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The Heirs of Columbus: A Study of Confrontation with Grand Narratives Mirroring Lyotard's Perspective of Postmodernism



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Abstract

Native Americans have always been misrepresented by Euro Americans. Euro Americans, with their hegemonic colonial construction have created and promoted the grand narrative about the marginalized Native Americans which are based on monolithic notions. Native Americans have always been misrepresented with stereotypical tags. Contrary to the mainstream narrative of dominant Euro Americans, the suppressed Native Americans have strived to reshape their true identity in their history and fiction. The study has been designed to bring to the center, the repressed Native Americans and their silenced truth about their identity, culture and history. The study is qualitative in nature and descriptive method has been used for the analysis of the selected novel. The analysis of the novel is grounded in Jean Francois Lyotard's postmodernist lens that exclusively studies the subversion of grand narratives and promotion of mini narratives. The research is designed to highlight Vizenor's effort to liberate Native Americans from toxic and monolithic notions. The present study is dedicated purely to the Native American stance of historical events and their culture and identity. The study, therefore, brings Native Americans to the center and relegates Euro-Americans to the periphery within the academic sphere of knowledge. The research finally winds up with the prospects for future research. I have suggested a study based on the comparison and contrast between Euro Americans' officially documented histories of discovery of America by Christopher Columbus with the fictive history of the discovery of America by Vizenor. Lastly, I have recommended thorough research on denunciation of the Native American stereotyping by Vizenor in *The Heirs of Columbus*.

Keywords: Postmodernism, Native Americans, Euro Americans, Grand Narratives, Mini Narratives

Background to the Study

Colonial history by the dominant Euro Americans has always misrepresented Native Americans by tagging them with stereotypes. These stereotypes establish many monolithic notions concerning Native Americans, as consistently portrayed by Euro-Americans throughout their history, fiction and movies. Native Americans have

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always been portrayed as primitive, savage, uneducated, stoic, warriors, addicted to smoking and drugs and above all, an inferior nation who does not know anything other than assaulting each other. This essentialist approach asserts that Native Americans cannot contest these preconceived notions promoted by Euro Americans because they are undeveloped and uncivilized.

The issue of misrepresentation of Native Americans commences with the mistaken notion of America's discovery by Christopher Columbus. When Euro Americans invaded on the lands on Native Americans in fifteenth century, a chaos was created by them that profoundly impacted Native Americans and their entire way of life. Native Americans are labeled with the stereotypes because of the difference that they hold from Euro Americans. They have a complex social, cultural and religious system. Euro Americans could not relate to that system as it was naïve for them, and they ended up in the misconceptions about Native Americans branding them with the stereotypes. This stereotyping was grounded on the concept of binary opposition that studies the relationship of difference. Euro Americans, being powerful, placed themselves on the center, thus became the standard to evaluate Native Americans and their culture. Euro Americans established their superiority with their difference from Native Americans such as educated/ uneducated, advanced/ primitive, superior/ inferior, peaceful/ warrior, civilized/ uncivilized, sophisticated/ unsophisticated and so on and so forth.

This research is chiefly concerned with disputing the stereotypical preconceptions about Native Americans. I have taken these preconceptions about Native Americans as the grand narratives which have been examined by Jean Francois Lyotard in his study of postmodernism. This study aims to examine the subversion of meta/grand narratives and the elevation of mini narratives in Gerald Vizenor's selected fiction. The study intends to challenge almost all the stereotypes as it reveals about them to be a nation who is intelligent, educated, advanced in technology, civilized, sophisticated and thus creating a mini narrative that establishes the Native American superiority over Euro Americans. The study is significant in the academic context as it shows how margin takes the place of center because the present study focuses on the Native American perspective about their history and culture to promote mini narratives.

The research objectives of the present study are

1. To explore mini narratives in *The Heirs of Columbus* to determine how grand narratives are subverted by Gerald Vizenor
2. To promote mini narratives established by Gerald Vizenor to liberate Native Americans from stereotypes and toxic image

The study strives to explore the following research question

- How are the grand narratives dismantled in *The Heirs of Columbus* to eliminate the tag of monolithic notions from Native Americans?

Research Methodology

The current research is extensively qualitative in nature to study the selected fiction by a Native American author. The researcher has framed specific research question to avoid ambiguity in the study. The analysis has been carried out in the light of theoretical underpinning of postmodernism to achieve the aims of the research. The research question has been linked to Lyotard's theory of postmodernism that deals with the destabilizing grand narratives and elevating minor narratives. The study of the selected fiction is based on inductive as well as deductive reasoning. In deductive reasoning, the formulation of concepts and themes relies on postmodernism as well as previous studies. The researcher has applied descriptive method to analyze the selected fiction in the light of postmodernism.

Jean-François Lyotard and Selected Theoretical Framework

For this study, the researcher employs Jean-François Lyotard's notion of subverting grand/meta narratives as the theoretical framework. Lyotard proclaims that grand narratives present a monolithic and absolute cultural phenomenon or an account of historical event. They also have a strong inclination toward universal truths. He argues that postmodernism fundamentally questions authoritative grand narratives, including those of nationalism and Christianity. These influential metanarratives suppress all other social and individual voices. The researcher has taken this disbelief in legitimized narrative to study the selected work of fiction to highlight mini narratives of the marginalized voice (Native American fiction author).

Lyotard states that mini narratives should be given prominence to subvert grand narratives. He believes that there is no concept of ultimate knowledge in any given context. He states that ultimate truth about the things is present in the universe,

but human beings cannot grasp all the knowledge in the universe. That is the reason they cannot understand objective truth in the universe to find out the answers to their questions. He intensely rejects political ideologies which also include grand narratives, because they eliminate minorities from society and become the core reason to create violence by suppressing those minorities. The present study also works on the same philosophy of subversion of the metanarratives which has been established by Lyotard to bring the Native American marginalized perspective into the limelight. Lyotard asserts that postmodernism involves highlighting and marginalizing knowledge to challenge modernist claims regarding the legitimacy of science and technology (*The Inhuman* 35). He asserts that ambiguity in existing knowledge is created by the tool of speculation. Speculation creates many doubts in the minds of the readers about the authenticity of the knowledge. As a result, the classical line between science and other disciplines is called into question and the legitimized knowledge converts into the delegitimized knowledge.

Lyotard maintains that today, grand narratives are not considered authentic as they have been considered in the past. These grand narratives have lost their legitimacy in the postmodern world. Postmodern culture speculates traditionally accepted knowledge. The grand narrative has become discredited, irrespective of the type of unification it employs, be it speculative or emancipatory (*Postmodern Condition* 37).

He states that knowledge and power go hand in hand: who defines knowledge, and who decides what is important to know? The issue of knowledge is increasingly a matter of political control. (*Postmodern Condition* 9). He maintains that the legitimacy of science through power is a language game which is used as a method to legitimize knowledge. He asserts that today the question of legitimation is not seen as a failure within the scientific language game but has been acknowledged as a legitimate problem itself (*Postmodern Condition* 9).

Foucault maintains that power is fundamental to examining how language and social behavior operate in a given context. According to him, people understand knowledge in relation to the society they live in, with the capacity of human thought playing a key role in shaping meaning. Power of thinking of individuals of a given society makes them think differently and individually instead of trusting traditionally

accepted knowledge. (258).

According to Lyotard, postmodernity functions as a method that operates through deconstruction and the examination of power relations in discourse (*Political Writing* 28). Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction is also related to Lyotard's perspective of postmodernism. Derrida's deconstruction of written or oral text provides the audience with the opportunity to take multiple meanings of the text based on their difference from each other. This phenomenon also invites creativity of the audience where the audience can take different perspectives of the same incidence. He takes the sign as production of a chain of different meanings which fling in all directions. For Derrida, written signs are purely a matter of their function as he encourages overlooking the meaning of those signs (365).

Lyotard also believes that the events of past cannot be trusted, which are narrated by the people. He supports this argument with the example of suspicion in the origin of language. He believes that all those human beings who have narrated the sequence of events, they all are dead at the present. The past which is presented can be product of the imagination of the narrator as we do not have any eyewitness to verify the truth (*The Differend* 3).

Lyotard's theory of subversion of grand narrative strives to give central importance to the knowledge which has previously been kept in the margin. His endeavor is not only to dismantle metanarratives, but the main purpose is intended to emphasize mini narratives. "The aim is not only to refute the other but to persuade a third party" (*Postmodern Condition* 49). The research adopts Lyotard's idea of the subversion of grand narratives as its framework. This research aims, first, to challenge the grand narratives promoted by Euro-Americans, and second, to highlight the mini-narratives of Native Americans.

Incredulity towards the Grand Narratives in *The Heirs of Columbus*

Gerald Vizenor in his novel, *The Heirs of Columbus* has endeavored to subvert many legitimized grand narratives established and promoted by Euro American. He has challenged the metanarrative of white superiority in general and the grand narrative of Native American inferiority in specific. He has presented a counter narrative about the legitimized grand narratives about Euro Americans and Native Americans. He has dedicated his novel to dismantle the metanarrative based on monolithic notions that

tag Native Americans as inferior, uncivilized, barbaric, savage, unsophisticated, addicted to drugs and alcohol, primitive and uneducated. The representation of Naïve Americans by Vizenor brings them to the center with this counter narrative resulting in marginalizing Euro-Americans and their misrepresentative narratives of Native Americans within the academic domain

Vizenor has carefully selected the title of his novel, *The Heirs of Columbus* to subvert the metanarrative of the heirship of the great explorer. The legitimized grand narrative of the Euro American documented account of history says that Columbus was a Euro American. In his fictive account of history, he has created a mini narrative establishes that Columbus is Native American. He owns Columbus to maintain that Native Americans are his legitimized heirs. The novel's omniscient narrator informs readers that the great explorer is of mixed heritage, carrying the tribal mark of survivance in his blood. The narrator recounts the voyage of Columbus stating that he misjudged tribal people and their dwelling but soon after that he realized that he belongs to these people and their stories. The Admiral of the Ocean Sea was a little-known man of mixed ancestry who carried the mark of tribal endurance and rose within the death-driven culture of the Old World (3).

Vizenor ironically shows Columbus as rising from an obscure crossblood to the status of the great explorer who is directly linked with royalty. Vizenor portrays it as a negative reversal of his fortune as he gets access to the royalty (Euro American King and Queen). This tribal signature of survivance (being crossblood) is basically Columbus' asset and legacy being a Native American that he loses when he finds a way to the Euro Americans. When the story moves to the climax, the readers are told that tribal legacy is the only feature that might redeem the world after a lot of chaos created by Euro Americans. Columbus can achieve greatness in his career when he connects to Euro Americans but when he ascends in his job, it transcends him to the culture of death. The culture of death is basically the result of the invasion of Euro Americans onto the Native lands. Vizenor has narrated an unexpected fact in the event of the discovery of Columbus. Euro Americans claim to bring the civilization to the world as they are considered to be at the center, hence, bore the white man's burden of teaching whosoever is at the margin. Vizenor has subverted this grand narrative when he makes Euro Americans to be responsible for bringing culture of death to the Old

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World (Native American regions). Vizenor has clinically highlighted the process of dissemination and extermination of Native Americans by Euro Americans to emphasize on the effects and consequences of the enslavement, forced assimilation and ethnocide on the lives of the affected. Vizenor, under the cover of fiction, has voiced the history of invasion on the Native lands and its effects on the present.

Vizenor has established a mini narrative about the original background of Christopher Columbus to challenge the grand narrative of Columbus' descendancy. He claims in his fictive history that Columbus is Native Americans. He contends that Columbus's voyage did not lead to the discovery of America but brought him back to his native land. This account of history by Vizenor discards the grand narrative of Euro American's version of officially documented history of discovery of America where they claim that Columbus was sent to discover the island by them. This also establishes that Columbus did not colonize Native Americans, as the legitimized grand narrative claims. "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 introduces a mini narrative that the mother of Columbus and his maternal ancestors were Native Americans and hence tribal people. He matures this claim by adding details to the ancestry of Columbus. Vizenor deconstructs the background of Columbus with new knowledge about his parents' marriage and his birth. Susanna di Fontanarossa, the daughter of a weaver and the bearer of the signature, was both a dancer and a dreamer of untamed seasons. Municipal notarial records show that she married Domenico Colombo, a wool carder and weaver. Six years later, during the winter, she felt the ancestral stories in her blood and conceived a son. Cristoforo was born and baptized in October 1451 in Genoa (28).

Throughout his novel, Vizenor reiterates that Columbus is Native American, using this claim to fictionalize the Euro-American official history and position his fiction as a form of historical narrative. Through postmodern techniques, Vizenor's fiction subverts the dominant narrative traditionally held about Columbus's lineage. He brings attention to the mini narrative through his claim of authentic Native American identity. "He would bear the stories in his blood" (29). Vizenor asserts that Columbus was a child of a Native American hand talker and then he married to a Native American hand talker who gave birth to his son. They carried stories in their

blood, the stories of survivance. For Native Americans, stories in the blood are ancestral memories. The stories in blood for them possess the position of religion for them. They have a culture of narrating the stories of their origin and their history to every generation. These oral stories, the memories are as important as the history and religion for Native Americans and they consider it their responsibility to remember their stories based on their history and to keep passing them to their next generation.

Vizenor's style in his fiction also keeps the reader moving back and forth between history to fiction and then from fiction to history to interpret the meaning of his stories. He keeps his readers guessing between the real history which may be false and the fantasy which may be real to communicate the Native American marginalized perspective that has long been kept in the margin. Vizenor's establishment of the mini narrative of Columbus' Native American ancestry is further strengthened with the promotion of his Native American descendancy to delegitimize the mainstream narrative about Christopher Columbus that claims his belonging to Euro Americans. Lyotard's theory of postmodernism also supports such claims of Vizenor as the theorist proclaims that there is no final meaning in this universe due to the limited knowledge of human beings and history can also be written wrong, as the eye witnesses are not alive to confirm those historical events.

Vizenor foregrounds yet another mini-narrative, recounting Columbus's voyage from the perspective of Native Americans. He asserts that when Columbus returned to his Native land accompanied with Euro Americans, they destroyed their land and civilization. The grand narrative promotes Euro Americans as saviors of the world, but Vizenor takes their invasion on the Native lands as ruinous because they destroyed the nature by enslaving the Native Americans. Vizenor has removed the monolithic tags of being uncivilized and primitive from the Native Americans with the mini narrative that tribal people (Native Americans) brought civilization that eliminated catastrophe and chaos created by Euro Americans. "Guanahani, the tribal name of the island, ended that ruinous morning with the return of the civilization" (36). Vizenor curses the culture of enslavement and barbarism that Euro Americans brought to the Native Americans. Using the term 'ruinous morning' carries great significance, as it sharply critiques the purported civilization of Euro-Americans. Vizenor's fictive history (the mini narrative) dismantles the official documented

history (the legitimized grand narrative) as the dominant Euro Americans excluded the marginalized Native Americans from the history. Lyotard also asserts the writing of history often conceals the truth, since it is controlled by dominant groups who decide what is recognized as knowledge. This is precisely what is reflected in the official historical records of Columbus's voyages. Vine Deloria, Jr. is a Native American historian, anthropologist and historian. He raises the same issue of authenticity in the historical version by Euro Americans. He argues that dominant societies always marginalize the truth, sidelining it to uphold a fabricated reality that serves their interests. Then they give this fabricated reality the place of legitimized truth. He harshly criticizes the west and the historical account produced by Euro Americans. For him, historical records are maintained by the dominant people who decide which events of the history should be documented and which events should be prohibited. In discussing the official historical records of Columbus and the pre-Columbian era, he highlights the example of Samuel Eliot Morison. He states that Morison's singular devotion to Columbus meant that, during his lifetime, pre-Columbian expeditions to the Western Hemisphere were scarcely discussed in academic contexts. (30).

Vizenor tries to liberate Native Americans from the stereotypes of being inferior, primitive and uncivilized by recounting the story of the earth's creation. At this point, he critically examines the grand narrative of Euro-American Christianity. He claims that the earth's creation is attributed to Naanabozho, a trickster in Native American mythology (5).

The trickster narrative of creation of the earth is entirely different from the enlightened narrative that the whole world knows. Vizenor takes an excluded and the repressed trickster narrative which is considered as Other by Euro Americans. He has unrepressed the Native American version of history of the creation of the earth to deconstruct Euro Americans' account of history. Fiction has facilitated Vizenor to represent, recount and re-describe the Native American version of history, their logic about this specific phenomenon of the creation of the earth with inclination of their own subjectivity. This claim of creation of earth by a Native American trickster is of challenging nature as it results in challenging the stereotypical portrayal of Native Americans as uncivilized, barbaric, combatant and inferior. A nation, who claims to

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have created the earth, can never be considered as inferior and uncivilized. Since they are creators of the earth, they cannot create chaos in the world with their savagery that may result in raging the war. Vizenor promotes a new and a positive image of Native Americans that brands them with the superiority over the whole world in general and over the Euro Americans in specific.

Vizenor's fiction serves as a tool to subvert the legitimized grand narrative working on the principle of tagging Native Americans with monolithic notions to prove them as an inferior and uncivilized nation. He claims in his fiction that civilization started with Native Americans. This time, he uses Truman Columbus as his messenger to communicate this message to the world. Truman Columbus is represented as the grandmother of Stone Columbus in his fiction. "Civilization started right here in our stories at the river named the gichiziibi" (13). Truman Columbus shouts out that gichiziibi river which is owned by Native Americans is the center of civilization of the world as the civilization started from this river. Vizenor challenges the mainstream narrative which tags the Native Americans being uncivilized, unsophisticated and primitive nation. Native Americans are epicenter of the civilization, therefore, cannot be uncivilized and unsophisticated with the reason that the civilization starts from them. Eurocentric notion of bearing the burden to civilize the world gets a counter narrative as the burden has been shifted on the shoulders of Native Americans because. The grand narrative of white man's burden seems to be subverted as the brown man's burden replaces the white man's burden. Now Native Americans have been given the responsibility to civilize and nurture rest of the world, more specifically the Euro Americans who have always established their hegemony over Native Americans. Vizenor is celebrating Native American superiority over Euro Americans under the cover of his fiction to introduce his mini narratives.

Vizenor has raised a loud voice against the stereotypes which have been associated with Native Americans. He has subverted the grand narrative that labels them to be primitive, stupid and uncivilized. Vizenor's Native Americans are civilized intelligent, educated and they are advanced in science and technology. He speaks out against the creation of reservations by Euro-Americans, designed to compel Native Americans to move there. Vizenor's nation is self-reliant and advanced in technology to establish their sovereign state named Point Assinika. On October 12, 1992, the

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descendants of Christopher Columbus proclaimed Point Assinika an independent nation. During a special radio interview, the adventurer recalled arriving at daybreak, encountering pale unclothed people, and rowing ashore. Miigis raised the royal standard while the heirs presented a flag bearing the emblem of an enormous blue bear paw (119).

This discussion from Vizenor's work foregrounds two mini-narratives aimed at deconstructing the Euro-American grand narratives. Rejection of the first grand narrative is the stereotypical images of the Native Americans that loses the authenticity with the knowledge that the Native Americans have raised their voices against Euro Americans and their enslavement and now they have a sovereign state. Second grand narrative that Vizenor has dismantled is the replacement of Miigis with Columbus. Miigis' replacement with Columbus carries the fact that Native Americans have broken the chains of slavery and they have established a sovereign state for them. It challenges the authenticity of Columbus's discovery as officially recorded, "he unfurled the royal banner with the great green cross" (36) with the narrative he offers in his fiction describes Miigis unfurling the royal banner and the heirs' bringing flags that bore a large blue bear paw instead of the great green cross.

Vizenor's replacement of the Euro Americans' Statue of Liberty with the Native Americans' Trickster of Liberty is also his willful intention to establish the Native American supremacy over Euro Americans. The heights of both statues are also deliberate to promote that Native Americans have left behind Euro Americans in science and technology.

The Trickster of Liberty faced west on the point and would be higher than the Statue of Liberty. The Trickster of Liberty... more than hundred and eighty feet, head to toe, taller than the Statue of Liberty (122-123).

Vizenor praises the Native American's effort in the development of their sovereign state, Point Assinika which houses an international bank, a radio station, a bingo hall, and a manicure salon offering support to women and children. He admires Native Americans as they adopt natural ways criticizing Euro Americans for their public schools that get huge amount of money in the name of taxes. Vizenor establishes a narrative that for Native Americans, the civilization which was brought to them by Euro Americans is nothing but a prison cell. "Point Assinika is a natural

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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 promotes the Native American’s supremacy over Euro Americans with a claim that Native Americans are close to nature and they are civilized as there is no concept of crime with them. Point Assinika has no prison cells because they are a peaceful nation who believes in harmony and coordination unlike Euro Americans. The heirs declared the point an independent state. It offered genetic treatments, natural remedies, bingo, and entertainment at no cost—both to residents and to visitors who sought healing there (124).

Vizenor’s Native Americans are advanced in technology than Euro Americans. The Parthenon Manicure Salon is located at Point Assinika. The community benefits from genetic therapies that repair or regenerate impaired body parts. “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). According to Vizenor, treatment is offered at no cost, together with food, lodging, and entertainment. One cannot expect this from the dominant and alleged civilized Euro Americans. Vizenor’s fiction repositions the margin as the center, emphasizing the value and prominence of Native Americans who have been historically suppressed.

Vizenor’s Native Americans have excelled in science and technology and now they are working at Point Assinika in Parthenon Manicure Salon to help their women give birth to their perfect children if they are not willing to marry. Vizenor states that the Parthenon Manicure Salon was transformed into a New World pavilion, serving as a place for women’s healing, celebrating the wondrous birth of children conceived without men or sperm, and promoting genetic studies on the phenomenon of parthenogenesis (148-149).

Vizenor has made a serious effort to reshape the Native American true identity to remove the tags of primate, uncivilized, uncultured from them. On one hand, he works on promotion of the marginalized mini narratives and on the other hand, he voices Euro American truth of having prejudice against Native Americans. He has pointed out this fact in his fiction that Euro Americans could not see them making advancement in science and technology. Consequently, there were many allegations on Native Americans like they were using children for pornography and experiments

in the laboratories for biological experiments. “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” (156). Ultimately, Vizenor proves innocence of Native Americans in the investigation report against these allegations. In his fiction, Euro-Americans acknowledge that Native Americans surpass them in technological expertise. Hence, it is one more subversion of the grand narrative as Euro Americans have always labeled them being primitive and uncivilized. Vizenor affirms the acknowledgment given to Native Americans by the same investigator for founding a sovereign state. In closing her report, she praised the heirs, and it was unusual for her reporting career, since in her decade as an investigator she had never ended with personal remarks (157).

Through Lappet, Vizenor highlights Native Americans’ technological achievements; during a press conference, she tells a New York Times reporter that more scientific advancements are expected from the people of the reservation (158). Vizenor’s works place Native Americans at the center, bringing to light suppressed facts about them through textual evidence, thereby promoting marginalized mini narratives that have historically been overlooked.

Conclusion and Findings

The present research was carried out undermining overarching narratives and giving prominence to minor narratives by Gerald Vizenor in is *The Heirs of Columbus*. The first research objective of the present study was to explore how Vizenor had sought to deconstruct dominant narratives and incorporate mini narratives in his fiction, bringing marginalized and suppressed knowledge to the forefront. The study intended to discard the legitimized grand narratives which had been linked to both Euro-Americans and Native Americans about their culture, history, identity, origin, nationhood and identity with the promotion of mini narratives voiced by Vizenor in the selected novel.

The second research objective of the study was to promote suppressed mini narratives of the marginalized Native Americans to establish that the grand narratives of monolithic notions about Native Americans were based on white supremacy and their prejudice against them. The study was designed to liberate Native Americans from the toxic and monolithic tags of stereotypical Native Americans. The main

intention of the present research was to study these mini narratives from purely Native American perspective to bring the marginalized Native Americans to the center by pushing Euro Americans and their legitimized overarching narratives to the periphery in scholarly discourse. Vizenor's effort to recount the history of Native Americans is not to bring into the limelight the victimization of Native Americans but his purpose is to create a narrative of survivance of Native Americans. The study has following findings.

1. Vizenor's fiction reveals that the mainstream grand narrative of the burdensome history of the conquest and discovery of America by Christopher Columbus is a myth because Native Americans claim to be the Natives of Americas who have been dwelling there since centuries, that was why they could not be discovered as they were the owners of their lands. The metanarrative of discovery by Columbus becomes the invasion of Columbus in the selected novel to highlight dark civilization of Euro Americans.

2. Vizenor has subverted the grand narrative that carries monolithic stereotypes for Native Americans when he claims in his fiction that civilization of the world started at gichiziibi river which is owned by Native Americans. Since centuries, Native Americans have been tagged as uncivilized, barbaric, savage, warriors and primitive by Euro Americans. Vizenor has subverted the mainstream narrative with a mini narrative that makes Native Americans and their territories the center of the civilization. Vizenor has replaced the white Man's burden to the brown man's burden and hence, the burden is put on the shoulders of Native Americans for a reason that they are at the center of the civilization and therefore, it is their duty to civilize Euro Americans.

Prospects for Future Research

The present study could not explore in detail many aspects of the Native American perspective due to time and length constraints. For that reason, I strongly recommend inclusive study on the following topics that Vizenor has discussed exhaustively in his novel.

1. I propose an in-depth study comparing Christopher Columbus' personal life as depicted in Native American fictional histories with accounts recorded in Euro-American official history.

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2. Lastly, I recommend a thorough study on the critique of Native American stereotyping in *The Heirs of Columbus*

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Notes

Postmodernism: Subversion of the belief of ultimate reality. It asserts that there is no definite truth and this belief of uncertainty invites subjectivity.

Euro Americans: All those Europeans who came to North American continent and settled there. Euro American and white have been used interchangeably in the study.

Mini Narratives: Stories that explain small practices, local events rather than large scale universal or global concepts.

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.

Bear Signature of Survivance: Measure of civilization and the power of resurrections. It is not the inheritance of genetic code.

Stories in Blood: Ancestral memories of American Indians.