The Baptism Study Guide

The Baptism by Amiri Baraka

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Introduction

In 1964, the Writers' Stage Theatre in New York City staged the first production of Amiri Baraka's satirical one-act play about religion, *The Baptism*. The play was presented and published under Baraka's given name, LeRoi Jones. According to Tish Dace and Andrew O. Jones in the *Reference Guide to American Literature,* the play "jarred and amused its spectators" but also "drew charges of both obscenity and blasphemy." That year, Baraka began garnering attention as a major playwright, with a number of his other plays also opening, including the Obie Award-winning *Dutchman*. *The Baptism* was also published in 1967, together with an earlier Baraka play, under the title *The Baptism and The Toilet*.

The Baptism is a challenging play on a number of levels. For example, some of the language and subject matter is of an adult nature and offensive to some. In addition, the characters are less individuals than they are representations of particular groups or ideas. The play begins with a minister's attempts to encourage a homosexual to change his ways. A boy comes to the church to be baptized, but his sins become a heated topic of discussion, launching angry accusations and a violent end. Throughout the play, the boy's identity remains a question and a source of strife for the other characters□is he simply a clever teenager, skilled at deception, or is he actually some sort of deity, maybe even Christ?

Author Biography

Amiri Baraka was born Everett LeRoy Jones on October 7, 1934, in Newark, New Jersey. (He changed LeRoy to LeRoi in the early 1950s.) His family was solidly middle class; his father, Coyette Leroy Jones, was a postal worker and an elevator operator, and his mother, Anna Lois Russ Jones, was a social worker. He was one of the few black students at his high school.

Jones started college at Rutgers University on a science scholarship but later transferred to the predominantly black Howard University in Washington, D.C., where he studied philosophy, religion, German, and English literature. While Jones gained a broad understanding of literature and art from his studies at Howard under the tutelage of such prominent African-American intellectuals as Sterling Brown and E. Franklin Frazier, he would later accuse the university of encouraging limited and bourgeois thinking among African Americans. During college and in later years, he was a voracious reader of such poets as William Carlos Williams, Walt Whitman, and T. S. Eliot. In 1954, Jones enlisted in the United States Air Force and served, primarily in Puerto Rico and Germany, as a weatherman and B-36 gunner.

Jones's return to civilian life in 1957 occurred at a time when many artists were experimenting with new ideas and forms as well as challenging traditional political thinking and social institutions. He moved to the bohemian neighborhood of Greenwich Village in New York City, where he started the literary journal *Yugen* and the Totem Press with his Jewish wife, Hettie Cohen Jones. Through this work, Baraka encountered such radically experimental writers as Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Jack Kerouac, and William S. Burroughs□often referred to as the Beat poets. Baraka began hosting informal gatherings in his home where these and others would come to drink, argue, and listen to jazz played by such musicians as Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry. During this period, Jones wrote extensively and contributed to numerous journals and magazines on a wide variety of topics. One of the first works for he which received widespread attention was his 1961 poetry collection entitled *Preface to a Twenty-Volume Suicide Note.* The book established Jones as a new voice in American poetry, expressing his discontent with the political and racial climate in the United States through jazz influenced verses.

The Writers' Stage Theatre in New York City first produced Jones's play *The Baptism* in 1964, the same year in which his much-praised play *Dutchman* was staged. During the mid-1960s, Jones broke philosophically with his fellow Greenwich Village artists as he emerged as a leader in the black arts movement. In 1965, he moved to Harlem, and soon thereafter he returned to Newark, leaving his wife. In 1966, Jones married Sylvia Robinson, an African-American woman. In 1968, he took the African name Imamu ("spiritual leader") Ameer ("blessed") Baraka ("prince"), prompted by his conversion to the Kawaida sect of Islam, his growing sense of black nationalism, and his appreciation of the messages of Black Muslim leader Malcolm X. He later modified "Ameer" to "Amiri." Sylvia Robinson took the name Amina Baraka. Throughout his life, Baraka has been involved in numerous political causes and movements, and many of his critics have pointed to his shifting allegiances. He has been a Marxist, positioned himself as a mediator between black and white intellectuals, and professed a militant anti-white stance. He has also worked in nearly every form of writing: poetry, fiction, drama, essay, autobiography, screenwriting, and literary and social criticism. Baraka's life has also been marked by a number of confrontations with legal authorities. His first imbroglio was over a copy of his 1961 play, *The Eighth Ditch*, mailed to a prisoner but intercepted by prison authorities; as a result, federal authorities raided Baraka's apartment and charged him with sending obscenity through the mail.

Baraka has taught at various institutions, including the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Columbia University, and the New School for Social Research. He has received numerous awards for his work, including an Obie Award in 1964 for *Dutchman*.

Plot Summary

The Baptism is a one-act play that takes place inside a Baptist church in New York City during the early 1960s. The play opens with the Minister and the Homosexual speaking to each other and running in place. The Minister wants to save the Homosexual's soul, but the Homosexual is making cynical comments about the Minister and religion in general.

The Boy enters the church carrying a bag. The Minister sees him as an innocent child interested in being baptized, and the Homosexual sees him as "rough trade," a slang term for a male prostitute who engages in violent sex acts. The Boy admits that he has committed some sins. The Homosexual attempts to distract the Boy by dropping his trousers, revealing that he is wearing red leotards. This angers the Minister, who rushes at the Homosexual. The Homosexual defends himself by saying that he is "the Son of Man" and has "done nothing not accounted for in the book of days." These are both biblical references, and the latter may also indicate that the Homosexual believes that any act he has committed is not new or different and should therefore be acceptable. The Homosexual indicates that the Boy should not trust the Minister.

The Old Woman rushes into the church as the Homosexual and the Minister are exchanging insults, and she claims that the Boy is an "agent of the devil." A lively discussion ensues among the Minister, the Old Woman, the Boy, and the Homosexual. The Old Woman insists that the Boy is an evil sinner and then nearly passes out in religious ecstasy; the Minister wants to forgive him; the Boy insists that he has done nothing wrong; and the Homosexual, while suggesting that the Boy could serve as his secretary, sings, dances, and throws confetti. Eventually, the Boy admits that the Old Woman must have seen him masturbating while he was praying, and he defends himself saying, "thinking of God always gives me a hard-on."

The Homosexual tries to get the Boy to dance with him, but the Boy refuses. This refusal wins the Boy praise from the Minister, who says to the Homosexual, "This is a gifted lad. You cannot sway him with your cant about religion or the evil pleasures of the flesh." The Old Woman starts singing an old gospel song, and the Homosexual derides her. The Minister declares the Homosexual's words blasphemous, and they exchange insults. The Boy asks if he is now saved, but the Homosexual mocks the idea that he could be saved from anything, let alone Satan. The Homosexual sings a song about wanting to experience everything possible and again asks the Boy to dance with him. The Minister intervenes, arguing that the Boy "can yet be saved." The Homosexual laughs at the idea, responding sarcastically that the Boy "can yet be made sterile. Can yet be taught that blank walls yodel the crazy name of salvation."

A chorus of about six young Women of various sizes and ethnicities enters the church singing. They wear numbers pinned to their gauzy dresses. The Old Woman is enlivened, shakes her hips, and asks the Boy to dance with her. The Boy is shocked, as is the Minister, but the Homosexual jumps in and again asks the Boy to dance with him. The Boy refuses, saying that he has already sinned and should not sin again by dancing in a church. The Homosexual laughs at his seriousness and makes fun of how upset he is for having masturbated. He asks the Boy how often he masturbates; the Boy admits that he does so each time he prays, which is three times a day. The Homosexual considers this figure and praises the Boy for his regularity.

The Minister is outraged by the Boy's admission, but the Homosexual calls him an "old hypocrite" and accuses him of having masturbated at least as often. The Minister states that God will strike the Homosexual dead, but this only encourages the Homosexual, who begins to sing a song about how exciting it would be to get "drilled with holy lightning." The Boy is confused at this point and asks, "What shall I do?" The Homosexual responds, "Become a Christian so you can understand the symbolism." The Boy asks to be baptized. The Homosexual thinks that baptism "might not be such a bad idea" for himself, as he could .- finally see God.

The Boy demands that he be baptized immediately. Suddenly, one of the Women shouts at the Boy, "He's the one," and they all begin to call him "The Christ child come back. . . . the Son of God. . . . Chief Religious jelly roll of the universe." They moan ecstatically and begin praying. The Minister and the Old Woman sink to their knees and praise the Boy, but the Homosexual is not convinced. He demands that the Boy prove he is Christ by turning the church into the White House, "or something cool like that."

The Boy next admits that he has lied in the past to the Women about his relation to God so that they would have sex with him, but he never meant for them to think he was Christ. The Homosexual is very impressed with the Boy's deceit, but no one else hears the admission of the trickery. Finally, the Minister realizes that the Boy has "lied merely to further [his] lust." This angers the Minister, the Old Woman, and the Women, who now call for his punishment. Intent on killing him, the group moves toward the Boy. The Homosexual tries to block them and is kicked down to the ground unconscious. "You must be sacrificed to cleanse the soul of man," the Minister cries out to the Boy. The Boy begs for mercy but none is offered. He pulls a sword out of the bag he has with him and kills the Women, the Minister, and the Old Woman.

Suddenly, the Messenger enters the church on a motorcycle. He is dressed in a leather jacket with the words "The Man" and a crown stenciled on the back. He asks what has happened, and the Boy answers, "I have slain these sinners. . . . I am the Son of Man. The Christ." The Messenger says that he has come to retrieve the Boy, sent by "the man. Your father." He dances a mambo step through most of the rest of the play. The Boy argues with the Messenger, noting that he was sent to save people on "this earth." The Messenger tells the Boy that his father is angry that he has failed in his assignment and that "the man is destroying the whole works tonight. With a grenade." The Messenger and the Boy argue over whether the Boy should be forced to leave, with the Messenger calling the Boy by the name Percy.

The Messenger .finally gets tired of arguing with the Boy, hits him over the head with a tire iron, and throws him over the back of his motorcycle. After they leave, the Homosexual rises from the pile of bodies on the stage and speculates on what has happened. "Damn, it looks like some really uninteresting kind of orgy went on in here," he says, and again suggests that the Minister should not have catered to "rough trade." As he leaves the church, thinking about getting a drink before the bars close for the evening, he wonders, "[W]hat happened to that cute little religious fanatic?"

Summary

The Baptism is LeRoi Jones' short, one-act play that satirically portrays conventional religious beliefs and all the accompanying manipulations and interpretations of individuals and established spiritual organizations.

The setting of the play is the interior of a well-to-do Baptist church in New York City in the 1960s. The play opens with a dialogue between the church's pompous minister and an openly homosexual man, who shows disdain for the minister's attempts to save his soul. The minister has obviously profited from the vulnerabilities of his congregation, and the homosexual chastises him for his own indecent behavior on that level.

Suddenly, a beautiful boy of fifteen enters the room carrying a bag on his back. The minister greets the boy, who has come to be baptized, and the homosexual labels the boy "rough trade," meaning that the boy is a homosexual who works the streets. The boy ignores the comments and tells the minister that he has sinned and wants to be baptized.

The homosexual doubts the boy's veracity and tries to get the boy's attention by dropping his pants to reveal red leotards underneath. The minister sees that the boy's attention is wandering away from the intention of baptism and attacks the homosexual for his sins once more.

An old woman rushes into the church accusing the boy of being a sinner. Apparently, the woman has witnessed the boy masturbating while kneeling in prayer. The boy maintains that he has not sinned, and the homosexual is delighted in this twist of events, pirouetting and tossing confetti on the scene.

Eventually, the boy admits to the masturbation, claiming that "thinking of God always gives me a hard-on." Now both the homosexual and the minister are interested in the boy, and the old woman writhes on the floor, almost unconscious in a sexual and religious frenzy.

Disgusted by the old woman passed out on the floor, the homosexual attempts to get the boy to dance with him, but the boy declines because they are in the house of the Lord. The old woman begins to sing a Negro spiritual, which further disgusts the homosexual who engages in more verbal name-calling with the minister.

The group is interrupted by the arrival in the church of six young women wearing ethereal gowns and singing softly while one keeps beat on a drum. The old woman rises and begins to dance seductively, trying to engage the boy to join her. Not to be outdone, the homosexual also begins to gyrate and beckon the boy to join him. The boy will not participate because he has already sinned and dancing in the Lord's house is one more sin he does not need.

The homosexual chides the boy for thinking that the masturbation can be considered a sin and asks the boy how often he engages in the practice. The boy replies that he has "sinned" every time he has prayed after every meal for a year, and the homosexual commends the boy on his record.

The minister is weary of this line of discussion, and the conversation returns to the baptism of the boy. One of the young women announces that the boy is actually Jesus Christ, and the rest of the young women begin to moan and writhe suggestively. The minister and the old woman are taken in by the conjecture, but the homosexual is skeptical, demanding that the boy perform a miracle of some sort on the spot.

The boy is overwhelmed by the attentions and admits to lying to the women in order to have sex, but he never claimed to be Christ. The women just made that assumption. The minister, the old woman and the young women are all angry at the boy's deception and determine that the boy must be killed for his sins. The group moves threateningly toward the boy, knocking the homosexual unconscious in the process.

In a surprise move, the boy retrieves a silver sword from his bag and strikes dead the minister, the old woman and the young women. As the boy surveys the scene, he is interrupted by the arrival of a man called the Messenger, who has ridden into the church on a motorcycle.

The Messenger, dressed in a leather jacket with a crown and the words "The Man" on the back, asks the boy to explain what has happened in the church. The boy confidently replies that he has killed the sinners because he is the Son of Man, The Christ. The Messenger informs the boy that he has come from "The Man, Your Father," with orders to remove the boy from earth.

The boy is outraged that he has not been given adequate time to complete his work on earth and refuses to leave. According to the Messenger, The Father is not pleased with the boy's slow progress in saving the people of earth and intends to destroy the planet in a few hours with a grenade just as the bars are closing.

The boy continues to resist until the Messenger hits the boy on the head with a tire iron and throws him onto the motorcycle, which he wheels offstage. As the play ends, the homosexual rises from the floor, surveys the carnage, which he attributes to the "rough trade" element of the boy, and leaves to get a drink before the bars close.

Analysis

This play by LeRoi Jones, also known as Amiri Baraka, is a satire on several groups of people, including organized religion and homosexuals. A satire means ridiculing something or someone by making fun of their characteristics or beliefs. The minister is ridiculed for being pompous and shallow while his profession should dictate humility and compassion. The homosexual is ridiculed for overtly sexual behavior and outrageous homosexual mannerisms instead of relating to the other characters and their needs.

The setting of the play is the interior of a Baptist church, and all the activity occurs there with no set changes. The time period in which the play was written, the 1960s, was a time for wide-sweeping social changes in America, including growing acceptance of homosexual inclinations in people who had not been able to freely discuss their lifestyles up to this point. The Civil Rights movement was growing rapidly in America, and the author's use of all black characters in the play provides the equality of negative as well as positive characteristics and makes this play about black cultures as much as about religion or homosexuality.

Because the play has minimal set and wardrobe demands, the dialogue is important. The conversations are in a black dialect of the time and at times are vulgar and obscene, a technique meant to draw the reader's attention to the irreverence of organized religion and other institutions. For example, when the homosexual is deriding Christian religion, he says, "I pee on her Jesus if he but dare to tell me who and when I can get laid." The young women describes the boy as, "the beautiful screw of the universe," when it is revealed that he lied to them in order to have sex.

The play is filled with explicit references to male genitalia, the act of masturbation and gyrations and writhing by an old woman, and the author's intent is unclear, other than the shock value created in a period of time when shock was a novelty and an artistic indulgence. In a time when there was a growing demand for discussion of taboo issues such as sexuality, the play unabashedly brings these taboo topics to the stage.

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Characters

Boy

The Boy is described in the play's list of characters as handsome and about fifteen years old, with a "martyr-like shyness." He appears at the church as an innocent, asking the Minister to baptize him, but then admits to having sinned. The Homosexual is sexually interested in the Boy, and he and the Minister struggle for the Boy's attentions. The Boy begins the play with a timid manner, but by the play's end he is convinced that he is "the Son of Man" and "the Christ."

The Homosexual

The Homosexual is in his forties and (according to the list of characters) "elegant" but gaining a bit of a belly and "conscious of it." He seems to delight in taunting the Minister with lewd suggestions and dismisses everyone in the play except the Boy, whom he finds sexually attractive. Under his trousers the Homosexual wears red leotards, which he reveals when the Boy admits to sinning. The Homosexual is an outsider and a cynic who comments under his breath about what is going on around him.

Messenger

The Messenger rides a motorcycle into the church to pick up the Boy and take him away. He serves as a sort of *deus ex machina* - an improbable character suddenly introduced into the plot of a play, who extricates another character from a difficult situation. According to the list of characters, the Messenger is a gaunt Spaniard or looks like the actor Lee Marvin. He wears leather pants and a jacket with a gold crown and the words "The Man" printed on the back. The Messenger is no-nonsense and does not care to listen to the Boy's reasons as to why he should not come with him. He inexplicably calls the Boy by the name Percy a few times.

Minister

According to the play's list of characters, the Minister is "pompous, appears well-meaning" but is "generally ridiculous." He is an image of conventional and middle-class America - white-haired and clothed in black robes. His church is "arrogant Protestant, obviously Baptist" and somewhat financially well-off. His sermons are probably broadcast over the radio, as his pulpit carries the sign "WHBI Radio." The Minister dislikes the Homosexual and is very interested in saving the Boy's soul.

Old Woman

The Old Woman is "strong from years of the American Matriarchy" and screams most of her lines. She makes her entrance early in the play, rushing in to accuse the Boy of sinning. The Minister refers to her as "devout" and listens to her claims about the Boy, but only to a point. When the chorus of Women enters the church, she takes up their songs and performs a seductive dance during which she removes numerous skirts from her waist, layer by layer.

Women

The Women are "young, sleek 'Village!' types," according to the list of characters, referring to Greenwich Village in New York City, where many intellectuals and artists lived during the 1950s and 1960s. They number approximately six and are young and of "diverse sizes and colors." The Women serve primarily as a chorus, entering the church singing gospel songs and wearing numbers pinned to their gauzy dresses. The Homosexual derides them, but the Old Woman finds them comforting and sings along with them. The Women are the first to refer to the Boy as "the Son of God."

Themes

Religion

The play is a satire of organized religion; that is, Baraka is making fun of organized religion and all those who are associated with it. The story centers on a boy who enters a church, sorry for his sins and asking to be forgiven, but Baraka embellishes the tale with characters behaving in ridiculous ways. Various aspects of organized religion are lampooned in a way that launches questions about the validity of religious belief.

The typical hierarchy of religion is challenged in the play, for example. The Minister, who represents church leadership, has his position reduced when the chorus of Women announces that the Boy is Christ or Jesus. The Minister drops to his knees, kissing the Boy's feet and praising him. As soon as the Boy admits that he lied about being Christ, the Minister turns on him and says, "May the true God strike you dead." Confusion reigns instead of orthodoxy, and this opens up the question of what is valid and true in organized religion. Even when the Minister and the others know that the Boy is not the true Christ, the Minister demands that he die "to cleanse the soul of man." He states that the Boy must die "so that He should not have died for nothing." The play then seems to turn the story of Christ's crucifixion on its head; the Boy, as a pseudo-Christ figure, slays his accusers and is whisked away on the back of a motorcycle to "the man."

Sexuality

Most plays that are set inside a church do not feature the themes of sex and sexuality, but Baraka's does—possibly to shock but maybe also to join together two topics, religion and sex, about which Americans have varying levels of discomfort. The tone Baraka takes also indicates that he sees hypocrisy when religious authorities comment on or proscribe certain types of sexual behavior.

The prominence of sex as a theme in the play is stressed immediately; the play opens with the Homosexual and the Minister arguing over sexual preferences and promiscuity. The Homosexual dismisses the Minister's concerns, but the Minister responds, "When you are strapped in sin, I pray for you, dear queen. I stare with X-ray eyes into your dark room and suffer with you." Sexual preference is a major point of contention between the two characters throughout the play, as is sexual behavior. Whenever the Minister accuses the Homosexual of behaving improperly, the Homosexual assures him that his actions are really not that shocking and can be attributed to his humanness. At one point the Homosexual refers to himself as "the Son of Man," underscoring his association with human desire as well as with the divine, since this title was used by Christ.

Interestingly, the Homosexual questions the sexual preference and activities of the Minister on a number of occasions, indicating that he believes the Minister is a hypocrite. When the Boy appears in the church, he asks to be forgiven of his sins and "sprawls" on the floor; the Minister responds by saying the word "love" as if it is a question. The Homosexual whispers off to the side "You, sir, are an opportunist," as if he thinks the Minister may see the Boy as something more than a prospective Christian.

The character of the Boy is surrounded by sexual references. The sin for which he seeks forgiveness when he first enters the church is masturbation. Later, he admits to lying to the chorus of Women about his identity so that he could sleep with them. They had been praising the Boy for being "the Son of God. Our holy husband," moaning that he had "popped us in those various hallways of love and blessed us with the beauty of Jehovah." However, when they hear him say that he is not Christ, they are angry at being deceived. "We wanted to be virgins of the Lord. He lied," they chant together.

The struggle to control human sexual desires and "the flesh" is preeminent in the play and provides the major source of hypocrisy for Baraka's characters. Only the Homosexual is uninhibited and straightforward about what he wants. He asks to experience everything and does not want to be "saved" from anything. "I want it all," he says. "I want to know it. See it. . . . Feel it, if it comes to that." The Minister and the others are not so sure. When they think that the Boy is Christ and has slept with the chorus of Women to "save" them, they find him acceptable. When he admits, however, to having lied to satisfy his human desires, they become enraged and attempt murder.

Style

Structure

The play is accomplished in one act and takes place in one scene at a Baptist church. Numerous characters enter and leave, but the action takes place in only one location.

Baraka uses a chorus, a classical technique favored by the ancient Greeks in which a group of people sing or chant important parts of a play. Often, the chorus was used to mark the parts of the play, commenting on what the audience had just seen or was about to see. In Baraka's play, the six or so Women are a chorus, singing bits of old gospel songs and praising the Boy when they think he is Christ. The Minister claims responsibility for the chorus of Women, calling them "my usherettes." The use of the chorus recalls traditional forms of drama, but it also lends an almost comic air to the play.

Character Types

Baraka has created characters that are not unique individuals but are more like representations of particular groups or belief systems. The characters are given titles, not personal names that might disguise the messages Baraka wants to deliver through their actions and words. For example, the characterization of the Homosexual is rather stereotypical□as are most of the other characterizations □with Baraka describing him as "very queenly" and overly concerned with his and other characters' appearances. The Minister is patriarchal, with silver hair and a rigid sense of respectability. The Old Woman, according to Baraka, is "strong from years of the American Matriarchy." She is accustomed to giving orders and dictating moral responsibility.

Satire and Humor

Baraka makes fun of everyone and everything in his play by satirizing religion and all those associated with it. From the opening moments of the play, Baraka sends the message that much of what his characters are saying is ridiculous; they dance, sing silly songs, jump on one leg, take a mambo step, and even drop their pants. Baraka's use of humor reflects his desire that organized religion be exposed for what he considers are its absurdities and hypocrisies.

The Homosexual's dropping his pants to expose red leotards brings the action close to slapstick. This is not the only place where Baraka uses this kind of humor. After listening to the Boy proclaim his holy mission and demand to be left on earth, the Messenger has had enough and hits him over the head with a tire iron.

Occasionally, the language in the play shifts to a kind of street talk in which the characters use obscene words or informal phrasing. Baraka's use of these techniques supports the general satiric tone of the play, encouraging a light atmosphere around subjects usually addressed in seriousness. For example, after listening to the Minister use formal language to condemn the Boy for his deceitfulness, the Homosexual says, "Oh, don't ham everything up," relieving the tension of the moment. When the Messenger explains to the Boy that they must leave immediately, the tone and pacing of his language sounds like jazz music: "Sorry baby. Can't make it. . . . Jump on the back of the cycle and we'll split." The Messenger is making light of the Boy's extreme demands that he "perish" and "suffer" with those on earth that he was sent to "save."

Historical Context

Bohemians and the Beat Movement in New York City

Baraka's writing and thinking was influenced during the late 1950s and early 1960s by a group of artists and intellectuals often referred to as the Beats or Bohemians. While many of the movement's participants considered San Francisco their home base, a large number of these artists also spent time in New York City's Greenwich Village while Baraka lived there. Gregory Corso, Charles Olson, Frank O'Hara, and Allen Ginsberg—who electrified the literary world in 1955 with his experimental poem "Howl" in San Francisco—lived in and visited Greenwich Village at various times.

The Beats rebelled against typical middle-class American values through their art and rejected the conventional in all that they came across. They experimented with the form and content of poetry and prose, relying on intuition and emotions to tell them when a piece was finished. They chafed against post-World War II conformity; William S. Burroughs and Ginsberg were open about their experimental drug use, and those who were homosexual were quite candid about it.

Struggle for Civil Rights in the 1950s and 1960s

During the 1950s and early 1960s, Amiri Baraka lived and wrote in a world in which blacks were largely considered second-class citizens and did not enjoy many of the same legal protections as whites. For example, until a number of court cases struck down segregation of the races in the United States, blacks were barred or restricted—sometimes by state law—from a variety of public venues, such as restaurants, neighborhoods, golf courses, schools, and movie theaters. In the second half of the 1950s, the Supreme Court handed down a series of decisions invalidating the segregation of golf courses, swimming pools, and beaches.

From the late 1950s through the 1960s, some African Americans and supportive whites engaged in civil rights demonstrations, often risking their lives in the effort. Many of the demonstrations were met with violence, such as the 1963 confrontation between police and activists in Birmingham, Alabama. The local police commissioner responded to the largely peaceful demonstration by releasing dogs and using cattle prods against the civil rights protesters.

One of the largest civil rights demonstrations of that era was the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Nearly a quarter-million Americans of varying backgrounds gathered in front of the Washington Monument to hear King deliver his now-famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

While the civil rights movement grew, and after a 1960 trip to Fidel Castro's Cuba, Baraka became increasingly more politically radical. During the early 1960s, Baraka became disillusioned with the apolitical attitude of the white experimental artists he worked with in Greenwich Village. He .finally broke with them in 1965, after the assassination of Malcolm X. He moved to Harlem and then Newark, declaring that he was interested primarily in black cultural efforts such as jazz and theater written for black audiences. In Newark, he launched the Black Arts Repertory Theater-School.

Critical Overview

Critical reception of Baraka's work varies widely from enthusiastic praise to equally enthusiastic condemnation. William J. Harris, in the introduction to *The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader,* suggests that the reason for this disparity may lie in the various modes and influences of the writer's energy and creativity. According to Harris, Baraka "is an avant-garde writer whose variety of forms . . . makes him difficult to categorize, while his stormy history clouds critical objectivity."

To get a handle on Baraka's efforts, many critics have divided his work into three or four periods. Harris sees Baraka's work falling into four periods: the "Beat Period," from 1957 to 1962, during which he was influenced by white avant-garde artists such as Allen Ginsberg; the "Transitional Period," from 1963 to 1965, during which Baraka wrote *The Baptism* and became increasingly disillusioned with white society; the "Black Nationalist Period," from 1965 to 1974, during which Baraka argued that blacks in America constituted a distinct nation; and the "Third World Marxist Period," from 1974 through today, during which the author has embraced international socialism and rejected black nationalism.

While freely admitting that classifying Baraka is difficult, Theodore C. Hudson refers to Baraka as a romantic in his *From LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka.* Baraka "places great faith in intuition, in feelings" and also believes that "man is divine," argues Hudson, who also writes that Baraka's romantic approach to art shows itself when he is "disdainful of the organized and orthodox religion of the majority" - a thematic element that defines *The Baptism*. Like most of Baraka's work, *The Baptism* has received mixed responses. Tish Dace and Andrew O. Jones, writing in the *Reference Guide to American Literature,* note that the play garnered charges of "obscenity and blasphemy" while it "jarred and amused" those who went to see its opening in 1964. James A. Miller, writing in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* Volume 16: *The Beats,* criticizes the play for its incomplete structure and substance. He argues that the play "lacks a clear dramatic focus and is heavily dependant upon the shock value of irreverent attitudes for its effects." Miller also notes, however, that Baraka was "clearly indebted" to the writings of French playwright Jean Genet and to others who wrote in the style of the "theater of the absurd." Absurdist theater typically abandons traditional dramatic devices, such as logical plot development and dialogue, and replaces them with a sense of confusion and unreality.

Praise for the play centers on its challenging message. According to Catherine Daniels Hurst in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* Volume 7: *Twentieth-Century American Dramatists, The Baptism* is a prime example of Baraka's concern with the themes of "personal identity, self-actualization, and appearance versus reality." Hurst also asserts that Baraka has effectively interwoven "setting, character, and theme" in the play. She calls it a "modern fable" and a "satirical indictment of religious perversion." Beyond her general praise for the play, however, Hurst questions Baraka's use of profanity and obscenity and doubts whether Baraka's message can be interpreted properly when it is in "such an unpalatable form." C. W. E. Bigsby echoes this concern in his *Confrontation* *and Commitment: A Study of Contemporary American Drama,* noting, "it is precisely his failure to communicate which ironically constitutes the greatest weakness of his work."

Critics have noted Baraka's innovative use of language; this technique appears throughout *The Baptism*. Dace and Jones see in his early work "techniques analogous to black music - jazz and the blues." Hudson observes that Baraka uses humor and satire as a major technique - a method very broadly used in *The Baptism*. Baraka's satire is "informed by a certain hip, or superior, sensibility, by an urbane sensibility developed in street lore, [and] by a contempt born of too much perception," according to Hudson.

While Baraka has received his fair share of negative press for his shifting views and his sometimes extreme political statements, most critics agree that he is an important twentieth-century writer. "Although he has often expressed disdain for the literary establishment," notes Miller, "[Baraka's] work has clearly defined him as a major intellectual presence.'

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1

Critical Essay #1

Sanderson holds a master of fine arts degree in fiction writing and is an independent writer. In this essay, Sanderson examines the role of the Homosexual in Amiri Baraka's play The Baptism.

Amiri Baraka wrote *The Baptism* when he was still known as LeRoi Jones and was immersed in the bohemian life of New York City's Greenwich Village. All around him were artists, intellectuals, and members of the beat movement—primarily young white men, who rejected the values of middle-class American society; experimented with nontraditional artistic forms, mind-altering drugs, and Eastern religions; and openly challenged traditional sexual sensibilities. The play definitely shows evidence of Baraka's exposure to other avant-garde writers: its language is peppered with street lingo and profanity, social institutions are lampooned, and the very content and meaning of the story are in question. Who is the Boy? Is he really Christ or just a clever street punk? Why are all of these people at the church? Why does the Messenger inexplicably arrive at the end of the play to take the Boy away— and where is he taken?

While these questions cannot be completely answered without directly querying the author, an examination of the character of the Homosexual can help reveal some of the intent of the play. This must be done, however, with extreme caution, as Theodore C. Hudson advises in his book *From LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka.* "To look only for rational, conscious, and ordered style in Jones's work is to subvert explication and to beg for a misreading or a nonreading," he warns. Nevertheless, the character of the Homosexual is a compelling one. He opens the play, deeply involved in an argument about sexual preference and sin with the Minister, and he has the final say in the play, rising from the pile of bodies on the stage to head off to a bar. "What ever happened to that cute little religious fanatic?" he wonders aloud, pausing for a moment to think about the Boy.

Like all of the other characters, the Homosexual is a stock character, the stereotype of a homosexual. He strikes effeminate poses throughout the play and works to attract the Boy's attention. The other characters also stand for ideas or groups and do not have any unique qualities that make them individuals. They have no names or personal histories. The Minister, for example, with his gray hair, black robes, and stern demeanor, is the image of authority. The Old Woman similarly projects authority with her loud voice and advanced age, but she also represents, as Baraka conveniently mentions in the list of characters, "the American Matriarchy." The Women are, according to the list of characters, "sleek 'Village!' types," probably representative of many of the women Baraka met while living in Greenwich Village—highly educated and smart but very focused on the next popular trend. In Baraka's eyes, they must have been as similar to one another as are the Women in the play, who are distinguished only by the numbers pinned on their chests. While Hudson's warnings about "ordered style" in Baraka's work are valuable, he misses his own point when it comes to interpreting the message behind homosexual characters in Baraka's work— at least within this play. Hudson argues that in Baraka's work, "homosexuality . . . may be considered as broadly symbolic of misuse of creative energies, as a deliberate turning from what is natural and good . . . as an avoidance of reality." In *The Baptism*, though, the Homosexual, however stereotypical Baraka has made him, has something the rest of the characters do not have: a keen sense of humor. This, along with his ability to survey a situation and call it as he sees it, sets him apart from the rest of the characters. Contrary to Hudson's assertions, the Homosexual is the character most connected to reality and most open to creative energy. The Homosexual is the outsider, literally and figuratively. He is outside the mainstream of American life by his sexual choices and preferences. The Minister accuses the Homosexual of being "less selective" than he himself is when it comes to sexual partners, and at one point he calls upon God to punish the Homosexual. The Homosexual is also often outside of the play's action and in a position where he can comment about what is going on without being heard. When the Boy appears in the church, for example, the Homosexual makes a side comment that the Minister is "an opportunist." Numerous times he asks another character a question or makes a demand but gets no answer, as if he is not there. When the Boy is declared to be Christ, the Homosexual asks him to prove it by turning the church "into the White House or something cool like that," but no one responds to this challenge. In his position as an outsider, the Homosexual can make sharp and perceptive comments about what he sees happening in the church. This is something no one else is able to do, as they are all busy either condemning the Boy for his sins or praising him when they think he is Christ. In fact, throughout most of the play, the tone of the other characters is often hysterical and fanatical. The Homosexual, on the other hand, is able to stand back and provide an analysis of the situation while remaining in touch with his sense of humor. When the Old Woman finishes her rant about the Boy's masturbation, she falls to the ground. The Minister sees her actions through the lens of his religious beliefs, stating, "She has swooned in the service of the Lord. A holy ecstasy has entered her soul." The Homosexual is not so sure about the Minister's interpretation. He turns over her limp body with his toe and muses to himself, "Hmm, I think maybe she's had a bit too much to drink."

The Homosexual reconsiders nearly everything he sees in the church, and no experience is closed to him—except, of course, the experience of true belief. He reacts quickly when the Minister and the Boy speak of being saved from sin, inquiring of himself why he should want to be saved. "And miss something? No, not me. I want it all," he says, and notes that he wants to feel, see, and know whatever is possible. If rejecting Satan means he will have to pass up an experience, count him out. When the Minister threatens to have his Lord strike the Homosexual dead, the Homosexual is even open to the possibility of that experience. "That's okay. It never happened before. It might be a gas. I mean drilled with the holy lightning," he says, and begins singing, "Drill me baby. Drill me so I don't need to be drilled no more."

Contrary to Hudson's general interpretation of Baraka's use of homosexuals in his work, the Homosexual in *The Baptism* is a perceptive outsider who questions all that he sees but is open to nearly every encounter and experience. He suspects hypocrisy but is flexible enough to admit that lies are sometimes desirable—especially when they possible more physical experiences. In addition, he delivers his evaluation of society and its participants with a sense of humor and a sharp wit. Far from drawing a negative character, Baraka has, in fact, depicted the Homosexual as the idealized Village bohemian or avant-garde artist.

Like the Homosexual, Baraka's fellow Greenwich Village residents saw it as their job to persistently challenge social institutions, such as organized religion. They purposely placed themselves outside of middle-class America to have a better view of its hypocrisy. Humor and absurdity were tools they could use to poke fun at what they perceived as Middle America's mindless rigidity and unwillingness to experience all of life. Granted, Baraka would soon reject much of bohemian and beat philosophy in favor of a more radical black activism, but for the time being he sought to praise what he saw as the obvious solution to a mindless, cookie-cutter existence. The Homosexual, representing bohemian ideals, is, after all, the last man standing in the play. Its apocalyptic climax has been, for him, simply one more experience.

Source: Susan Sanderson, Critical Essay on *The Baptism,* in *Drama for Students,* The Gale Group, 2003.

Topics for Further Study

The play takes place during the early 1960s in New York City. If you were producing the play today, what changes would you make? Would you set it during contemporary times, or would you move the setting to another city? If you did change the play's time or place, how would you then change its content and language?

If you were asked to produce the play, who would you cast in the various roles? Would Baraka's instructions in the list of characters be helpful, or would you ignore them?

Why do you think Baraka chose to title the play as he did? Do you think *The Baptism* is a good title? Suggest three other possible titles.

Many critics have commented on Baraka's use of profanity in the play. What is your opinion of the language? Explain whether you think it is critical to the content and message of the play, including why or why not.

When the play debuted in 1964, many audiences were shocked not only by the profanity but by the irreverence toward Christianity and organized religion. Does it hold the same power to shock today? Explain why or why not.

Compare and Contrast

1960s: In the early 1960s, Black Muslim leader Malcolm X breaks away from the Nation of Islam and begins to gain a following of his own, somewhat softening his previously hard stance against whites. In the mid-1960s, after Malcolm X's assassination, Baraka begins to shift his political affiliation away from white liberalism toward black nationalism.

Today: A controversy erupts over the ownership of Malcolm X's papers. His family is able to prevent the auction of his personal writings, at least temporarily. Baraka now considers himself a "Third World Socialist."

1960s: Four young black girls are murdered when a church is re-bombed in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963.

Today: An average of fifteen to twenty churches suffer arson attacks each month in the United States. A majority of these are either predominantly black or multiracial churches.

1960s: In the 1960s, Greenwich Village is a center for avant-garde artists and writers (those who are experimenting with new and challenging forms of art), filled with coffee houses, storefront theaters, and a small but thriving homosexual community.

Today: The Greenwich Society for Historic Preservation works to maintain many of the significant buildings in the neighborhood. The area is considered prime real estate now, and few "starving artists" can afford to live there.

1960s: In 1964, the Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is passed. One of its primary features is a ban on poll taxes in federal elections, giving the poor and many African Americans increased access to the voting booth. In 1965, the federal Voting Rights Act is passed, temporarily suspending literacy tests intended to restrict voting of African Americans and other minorities in some states. By the end of the decade there are 1,469 African-American elected officials in the United States, according to the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

Today: The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies reports that there are nearly nine thousand African-American elected officials in the United States.

What Do I Read Next?

Baraka's *The Autobiography of LeRoi Jones* was originally published in a severely edited form in 1984. The 1997 edition restores the cuts made by the publisher and tells the story of the black literary leader and political activist through his fortieth birthday in 1974.

Baraka won the Obie Award in 1964 for his play *Dutchman,* which relates the violence and hatred that ensues when a white woman picks up a black man on the subway in New York City. It was originally published in 1964 with another one of his plays in the book *Dutchman and The Slave: Two Plays.*

The LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka Reader (1991), edited by William J. Harris, is a good introduction to the wide variety of works authored by Baraka between 1957 and 1990. The volume includes poetry, plays, social essays, novel excerpts, and music criticism.

Poet Allen Ginsberg was a leader of the Beat movement, a group of avant-garde writers who influenced Baraka early in his career. *Howl and Other Poems,* originally published in 1956 with an introduction by the poet William Carlos Williams, propelled Ginsberg into the limelight. In 1996, a fortieth anniversary edition was released.

Ntozake Shange first began publishing her plays about a decade after Baraka became well known. Her revolutionary play *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf: a choreopoem,* originally published and produced in 1975, is an exploration of how black women are twice challenged by living in a world controlled by white men.

Further Study

Bigsby, C. W. E., *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth Century American Drama: Beyond Broadway,* Vol. 3, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

This book covers the period in American drama immediately after Baraka's productions of *The Baptism* and *Dutchman* and serves as an introduction to how American theater changed dramatically during the 1960s and 1970s. The author focuses on the work that was being done in the smaller, less mainstream theaters commonly referred to as off-Broadway, as well as the ground-breaking work accomplished by playwrights such as Sam Shepard and David Mamet.

Jones, Hettie, *How I Became Hettie Jones,* E. P. Dutton, 1990.

Hettie Jones, Amiri Baraka's wife when he was LeRoi Jones, remembers her interracial marriage to the famous writer. She also writes about the beginnings of her life as a child in a middle-class Jewish household in the Queens section of New York City, and about the various members of the Beat movement whom she and her ex-husband called friends in the 1950s and 1960s.

Oliver, Clinton F., and Stephanie Sills, *Contemporary Black Drama: From "A Raisin in the Sun" to "No Place to Be Somebody,"* Charles Schribner's Sons, 1971.

This volume features plays from many of the leading black playwrights of the late 1950s through the late 1960s, including Lorraine Hansberry, Adrienne Kennedy, James Baldwin, and LeRoi Jones. Each play is preceded by an introductory essay to the playwright and the play.

Watts, Jerry Gaflo, *Amiri Baraka: The Politics and Art of a Black Intellectual,* New York University Press, 2001.

The author dissects the intellectual and artistic journey taken by Baraka from the late 1950s through the 1980s, covering the controversial writer's life from his Beat movement days to his more recent Marxist period.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Drama for Students (DfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, DfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of DfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of DfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in DfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by DfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

DfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Drama for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the DfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the DfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Drama for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Drama for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from DfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Drama for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from DfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Drama for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of DfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Drama for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

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