seek to impose static definitions like they are destructive and suicidal. The most important chapter of the novel under the heading Terminal Creed at Orin carries the gist of the novel that brings into the light Vizenor’s concept of Indian and Invented Indian.

The grand narrative of Indian has been beautifully subverted by the writer with the help of the clear rejection of the Indian Identity. The pilgrims visit Orin that is the town inhabited by the descendants of hunters and horse breeders. They believe that “terminal creed is terminal disease” (189). Vizenor makes these descendants his mouthpiece to share his concept of terminal creed by declaring it a disease. Vizenor shares his point of view about the survival by using the same descendants as they believe that the survival is possible only in questions. Vizenor also questions the

preconceived notions about Native Americans and the fixed meanings of the words given by Euro- Americans. For Vizenor, terminal creed is a disease and their survival lies in questioning the terminal creed. “We avoid terminal creeds with questions . . . there are no last words to this world, said the hunter” (192). Vizenor shares the same concept that there is no fixed meaning or fixed identity for human beings and nothing is ultimate and final in this world.

Belladonna tries to define Indian and Indian/tribal identity at Orin and she fails to satisfy the hunter. She attempts to define Indians on the basis of tribal values of Indians. First of all, she tries to define Indians on the basis of values. “We are raised with values that shape our world in different light. We are tribal and that means that we are children of dreams and visions. Our bodies are connected to mother earth” (194). The hunter challenges her by raising the question about tribal values and claiming that they are hunters and they share the same values. The hunter remains unsatisfied so she tries to further categories Indians with exclusively mixed-blood Indians from the white people by giving her justifications about the upbringing of the children by parents. Tribal people do not punish their children and she tells that there is no concept of old homes with Indians as they live in large family and the family bond is strong among the members. She adds more aspects of Indian identity by claiming that Indians use more magic than white people.

The hunter interrupts her and asks her “what does Indian mean and what is Indian blood?” She replies that “Indian blood is not white blood” (195). The hunter produces a very important phrase in the answer that conveys Vizenor’s viewpoint about the very term Indian. “Indian is an invention. . . an Indian is an Indian because he thinks and believes he is an Indian, but an Indian is more than an invention. Are you speaking as an invention?” (195). She gets annoyed and tells him that it does not make any difference what does the word Indian mean. She starts again to defend Indian identity by telling him that Indians are not competitive like white

people who have destroyed the nation with corruption and failure. He again challenges her definition that differentiates Indians from white people on the basis of competition. “How about the western fishing tribes. . . those tribes burned down their own houses in potlatch competition. . . you speak from terminal creeds, not a person of real experience and critical substance” (196). He gives her the example of Indian tribes who burned their own houses in competition that challenges the stereotypical characteristic of Indians as they are not believed to harm the mother earth and who are against competition. Belladonna fails to convince the hunter about Indian identity and the features that make them Indian and he concludes the argument: “When questions are unanswered the messages become terminal creeds” (197). All of the sudden, the people at Orin start praising Belladonna, and then poison her with a sweet cookie that takes her life.

The above discussion conveys the same message again that is given in the definition of terminal creed by Owens that terminal creed is suicidal and destructive. The survival remains in questioning what is communicated by the terminal creeds. Vizenor also wants to question the authenticity of terminal creeds (the grand narratives) that make stereotypes of Native Americans because he believes that the survival lies in questioning them. The death of Belladonna, for me, is not tragic because I take it positive in a sense that symbolically it is the death of terminal creed. Her death subverts the stereotype of invented Indian because Indian does not exist but it has been invented with the help of terminal creed. It is the symbolic death of terminal creed that has happened after “questioning its authenticity” and the logic behind the background of Indian.

5.3 Disbelief in Grand Narratives in *Green Grass, Running Water*

Thomas King has subverted many legitimized grand narratives through his novel *Green Grass, Running Water*. He has used his fiction as a tool to achieve his objective. He starts the novel with the creation story of

the earth that gives a central position to Coyote that is the trickster figure of King's fiction. He has tried to promote a mini narrative about the creation of the earth that Coyote has created the earth. His claim about Coyote being the creator of the earth gives the marginalized American Indians a central place in his fiction. In Native American mythology, Coyote is a trickster who works out to balance the lives of the people with humor. By giving the central place to Coyote, King has made an effort to highlight the importance of Native Americans. The novel starts with a claim by Coyote who narrates the creation story of the earth. "So. In the beginning, there was nothing. Just the water. Coyote was there, but Coyote was asleep. That Coyote was asleep and that Coyote was dreaming. When that Coyote dreams, anything can happen" (1). King uses Coyote as his mouthpiece to narrate the creation story to his readers. Coyote claimed that in the beginning when the earth came into being, there was nothing except water and Coyote. There was water everywhere and Coyote was dreaming. Coyote takes a central place at the start of King's novel. He reinforces the importance of Coyote by further telling the readers that anything can happen when Coyote dreams. The most important character in King's novel becomes Coyote as he is the one who has been living on the earth since its creation. The grand narrative of Euro-Americans' superiority has been challenged with the narration of the creation story of the earth. It brings the marginalized narrative about the origin of the world to the center with Native Americans' perspective and the center takes the place of margin. King's claim about the creation of the earth is postmodern critical nostalgia that focuses on the individual truth about history. As postmodernism suggests that there is no fixed truth about history, so individual perspective gains more importance. King has challenged the Biblical history of the origin of earth under the cover of fiction which is acceptable in the postmodern world.

Vine Deloria Jr. in his book addresses the same issue about the authenticity of the origin of the earth. He is of the opinion that Euro-Americans believe that their creation story is more authentic because it is

narrated in Bible but Deloria Jr. gives equal importance to other creation stories of different religions as well. His views also support King's creation story when he claims that the earth has been created by Coyote. He states that every human society has some stories that maintain their sense of identity to satisfy their need of knowledge for the origin of the universe and human beings. Many societies begin with the creation of the universe and link the historical events that are considered important in the process of creation. Some of the stories also teach some moral lessons that highlight the religious tradition. He compares contradictory view of secular thinkers and believers of Biblical accuracy. He states that the historical events regarding the creation of the earth have been conducted in the Western civilization as it has dominated all other traditions of Non-Western civilization. The reason remains religion as the creation of the earth traces its history from Bible. For them, it is more authentic as it is based on the words of God.

Arguments about the great flood of Noah and the presence of geological strata of skeletons of animals not seen today opened the floodgate of controversy about the age of the Earth . . . eventually, the believers of biblical accuracy were put to rout by secular thinkers who substituted the seemingly infinite amount of time during which everything 'evolved' in place of the shorter time scale of creation and religious history as it was represented in the Bible (*Red Earth White Lies* 23-34).

King continues with the same mission to dismantle grand narratives making Coyote his mouthpiece by telling his readers that the dreams of Coyote have unusual power because when Coyote dreams, anything can happen. He prepares his readers with this information to give them the hint that something very important and unusual is going to happen in the next few sentences. During the sleep of Coyote, one of his dreams gets liberated from his sleep and enters the real world to announce that he is powerful because he has been given the charge of the world. He wakes Coyote up and asks him who is he and is he someone important? Coyote introduces himself

to the dream and tells the dream that he can be a dog and dogs are also good like Coyote.

The irony arises here because King challenges the creation story of the earth that has been accepted in Christianity. The tension arises with the claim of the dream that he is a god “I am god, says the dog dream” (King 2). Three very important grand narratives of dominant Euro-Americans have been challenged with the use of creation story by King. The first grand narrative that has been challenged is the Christian belief that asserts that Adam and Eve were the first human beings in the Eden and on the earth. King subverts this grand narrative to promote a mini narrative by claiming that Coyote was the first on the earth when there was nothing but the water. Secondly, according to the Christian belief, the process of naming the things also started with Adam but in the creation story of King, the process of naming the thing starts with Coyote as he names the dream as dog. The dream thinks that he must be Coyote but Coyote tells him that he cannot be Coyote and he is a dog. “You can be a dog” (2). The third grand narrative that has been challenged here is the creation story by King shakes the readers. It is hidden in the claim of the dog dream of Coyote that he is god. If for the time being, the readers can believe in the claim of the dog dream, it conveys that Coyote is the creator of god as the dream dog who claims to be a god has been liberated from the sleep of Coyote. King had already given a vivid hint to his readers with the information that anything could happen when Coyote dreamed.

The central importance of Coyote and his great power in the creation story has been strengthened with the desire of Coyote’s dream to be a big god as he feels bad for being a little god. “I don’t want to be a little god. I want to be a big god” (3). Coyote honors the desire of his dream to be a big god and announces him as G O D. The dream becomes happy for being a big G O D. This is also very significant that makes me get another hidden message of King to make the readers believe in the power of Coyote. Previously, he has conveyed to his readers, that the dream announces that

he is a god, but immediately after he announces he wants to be a big G O D instead a small god. He needs the approval from Coyote and his announcement to name him a big G O D. “‘okay, okay’, says the coyote. ‘Just stop Shouting’. There says that G O D” (3). The dream claimed to be a god, even in his claim he realized that he is not powerful as he is a small god and he needs help from Coyote to make him a big G O D by naming him and making an announcement.

The grand narrative of Judo- Christian belief system has been challenged by King; he gives it a marginalized position by promoting a mini narrative of Coyote and giving him a central position. I believe, after a detailed study of King’s novel *Green Grass Running Water*, that it is based on the postmodern philosophy of untrustworthiness of legitimized grand narratives. This philosophy has been addressed by Lyotard to eliminate universalism and to promote marginalized knowledge with the help of deconstruction. American Indians’ belief system is very complex in nature. American Indians live in tribes and different tribes have different belief systems but they do not impose their beliefs on the rest of the tribes, because they work in harmony and they respect each other. For them, universalism and totalization are not important but they believe in individual spirituality and they preach to be honest to the individual belief. Postmodernism also focuses on individual thought process. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book highlights the same issue of authenticity on the basis of totalization and universalism. He writes that Native Americans believe in their own creation stories that are different from the mainstream as well as from the tribes among these people. The elders of Native Americans did not believe in authenticity that came from the confirmation of the majority. They strongly believed in their special relation to the spiritual world. “The task of each tribe was to remain true to its special calling without worrying what others were doing” (*Red Earth, White Lies* 36).

King repositions the center and the margin in his fiction where center takes the place of margin and margin takes a central position. He

subverts the grand narrative of dominance of white culture that prevails in the religion as well. Christian beliefs which are considered very important and the dream who claims to be god have been placed at the margin by King. Coyote has been presented as very powerful in his fiction that remains indifferent and unimpressed by the dream who claims to be god. The dream announces that he has been given the charge of the world and it makes no effect on Coyote. He does not react nor does he take it seriously. He does not give any gesture of fear as well, as expected when someone realizes that he is in front of a god who has been given the charge of the world. The power relationship and dominance of white culture and religion has been subverted by King. Coyote keeps on scolding the dream for disturbing his sleep by making noise. "I am in charge of the world, says that silly dream" (2). The claim of the dream makes no effect on Coyote and he keeps on telling him not to make the noise. Coyote criticizes the manners of the dream for his impatience and for making the noise. "That dog has no manners" (3).

There is no power relationship in the fiction of King in narration of creation story. Coyote remains indifferent to the claims of dream, and does not get impressed with his powerful position on the earth. It also conveys the same message to the readers, which has been highlighted earlier that the dream is the creation of Coyote. So, he knows the fact about his creation that makes no difference to him what the crazy creation is saying to satisfy its desire to gain power. As readers, we already have been conveyed a message that Coyote is the most powerful and he is at the center of the creation because anything can happen when Coyote dreams. King has used Coyote to change and counter the authority of dominant Christianity. The dream declares that the charge has been given to him to show the power and dominance of Christianity but the readers have been informed earlier that since the origin of the earth, Coyote has been there, sleeping and dreaming. It highlights a mini narrative to counter the dominance.

King has created a new Christian theology in his fiction and that should be called a Coyote theology as the focus remains on Coyote. King has subverted grand narrative of Christian theology by giving a new perspective to it in which all the dominance shifts to the margin because Coyote takes the place of The Creator. In Coyote theology, Adam and Eve are given different names. Ahdamn and First Woman respectively. First Woman and Ahdamn are different from the original theology of Adam and Eve. King has used humor as a tool to subvert the metanarrative of Christianity. G O D has been presented in a very humorous way. He has always been presented to behave like a child. The first time, when he was liberated from the dream of Coyote, he started to make noise and insisted to make him a big god like a child. The first encounter of First Woman and Ahdamn with G O D has also been presented in a humorous way as G O D insists like a child that he is a G O D and the garden where they are eating belongs to him. G O D keeps on insisting on his authority being G O D and his possession of the garden but no one takes him seriously. They ignore him the way elders ignore kids when they repeatedly make illogical claims. "This is my world and this is my garden. . . don't eat my nice red apples, says that G O D" (72). First Woman ignores his claim by making a satirical comment "News to me" (73) and carries on giving a nice red apple to Ahdamn. "The G O D fellow does not eat anything. He stands in the garden with his hands on his hips, so everybody can see he is angry" (73). King reinforces the childish behavior of G O D with the mention of the phrase: "So everybody can see he is angry". This is a typical childish behavior because children try to seek attention by making people realize that they are angry. The authority of Christianity has also been challenged as G O D has no authority. He keeps on telling them not to eat from his garden and they continue to eat, ignoring all his efforts to prevent them. The maximum that G O D could do was to get angry; nothing more he could do when they did not listen to him. Although he is a G O D, he has no authority and no power.

King uses G O D to satirize Christianity. He criticizes the rules by relating them to “eating”, leaving all the serious subjects. He tells Ahdamn, First Woman and Coyote that there are the Christian rules that will make all of them sorry for eating from his garden. It subverts the grand narrative of Christianity and its rules of life. There were certain food items which were prohibited by God. King refers to those Christian rules but he creates humor by relating them to G O D and his childish manners. He generalizes rules for all food items of the garden and he asks them to take nothing from there. “Anybody who eats my stuff is going to be very sorry, says that G O D. There are rules you know. Christian rules” (73). The phrase “going to be sorry” is important as it conveys a warning from G O D that they will be punished for not following the Christian rules. Thomas King marginalizes the importance and superiority of Christianity by associating non-serious subjects with it excluding the serious and real subjects of Christianity. King has marginalized the rules of Christianity which state **do** not eat from the tree of knowledge. King has designed different rules regarding his Coyote theology which apparently seem to create humor in his fiction to make a parody of the original rules of Christianity. King’s rules have been announced by G O D, they are irrational and ridiculous. He simply does not want First Woman, Ahdamn and Coyote to take any edible from his garden.

King dismantles the Christian theology again by marginalizing its importance when First Woman and Ahdamn remain indifferent to the warnings and anger of G O D. They do not act upon his advice. Rather, they refuse to follow his instructions. In Coyote theology, First Woman and Ahdamn not only refuse to follow the instructions of G O D, but they also leave the garden without making any effort to please G O D. Therefore, they challenge his authority. “What a stingy person, says First Woman and that one packs her bags. Lots of nice places to live, she says to Ahdamn” (74). First Woman uses harsh language for G O D and takes him as a neighbor like any other human being but not a deity. The authority of G O D has also been challenged by taking him as a human neighbor to contest his position

and importance as a deity. King repeats the same idea that G O D has no power, no control and no authority over First Woman and Ahdamn. They decide to leave the garden to find a new place to live. “You can't leave my garden that G O D says to First Woman. You can't leave because I'm kicking you out. But First Woman does not hear him. They go looking around for a new home” (74).

King has established the superiority of Native Americans over Christians to promote a mini narrative to marginalize the previous grand narrative which reflects the superiority of Christianity and Christian over “superstitious Native Americans”. In Coyote theology, American Indians are superior because the central importance has been given to them and they have the courage to speak against unjustified things, they cannot be dominated with power. They also have a strong sense of self esteem. King has made another difference in Coyote theology to make a parody of Christian theology when he makes Native Americans to behave differently on leaving the garden. They were asked by G O D not to have food from the garden and they left the garden, finding another place to live there. It shows the self-esteem of American Indians as they have not behaved like the sinners who have annoyed the God with their sins rather, they have the realization that they have not done anything sinful and to live peacefully, they left the garden. This difference makes them courageous with a high sense of self-respect and it liberates them from passivity of typical sinners who cannot do anything but to wait for forgiveness. This changing tradition in Coyote theology liberates Coyote who is the representative of Native American Indians from the evil of domination. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* states that the idea of creation for American Indians and Euro- Americans is different. He asserts that the Christian theology is based on “the disobedience of man; Adam in eating the forbidden fruit growing on a tree in the Garden of Eden” (78). It became the reason of the fall of man from the sky to the earth whereas, there is no fall in tribal religions. Tribal religions hold a strong relationship with human

beings and the nature. For them, “whole creation was good . . . the creation even didn’t include fall” (80).

In King’s fiction, the changing belief system and traditions make Coyote and American Indians to think over the issue and act accordingly, rather than to wait for the instructions designed by the dominant culture. In Coyote theology, First Woman and Ahdamn leave the garden and find another good place to live there. “Oh, oh, says First Woman to Ahdamn. Here we go again” (74). King has deconstructed the Biblical story of Adam and Eve because there are no traces of fortune fall in his creation story and unlike Eve, First Woman decides to leave the garden refusing the submission. Her departure from the garden signifies her free will as it is her personal decision to refuse the submission and live independently. King intensifies the effect of the departure of First Woman and Ahdamn from the garden to highlight the challenge to the established system. With the departure of First Woman and Ahdamn, “the animals also leave the garden” (74). The authority of G O D has not been challenged by human beings in King’s version of theology; animals also have chosen to leave the garden with them to show the superiority of human beings over G O D.

The character of Coyote has been portrayed in a way that for Coyote anything is possible. He can transcend time frame to facilitate American Indians in the novel. His character highlights a very important feature of the survival that is to cope with the dominant structure of the society. He facilitates American Indians in the novel transcending time and place to establish a message that learning to cope with the circumstance is important because the survival is hidden in coping with the circumstances structured by the dominant. He asserts that coping is very important because if the characters of the novel fail to cope with the circumstances, they will be crushed by dominant culture and dominant society which makes the rules. Coyote provides the solution to problems facing Native Americans with the help of his unique outlook. Coyote’s effort to maintain the respect of Americans Indians which is based on coping with the circumstances for the

survival, symbolically points out the survival of American Indian culture. He makes American Indian characters, cope with the circumstance for their survival and for the survival of their culture as a whole. Coyote, in this regard, subverts the power relationship in the novel and remains the center of the story. King has made an effort to dismantle the grand narrative that makes the powerful class in a given society superior and the center of the society. In *Green Grass, Running Water*, power is in the hands of Coyote, who represents American Indians and who can transcend time and place to help his people. The central importance has been given to American Indians to establish their superiority.

King subverts the grand narrative of Judo- Christian theology by creating Coyote theology which parodies the original Christian theology. King presents the process of naming the things by Ahdamn in a very humorous and satirical way. He starts giving names to the animals and natural objects and the irony that King has highlighted in the novel is that they already know their names. Ahdamn gives them wrong names which are altogether different as he names Elk as microwave, cedar tree as telephone, bear as garage sale and old coyote as cheeseburger. Elk, cedar tree and bear make fun of him for giving them the wrong names. The central position given to Euro- Americans and Christianity by virtue of their domination has been challenged by King. The process of naming the people, natural objects and animals signifies power and domination that has been subverted by King. Because he uses his fictional characters who are animals and humans, both to make fun of Ahdamn for giving them the wrong names. “We got to get you some glasses, says the bear” (47). It also signifies that if the animals and natural objects make fun of Ahdamn for naming them incorrectly, then they must already know their names and it makes them superior to Ahdamn as they have more knowledge than Ahdamn. King tells his readers that Euro-Americans have a culture of dominance that starts with naming everything and everybody to establish their hegemony and after that they create disturbance in the world, the way GOD is seen to rule the garden.

Vine Deloria Jr. in his book states that Euro- Americans have different religions from tribal people. Their religion is based on the dominance as man has been given dominance over the rest of creation. “Just after creation man is given responsibility of naming the animals. He is their master and commander. It is his task to subdue the earth” (*God Is Red* 81). He establishes that this is the same attitude of Western people in the economic exploitation of the earth. They have exploited the earth, nature and environment for their economic benefits because they are the masters. He argues that the major crisis that has resulted from such kind of attitude is ecological crisis because they do not have any concern with earth and nature.

King narrates the creation story of First Woman, using Coyote his mouthpiece. He tells G O D about the two worlds. The two worlds are known as the sky world and the water world. He tells him that in the sky world, there are all the sky things including First Woman. “Big woman. Strong woman. First woman” (38). The second world is the water world; he says: “They have all the water things” (38). He tells him that the sky woman has a mission to fix the things which are bent. She fell from the sky and deep in the water, the ducks saw her falling and they flew up to catch her and brought her to the water. Those ducks put First Woman on the back of grandmother turtle. They decided to make the land because there was water everywhere. “They get some mud and they put the mud on grandmother turtle’s back and pretty soon, the mud starts to grow” (39). So, the power of G O D has been challenged again in another creation story of King. Coyote narrated the story of the creation of earth as we had been informed many times by the writer that there was just water in the beginning, just water and Coyote. The center of focus is given to First Woman in Coyote’s creation story. It promotes mini narrative that the earth has been created by First Woman; she has created the earth in the creation story of Coyote. Since she is part of Coyote story, she must be Native American. The margin takes the place of center with the promotion of this mini narrative. King has claimed

that First Woman has taken part in the creation of the earth. It is the religious belief of Native Americans and that is the reason that they give equal importance to all natural objects and all forms of life. They believe that all of them took part in the creation of earth.

Vine Deloria Jr. in his book states that tribal religions is different from Christianity on the basis of the relationship between man and other natural objects. Tribal religions live in harmony with nature and they have a relationship of respect towards other natural objects. He believes that there is no harmony between Euro- Americans and nature which is the reason for a fall in Christianity soon after the creation. “In Indian tribal religions man and the rest of the creation are cooperative and respectful of the task set for them by the Great Spirit. In Christian religion both are doomed from shortly after the creation event” (*God Is Red* 81).

Another important thing, in King’s creation story is the place of First Woman in Coyote narrative of the creation of earth. All the credit goes to First Woman, who collects some mud and applies it to the back of grandmother turtle that starts to grow and becomes beautiful land. In Christian belief, central importance has been given to Adam, but in Coyote theology, the central story revolves around First Woman. She is the creator of earth and she also possesses a very strong character with high self-esteem because she decides to leave the garden when she notices G O D’s interference with his excessive instructions and Christian rules. She is the major character of Coyote’s creation story. Ahdamn has not been given much importance as he has been portrayed a passive character who follows the instructions of First Woman and submissively respects the decision of First Woman to leave the garden, without objecting or sharing his opinion on the matter. Then his flawed knowledge has also been highlighted. He has been seen to perform only one task and that is “naming the things” in the creation story. That too reflects his flawed knowledge. He gives wrong names to all the things and animal and this flaw of his knowledge

marginalizes his position in the creation story making him an insignificant and passive character.

Thomas King has subverted the grand narrative based on generalization and stereotypes that makes American Indians inferior and unreliable. He has conveyed this message through one of the themes of his novel, making mistakes. His fiction proves that making mistakes is not specific to Native Americans but everybody makes mistakes. Lionel is one of the important characters of his novel who keeps on repetition that “everybody makes the mistakes” (8). He also shares three major mistakes of his life and one of them was to wish for a bad throat and tonsils. Through this mistake, he conveys his point that everybody makes mistakes. He was admitted to the hospital at Calgary that was run by Euro- Americans and they made a major mistake to send him to Toronto for a heart surgery. They thought he was the heart patient. In fact, they had to send another patient. “A ten-year old white child named Timothy and not ten year old Indian boy Lionel” (35). This time, the mistake was made by Euro- Americans, not by Americans Indians.

King subverts the grand narrative based on stereotypes that Euro- Americans are superior because they are reliable and they cannot make any mistakes. He has also subverted the grand narrative in his fiction through the tragedy of Lionel being registered as the heart patient and sent to another city for the treatment that “Indian doctors were not good enough” (32). This time, the good Euro American doctors have made the mistake that made him suffer throughout his life. He applied for a car loan and was denied the loan because he had been still registered as the heart patient in the documents of the hospital because they forgot to correct the data and it was another mistake. Six months later, he was turned down from a job of driving a school bus, because the same record proved him the heart patient as the Heart Foundation sent them the letter about the tax deduction donation.

King’s fiction rejects major stereotypes attached to American Indians. They are considered to have very strong family bonds. They are

believed to live on the reservations. It is supposed that they cannot survive alone because they are in the habit of living in the form families. It is assumed that they have very strong cultural norms and they strictly follow them. King has subverted all such narratives by creating non- typical characters in his fiction. Eli, Lionel, Charlie, Alberta and Latisha, all these major characters do not behave in a typical American Indian way. They have challenged all such stereotypes by behaving totally contrary to what they are supposed to behave. Latisha runs an Indian restaurant named The Dead Dog Café. She makes beef burger with the same recipe and claims that it has been prepared with the dog meat. She is also in the habit of giving the burger the different names daily to attract the tourists. “She sells hamburger and tells everybody that it’s dog’s meat” (59). She has been portrayed very witty who traps the tourists to visit her restaurant. She does not consider it cheating as everybody on the reservation knows that it’s a beef not dog’s meat. “The tourists who came through never knew it didn’t” (116). It is a trap for tourists, not for her people. Euro- Americans have always been cheating Americans Indians by violating the treaties and Americans Indians have been considered not to take any step against it as they do not have sufficient courage to speak against it, as they are not educated enough to read out the documents which have been violated. Here, in the fiction of King, the tradition of Euro- Americans has been followed by American Indians. She deceives the tourists by trapping them in the name of dog’s meat and she thinks it is okay and “It was not cheating” (116) as everybody knows on the reservation that it is beef.

The character portrayal of Eli is another example of Non-typical American Indian. He also subverts a grand narrative about Americans Indians to promote a mini narrative that Indians can also be educated, have good jobs and they also can leave the reservation to improve their standard of life. King establishes that they also can survive without their families by living alone. Eli is a Native American who has left the reservation many years ago. He has completed his education and has become a university

professor in Toronto. He teaches literature to the university students. He has not come back to reservation. He has the job there. He is a successful man who can speak better English than Euro- Americans. His discussion with Sifton points out the stereotypical image of Indians. “You guys are not real Indians anyway. I mean you drive cars, watch television, go to hockey games, look at you, you are a university professor. And you speak as good English as me” (155).

According to Sifton, the government employee must not be able to drive the cars because they cannot afford them. They should not watch television because they do not have the money to buy and if they manage to buy one, they cannot understand what is happening around the world, so watching the television is not their business. They do not watch television. They do not play hockey because they cannot think about any luxury. They remain busy in the struggle of earning that much money to get themselves food; hockey is not for them and they cannot play game. American Indians cannot be university professors as they are primitive, uncivilized and uneducated and because they are not educated, they cannot speak English. All these grand narratives have been challenged in the case of Eli in the novel *Green Grass, Running Water*. He is not real Indian because he has got a car, he watches television, he is the university professor and he speaks good English. He does not fulfill the criterion to be a real Indian. Eli corrects Sifton by making a difference between choosing professions and being Indians. He tells him that being Indian is not a profession and he speaks better English than him and he can also speak his native Blackfoot language. Then he tells him about his relatives who are also not traditionalists. “Latisha runs a restaurant and Lionel sells televisions. Not exactly traditionalist” (155). “It was a common theme in novels and movies. Indian leaves the traditional world of the reserve, goes to the city, and is destroyed . . . Indian is exposed to white culture, and becomes trapped between two worlds. . . Indian gets an education, and is shunned by his tribe” (317).

King asserts in this extract from his novel that the stereotypes that have been attached to Native Americans are baseless because his characters do not correspond to/with those stereotypes. Eli discusses his guilt of leaving the reservation and settling at a place far from his family for his job. During the discussion with Karen, King breaks the stereotypes of American Indians when he conveys the message that the Native Americans can leave the reservation and lead a successful life. It is political discourse that has been promoted through literature and movies that present same themes in all of them. Euro- Americans have always chosen the same plot for American Indians who leave the reservation should suffer in the long run. The generalization that says every Indian who leaves the traditional world is destroyed because when he gets the exposure to white culture, he gets confused. He becomes unable to behave in both the societies properly, being trapped between the two cultures. Another important stereotype that has been promoted in film and fiction is that when an American Indian leaves the reservation to get education he is always shunned by his tribal people. They disown him for leaving the reservation to acquire education.

King has subverted these grand narratives in his novels because he has portrayed different characters using the themes contrary to them. For example, Eli leaves the reservation and does not get destroyed. He is a successful literature professor in the University of Toronto. Even when he is exposed to white culture, he learns their language but he does not get confused and does not get trapped between the two cultures. As King has already conveyed to his readers through the conversation between Eli and Sifton that Eli can speak English better than Euro-Americans. He does not forget his native language because being Indian does not hamper one from learning a new language or adapting oneself to a new culture. The overall theme of the novel and film presented by Euro- Americans remains that there is no coming back for American Indians once they leave the reservation. In Eli's case, he returns to the reservation for his tribal people breaking all stereotypes. He comes back to fight for his people to stop the

government from starting the usage of dam. Doctor Hovaugh says the same thing about Indians on their coming back that confirms that King's characters are not stereotypical. "It's too bad about the Indians. . . They are back. . . They always come back" (466).

Alberta is another important character of King's novel *Green Grass, Running Water*. His character subverts the grand narratives of stereotypes associated with American Indians. She breaks the stereotypes in such a way that shakes American Indian identity as a whole that has been promoted since long. She is a woman who left the reservation to pursue education; after getting, the degree she is a university professor that is also unlike American Indian fixed identity. She can speak English that is again something that is not expected from American Indians. She owns a car and she lives independently. She does not believe in strong bond of family relationships. She does not want to get married that shows a deviant American Indian identity.

The definition of American Indian presented in literature and movies is shaken badly with this strong and powerful character of Thomas King. She is not caught between two identities rather she has decided her own track to live her life. She decides to get a child or two children without getting married. She does not need any man to impose his authority on her. She has two affairs simultaneously with Lionel and Charlie because she does not like to have one man in life who rules her. Rather, she has been presented as a desired woman by two men. Both want to marry her but she remains reluctant to marry any of them. She is such a strong lady that she does not discuss her desire to bear both the men any child. She plans to have the child with artificial insemination method because she does not want to get it from either of the men. Once it was confirmed whose child she was pregnant with it was not desirable for her that the other man could go out of her life. She wanted both the men. She could not marry Lionel or Charlie with the same reason that it was something understood that if she married either of men the other would flee and she did not want to have one man in

her life. Then she decided to choose a man randomly to get physical with him and in that case she could have “willing but an uninformed father” (70). There were many problems in this option as well because she had no idea how many times she would have to repeat this, so she discarded this idea too. So after thinking a lot, she decides to have a baby with artificial insemination. Latisha encourages her for having a baby with artificial insemination. The following lines break all the stereotypes of a Native American lady as it shakes the prescribed identity assigned to her by Euro-Americans. “Successful university professor seeking employment as a single parent desires discreet short term relationship with attractive, considerate person. Men need not apply. Intercourse not required. Willing to drive great distances. Own car essential” (394). Charlie was another degree holder; she also admired and respected Alberta for being educated and employed as it was unlikely to be educated for a Native American woman. “Charlie respected Alberta. She was smart. She was educated. Best of all she was employed” (125).

Thomas King subverts the grand narrative under the cover of his fiction that raises the slogan of American Democracy. He has used G O D to highlight the emptiness of American Democracy. Coyote wanted to narrate his story and he insisted to get his turn and he related his desire to be given a chance to speak to democracy. “In a democracy everyone gets a turn, says Coyote” (365). G O D makes fun of the innocence and limited knowledge of Coyote who thinks that everyone gets a chance to speak in democracy. G O D makes a satirical remark about real democracy. “Nonsense”, I says, “In a democracy only people who can afford it get a turn” (365). This is a very harsh satire on American political policy that is always raising the slogan of democracy. G O D’s remark conveys the readers that it is nothing more than a slogan as the chance to speak and the turn to express is given only to those who can afford it. It says that there is a price to be paid in taking a turn in democracy and only those people can get the turn who can afford the price of taking the turn in democracy.

White race has been considered superior worldwide. King's fiction de-centers it by portraying it in a way that it becomes less important. The traditional tag of heroism that has always been associated with Euro-Americans is not evident in King's fiction. They are not desirable and most of King's fictional characters do not appreciate them. They also do not approve Native Americans who try to copy Euro-Americans' ways of life. Norma in *Green Grass, Running Water* makes satirical comments about Eli for leaving the reservation, getting education and working in the University of Toronto. She tells Lionel that there is no point trying to be like Euro-Americans because they are not the standard. "Your uncle wanted to be white man. Just like you" (36). She calls Eli, a white man, because he leaves the reservation and does not come back for many years. "A white man, said Norma, as she shook her head. As if they were something special. As if there were not enough of them already" (37). She tells Lionel that Eli tried to copy Euro-Americans and she did not like him for that. Norma's attitude conveys that Euro-Americans are not important and their ways of life should not be copied considering them as the standard lifestyle. She continues with another satirical comment for Euro-Americans, as if there were not enough of them already and it reinforces her dislike for them.

King's fiction subverts the grand narratives that are based on generalizations and give permanent impressions. He takes human being naturally because they are not robots to behave in a calculated manner. They are living beings and they can respond differently in different situations. It is not correct just for American Indians but same is true for Euro-Americans as well. They are also prone to errors. They can also be as dull and awful as Euro-Americans take American Indians. Latisha is the restaurant owner, shares her experience with her husband who is white. She tells that she has no idea that Euro-Americans can also be stupid and dull. "George was dull and he was stupid, more stupid than Latisha could have ever guessed whites could be stupid" (213). Her comment signifies that King's fiction removes the tag from Euro-Americans that consider them superior and intelligent

to American Indians. King also asserts that Euro- Americans can also be failure. There is no general rule that only American Indians cannot get jobs. There is also possibility that Euro- Americans, despite having their degrees fail to get any job. “White man got university degrees, too. But they don’t have jobs. . . Whites don’t want to hire Indians, unless the government makes them” (87). The caliber in American Indians and Euro- Americans can vary. Native Americans are not given jobs because there is a stereotypical tag attached to them that makes them inefficient, dull and inferior.

The superiority of Native American beliefs and tradition has also been conveyed by King to give them the central place and make them superior that de-centers Euro- Americans and their superiority. Doctor Hovaugh tells Babo about the primitive people and their belief in omens. “Primitive people believed in omens and other superstitions. . . What they thought were omens, were actually miracles” (261-262). His words convey a message to the readers that Native Americans who used to believe in omens and other superstitions were considered primitive. The reality is that the omens were in fact, miracles. So, if they believed in miracles there was no harm in it and there was no reason to call them primitive on the basis of the miracles they used to believe in. King has made Doctor Hovaugh his mouthpiece to take such things positive to remove the tag of primitive from American Indians. It is also an effort to promote a mini narrative about Native Americans to establish their positive image.

King has put a great stress on the rules of Christianity that he relates to dominance. It also conveys a message that if the powerful can make the rules and make other people follow those rules then there can also be some rules established by Native Americans to show their power and dominance. It is an effort to de-center the rules established by a powerful race and it also signifies that American Indians have the courage not to follow the rules of a dominant race, rather they have their own rules and they also make people follow their rules. Almost at end of the novel, the four elderly Indians move

to some place to fix the world and Coyote requests them to take him along. They agree but they also tell him certain rules to follow if he wants to go with them. The first rule signifies the real rule of American Indian society as they do not let the people take the photographs of their sacred ceremonies and here the elderly Indians tell the same rule to Coyote to follow if he really wants to go with them. The second rule symbolizes the noise that has been made by G O D and Coyote asks him not to make the noise. Elderly Indians give the same instruction to coyote to follow if he wants to go with them. “But you cannot take any pictures”, said Ishmael
 ... “and you cannot make any rude noise”, said Robinson Crusoe
 . . . “and you cannot do any more dancing” (370).

5.4 Confrontation with Grand Narratives in *Truth and Bright Water*

Thomas King in his novel *Truth and Bright Water* narrates the story of creation of earth with American Indians’ perspective that subverts the mainstream creation story of Christianity. This creation story involves the fall of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. He invents a little girl named Rebecca Neugin through his mouthpiece Georgia to tell the readers about the creation of earth and the role of the duck in the creation. She meets the protagonist of the novel named Tecumseh and asks him about her duck. King establishes the significance of the duck through the conversation of Rebecca Neugin and Tecumseh. Tecumseh tells her the general perception of people about ducks that they are silly. She corrects him by telling him the participation of the duck in the creation of earth. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book confirms that in the tribal religions there is great respect for all forms of life because they participated in the creation of earth that makes them important and respectable. He writes, “there are to be sure numerous accounts from the various tribal religious traditions relating how animals, birds or other reptiles participated in the creation event” (*God Is Red* 86). The little girl in King’s novel *Truth and Bright Water* tells the same thing

to the protagonist about the duck. “But it was duck who helped to create the world . . . when the world was new and the woman fell out of sky, it was a duck who dove down to the bottom of the ocean and brought up mud for the dry land” (102).

King subverts the grand narrative that establishes the superiority of Euro-Americans over Native American in his novel. The character of Arthur Circle is the principal of elementary school at the reservation has been portrayed as an ordinary coward man who is afraid of the grandmother of the protagonist. He comes to the grandmother’s house to report certain problems about the inattentive behaviors of her daughters and starts to read them from the reports of teachers. King has tried to convey his readers that whites take it as their responsibility to teach Americans Indians the white man’s ways of life. Vine Deloria Jr in his book also satirically states that Western attitude towards non-whites has always been devoid of respect. They only raise a slogan to establish their superiority. “We all know better” (*Custer Died* 8). The principal came to report to the grandmother that her daughters were not adopting white man’s ways.

King has criticized this behavior of Euro-Americans in a humorous way. She started to cough, at first it was just a low chuffing coughs but then it took on shape and weight and filled the room. The loud cough created an uneasy feeling for the principal and soon he was frightened. “His face covered with sweat. He pulled his feet under the chair . . . then he ran to the band office, turning back every few steps . . . to see what was coming behind him” (King 59). There has been a myth that Euro-Americans know everything and they are superior so they need to teach Native Americans the white man’s ways. He came to report the problems with the behaviors of daughters of the grandmother of the protagonist. They were inattentive and they failed to learn white ways and the principal who had the great responsibility to “tame Native Americans” got scared by their grandmother. There was an abrupt ending of the discussion and he ran away without saying

goodbye to the lady. It puts a question mark on the superiority and civilization of Euro-Americans.

In his novel *Truth and Bright Water*, Thomas King through Lucy, one of his characters, establishes a mini narrative about Marilyn Monroe, an American actress and model of 1950s. She had blonde hair that Lucy liked the best. She wanted to become like Marilyn Monroe; thus, she kept on dying her hair to get blonde color. Lucy had her own philosophy about the actress as she never considered her American. “Lucy has a theory that Marilyn Monroe was really Indian and that she was adopted out when she was a baby” (19). We come to know about her belief through the protagonist and narrator of the story. Lucy was obsessed with the actress and because she liked her so much she believed that Marilyn Monroe could not be American and she belonged to American Indians. King repeats the same desire of Lucy to get blonde hair to look like the actress through the story that reinforces the belief of Lucy that the actress is not an American but an American Indian. King has followed white’s tradition to make stereotypes of Euro-Americans. Lucy likes the actress so she is of the view that the actress must be American Indian because that is also a generalized perception about Euro-Americans that they cannot be liked by American Indians for their racist and prejudice attitude towards them. Now, if Lucy likes that American actress, she must be American Indian and an adopted child of American family.

King has not created gloomy characters in his novel *Truth and Bright Water*. His characters do not mourn the stereotypes that West has established about them. They do not cry on being Indian. His characters are emotionally strong and unlike stereotypical dull Indians. King has established Native Americans’ superiority over Euro- Americans with the help of Lionel. He is a Native American and he possesses an entertainment barn named after his own name Lionel Home Entertainment Barn. The best part of this story is that the barn has been purchased from a white man who has become bankrupt. When he becomes bankrupt, he sells it and Lionel

purchases the property. “Indian guy own it . . . white guy went bankrupted” (87). The power has been shifted from Euro-Americans to Native Americans in the story of King and it subverts the stereotypical roles of both American Indians and Euro- Americans . King has tried to establish a mini narrative to make American Indians superior to Euro- Americans .

Euro- Americans have promoted a stereotype about Native Americans that they do not leave the reservations and once they leave, they do not come back. King has subverted this notion as well. Cassie is the aunt of the protagonist of the novel and Monroe Swimmer, who is an Indian artist; they both leave the reservation and come back. Cassie is in the habit of leaving and coming back after long tours around the world. The grandmother of the narrator comments on the return of Cassie, “Cassie always comes back” (92). Monroe Swimmer also leaves the reservation. He had nothing when he left the reservation. He earned and became very rich and came back to the reservation. King has told his readers that it is believed that Indians do not return to reservations then he himself has broken the stereotype through the discussion of Lum and the protagonist. Lum tells him, “Nobody comes back to Truth and Bright Water” (67). The protagonist corrects him by reminding him, saying: “Monroe Swimmer came back” (67). Both characters who leave the reservation come back to subvert the previously known behaviors of Native Americans. The same theme has been presented when Lum asks the protagonist “a traditional Indian would never ask the questions” (65) but it does not keep the protagonist from asking the questions. He asks Lum many questions, confirming that he is not a typical misrepresented American Indian. Thomas King has not created stock characters, but he has portrayed them as human beings, who can do whatever they want to do, who are not predictable as the human behavior cannot be predicted because it keeps on changing according to the circumstances. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book writes that “if you count on the unpredictability of Indian people, you will never be sorry” (*Custer Died* 1).

King has also subverted the belief that American Indians are dull, unreasonable and stoic. His characters are intelligent and they have the realization of good and bad, just and unjust. It is not only they are following the general perception of their forefathers about Euro- Americans and their dislike for them, but they also have the courage and intelligence to see and point out if there is anything bad about Native Americans. He has created his characters as human beings, not the stereotypical beings who always behave in a calculated and predictable manner. They also have the ability to question if anything unreasonable is happening by Native Americans around them. The father of the protagonist asks him what is wrong in the world? The expected answer is 'whites'. But he corrects his son and tells him the problem is not with whites but it is with American Indians. He made satirical statements about his own brother who was elected as the chief by paying the money. "What's wrong with the world is Indians . . . you know why Indians smoke? . . . Cause we like getting burned . . . you know how he got elected chief? . . . he bought votes" (105). The unpredictability that King has portrayed, Vine Deloria Jr. also addresses this unpredictability in a poetic manner in his book "Indians are like the weather. Everyone knows all about the weather, but none can change it. When storms are predicted, the sun shines. When picnic weather is announced, the rain begins" (*Custer Died* 1).

King has established mini narratives about Native Americans and Euro- Americans in his fiction and he has made an effort to promote them using different ways. His characters are not stock characters, but real human beings who can react if they see anything wrong happening around them. The father of the protagonist has not blamed whites for their troubles and miseries but he has admitted the flaws in American Indians as well. The cheating is not acceptable for him in both the cases. It is unacceptable for him to see whites cheating on lands and his brother buying the votes in the elections. Since the protagonist's father has been presented as a human

being whose behavior is unpredictable like weather. He too cheats at times; his act of cheating is evident from his habit of occasional smoking.

Thomas King has subverted the grand narrative that is based on the misrepresentation of American Indians. American Indians are considered to be inferior and dull but King has created intelligent American Indians who are well aware of the fact that they can also use their typical Indian image whenever they need against Euro-Americans who have created the image. The protagonist and his father wanted to cross the border of Canada. They were driving a truck. The father did not have the identity card and still he was able to cross the border. He has been presented as a very cunning character in the novel, who outwits white guard on the border. The protagonist of the novels narrated an event when he and his father crossed Canadian border sheer because his father knew it very well how to deceive Euro-Americans by giving them the true representation of stereotypical Indian. He filled the truck with smoke before reaching the border and behaved like dumb Indian. "My father shakes his head and smiles and talks like the Indians you see in the westerns on television . . . they love them dumb Indians routine. You see how friendly those ass holes were" (86). His words you see how friendly those ass holes were are very significant proving that American Indians have also learnt to deceive Euro-Americans and they have used another strategy of avenging Euro-Americans. They have decided to take the revenge for their misrepresentations on television by utilizing those identities against them to outwit them by using their minds, proving they are not dull as they have been considered. On seeing that the driver is behaving like typical dumb Indian, the guard lets them enter Canada. The guard tells them: "Welcome to Canada . . . have a nice day" (86). In this way King has subverted the grand narrative that says that American Indians are dull and inferior because it has established a mini narrative that says that American Indians are smarter than Euro-Americans and they can outwit them. With this knowledge, the center has been pushed to the margin and the margin takes the place of the center in academic field

of knowledge. King has made Native Americans superior to Euro-Americans who are more intelligent to outwit Euro-Americans.

King has subverted the grand narrative that Native Americans are inferior and they cannot defeat Euro-Americans in any field of life. All the Hollywood movies carrying the theme of fight between white and Native American end in the same way. Native Americans face the defeat because they cannot win from superior Euro-Americans. They are represented dull and all the focus remains on presenting Native American as inferior being and nothing superior was expected from them. King has created different characters in his novel. His characters can definitely surpass Euro-Americans with their wit and they can also be economically stronger than Euro-Americans. Monroe Swimmer in *Truth and Bright Water* is one of those characters who are not stereotypical suppressed, economically weak, dull and helpless Indian; he dismantles all such stereotypes by behaving as a very different Native American. He is a famous Indian artist who is very rich. In the past, he left the reservation to earn the money and came back with lots of money. He was able to buy a church which was property of superior Euro-Americans. It dismantles metanarrative that says that Native Americans are helpless and economically weak.

This is the greatest achievement of King's character to establish a mini narrative that there is no rule in the world that says Native Americans are economically weak. They can also be at strong positions to challenge the established stereotypes and live better lives than Euro-Americans. The important thing to notice here is that Monroe Swimmer does not only subvert the grand narrative that Native Americans are economically weak but he has also portrayed them as superior beings to Euro-Americans who have failed to protect their sacred place. They are not economically stable to keep the church and they have to sell it for money. The one who has bought the church is not the one among Euro-Americans but he is a Native American. He is among those who are considered inferior and economically weak. But subverting all such preconceived notions, Monroe

Swimmer has left behind Euro-Americans and he is able to get better financial position because when Euro-Americans need the money, he is there to buy their church by paying them the required amount. The church was sold to Monroe Swimmer by a real estate developer Miles Deardorf. “Monroe paintings began to sell and in no time at all, according to Miles, he was rich” (25).

Native Americans are considered to be inferior and they have always been placed at the margin in the legitimized grand narratives. King has subverted this grand native as well by giving the central place to Native Americans in his novel and has pushed Euro-Americans to the margin in the academic field of knowledge. He has promoted mini narratives that oppose the established knowledge about Native Americans. He has established the superiority of Native Americans through his characters who have been represented to do the tasks which cannot be expected from Native Americans. These tasks become the reason for their fame. The superiority of Native Americans has been established to give them the central place. Monroe Swimmer’s character is one of those superior characters of Thomas King who has central place in the novel. When he becomes rich and buys the church he becomes famous and a topic of discussion for everybody in both *Truth and Bright Water*. “As soon as word that the church had been sold got around, everyone in *Truth and Bright Water* began talking about Monroe Swimmer” (25).

King reinforces the idea of the superiority of Monroe Swimmer by asserting that the local residents of *Truth and Bright Water* and the real estate developer Miles are talking alike about him. Although the developer does not know enough about Monroe’s background and achievements, he gives the impression that he has been well acquainted with every detail about Monroe since long. An American Indian artist becomes very famous that the people who hardly know him previously get to know everything about him. “When Monroe bought the church and everybody began talking, no one came up with more stories about Monroe than Miles”(26). King has

not only given him a central place by establishing his achievements and fame, but he has also given him a powerful position by making him the owner of the church that he buys. All the authority and power shifts from Euro-Americans to the hands of a Native American artist who can do anything with the sacred religious place of Euro-Americans. King says the authority and power of Monroe Swimmer using Miles who affirms that the owner can do anything with his property. “Big time Indian artist likes him. May be he is going to tear the damn thing down and put up a tipi” (24).

King’s fiction presents Native American more powerful and economically stronger than Euro-Americans. He also conveys another idea that asserts that there are no rules in the world that Native Americans should always be presented inferior and suppressed. This is the world and there is no certainty of the things in it. People should be taken as human beings not the stereotypical characters who behave in calculated manners and in case of Native Americans, they are always presented as inferior. They can also take a central position and they can also be superior to Euro-Americans. When the protagonist meets Monroe Swimmer at the church and he tells him that he wants to see Monroe Swimmer, not knowing that he is talking to the required person. That person corrects him by telling him that whenever he says Monroe Swimmer, he should always add the phrase “famous Indian artist” (45). Mile’s remark is important to convey this idea. Skee is surprised on Mile’s act of selling the church and he tells Miles Deardorf, “Didn’t know you could sell a church . . . I can sell anything” (24). If Miles can sell anything, even if it is a church, then there is also no rule that makes Native Americans to behave in a particular manner and to do the certain things which are expected from them. Anything can happen in the world and that is the same idea that makes Native Americans superior and gives them the central place.

Thomas King has not emphasized on the tragic and dark aspect of Native Americans. I have found the traces of historical tragedies of Native Americans in the novel but he has not given serious consideration to them.

He has focused on the creativity, intelligence and superiority of Native Americans to give them the central place to help them to come out from a marginalized place. He has not highlighted negative impacts of the misrepresentation of Native Americans by Euro-Americans. However, he has taken it as an advantage and plus point that goes in the favor of Native Americans. It asserts a mini narrative that can be very useful for Native Americans to lead their lives and to get out of the inferiority complex. The stereotypical images that Euro-Americans have been promoting since very long have been subverted by Thomas King as he has used them against Euro-Americans. The father of the protagonist has been presented to work very hard to make dogs with the stones in their eyes for Indian Days. He is well aware of the fact that the stereotypical image of Native Americans can be useful for him to earn the profit in his business. He makes the dog and claims that it is coyote. He knows the strategy of cashing Indianness. "Everybody's going crazy over Indian stuff. I figure I can sell them for fifty bucks" (32). For King, even if Native Americans have been misrepresented, it is not an embarrassment for them. If Euro-Americans are known by an image reflecting specific characteristics, Euro-Americans' representation makes Native Americans different. It should be taken in a positive sense rather it should be used against them. He tells Skee that it is really a coyote and asks to get a proof from the sports magazines where there can be seen many ads on American Indians and coyote is most the important part of Indian tradition. "It's a coyote. You ever see all that shit they advertise in the sports magazines" (33).

He tells the protagonist named Tecumseh that he will make almost two hundred dogs in the name of coyote and sell them to the tourists. He has the plan to show them the ads from the sports magazines that will prove those dogs to be coyotes. "Figure I'll make about two hundred or so, take out an ad in a couple of magazines, and sit back. With any luck, the money will pour in" (32). This is a great satire on Euro-Americans who have created the misrepresentations of Native Americans and have promoted

them through different channels. King has reinforced the use of being Indian by referring to treaties that have a strong impact on the lives of Native Americans.

Treaties have ruined the lives of Native Americans but Thomas King has also subverted the negative impact of treaties by using them as a proof for dogs being coyotes. Treaties were used to force Native Americans to leave their lands and to shift on the reservations. They were used a tool to deprive Native Americans of their rights on their lands. However, in King's novel it is ridiculous that Elvin decides to put treaty number on each card for dogs, claiming those dogs are real coyotes. And no one questions the authenticity of coyotes because they contain the treaty number. "Figured I'd put my treaty number on the card so there is no question" (32). The treaty number refers to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (1990), which bans the art made by non-federally recognized Indians from being sold as Indian art. Elvin uses that act as his license to show to the tourists as a proof that coyotes are really Indian. The way the father of the protagonist decides to cheat Euro-Americans is not specific to him because this trick has also been used by a man who makes turtles. Turtles also are traditional with Native Americans and they are also taken to represent the culture of Native Americans. "There is a guy who sells stone turtles . . . he gets hundred and fifty bucks a pop" (34). Elvin tells the protagonist that the same practice has been carried out by another guy who earns one hundred and fifty bucks for a turtle. He also uses a trick to make the turtles look more Indian by signing his Indian name. "The guy with the turtles signs everything with his Indian name, clever, huh?" (32). The way ordinary American Indians have been presented to cheat Euro-Americans, it subverts the preconceived notion based on the inferiority of Native Americans. They are rather more intelligent to outwit Euro-Americans using their stereotypical identity against the people who have worked hard to promote it. The central position of Euro-Americans being superior has been occupied by Native Americans

who have been presented superior on the basis of intelligence to Euro-Americans.

Thomas King has promoted the mini narrative of Native American superiority relating it to their humanity. He dismantles the grand narrative of Euro-Americans superiority when he addresses the issue of the cousins, three dogs at the church, who were abandoned alone at church throughout the period when the church was owned by Euro-Americans. Before Monroe Swimmer purchased the church, it had been sold three times and all the three times the dogs were not taken along with the administration of church and every time they were left behind for dying with hunger. It is not only that they did not take the dogs along and it was the only period when the dogs were hungry but we know through Skee that no one ever fed those dogs and they always remained hungry at the church. It was also said that the dogs had been there even before the construction of the church and Lum thinks that there was the possibility that missionary took those dogs with them to keep the Indians in line. "My father said some of the old people told him that the dogs were there before the church had been built. Lum figured that the missionaries brought the dogs with them to keep the Indians in line" (38).

Euro-Americans have always been considered superior, but King has highlighted that the self-claimed superior nation thinks that Native Americans are worse than dogs. Lum thinks that the dogs were brought for Native Americans to keep them in line. However, this is ironic that the people who have been misrepresented as savage and inferior are better than the civilized and superior white nation who is devoid of humanity. The whole focus shifts from Euro-Americans to Native Americans in King's novel as it reflects that Euro-Americans treat animals callously and cruelly. Euro-Americans have never cared for the dogs. King has urged his readers to believe that Native Americans are more humane than Euro-Americans because they have a kind heart and they can feel the pain of animals. The care and respect for animals is important for Native Americans and it makes

them superior on the moral grounds. Skee opines: “No one ever fed the cousins, not the Baptists, not the Nazarenes, and certainly not the First Assembly of God” (39). King’s text brings Native Americans to the center by making them superior by highlighting their humanity that removes the tag of savage from them.

The same idea has also been addressed by Deloria Jr. about the humanity and respect for all forms of life. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book states that American Indians accord too much importance to morality. They take all forms of life as their brothers so they respect them and handle them, the way they handle human beings. For American Indians, the universe is alive and all the life-forms (creations and natural objects; animals and plants) are also alive and they consider themselves as their “younger brothers” (*Spirit and Reason* 50). They respect all forms of life. He clearly states that the respect for life-forms is not to worship them. The respect is based on two things. First is to accept the responsibility towards all forms of life. The second is to establish a communication on mutually agreeable grounds with other forms of life (51).

King has linked the inhumanity of Euro-Americans to the teachings that Euro-Americans receive in their church on Sunday. He makes his readers believe that the black color of dogs and their huge bodies are the result of those things they preach every Sunday. King’s satirical comments signify that there is no use of preaching if someone does not have care and respect for the animals. Euro-Americans, who claim to be superior and civilized, have failed to take care of the dogs. Through the character of Charlie Ron, we are communicated that originally the dogs were brown and they were small but due to the lies of white people their color kept on changing and their size also kept on increasing and finally they turned to be huge black dogs. King’s way to relate the color and size of the dogs to the lies of Euro-Americans shows the hypocrisy and deceitful nature of Euro-Americans. They do not practice what they preach and their words do not relate to their actions. King highlights their indifference towards other

forms of life. King establishes their cruelty towards the cousins by telling the readers that they have not been fed by the administration of the church. It shifts the focus of superiority from Euro-Americans to Native Americans. Vine Deloria Jr. in his book establishes the relationship of human beings with all other forms of life including animals and plants. He is of the view that everything is related to each other in the physical world. He quotes a religious phrase All My Relatives from American Indians' religious ceremonies. He writes that all the religious ceremonies start and end with this phrase because they are of the view that everything is directly related to human beings. He also explains the purpose for this phrase: "To remind us of the responsibility to respect life and fulfill our covenantal duties" (*Spirit and Reason* 52).

There is a major difference between the religions of Euro-Americans and Native Americans. Native Americans start every ceremony by addressing all the forms of life. King has highlighted that Euro-Americans have no link with other forms of life and they do not have care and respect for them. They are devoid of basics of humanity and their hypocrisy is symbolically connected to the color and size of the cousins. This hypocrisy can also be linked to the lies that Euro-Americans told to Native Americans. They made many promises in order to get the treaties signed by Native Americans but they reneged on all their promises. The way King has revealed the truth about Euro-Americans to de-center their authority and superiority and hence he pushes them on the margin while giving the central place to Native Americans.

Charlie Ron, liked to tell about how the dogs had originally be small and brown, and how hanging around the church and having to listen to all the lies white people told every Sunday had turned them large and black. Except for the white ruff at their necks, which made them look a little like penguins. Or priests (38).

King has subverted the grand narrative in a unique manner with the help of the protagonist when he becomes judgmental about a Western movie. The protagonist watches the television and he asks the suggestion from his dog

which channel should they watch. He gives the dog some options: Western movie, bunny or hockey game. He explains why they should not watch the Western movie because it is not a good movie and it lacks some important things. The movie is about a white guy who wants to marry the chief's daughter and the chief arranges a ceremony to convert the white man to Indian. The ceremony is not completed as a European movie lacks important steps and by the end of the ceremony, they show that white man marries the Indian girl who is chief's daughter. There are major mistakes in performing the ceremony. The grand narratives have been subverted by King threefold in this example to promote mini narratives that give a central position to Native Americans. The first grand narrative that has been subverted in this example is the knowledge that a white man is being converted to Indian. It had always been the tradition of white man to convert Indians and they had established churches and boarding schools in order to convert Indians. The second grand narrative that has been subverted here is the tradition of Euro-Americans to judge Native Americans because they have been superior and they have the right to tell Native Americans what is good or bad. They also have the burden on their shoulders to civilize them because Native Americans know nothing about civilization. In the same process of judging Native Americans and civilizing them, they established the stereotypes of Native Americans. In the movie, all the process of judging the people has been reversed because now it is a Native American who is judging a Western movie and counting the mistakes of white men. Thirdly, Native Americans are considered inferior to Euro-Americans, but here a white man is willing to convert and he goes through the process of conversion to be Indian to marry an American Indian girl. "It's all about some white guy who wants to be an Indian. The regular Indians put him through a ceremony . . . the guy staggers through the ceremony without passing out or throwing up and gets to marry the chief's daughter" (111).

In his fiction, Thomas King has subverted the historical image of American Indians; they are considered inferior and stereotypical beings. He

does not take these stereotypes as their weakness and he converts them into their strength. He makes his characters to cash the misrepresentation of his people through film and literature throughout the world. He celebrates Indianness that Euro-Americans have established for his people. He has celebrated Indianness in *Green Grass, Running Water* the same way as he celebrates in his *Truth and Bright Water*. In *Truth and Bright Water*, he has extended the celebration of Indianness throughout the course of the story. The whole story revolves around the preparation and celebration of Indian Days. Native Americans cash their stereotypical image in the celebration to attract more tourists for the profit in their business. They have prepared the special traps to get maximum tourist. King has enlightened his readers, telling them that Native Americans are a source of recreation of Euro-Americans. They come to visit Native Americans and they feel happy when they see that Native Americans are behaving in the stereotypical Indian ways.

Vine Deloria Jr. in his book satirically highlights the Western misrepresentations of American Indians. He is of the view that the western world is so eager to talk about American Indians and they think it is the easiest task on the earth. "There is no subject on earth so easily understood as that of the American Indian. Each summer . . . within one month's time the youngest acquire knowledge of Indians that would astound a college professor" (*Custer Died* 5).

Franklin in *Truth and Bright Water* has been presented to be obsessed with creating the Indian environment on the reservation to get more tourists. Happy Trail is also his idea. He also manages a herd of buffalo to encourage the tourists to stay at the reservation. King has not made his characters to be ashamed of their identity that has long been promoted on the basis of misrepresentation. He has intelligently used the misrepresentation against Euro-Americans to use them for the benefits of American Indians. "Franklin figured that a herd of buffalo would bring more tourists and help fill up Happy Trail" (89). Native Americans plan to

celebrate Indian Days, fulfilling the criterion of Indianness to earn the money. King has familiarized his readers with the concept of using their stereotypical identity against the people who have spent centuries to promote that stereotypical image.

Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King have subverted the grand narrative which portrays Native Americans as illiterate, primitive, inferior and uncivilized race/nation beings. They have rejected all the stereotypes attached to Native Americans, besides raising a loud voice against these stereotypes by creating a counter narrative to present Native Americans as intelligent, educated, advanced in technology and civilized. Their fiction has introduced the marginalized facts about Native Americans and Euro-Americans . However, their great contribution to American Indian literature lies in their effort to promote of mini narratives which dismantle the grand narratives established and promoted by Euro- Americans .

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This research has been conducted in order to analyze the selected novels of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King from a postmodern perspective. For the purpose of accomplishing the first and third objective of my research, I have explicated how mini narratives introduced and promoted by the selected writers subvert the grand narratives of history, religion, culture and nationhood associated with both Euro- Americans and Native Americans. The aim of this research has been to highlight mini narratives purely from the vantage point of Native American. Using Native Americans' point of view has helped me bring mini narratives to the center, besides pushing previously acknowledged grand narratives to the margin in the academic field of knowledge. The study has proved with the help of the evidences traced from the selected texts and the previous studies that grand narratives are promoted by powerful societies in order to achieve hidden political, social or religious agendas. The research has relied on the comparison between grand narratives and mini narratives for accomplishing the second objective of the study. The research has proved after careful analysis and sufficient evidences that mini narratives promoted by American Indian writers are more authentic than grand narratives floated by the Euro-Americans.

The second objective of my research has been to explore the differences between the officially documented history and the fictive history authored by both the writers under study. The study has been designed to ascertain that history is not always based on factual truth. It is conceived and crafted by human beings who are prone to committing errors. They are expected to purposefully conceal certain facts about history to underline the significance of certain events in order to further their own hidden agendas. By comparing the historical events with the fictive history authored by both writers, I have strived to prove that history can also be subjective in nature. The study asserts after careful analysis that there can be many versions of the same historical events. I have pointed out the difference of opinions about some particular historical events with the help of the fictive history written by the selected writers. The study has been designed to draw a comparison of historical events and historical characters with the fictive history and fictive characters given in the selected literary works to achieve the first objective of the research. The analysis has been conducted to reveal that both history and fiction have been written by human beings; both subjects can present their own subjective truth. Therefore, fictive history also deserves serious consideration. My focal point has been to bring to light Native Americans' perspective on their history. I have highlighted the marginalized truth from the perspective of American Indians in order to blur the boundary between fiction and history by drawing a comparison between historical truth and fictional truth with the help of evidences found out from the selected texts.

6.1 Findings of the Study

My research demonstrates that Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King have addressed many historical events and characters in their novels to reveal the silenced truth about them. I have made a point through my study that the selected writers have used their fiction as a tool to present the perspective of the marginalized Native Americans, emphasizing that just

like historical documents, fiction is equally important as both are written by human beings. If history could be considered authentic, fiction could also be trusted because both subjects mirror subjective and personal truth. The present study suggests that reality is only linguistically fabricated and hence questions the systems and the perceptions which believe in the objectivity of history. My study rejects the related historical truth to bring into focus the fictive truth introduced through the selected novels of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King. The research has been exclusively designed to appreciate and understand Native Americans' view on their history; however, in the past, their point of view about their history had been marginalized.

As historiographic metafictionists Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King have experimented with history. They have used history as a tool to rewrite the history of Native Americans in order to reshape their identity and challenge the authenticity of objective facts. Furthermore, they have done this mainly for achieving the philosophical ends such as self-knowing and the problems related to identity. The analysis indicates the impossibility of gaining ultimate knowledge. Their fictional characters testify to the fabrication of historiographic metafiction in their work which both uses and repeals the veracity of history. It could be assumed that history no longer embodies the truth about the past, but is constructional, subjective, and perspectival.

I have shown how Gerald Vizenor has rewritten the history of Columbus' first voyage through his novel *The Heirs of Columbus*. In his novel, he has addressed the gaps in history by revealing the marginalized truth. To emphasize, American Indians' perspective on the great voyage has been elucidated. The truth about the great voyage presented from American Indians' perspective seems to be altogether different from Euro-Americans' officially documented historical account. Gerald Vizenor has rejected the great discovery made by Christopher Columbus, claiming that it was not a discovery but a homecoming to the homeland. With regard to his view on Columbus' return, Vizenor's has highlighted the personal life of

Christopher Columbus rather than discuss his political and official life documented by Euro- Americans. I have compared the officially documented history with the fictive history by using historiographic metafiction with a view to proving the authenticity of Native Americans' perspective. Further, the research has established that the perspective presented by Vizenor is more comprehensive than Euro- Americans' version of history because it gives a detailed personal account of Columbus' personal life. Vizenor has filled the gaps in history with the help of intertextual parody and self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction. Finally, I have also proved with evidences from the text that Euro- Americans have misrepresented Native Americans in their historical accounts. On the basis of the evidences explored from the selected text, I have presented the true and positive image of Native Americans depicted in the selected text with the intention of contesting the dark and tarnished image of Native Americans projected by Euro- Americans. I have found that Vizenor has used historiographic metafiction to lay bare the inevitable textuality of history through intertextual parody and self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction.

My journey through his second novel *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* has asserted that Vizenor has merged the boundary between the officially documented history and his fiction to present Native Americans' perspective on their history by using intertextual parody and self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction. Many historical events have been taken into account including Wounded Knee Massacre to bring to light Vizenor's attempt of presenting a new account of one of the most tragic events happened in the history of Native Americans. He has mitigated the intensity of the tragedy by giving an optimistic standpoint in his intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction. Instead of terming the murder of the two different characters the massacre of all Native Americans, he considers these two gory and tragic incidents a sort of personal tragedy befalling the bereaved families. He has also deconstructed the facts about the massacre

by making Wounded Knee a symbol of bravery and achievement because one of the characters has been killed on the way to Wounded Knee. He was going there to celebrate the achievement of the American Indian Movement. It was the declaration of a sovereign nation. Vizenor has also made it a symbol of survival, as one of the characters of this novel has been conceived and born at Wounded Knee. The birth of a child helps readers ignore the gloomy atmosphere engulfing the historical place; besides, the birth also promotes optimism and hope for Native Americans. The author shifts the focus from factual to fictional intertexts to reveal that the distinction between fact and fiction is not noteworthy as they go parallel; they both make sense of our world.

In the third novel *Green Grass, Running Water* written by Thomas King, I have made a comparison between historical facts and fictive details. The analysis shows that it is a self-reflexive historical novel that inevitably deals with intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction. Fort Marion is one of those historical places, which have been presented as the symbol of the bravery of U.S Army by Euro- Americans. I have proved with the evidences from the text that Euro American's documented history of Fort Marion that makes the U.S army the hero has been reversed in the fictive history authored by Thomas King. The U.S army has been presented as the villain in *Green Grass, Running Water*. He has revised the history of Fort Marion by introducing his historical facts in his fiction to highlight the marginalized history. King has made an effort under the cover of his fiction to assert that Western History has marginalized the facts about Fort Marion. He employs his fiction as a tool to look for the gaps in Western History, which has been exploited to create fictitious heroes of the U. S army. King asserted that Fort Marion was used to imprison the innocent Native Americans who were blamed for causing disturbance for the army. The U.S army imprisoned the innocent Native Americans who resisted their enforced settlement on reservations; they were forced to leave their homes and lands. He establishes in his novel that those Native Americans were

innocent and their only crime was “being Indian”. King has also rewritten the historical discovery made by Columbus. In King’s version of history of Columbus’s voyage, the three ships that Columbus was given by the King and the Queen are presented as three cars and the characters of King’s fiction own those cars. Babo’s red Pinto is an old version of La Pinta, Alberta’s blue Nissan is a modern version of La Nina and Dr. Hovaugh’s white *Karmann-Ghia Convertible* is a modern version of La Santa Maria. These three cars which symbolically represent the three ships of Christopher Columbus have been used as an instrument to destroy the dam. In the novel, the dam was constructed for the inconvenience of American Indians who were upset for losing their lands and homes. But in the version of King’s history of Columbus’s voyage, woven in intertextual parody of historiographic metafiction, the three cars have been made the symbol of Native Americans’ survival.

The study of the fourth novel *Truth and Bright Water* by Thomas King is also based on the comparison between the historical documented events and fictive history. I have proved with the help of postmodern technique of historiographic metafiction that King has filled the gaps in history by merging the boundary of fiction with the boundary of history. He has revised their history from Native Americans’ perspective through the use of intertextuality and self-reflexivity of historiographic metafiction. The historical event of Trail of Tears has been compared with the fictive event of Happy Trails narrated in King’s novel to blur the boundary between fiction and history. King has deconstructed the tragic history of Trail of Tears and revised it in his fiction by renaming it to Happy Trails. I have also pointed out that King has deconstructed the history of First July. He has replaced Canada Day by Indian Days. He has also presented it as the birthday of one of his characters’ lost daughter named MIA. King has revised the meaning of First July to give central importance to American Indians who have always been marginalized by Euro-Americans. He has also deconstructed the meaning of AIM in his novel. After bearing great

sufferings and hardships, it was a movement for American Indians to demand their rights; however, King has limited its scope by just showcasing the personal grief of a mother who has lost her daughter. The readers are conveyed this message with the help a tattoo on Cassie's hand. According to the perception of the teen aged protagonist of the novel, the tattoo contained the letters AIM.

My research has mainly revolved around the promotion of the mini narratives, which aim to subvert the grand narratives of history, religion, nationhood and culture associated with both Euro- Americans and American Indians. I have supported the stance of the Native Americans to analyze and prove that there is no authenticity in these grand narratives because they are promoted in order to achieve certain hidden objectives. I have drawn a comparison between the grand narratives and the mini narratives on the basis of textual evidences to prove that the mini narratives which have been introduced by the selected writers are more authentic than the grand narratives spread by Euro- Americans. My study is based on the effort to bring to the center the marginalized truth about both Euro- Americans and American Indians. Since the study has been designed to promote mini narratives from the perspective of American Indians, the researcher has brought marginalized American Indians to the center by highlighting the unsaid truth and has placed powerful Euro- Americans on the margin.

My study of the first novel *The Heirs of Columbus* is based on the subversion of many grand narratives about Euro- Americans and American Indians. My research reveals that Gerald Vizenor has told his readers that American Indians are more advanced in technology than Euro- Americans because they have the salon where they cure the wounded people with the help of genetic therapies. They can do wonders that seem impossible. For example, they can make new real heads, arms and legs to give new lives to the wounded people. American Indians are superior to Euro- Americans on the basis of their spirituality as well as their power to bring the dead ones

back to life through the process of resurrection. My research has revealed that the selected authors have subverted the grand narrative that makes American Indians uncivilized. I have presented the evidences which underline the importance of the claim made by Vizenor about the start of civilization. The novelist says that civilization starts with Mayan, who belongs to American Indians. He further says that the center of civilization is gichiziibi, the name of a place owned by American Indians. It can be assumed without any doubt that American Indians cannot be branded uncivilized as both civilization and the center of civilization are owned by them. Vizenor further claims that Jesus Christ also belongs to them. Coming up with his argument about the creation story of the earth, he maintains that the earth has been created by a trickster known Naanabozho. I have also drawn a comparison between Euro American Statue of Liberty and Native American Trickster of Liberty to project the superiority of Native Americans over Euro- Americans. According to Vizenor, the Trickster of Liberty is higher than the Statue of Liberty. All such evidences in my research bring Native Americans to the center by proving them superior to Euro- Americans.

My research on the second novel of Vizenor *Bearheart: The Heirship Chronicles* reveals that the term Indian does not exist but it has been invented by Euro- Americans. I have traced that Vizenor does not believe in the fixed meanings of the words, calling such belief Terminal Creed. For him, the term Indian is also a terminal creed contrived by Euro- Americans to spread the impression that the Native Americans behave in a fixed manner. Consequently, Vizenor rejects this term. He has replaced it with Postindians Warriors who do not behave in a fixed manner. They are saviors of their people and not typical warriors. His third *Proude Cedafair* is not a typical aggressive warrior but a warrior diplomat who believes in the power of negotiation. I have proved in my study that Vizenor has subverted the grand narrative that presents American Indians as barbaric, uncivilized and warriors. I have promoted a mini narrative with the help of

the evidences from the text that American Indians are a peaceful nation. They fight, when they are forced to fight against Euro- Americans to save their people and nature. By quoting various examples of their cruelty and their unreasonable attitude towards Native Americans from the text, I have promoted another mini narrative about Euro- Americans to prove them barbaric, savage and uncivilized. The research also indicates that Native Americans were left with no other choice/option but to fight for their survival.

My research on *Green Grass, Running Water* subverts the grand narratives of religion, culture and nationhood associated with both Euro-Americans and Native Americans. I have managed to bring Native Americans to the center by proving them superior to Euro American. The study has also highlighted the claim of King that the earth has been created by a trickster Coyote. Further elaborating his point, King asserts that everything is possible in the world of Coyote because anything can happen when Coyote dreams. Hence, the fictive truth of King undermines the credibility of history owing to the possibility of any happening in the world. King has also challenged many beliefs of Christianity to dismantle the grand narrative that makes Christianity superior to the religious beliefs of Native Americans. In order to establish Native Americans' superiority to Euro-Americans, he has promoted mini narratives. I have quoted from the text where King reflects the superiority of Native Americans over Euro-Americans. I have proved that King has followed the white tradition of misrepresentation when he addresses the theme of religion to promote mini narratives. King's Native Americans are not dull and uncivilized but they are well aware of the fact that they have been invented as Indians and they should use this term against the people who have misrepresented them by attaching stereotypes to them. His characters have used these stereotypes intelligently against Euro-Americans to get financial benefits from them. They are seen to behave in an Indian way to wangle money from Euro-Americans who like to see American Indians behaving in that typical

manner. I have highlighted that Euro- Americans consider themselves as superior to Native Americans because they have spread the knowledge about Native American in the world but that is based on misrepresentation. The Native American know the fact and they enjoy befooling Euro-Americans by behaving in Euro American's prescribed manners to exploit them for getting financial benefits.

In the fourth novel *Truth and Bright Water*, Thomas King has subverted the grand narrative that manifests the superiority of Christians. He has exposed many evils of the people who have been given the charge of church. He has introduced mini narratives by highlighting the contradictions between their preaching and their actions. The ill-treatment meted out to the hungry dogs helps the readers peep into the sick mind of the people associated with the church. The author relates the black color of dogs to the evil mind of the preachers in order to subvert their superiority and push them to the margin in academic field of knowledge. Since Native Americans respect and love all forms of life, they have been accorded the central place in the novel. King's characters are superior and central importance has been given to them because they also know how to cash their Indian identity.

6.2 My Contribution to the Field of knowledge

1. My significant contribution to the field of knowledge is that I have placed history and fiction on the same margin in the context of Native Americans. I have highlighted the marginalized truth from the perspective of the marginalized people by conveying the message that there is no boundary, no border between the existing knowledge (history) and the imaginative stories. Besides this, I have endorsed the importance of the power of human imagination by comparing it to the existing knowledge (history). As per my understanding, both history and imaginative stories are subjective in nature. My research reveals that history could also be taken just as a story. People should attach an equal significance to all versions of a story, keeping in view the context that nothing is divine and every piece of writing is conceived

and crafted by man. Normally, people trust the stories of those people who could wield power. However, on the basis of the evidences gathered from the selected works, the study has proved that history is merely a collection of stories and the stories introduced or composed by the marginalized people are more authentic than the stories spread by the powerful people. To emphasize, I have supported the stance of a marginalized nation which is considered inferior and uncivilized.

2. The second major contribution on my part to the field of knowledge underscores the need for dismantling grand narratives; for that matter, mini narratives should be promoted. Pursuing the path mentioned in the preceding sentence, I have brought to light all the marginalized mini narratives suggested by the selected writers. I have questioned the authenticity of grand narratives by relating them to the ulterior political motives of Euro- Americans who have always been in a powerful position. They have all the resources at their disposal to promote the knowledge that favors Euro-Americans and misrepresents American Indians. The biased promotion of knowledge by Euro- Americans eventually created grand narrative based on white superiority and American Indian inferiority. I have reversed the biased knowledge by highlighting American Indians' superiority and by giving central place to them in my study. The research has promoted mini narratives purely from the perspective of American Indians to push the grand narratives and Euro- Americans to the margin in academic field of knowledge. In my study, the center takes the place of the margin and the margin secures the central position.
3. My study significantly adds to the field of knowledge as I have also advocated my arguments by citing many books of an American Indian historian, anthropologist and activist Vine Deloria Jr. My study proves that the fiction of the selected writers is not just the product of their imaginations but it also contains historical truth that lends more authenticity to their fiction and my research. I quoted him on many instances to prove my point, where there were some claims which seemed unrealistic and merely the

product of imagination, like the creation of the earth and superiority of American Indians to Euro- Americans in science and technology.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The study has found out that the selected novels still offer a vast scope for the future research. There are many areas in the selected works which need further exploration from a postmodern perspective as it has not been possible for me to incorporate every aspect of these areas. Therefore, I recommend some topics for the future research.

1. I strongly recommend a comprehensive study based on the comparison between Christianity and the tribal religions delineated in *Green Grass, Running Water* by Thomas King.
2. A study can be conducted based on the comparison of literature created by Euro- Americans and the Hollywood movies produced with reference to Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water*.
3. A study can be conducted based on the comparison of King's episode of Moby-Jane in *Green Grass, Running Water* and Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*.
4. I suggest a comprehensive study based on the comparison between the officially documented histories of Columbus' discovery of America recorded by different Euro American historians and Native Americans' perspective projected in Gerald Vizenor's fictive history of Columbus' Voyage in *The Heirs of Columbus*.
5. Finally, I recommend a thorough research on the rejection of stereotyping of Native Americans highlighted in the selected novels of Gerald Vizenor and Thomas King.

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