

The invisible man: a quest for recognition and politics in disguise and ambiguity

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



African American Political Introduction The democracy of one of the most powerful nations of the world has not been a piece of cake for the fathers who laid the foundation of the system. The long drawn struggle for the establishment of democracy also has not been very easy. Looking the Afro-American history of struggle, it gets quite evident that the Afro-American population had to strive very hard since the establishment of the nation. Whether it has been a battle of minorities or of rights of the Blacks, the Afro-American community in America has always suffered from an existential crisis which has been time and again found enough space in literature and art to evolve out with specific and serious existential agendas. Ralph Ellison's novel, " The Invisible Man" is a promising and enlightening document bearing the scar, deprivation and mark of the entire Afro-American community since the era of post Second World War. The novel " The Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison almost attains the stature of Bible in figuring out the saga of politics pertaining to recognition in the paradigm of existential discourse in the history of American politics and its democratic life. The Invisible Man: A Quest for Recognition and Politics in Disguise and Ambiguity The novel by Ralph Ellison bearing the title " The Invisible Man" is the only novel published during his life time and that won him the National Book Award in the year 1953. Ellison took five years to complete this novel and it stand out to be one of the most engaging studies of social and psychological tensions and issues faced by black man precisely and humanity in general, during the post-modern era. The novel captivates myriad social and intellectual issues encountered by the Afro-American period along with the delineation of the motif and objective of the black- nationalism. The novel

clearly hints on the relationship between the black identity at a national level and Marxism. The novel explores the racial and reformist policies undertaken by Booker T. Washington. Along with the racial perspective, the book is widely relevant in the post-modern scenario of literature and politics because it presents a consistent perspective of identity crisis and a discourse that deals with personal identity. The political paradigm of the novel is entwined in its coherent aspects starting from the background against which it is written to plot structure, symbolism, narrative and anatomy of the book and the close relationship that the novel of Ellison shares with the black history and politics of America can be well understood if all these aspects of the novel is given a close introspection. The narrative of the novel, "The Invisible Man" is presented in the first person through the protagonist of the novel who is an anonymous African American man and who considers himself as an identity who is socially invisible. The book is structured in a way that the protagonist tends to present his autobiography before the audience and in maintaining so, he is conscious of his audience and at a broader aspect therefore the invisible underdog identity is well aware of the mainstream culture and audience. The novel is presented in the oscillating mode where the plot moves to and fro into the past and present of the protagonist and the story begins from the middle of his life. The anonymous black man, the protagonist Ellison's "The Invisible Man", describes thus being the mouthpiece of the author, the growing up as a Black Negro in the black community of South. He further attends a Negro college from where he is expelled and he moves to New York and turn out to be one of the chief spokesman of the Harlem branch of "The Brotherhood" and at last reiterates

amid the environment pertaining to violence and confusion to the basement lair of the invisible man where the anonymous protagonist imagines himself to be. In the prologue of the novel, the protagonist of the novel speaks to his readers, " I live rent-free in a building rented strictly to Whites, in a section of the basement that was shut off and forgotten during the nineteenth century". The very prologue gives the hint of the living status of Afro-American men in the society and their status. He further says, " My hole is warm and full of light. Yes, full of light. I doubt if there is a brighter spot in all New York than this hole of mine, and I do not exclude Broadway". The light is symbolic of the intellectual necessity of the protagonist and he explains that the light is analogous to truth for him and by making this statement, Ellison through his narrator makes it clear to the readers the position of an Afro-American entity in the American society in lieu of the experience, position and the sensibility of the protagonist culminated out of his life. Conclusion The novel, " The Invisible Man" is evidently based on the themes of the underdog and invisibility. Along with that a foreboding tone of darkness and disguise pervade the entire plot of the play. Needless to say that these themes are culminated to relate the Black Nationalism and Afro-American history to the wider perspective of American society, politics and life. The protagonist and the narrator of the novel is in a state of invisibility which he himself bemoans sometimes but is somehow compelled to embrace the situation at the end which is very true to the cruel life of the Afro-Americans during the period in the society. The entire novel stands out to bear the long drawn history of Black Nationalism and identity crisis in America.

Bibliography Ellison, Ralph. The Invisible Man. Vintage International, 1995.

<https://assignbuster.com/the-invisible-man-a-quest-for-recognition-and-politics-in-disguise-and-ambiguity/>