Textual Note

The researcher has followed the documentation method as prescribed by the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Seventh Edition) and has used the following abbreviations.

1. *One Flea Spare*      *Flea*
2. *In the Heart of America*     *America*
3. *The War Boys*      *War*
4. *Slaughter City*      *Slaughter*
5. *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek*      *Trestle*
6. *Things of Dry Hours*      *Things*
7. *And I and Silence*      *Silence*
8. *The Fever Chart*      *Fever*
Abstract

Naomi Wallace (b.1960), an American dramatist, is a merciless commentator of contemporary American politics. This research work examines her approach to the issues of class, race and gender in her select plays, in relation to the politics of space and identity. The plays selected for this study are *The War Boys, In the Heart of America, One Flea Spare, Slaughter City, The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek, Things of Dry Hours, Fever Chart, “One Short Sleepe”* and *And I and Silence*. The selected plays have been read in conjunction with the theories of post-Marxian thinkers Lefebvre, Foucault, Guattari and Deleuze and the epic dramaturgical strategies advocated by Bertolt Brecht.

The research focuses on the examination of the class structure and racial prejudices under the capitalist system as foregrounded in Wallace’s plays *One Flea Spare, Slaughter City, The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek, Things of Dry Hours* and *I and Silence*. Wallace has highlighted the dystopian conditions of the working class, with glimmering hopes of utopia as pointed out by critics. But this thesis argues that the spaces occupied by the characters are heterotopias in Foucault’s terminology, and “lived space” according to Lefebvre, where existing hegemonic discourses are represented, contested and subverted. The quarantined house of the Snelgraves in the plague-ridden city of London in *One Flea Spare*, the meat packing plant in *Slaughter City*, the railroad trestle in *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek*, the log cabin in *Things of Dry Hours* and the prison cell in *And I and Silence* and *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek* are examined by the researcher as heterotopias.

The argument is carried further into global politics and the imperialistic intentions of the U.S, interventions in global affairs, with reference to the plays *In the Heart of America, The War Boys*, and the four plays included in the *Fever Chart*. The
thesis discusses the collusion of the past and present, the confusion of the wars, the breaking of boundaries, inversion of class position, envisaging a space between reality and unreality and breaking of dichotomies in the light of the Deleuzian theory of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. The aspect of deterritorializing and reterritorialization based on the principle of rhizome is exemplified through the collision of the past and the present and the confusion of the wars in *In the Heart of America*. *The War Boys* is set on the border between Mexico and the United States, where boundaries of identity are broken. The characters play games of violence in which they switch roles, thus blurring the class and racial boundaries. In Deleuzian terms, these characters subvert the traditional molar lines of binaries, destabilizing the distinction between fixed identities, and take lines of flight along molecular lines. In *The Fever Chart* the Deleuzian model of the orchid and the wasp is applicable as Wallace envisions “another” space, where all distinctions imposed by an imperial hegemony dissolve.

The researcher has also applied the Deluzian theory to the plays of Naomi Wallace in the transgression of gender boundaries. She has used the epic dramaturgical strategies advocated by Bertolt Brecht to highlight these issues. This research work has identified the different dramaturgical strategies like the montage of scenes and speech styles, use of songs as points of contrast or irony, employment of metaphors and self-conscious presentation of role-play which contribute to the creation of the Brechtian alienation effect. In short, Naomi Wallace has problematized the notions of class, race, and gender in her plays which are primarily about resistance and transgression in a capitalist society.