

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
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Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
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Delusion of Grandeur, Double Consciousness, and the Decadence of
the Black People in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and Foreign Languages in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in English Language
Option: Literature and Civilization

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2021/2022

Dedication

To my dear mother and father

To both of my sisters

To my colleagues and friends; Ilham, Lokman, Mira, Anfal, Zahra, Wail, Jalil, Seif

Acknowledgments

Sending a heartfelt appreciation to my supervisor Mrs. BOUGOUFA Zeyneb who has been with me, and guided me throughout the process of writing my thesis by providing insight, help, and feedback. I would also like to thank my friends who encouraged, and motivated me.

Abstract

Racial oppression and discrimination are the major reasons for the engenderment of mental illnesses such as delusion of grandeur, and double consciousness. These mental illnesses hinder black people from achieving their full human identity. Which in turn would impede black people from achieving an equal social status as the white people. This present work intends to investigate how can racial discrimination give rise to mental illnesses and to what extent the latter leads to the deterioration of the black people using Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* as a case study. It also tries to ask questions that link delusion of grandeur and double consciousness to racial trauma and how it affects the development of full black identity. Using a psychoanalytical approach and a descriptive qualitative method to point out the major psychological concepts in the novel. The characters that represent grandiosity or inward-twoness ultimately fail in achieving their purpose, whether it is achieving a full human identity, gaining power on both races, holding a race's future upon one's shoulder, or taking the black community back to Africa and away from the interest of the whites. Delusion of grandeur and double consciousness ultimately hinders the characters from achieving their purpose.

Key Words: Delusion of Grandeur, Double Consciousness, Trauma, Decadence, Racial Oppression, Mental Illness, Identity

الملخص

يعتبر الاضطهاد العرقي والتمييز العنصري من الأسباب الرئيسية للإصابة بالأمراض العقلية مثل وهم العظمة والوعي المزدوج. التي تمنع السود من تحقيق هويتهم الإنسانية الكاملة. وهو الأمر الذي من شأنه أن يعيق السود من تحقيق مكانة اجتماعية مساوية للبيض

تهدف هذه المذكرة إلى التحقيق في كيفية تسبب التمييز العنصري في الإصابة بأمراض عقلية وإلى أي مدى تؤدي هذه الأخيرة إلى تدهور حالة السود. وذلك باستخدام قصة "الرجل الخفي" للكاتب رالف إليسون كدراسة حالة. كما تحاول طرح أسئلة تربط بين وهم العظمة والوعي المزدوج بالصدمة العرقية وكيف تؤثر على تطور الهوية السوداء الكاملة. وذلك باستخدام المنهج النفسي التحليلي والوصفي النوعي للإشارة إلى أهم المفاهيم النفسية في الرواية

وتوصلت الدراسة إلى أن الشخصيات التي تمثل وهم العظمة أو الازدواجية الداخلية تفشل في نهاية المطاف في تحقيق هدفها، سواء تمثل في تحقيق هوية إنسانية كاملة، أو اكتساب القوة على كلا العرقين، أو تحمل مسؤولية مستقبل العرق، إعادة المجتمع الأسود إلى إفريقيا وبعيداً عن مصلحة البيض. في نهاية المطاف وهم العظمة والوعي المزدوج يعيقان الشخصيات عن تحقيق أهدافها

الكلمات المفتاحية: وهم العظمة، الوعي المزدوج، الصدمة النفسية، علم النفس التحليلي، الانحطاط، الاضطهاد العرقي، الأمراض النفسية، الهوية

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General Introduction

Chattel slavery and systemic racism are today's reasons why black people suffer to the point of self-extinction. African-Americans are more likely to be diagnosed with psychotic illnesses such as double consciousness, and delusion of grandeur. Mental diseases as such could be the main reason for the decadent status of black communities. Trauma is considered one of the major reasons for the engenderment of GDS and DC. Black people, on the other hand, consider racism and discrimination the fundamental source of their subordinate status compared to that of other ethnic groups.

Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* depicts how trauma and racial discrimination engender psychological problems, and how the latter causes black communities' deterioration. Grappling with legacies that come with being black in America, the author unpacks various psychological and sociological structures through his novel, where he tackles psychotic illnesses, such as wrestling against double-consciousness and delusion of grandeur as two main psychological states among black people in particular. *Invisible Man* as the title implies tells the story of a black youth who narrates the story through his eyes. He is the embodiment of delusion of grandeur and double consciousness. Beginning his journey with ambition and hope then ends as a delusional rebel. The narrator's identity is never revealed throughout the story. He goes through the story as a displaced voice, invisible to all those who are unable to see him for what he is, an intellectual instead of simply a black complexion.

The story follows the narrator's journey starting with him hiding underground from his black and white oppressors to him trying to believe in a cause and trying to find his identity. In the end, he discovers that the institution and the brotherhood are a lost cause, and he has to figure out what he thinks of his person without the intervention of others. He speaks of himself and says "Perhaps the part of me that observed listlessly but saw all, missing nothing,

was still...the dissenting voice, my grandfather part; the cynical disbelieving part—the traitor self that always threatened internal discord” (Ellison, 335). Ras the Exhorter is a West Indian and a nationalist. He believes that the black people should band together and go back to Africa away from other races’ interests.

Ras stands against multiracial membership as he does not believe in black and white relations. By the time of the Harlem riots, Ras declares himself as Ras the Destroyer, while he holds a shield and waves a spear on police officers. He fights the members of the brotherhood and encourages them to leave the organization and join his cause for the good of the black people. Brother Jack is another example of delusion of grandeur. At first, he looks like someone with immeasurable knowledge and total mastery of history and human theories. Later on, he admits using the brotherhood for gaining power and status. His loose eye becomes a metaphor for his partial blindness. He addresses the narrator and tells him “Our job is not to ask them what they think but to tell them” (Ellison, 473) As to show that all he wants is power.

This work will be divided into a general introduction, two chapters, and a general conclusion. The general introduction will include the topic, research problem, research question, subsidiary questions, the methodology of the work, the research objectives, and limitations. The first chapter will give a general overview of African American literature, an introduction to racism, and a biography of the author and his works. It will also address racial oppression and its effects on blacks’ mental health. The first chapter will also define the key concepts of the work. The second chapter will deal with the traumatic events in *Invisible Man*. Also, it will shed light on double consciousness and delusion of grandeur in characters such as The Invisible Man, Ras the Destroyer, Mr. Norton, and Dr. Bledsoe. The general conclusion will provide a summary of the results of the work.

2. The Research Problem

Invisible Man is a work that tackles the psychology of black people. One major problem that the work represents is the relationship between racial oppression and discrimination with the engenderment of mental illnesses such as delusion of grandeur and double consciousness. With the aforementioned information, this research attempts to identify how racial discrimination can give rise to mental illnesses and how the latter causes the deterioration of black people.

3. Major Research Question

How can racial oppression give rise to mental illnesses and to what extent does the latter lead to the deterioration of the black people?

3.1 Subsidiary Questions

1. What impedes black people from reaching their full human identity?
2. How can racial oppression and mental illnesses cause deterioration?
3. How can racial oppression be linked to the development of double-consciousness and delusion of grandeur?

4. Significance of the research

This work sheds light on the different psychological problems and how to explain them using a psychoanalytical approach. It will also help future master two students better understand how to conduct a psychoanalytical study. This study touches on topics that are not well discussed in Ellison's invisible man. Moreover, it will touch on major black people's problems in an attempt to better understand their causes.

5. Research aims

This research aims to explain the relationship between racial oppression and discrimination of black people and its role in the development of mental illnesses. The work also attempts to understand the psychology of black people, and how they can be responsible for their deterioration. It will also try to answer the question of black identity and what reasons are holding black people from reaching it.

6. Research objectives

By collecting data concerning the topic at hand, and by conducting an extensive reading of the work and its context, the researcher will develop a well-articulated work that tries to understand the relationship between racial oppression, delusion of grandeur, double consciousness, and how it can be the reason for black people's deterioration.

7. Methodology of the research

This work will use a descriptive qualitative method to point out the major psychological concepts in the novel. It will also use the psychoanalytical approach to better understand and analyze the mental illnesses apparent in the work, and figure out the effects of these psychological problems on black people.

Chapter one: African American Litterateur and mental illnesses: a Co-existence

1.1 Introduction

African American people and mostly black men are more likely to be diagnosed with mental illnesses such as inward-twoness and delusion of grandeur. Black men's Psychosis is the consequence of racial oppression and the social identity that is imposed on black people by white figures. Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* is a masterpiece of African American literature. It depicts the role that a black man impersonates in his daily dealings with his white and black oppressors. *Invisible Man* tells the story of an unidentified young black narrator who studies in an institution for black people. He travels to New York in search of a job that later gets him involved in an organization that has a Marxist orientation. As the narrator's story develops, he starts seeing the true purpose of the organization. By the end of the story, the narrator retreats to an underground hole as a shelter of his oppressors. The narrator remains unidentified throughout the story. He ultimately realizes that he is the only one that can identify himself.

1.1.2 African American literature

African American literature is the body of literature produced in the United States by authors of African descent. This body of literature originates from the late eighteenth-century writers such as Phillis Wheatly and Olaudah Equiano. African American literature started with slave narratives to the Harlem Renaissance and continues today with writers such as Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, Walter Mosley, Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, and many others. The main themes of African American literature revolve around topics such as; slavery, racism, equality, freedom, the African American culture, and the role of African-Americans within the American society. It is needed to note that African

American literature also includes oral forms such as gospel music, sermons, spirituals, and even rap (New World Encyclopedia).

African American literature developed with the change of status of the black people within American society. Before the American Civil War, it dealt only with the topic of slavery and it came in the form of slave narratives. Later on, by the coming of the twentieth century, authors such as Booker T Washington published books debating whether African Americans should confront or appease racial oppression in the United States. At the time of the American Civil Rights movement, authors started addressing topics such as racial segregation, and black nationalism. The main authors of the American Civil Rights period are Richard Wright and Gwendolyn Brooks.

At present African American literature is accepted as part of American literature. Works such as *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker achieving both best-selling and award-winning status. African American literature is an important part of African diasporic literature, and it has been influenced by the enormous African diasporic heritage and, in turn, has influenced African diasporic writings in many nations. Scholars distinguish African American literature from most postcolonial literature by claiming that "African American literature varies from most postcolonial literature in that it is written by members of a minority community who live within a nation of immense wealth and economic power". Spirituals, African American gospel music, blues, and rap are all examples of poetry in African American oral culture. Oral poetry is also found in the African American Christian preaching tradition, which employs deliberate repetition, tempo, and alliteration (New World Encyclopedia).

African American literature, particularly written poetry but also prose, has a long history of including all of these sorts of oral poetry. However, while these features and topics

can be found in many works of African American literature, they are not the genre's exclusive definition and do not appear in all works.

The oldest known piece of African American literature is the poem “*Bars Fight*” (1746) written by Lucy Terry, yet it was only published in 1855 in Josiah Holland’s “*History of Western Massachusetts*”. Phillis Wheatley (1753–84), a poet, published her book *Poems on Various Subjects* in 1773, three years before the American independence. Wheatley was born in Senegal, Africa, and was kidnapped and sold into slavery at the age of seven. She was brought to America and owned by a Boston merchant. Even though she did not speak English at first, she had learned it by the age of sixteen. Many of the main characters of the American Revolution loved her writing, including George Washington, who personally complimented her for a poem she penned in his honor. Many white people, however, found it difficult to accept that a Black lady could be clever enough to produce poetry (New World Encyclopedia).

The slave story is a subgenre of African American literature that emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century. At the time, the debate over slavery inspired passionate literature on both sides of the issue, with books like Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) representing the abolitionist view of slavery's evils, while so-called Anti-Tom literature by white, southern writers like William Gilmore Simms represented the pro-slavery viewpoint. Former slaves such as Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass produced slave narratives to convey the African American perspective on slavery, and they quickly became a pillar of African American literature. Approximately six thousand former slaves from North America and the Caribbean penned autobiographies, with approximately a hundred and fifty of these being published as separate books or pamphlets (New World Encyclopedia).

Slave narratives are classified into three types: tales of religious redemption, tales to motivate abolitionists, and tales of advancement. Because they include a strong personal narrative, the most well-known stories are those written to motivate the abolitionist movement. Many of these are now recognized as the most literary of all nineteenth-century African American literature, with Frederick Douglass' autobiography and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* being two of the most well-known examples (1861).

From 1920 until 1940, the Harlem Renaissance drew increased attention to African American literature. While the Harlem Renaissance existed as a greater blooming of social thinking and culture, with several Black artists, musicians, and others producing classic works in genres ranging from jazz to theater, the renaissance is perhaps best recognized for its literary output. Langston Hughes, a poet, is one of the most well-known Renaissance poets. *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, published in 1922, drew Hughes' attention for the first time. This book, edited by James Weldon Johnson, included the work of the most gifted poets of the time (including, among others, Claude McKay, who also published three novels *Home to Harlem*, *Banjo*, and *Banana Bottom*, and a collection of short stories).

Migration gave the Black community a new sense of freedom and contributed to the thriving Black urban culture observed during the Harlem Renaissance. The migration also aided the rising American Civil Rights movement, which left an indelible mark on Black writers during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Just as Black activists worked to eradicate segregation and racism and instill a new sense of Black nationalism, Black authors attempted to address these concerns via their writing. James Baldwin, whose work grappled with questions of racism and sexuality, was one of the first to do so. Baldwin, best known for his novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain*, wrote intensely personal stories and essays about what it was like to be both Black and homosexual in an era when neither identity was recognized by

American culture. Baldwin published approximately 20 books in total, including classics such as *Another Country* and *The Fire Next Time* (New World Encyclopedia).

1.1.3 About the Author

Ralph Waldo Ellison was born in 1914 in Oklahoma City, he was raised with his younger brother by their mother. Ralph's father died when he was 3 years old. From his early years, Ellison loved music and was expected to become a musician and composer. He played his first instrument, a "cornet", at age 8. At the age of 19, he enrolled at Tuskegee institution as a music major playing trumpet. Ellison was drawn to jazz and jazz musicians, yet he studied classical music and the symphonic form because he was looking forward to a career as a composer and performer of classical music.

In the summer of 1936, Ellison moved to New York City to earn expenses for his senior year at Tuskegee institution. This was a crucial turn in his life. He never went back to his studies at Tuskegee, and he never became a classical music performer. When he first moved to New York his main intention was to get enough funds to return to the institution, yet he was rendered unable to do so due to the great depression. While he was there, he got acquainted with the writer, Richard Wright. Later on, he got a job writing for the New York Federal Writers Program; a branch of the Works Progress Administration. At the same time, he started writing short stories and essays for the "New Masses," "The Negro Quarterly," "The New Republic," "Saturday Review" and other publications.

Ellison joined the United States Merchant Marines as a cook after the outbreak of the Second World War. He only began to think of writing a major novel after he saw the action in the North Atlantic. Nevertheless, it wasn't until the end of the war that he began writing what will be "*Invisible Man*". From the time *Invisible Man* first appeared in 1952, it was a major success. One of the best sellers, and in 1953 the novel won the National Book Award. More

than forty years later, Saul Bellow, the Nobel prize winner, declared that *Invisible Man* “holds its own among the best novels of the century”. *Invisible Man* rendered Ellison an important and a serious figure in literature. He spent the two upcoming years (55/57) in Rome as a Fellow of the American Academy.

Ralph returned to the United States to teach in different universities including; Yale, Brad College, University of New York, University of Chicago, and Rutgers. Ellison had a wide range of interests that he maintained throughout his life including music both jazz and classical, sports, theatre, and photography. In 1964 he published a collection of essays on these subjects and others under the title of “*Shadow and Act*”. He described the essays as “an attempt to relate myself to American life through literature”. Another collection of essays under the title of “*Going to the Territory*” appeared in 1986. For a long time, Ellison worked on a second major piece of literature, yet it was never completed. It came to light after his death in 1994 as “*Juneteenth*”.

Ellison’s first marriage was short-lived, and in 1946 he married Fanny McConnell. They lived together in an apartment on Riverside Drive in New York City until he died in 1994. Fanny lived eleven years after the death of Ellison, she died in 2005 at the age of 93 years old. Ellison spoke in the library of the congress for the first time in 1964 when he delivered the Gertrude Clark Whittall Lecture. From 1966 to 1972, he served as the library’s honorary consultant in American letters.

1.1.4 Synopsis

The protagonist of *Invisible Man* is a young Black man whose identity is never revealed in the text. He grew up in the Jim Crow South of the United States and is driven to attain professional achievement despite growing up in a segregated world where he is the subject of racial stereotypes and persecution. As a graduating high school senior, he is invited

to give a graduation speech at a celebration in his hometown attended by important White males. He rapidly realizes, however, that the event is merely an excuse to force young Black guys to entertain White folks by boxing blindfolded and then scrambling on an electrified carpet for fake money. At the end of the night, he receives a briefcase containing notification that he has been accepted to a Black college.

Several years later, the protagonist irritates the president of the college by taking an esteemed White founder to destitute neighborhoods surrounding the college rather than providing a more "sanitized" perspective of the place. The president punishes him by sending him to New York City for the summer, ostensibly to learn how to communicate professionally with White people. The president sends sealed letters to important White males in New York that he claims are recommendations.

The Brotherhood appears to operate under a rigid code of ethics that appeals to the protagonist, and he likes his work for a period of time, getting to know other activists in Harlem, where he is based. After a few months of rising dispute and contention between the Brotherhood and the protagonist, he is exiled from Harlem. When he returns, he discovers that the Brotherhood has abandoned its work in Harlem, leaving the people it helped in terrible need. Enraged by the Brotherhood's actions and the unjust death of a fellow activist, he organizes a funeral that sparks a communal uproar against White authorities in Harlem.

The protagonist is thrown into the race riots that erupt and realizes that the Brotherhood means to make him a scapegoat for the unrest. Having been let down repeatedly by the people and groups who once had his respect, he finally decides that he will determine his sense of self rather than letting it be dictated to him. During the riots, he falls down a manhole and uses it as a chance to stage a "disappearance." His absence lets him spend some years living a quiet life in Harlem before he reemerges, ready to re-join the effort of social

causes. Ellison combines psychological and social storylines in *Invisible Man*, examining the effects of racism on his protagonist and his ability, nonetheless, to rise above the difficulties he encounters to craft his sense of self.

1.2.1 A Brief Introduction to Racism

Racism is defined as discrimination between two races. Racial discrimination has been a major issue in the United States since the slave and colonial eras. Asian Americans, Native Americans, Latin Americans, and African Americans do not have the same legally sanctioned rights and privileges as white Americans. The slave trade is central to the history of American racism. Slave trade had occurred since Columbus discovered the New World. Millions of black men were apprehended and shipped to America as slaves. They were malnourished, thirsty, and infected. The social status of blacks was very low, and their masters assumed that they would work all day.

The Civil War between North and South lasted from 1861 to 1865, and it was the bloodiest and most destructive of all the nation's wars. After the Civil War, when the North was victorious, black slavery was abolished in the United States. Slavery was abolished in the 1860s, but its ramifications persisted. Blacks were not easily integrated into larger American culture, particularly in the South. This type of phenomenon is still present today. Black people had to accept whatever work they were given.

Racism in America manifests itself in a variety of ways, including education, employment, voting rights, immigration, citizenship, and so on. Education is a critical component of American racism. Whether it was a public or private school in the first 100 years after the United States was founded, white and black students were separated and not co-ed. The situation persisted until the presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Even though the relevant legislation was already in place, racial discrimination in education persisted. As a result, the majority of white students continue to attend good schools.

Employment is another form of racism in the United States. In America, the majority of black people work as carpenters, miners, soldiers, cleaners, or in heavy industry factories doing dirty, exhausting, and unskilled labor. Wages for blacks are generally low. Blacks are less likely to work in management, technical fields, or as lawyers, doctors, or government officials. Although there has been a significant increase, the proportion of blacks in high-wage jobs remains significantly lower than their numbers in the United States.

The third type of racism is based on one's standard of living. In America, the living environment has been critical. It is related to education, employment, and service facilities, among other things. The Civil Rights Act of 1968 stated that blacks have the same right to choose their living environment as whites. Racism in living standards appears to be weakening and disappearing. However, it has not been improved. According to a survey of 119 Atlanta apartments, only 27% provide equal opportunity for black and white residents. Forty-five percent say they will prioritize the white. The racial disparity in living standards divides American society into two distinct societies.

1.2.2 Discrimination and the Black's Mental Health

According to research, exposure to discrimination and its negative effects on mental health begins at a young age. A review of research on discrimination among children and adolescents discovered 121 studies (and 461 outcomes) that investigated the relationship between discrimination and health among people aged 0 to 18. (Priest et al. 2013). In 76 percent of the 127 associations studied, exposure to discrimination predicted worse mental health (e.g., anxiety and depression symptoms). Similarly, discrimination was found to be inversely related to positive mental health (e.g., resilience, self-worth, and self-esteem) in 62% of the 108 associations studied.

Most studies, like those of adults, are cross-sectional, but there is also an emerging body of longitudinal research. For example, in a rural Georgia study of 714 black adolescents

aged 10–12 at the start, discrimination was assessed three times over the next five years (Brody et al. 2006). It discovered that increases in racial discrimination were associated with conduct problems and depressive symptoms, with the association between discrimination and conduct problems being stronger for boys but no gender difference in depressive symptoms being evident.

Several studies found that parental discrimination can have a negative impact on the child. A study of black adolescents, for example, discovered that parental racial discrimination was associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression in the child, regardless of the child's experiences with racial discrimination (Gibbons et al. 2004). In this study, parental experiences of discrimination were also linked to children's substance use, which was mediated by both parental and child anxiety and depression (Gibbons et al. 2004). Another study of 10 and 11-year-olds discovered that mother reports of racial discrimination were associated with poor parental mental health, which in turn influenced parenting behaviors and parental satisfaction (Murry et al. 2001).

The Millennium Cohort Study, a large longitudinal study conducted in the United Kingdom, investigated the pathways by which maternal discrimination among Ethnic Minority mothers can affect four domains of social and emotional behavior in children—conduct, peer problems, emotional symptoms, and hyperactivity (Becares, Nazroo and Kelly 2015). The study discovered three pathways by which maternal racial/ethnic discrimination in 2006 was associated with children's social and emotional behavior in 2012. These pathways were adjusted for socio-demographic factors and the mother's mental health in 2006. First, in 2006, maternal discrimination predicted child outcomes in 2012. Furthermore, mother discrimination in 2006 was linked to poorer maternal mental health and harsh parenting practices in 2008, and both of these factors were linked to child social and emotional development in 2008.

A recent systematic review documented how children are frequently unintentional victims of discrimination due to their relationships with other people (Heard-Garris et al. 2018). This review found 30 studies that looked at the relationship between vicarious discrimination (secondhand racism exposure) and child health. The majority of the studies were longitudinal and published after 2011. There were studies of Asian Americans, Hispanics, whites, and indigenous groups in Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, with two-thirds of the studies focusing on African Americans in urban areas in the United States. The most frequently assessed outcomes were socio-emotional and mental health, and the review discovered that indirect exposure to racism by children was inversely related to child health in nearly half of the examined associations.

1.2.3 Cultural Racism and Mental Health

According to research, racism is deeply embedded in American culture and can have a negative impact on mental health in a variety of ways (Williams and Mohammed 2013). The prevalence of negative stereotypes in the population is one indicator of the persistence of racism in the culture. A recent national study found that young children (aged 0 to 8 years) and youth of color in the United States face high levels of negative racial stereotyping from adults who work with them, not just adult members of disadvantaged racial/ethnic groups (Priest et al. 2018).

The study looked at the stereotypes held by white adults who work or volunteer with children in the United States, looking at their reported attitudes toward adults, teenagers, and children from various racial and ethnic backgrounds (blacks, Hispanics, whites, Native Americans, Asians, and Arab Americans). The study discovered widespread negative racial stereotyping of non-Whites of all ages among adults who work or volunteer with children. Blacks were found to have the highest levels of negative stereotypes across all stereotypes

measured (lazy, unintelligent, violent, and having unhealthy habits), with Native Americans and Hispanics seen as similarly negative on several stereotypes.

Whites' negative stereotyping of adults was most pronounced, but it was also observed in young children. For example, young black children (aged 0–8 years) were nearly three times more likely than white adults to be considered lazy, with Native American and Hispanic children also more likely than white adults to be considered lazy. Young black children were more than twice as likely as white children of the same age to be rated as unintelligent or violent, with Hispanic children also rated as more unintelligent or violent than White children. Some of the most severe negative stereotyping by white adults working with children were directed at teenagers, with black and Native American teens nearly ten times as likely as white adults to be viewed as lazy. African American and Hispanic teens were one and a half to two times more likely than white adults and teens to be considered violent and unintelligent.

1.3.1 Key Concepts

1.3.2 The Development of Trauma Theory

The term "trauma" is derived from Greek and first appears in literature in the early 1990s. The origins of trauma theory are thought to be in America in 1980. During that time, Vietnam War veterans maintained a constant political movement and organized inflammatory groups against the war, increasing public understanding of the consequences of war and public support for veterans. They also entrusted a specialized institution with researching the impact of wartime experience on combatants and establishing a link between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and war. As a result, PTSD was included in the diagnostic criteria of the American medical and psychiatric professions.

Trauma theory emerged at the end of the nineteenth century, with Jean-Martin Charcot being the first to study it. Later on, Freud examined trauma through the lenses of sex, consciousness, and desire. Then turned his attention to the psychological trauma of war, hoping to study the relationship between combat neurosis and the patient's moral personality in order to help them recover from trauma. Freud's trauma research laid the groundwork for subsequent trauma research. (Tao, Qtd in Du, 1)

In the 1890s, a slew of important scholars emerged to study trauma theory, and their interests began to diverge. And, of all the researchers, Cathy Caruth was the most notable, as she was the first to propose "Trauma theory." Based on Freud's research, he examined characteristics of traumatic experience in relation to the American Psychological Association's description of PTSD. In his research, traumatic events can be sudden and catastrophic, then appear repeatedly, making the subject feel overwhelmed. Furthermore, the traumatic experience will exist in the mind of the person affected to such an extent that the heart of the person who was injured cannot face the trauma of the experience (Caruth, 2016).

The factors that contributed to the traumatic experience are numerous and complex. It could be caused by a flood, earthquake, fire, or war, or it could be caused by violence, ignorance, or emotional abuse. In the twentieth century, Judith Herman, a famous psychiatrist who promotes the development of trauma theory, stated in her book *Trauma and Recovery* that "psychological trauma is an affliction of the powerless." The victim is rendered helpless by overwhelming force during a trauma. We talk about disasters when the force is natural. When the force used is human, we speak of atrocities." (Herman, p.33).

"The numerous symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder can be divided into three categories: hyperarousal, intrusion, and constriction." (Herman, p.35). Hyperarousal is the constant fear of danger. After a traumatic experience, a person will be on high alert, as if danger could strike at any time. Their bodies are constantly on the lookout for danger. An

unexpected stimulus or a specific stimulus associated with their trauma experience will cause them to panic. Intrusion implies that traumatic memories linger in one's mind. Even the danger has been gone for a long time. The injured person will continue to have flashbacks to the same traumatic event in his or her mind. Constriction is the numbing reaction that occurs after giving in. The person who exhibits this symptom feels completely powerless and despondent as if his or her soul has separated from the body. (Herman)

1.3.3 Grandiose Delusion

False beliefs about having inflated worth, power, knowledge, or a special identity that are firmly maintained despite undeniable evidence to the contrary are referred to as Grandiose Delusions. GDs, like other delusional beliefs, are multidimensional (Garety & Hemsley, 1994), with varying levels of conviction and preoccupation, as well as distress and dysfunction. GDs (along with religious delusions) appear to be held with the most conviction and are associated with fewer negative effects than other delusions (Appelbaum, Robbins, & Roth, 1999). However, given this increased level of conviction, Appelbaum and colleagues report that GDs are less likely to motivate individuals to act than other types of delusions appears to be a contradiction.

In light of clinical observations of patients engaging in risky and impulsive behavior fuelled by grandiose delusional beliefs, this finding appears to be somewhat counterintuitive. The finding of Appelbaum et al. (1999) may be a measurement artifact because the 'action' dimension of the MacArthur-Maudsley Delusions Assessment Schedule is biased toward the assessment of aggressive acts, which means that respondents would receive low scores for not acting on their beliefs in an aggressive or violent manner regardless of other behavioral consequences. Because of the nature and content of GDs, we would not expect the behaviors

motivated by them to be aggressive or violent, and thus this assessment tool may be insufficient for establishing links between GDs and any associated behavior.

Grandiosity was found to be the second most common delusional theme after persecutory delusions in a study of over 1000 individuals with a diagnosis of schizophrenia from socio-culturally diverse countries (Stompe, Karakula, Rudaleviene, Okribelashvili, Chaudhry, Idemudia, et al., 2006). Stompe and colleagues also discovered that the prevalence of GDs in Austrian patients had remained broadly similar (38–44 percent) over the previous 145 years, despite significant societal changes. So, while GDs are present in all cultures, there appears to be some cross-cultural variation in the specific presentation (Suhail & Cochrane, 2002). Several studies have been conducted to compare GDs in European and Asian patients.

Stompe, Bauer, Karakula, Rudaleviciene, Okribelashvili, Chaudhry, et al. (2007) discovered that there were significantly more GDs in patients with schizophrenia in Austria than in Pakistan, and that delusional grandiosity with a religious theme was especially rare in Pakistan (2007). When Suhail (2003) compared the delusional beliefs of three groups of schizophrenia patients – a White British group living in Britain, a group of Pakistani people living in Britain, and the third group of Pakistani people living in Pakistan – they discovered that the groups did not differ in the frequency of GDs. In fact, compared to other cultural groups, Pakistani people living in Pakistan were more likely to have a delusion about being a star/hero/famous person (32%). The authors speculate that Pakistan's large socioeconomic disparities, as well as the difficulty of achieving upward social mobility, may fuel delusional beliefs about one's own worth and achievements — a kind of self-defensive strategy.

The main cause for delusion of grandeur is mental illnesses such as narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), schizophrenia, dementia, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder with psychotic features, and delirium. Other factors such as stress, alcohol and drug

abuse, genetically inherited mental illness, imbalance of chemicals in the brain called neurotransmitters, or living in isolation or the absence of close relationships could be the cause of the delusion of grandiose.

Grandiose delusions are false beliefs that one possesses special abilities, wealth, a mission, or identity (Leff, Fischer, & Bertelsen, 1976). Although they are a common type of delusion (Appelbaum, Robbins, & Roth, 1999; Goodwin & Jamison, 2007) – occurring in approximately half of patients diagnosed with schizophrenia and two-thirds of patients diagnosed with bipolar disorder (Knowles, McCarthy-Jones, & Rowse, 2011) – they have been remarkably neglected as a specific focus of research and clinical practice. Indeed, even though theoretical discussions about grandiose beliefs have been going on for more than a century (Bleuler, 1950; Freud, 1911), very little empirical research has been done (Knowles et al., 2011), and only a few studies test hypotheses about causal or maintenance mechanisms.

When compared to the extensive literature focusing on other psychotic experiences such as persecutory delusions and auditory hallucinations, this lack of research activity is especially noticeable. This apparent disparity could have resulted from a variety of factors. There may be a misconception that grandiose delusions are a more benign manifestation of non-affective psychosis and will not be distressing or harmful given the focus of the belief. Alternatively, they may be viewed simply as a symptom of mania in affective psychosis, and it is assumed that research and clinical attention should be directed toward the manic episode rather than the belief per se.

These assumptions, however, could be incorrect. Grandiose delusions can cause both harm and distress (e.g., believing one is invincible and stepping into traffic, or believing one is Jesus and will therefore be crucified). Beyond mania, potential maintenance mechanisms (e.g., reasoning biases) have been identified (Bortolon, Yazbek, Norton, Capdevielle, &

Raffard, 2019; Garety et al., 2012) and others hypothesized (Bortolon, Yazbek, Norton, Capdevielle, & Raffard, 2019; Garety et al., 2012). (Knowles et al., 2011). Furthermore, factor analytic symptom studies and twin design genetic studies suggest that different psychotic experiences, including grandiosity, have distinct etiological influences, providing justification for the development of experience-specific models and interventions (Ronald et al., 2014; Zavos et al., 2014). (Freeman, 2016).

1.3.4 **Double consciousness**

Moore (2005) used history to describe the nature of the evolution of double consciousness. African-Americans have not experienced true independence where freedom from chattel slavery was not fought for but granted in the form of the Emancipation Proclamation; as a result, Moore (2005) contends that African-Americans have unconsciously inherited an omnipresent sense of inferiority to people of non-color or members of the dominant society. Gaines and Reed (1995) also discussed why African-Americans engage in double consciousness.

The authors argued that double-consciousness emerges in response to perceived bias against people of color. Because African-Americans are a cultural minority subgroup, they may face implicit and explicit socially determined labeling that is often punishing. These patterns of social interaction eventually promote the never-ending cycle of a self-perception of belonging to a cultural minority. Being Black is defined by more than just African-Americans. Or individual Black people, but by a societal process in a pluralistic environment (Gaines and Reed, 1995).

Given Westernization's power over Afrocentrism in the United States, a large part of what it means to be Black is built on assumptions, attitudes, and beliefs. As Ciccariello-Maher points out in her critique of the concept of double-consciousness, these

expectations appear as a "veil," or imagined obstacle to success (Ciccariello-Maher 2009). As a result of this curtain, it is practically impossible to compare an African-American person's existence in the United States to that of an American of European origin (Gaines and Reed 1995). Universally, the African-American develops into who he or she is in an environment in which many events, regardless of socioeconomic background, serve to brand this developing person as a subaltern (Ciccariello-Maher 2009; Brannon et al. 2015). As a result, the African-American develops this two-ness, or double-consciousness, in order to function in a constantly divided environment. This is the African-American experience, which remains "invisible" or nearly incomprehensible to mainstream society and in social psychology assessments of personality (Sue 2004).

Much of the present research on double-consciousness is theoretical and is based on the self-concept studies research paradigm (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015; Obasi 2002; Nobles 1973, Qtd in, Walker). Nobles (1973) described double-consciousness in African-Americans as a depiction of the African worldview and how it links to the self-concept. It was explained that many, if not most, Black people living in hegemonic society live their daily lives from a perspective that reflects their indigenous or African worldview (Nobles 1973; Parham and Parham 2002; Jenkins 1995), which differs from the Western worldview in many ways, particularly in terms of self-concept (Nobles 1973). According to Itzigsohn and Brown (2015), in our current racialized modern society, the aforementioned processes support the establishment of social identity, or self, whose growth is facilitated by interpersonal encounters.

The African worldview implies that when examining oneself, one looks at the dynamics of the collective "we" rather than the dynamics of distinct, independent people. This collective we, or sentiments of belonging to, as well as being the group, is critical to

understanding an African-American. It is important to emphasize that the Western idea of the self is defined in individualistic terms, implying that the self is what makes one uniquely unique or different from others (Obasi 2002; Parham and Parham 2002; Jenkins 1995 Nobles 1973). There is anxiety among African-Americans living in a hegemonic society when a cognitive organization emerges as a result of this collision of worldviews.

According to Nobles (1973), this clash may cause some people to modify their self-concept in order to fit in with the dominant culture. This may entail modifying one's self-concept or engaging and thinking in ways that are completely contradictory to one's current self through the internalization of societal perspectives. The push for this shift is provided by some form of "reward" or "recognition" (Itzigsohn and Brown 2015). Nobles (1973) emphasizes the difficulties of defining racial tension avoidance as a reward; then, the self may potentially strive to compromise components of their Black identity, resulting in negative emotions, which may arise in the dysfunctional usage of double-consciousness.

1.3.5 Psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis came to light by the end of the nineteenth century. It gives much importance to the relation between the unconsciousness and people's thought process, this means that psychoanalysis' main focus is to make a link between the unconscious mind and the mental state of people that are in a state of psychosis (whether they know of it or not).

Psychoanalysis is based on the works of Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud. He asserted that people's behavior is dictated by their unconsciousness. He also applied psychoanalysis techniques to his patients in order cure them of their mental illnesses. When it comes to psychoanalysis Freud coined most of the major terms that are used in psychoanalytic studies till recent times. Terms such as; the ego, the superego, the id, consciousness, unconsciousness, and others. At first, psychoanalysis only had a therapeutic

purpose, but later on, with the development of social and psychological sciences, it evolved into a theory of explaining the different relations between humans not only in real life but also in literature.

Psychoanalysis became a major critical theory. In literature psychoanalysis is applied at two different levels; the first is, at the author level. It attempts to study the author's psyche through psychoanalyzing his work and his life and studying the different events that occurred throughout his life, and how these are reflected in his work. The second level is at the level of the work itself; by analyzing the different characters and applying psychoanalysis to them to determine the state of mind of the characters. The application of psychoanalysis is done by studying the interactions between conscious and unconscious elements of the mind.

Psychoanalysis is more than just a field of medicine or psychology; it aids in the understanding of philosophy, culture, religion, and, most importantly, literature. In establishing his psychoanalytic theory, Sigmund Freud frequently linked it to art in general and literature in particular. Freud examined Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet* for Oedipal characteristics and the effects the plays had on their audiences in 'The Interpretation of Dreams.' Freud touched on the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis in his essay 'Creative Writers and Daydreaming.' In an attempt to understand creativity, he compared fantasy, play, dreams, and works of art in order to comprehend creativity. Freud initially presented his theory on the structure of the literary work and conducted psychoanalytic research into the nature of literature in 'creative writers and Daydreaming.' A literary work, according to Freud, is akin to a fantasy. The literary work, like a daydream, embodies in its fantasy the fulfillment of an unfulfilled want and so improves on an unsatisfactory reality. Psychoanalytic literary criticism may concentrate on one or more of the following topics:

- I. The author: The theory is applied to the author, his or her biography, and the literary output.
- II. The characters: When this theory is applied to one or more of the characters, it becomes a tool for explaining the characters' behavior and motivations.
- III. The audience: The theory is applied to explain the work's appeal to those who read it.
- IV. The text: The theory is used to examine the work's use of language and symbolism.

1.4 Review of related studies

Previous research has been conducted on *Invisible Man*; topics such as mental illnesses have been addressed by several other researchers. A chapter entitled “—And I Might Even Be Said to Possess a Mind”: Hibernation, Psychoanalysis, and Schizophrenia in *Invisible Man*. The writer of this chapter addresses topics such as Schizophrenia, form Disorder, and Double Consciousness, he argues if this is an ironic declaration meant to represent dominant assertions of inferiority and their inherent intimations of diminished cognitive potential for black people in America, or a muted interrogation of the self carried out by a nameless protagonist who must indeed question his capability for thought, reason, and rational action? Identity issues are central to this novel, reverberating through each episode and chapter, like shock waves from an explosion, but then returning, reverberating back to their point of origin upon contact with a matching force.

Another research conducted by William T. Simonson entitled “An Ivory Tower on the Outskirts of Town”. In this thesis, he examines a pair of protagonists and texts, Stephen Dedalus from James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and the unnamed protagonist-narrator from Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1953), to investigate how these protagonists are Othered as a result of their unconventional intellectualism, and how that Othering affects their progress toward self-actualization. He engages with theories of

language, intellect, intellectualism, and the role of the intellectual, particularly when he/she is a marginalized figure, drawing on writings by Jacques Lacan, Pierre Bourdieu, Edward Said, Hélène Cixous, Louis Althusser, and Richard Rorty, among others. He claims that by choosing self-imposed exile, these two Othered intellectuals leave the society of which they are products to occupy liminal spaces, outside of convention, from which they can function and be productive as intellectuals. Finally, he contends that their portrayals demonstrate that high intellectual pursuits have inherent and intrinsic value, if only for the intellectuals themselves.

1.5 Conclusion

Based on the information collected in this chapter we can conclude that; double consciousness in black men is the result of the imposed social image by the white majority on the black sub-group minority. Over time black people developed an unconscious sense of inferiority towards white men which made the black people wear different personalities, especially when dealing with white people. On the other hand; delusion of grandeur is a state of psychosis that is often neglected as it rarely leads to harmful action. Yet it could be an indication of more serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, dementia, bipolar disorder, and other serious mental illnesses. If that is the case this could be dangerous for both self and others. *Invisible Man* is the perfect work to conduct a psychoanalytical study concerning such mental illnesses in a work of literature.

Chapter Two: The Traumatic effect of Racial Oppression and The Engenderment of Grandiose Delusion and Double Consciousness

2.1 Introduction

In a multicultural American society where policies and politics of difference engender tension for the purpose of dominance, the literature will reflect the underlying racial oppression engendered by divisive policies. In the case of *Invisible Man*, this racial oppression engenders mental illnesses such as double consciousness, and delusion of grandeur, and depicts how trauma affects black people mentally. Which renders them passive towards social progression and self-development. Traumas and racial oppression are the main reasons for such mental illnesses, which are depicted in characters such as The Narrator, Dr. Bledsoe, Mr. Norton, and Ras The Exhorter. This chapter will attempt to shed light on racial oppression and trauma, and the mental illnesses it engenders in the mentioned characters.

2.2 Racial Oppression in *Invisible Man*

In *Invisible Man*, the narrator is a black man living in South America. As we all know, blacks are no longer slaves, but the ideology of slavery continues to poison them. The white are their lords in their minds. They must serve white men without reservation. The narrator endured a great deal of hardship during his college years. He followed the arrangement of the teachers at school and the rule of whites in the whites club. As he began to comprehend the world and himself, American racism and apartheid policies in the United States exacerbated the boy's alienation.

The spiritual shock occurred repeatedly during the narrator's growth process. The poor black adolescent kept asking himself, "Who am I?" What country am I from? How am I supposed to be a man? These were the most abstract questions, but they were also the most natural. During his development, the black youth became aware of the definitions of visibility and invisibility, and he repeatedly transformed himself from a visible man to an invisible

man. The author repeatedly presented the issue of racial discrimination based on the young's inner change.

In *Invisible Man*, we can see that the narrator's grandfather warned his family members that,

Son, after I am gone, I want you to keep up the good fight. I never told you, but our life is a war and I have been a traitor all my born days, a spy in the enemy's country ever since I give up my gun back in the reconstruction. Live with your head in the lion's mouth. I want you to overcome'em with yeses, undermine'em with grins, agree'em to death and destruction. Let'em swoller you till they vomit or bust wide open. Learn it to the younguns.(Ellison, p. 16)

We were struck by the narrator's grandfather's viewpoint. According to his grandfather, black should maintain two identities. On the one hand, they should pretend to be good slaves, acting in accordance with their former masters' wishes. On the other hand, they must remember their resentment and bitterness and fight against this imposed false identity. That was a common way for blacks to deal with racial discrimination. They only wanted to protect them yet never fought for their rights or identity. We can see from his perspective that racial discrimination in America had a significant impact on black people.

The black knew they were bitter and resentful, but they couldn't change reality. As a result, they must wear a mask in order to protect themselves and live a better life in this unfair world. We can see in the narrator's growth process that the narrator emphasised submission and humility as the keys to black Americans' advancement. They desired equal human rights in order to be considered true Americans, but a series of grave insults made them realize that they had paid a high price for them. Moreover, even though the view that all men are created equal was put forth, it appeared that whites were more equal than black.

After being expelled from college, the narrator began to integrate into society. He took the bus to New York. Even though the bus was empty, we can see that the narrator, as a black man, could only sit at the far end of the row. He ran into the vet he met on Golden Day. The vet expressed his feelings about this society's situation to the narrator, claiming that it was extremely unjust to black people. We can see from the vet's words that the black man does not have the same level of freedom as the white man. The vet also demonstrated racial discrimination, but he was treated as a mentally ill patient. And before the vet got off, he gave the narrator some advice. In the vet's opinion, the black should learn to be their own master.

This kind of opinion was especially important for black men. However, the narrator did not understand the meaning of the vet's words at the time. He was so sure of himself when he arrived in New York. He desired to be recognized for his efforts and struggle. He desired to be a visible man and to achieve social standing in this industrial society. He believed that by working hard, he could realize his own worth. He went to a paint factory with the assistance of Emerson, the son of a trustee. When the narrator entered the factory, he believed he could make his dream come true.

When he entered the paint factory, he noticed a large electric sign that read, "Keep America Pure With Liberty Paint." He was pleased with everything in the factory; the working environment was relaxed, and people of different races coexisted. The paint factory was called Liberty, and it produced the whitest paint in the United States. But the process of creating this type of paint was so meaningful. To combine, they needed ten drops. That was similar to American society, where this type of white could not be produced without the help of blacks.

The contribution of blacks to American prosperity and development cannot be separated. Sometimes people only see the final white, just like the paint, but they forget how it got so white. "Our white is so white you can paint a chunk coal and you would have to

crack it open with a sledgehammer to prove it was not white clear through," (Ellison, p.195). This sentence's meaning accurately reflected the black's situation. White culture, in the eyes of the white, can assimilate black culture just as coal can be painted with white paint. Only the white can be seen from the surface. If someone wanted to see the inner color of the coal, he had to break it with a hammer. The hammer stood for the power the black searches for. The way how to produce the white paint demonstrated the way of this society.

He worked hard in this factory, but he wasn't very good at it. He tainted the white paint, turning it grey and sticky. As a result, he was assigned to work in the basement. He had a disagreement with his boss and the labor union. During his conflict with his master, an elderly black man, the narrator began to reflect on his humility. During this time, the narrator delivered an important monologue. This monologue's content was that he was being trained to be a humble man who should bear almost everything. Even if they bullied you at times, the only thing you could do was leave. His monologue reflected the black man's current situation.

The narrator was injured while working in the factory as a result of a boiler explosion. When the narrator was admitted to the hospital, white doctors treated him as a test subject. He wanted to leave the hospital, but the electric shocks made that impossible. He had no choice but to lie down on the bed. When the doctor inquired as to his name, he discovered that he had transformed into a true invisible man. He was unable to return to the paint factory after leaving the hospital. Furthermore, we can see that it was difficult for an injured black man to find work in the American industrial society.

The narrator suffered greatly in industrial society, but no one noticed his pain and numbness. It appeared that he was in another world. He can see every act and movement of the white men, but they don't notice him. He'd been labeled "invisible." The experience in the paint factory taught the narrator that even in this ostensibly free environment of the factory, he cannot change his status as an invisible man. He was not in a free environment. The

American Dream he carried on is both beautiful and fragile, and it would shatter if it came into contact with reality. The narrator began to consider the issue of his dream. But, he finally found that all his thoughts were pipe dreams, he was just an invisible man.

2.3 Trauma Experiences in *Invisible Man*

The invisible man was an honest man who wanted to be noticed by others, so he tried to create himself based on the values instilled in him by his school education. He was taken to the white club to join a fight between black boys and forced to crawl over an electric blanket to grab the coin. His speech in the club earned him a scholarship to a black college. The protagonist regarded the college president, Dr. Bledsoe, as an idol and was always deferential to him. However, when he was mistakenly assigned to take Mr. Norton's whiteboard to the slum, he made him see the dirty and messy side of the black. To punish him, Dr. Bledsoe pretends to write reference letters for him in order for him to find work, but in reality, makes him never find work. The invisible man displayed the following symptom after experiencing these traumas as a college student:

2.3.1 Hyperarousal

"After a traumatic experience, the human self-preservation system appears to go into permanent alert, as if the danger could reappear at any time." (Herman, 2015, p.35), Hyperarousal is the first symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder. The protagonist displayed this symptom when he attended the white social gathering. During white social gatherings, the invisible man rushed up to the front of the ballroom, where a magnificent blonde stood. However, the protagonist experienced fear, as described by the author in this book: "A lot of cold chilled me." "I was overcome with irrational guilt and fear." My teeth chattered, my skin turned goose flesh, and my knees shook." (Ellison, p.24)

Even though no danger appeared, he felt a sense of cold and fear as if danger was approaching. He could tell the blonde had a bad experience and felt powerless. The fear in

her eyes was almost identical to the fear he had felt and found in some of his companions, according to the invisible man. Those who have previously experienced trauma will be reminded of their own trauma at the sight of others' suffering. Furthermore, "traumatic patients, in Herman's opinion, will feel guilty when they witness the suffering or death of others" (Herman, 2015). As a result, when the invisible man saw the blonde, he felt guilty and afraid.

According to Herman,

patients' bodies are constantly on the lookout for danger, and they have an extreme startle reaction to unexpected stimuli, as well as an intense reaction to specific stimuli associated with the traumatic event. A traumatic person is always on high alert, as the protagonist was as a worker (Herman, 2015).

During his time at the Liberty Paints plant, the invisible man was careful not to offend the foreman Kimbro. When Kimbro checked the paint he stirred, he noticed something was off and suspected Kimbro, like Dr. Bledsoe, of defrauding him. "Trauma patients are constantly on high alert for fear of being hurt again" (Herman, 2015). Invisible man was so afraid of the white man Kimbro scolding or punishing him that when his work was checked, he became nervous and timid. The invisible man's attitude toward Kimbro represents a black man's fear of confronting a white man.

2.3.2 Intrusion

"Long after the danger has passed," Herman writes, "traumatized people relive the event as if it were constantly recurring in the present." (Herman, 2015, p.37), It is the second symptom of traumatic stress disorder, the intrusion, that he encounters with Mr. Norton. Mr. Norton lost consciousness again in "the Golden Day" due to the pushing and shoving of others. An unnamed man was pushed into Mr. Norton's body, and his face filled the protagonist with dread. He had never been so close to the white before and was terrified of

the "white ghost." In the protagonist's mind, they had to obey the white in order to be recognized, and they had grown accustomed to suffering from them. Mr. Norton's face reminded him of what he had suffered and experienced in the past, as he had never dared to be close to the white. Because of how terrifying his memory of the white is, even the white's face will make him feel the same way. He displayed the intrusion symptom at this time.

Reviving a traumatic experience, whether through memories, dreams, or actions, carries with it the emotional intensity of the original event, according to Herman. Terror and rage constantly buffet the survivor (Herman, 2015). After being transferred to work in the basement, the invisible man inadvertently entered the workers' conversation. As before, he felt slighted and ignored by these workers, which irritated him. "The sudden change puzzled and enraged me, as if they were making me the butt of the joke of a joke." (Ellison, p.259).

"Here in this room, my defenses were negated, stripped away, and checked at the door as the country boys' weapons, razors, and pistols were checked on Saturday night at the Golden Day." (Ellison, p.261). In this place, the invisible man was once again ignored and humiliated by others. He felt hated by everyone here, which reminded him of how he had lived his entire life with hostility. He was angry at the time, but there was nothing he could do.

2.3.3 Constriction

Constriction is the third major symptom of PTSD. "When a person is completely powerless, and any form of resistance is futile," Herman writes, "she may enter a state of surrender." (Herman, 2015, p.42). He will feel numb and helpless at that point. With Dr. Bledsoe's recommendation letter, the invisible man traveled to New York in search of work. After several letters failed to elicit the desired response, he became fearful for no apparent reason. His grandfather appeared in his dream that night, giving him the impression that he

was involved in a plot devised by Dr. Bledsoe and Mr. Norton. Later, knowing the truth, a recipient of the letter gave him the letter to read.

He was depressed and sat on the bed, laughing. "I laughed and felt numb and weak, knowing that soon the pain would come and that no matter what happened to me, I'd never be the same," the author described (Ellison, p.225). At that point, the man will become numb and realize he is not the same person he was before. The invisible man was looking for work, hopefully with the help of Dr. Bledsoe. One day, he discovered that his hope and expectation had collapsed and that he had been cheated all along, and all the wounds he had suffered came upon him. Of course, he felt helpless and numb, which indicated constriction.

When a traumatic patient exhibits the symptom of constriction, he may no longer feel fear, but reality is constantly distorted, even if he appears to return to normal life (Herman, 2015). After the workshop exploded, the invisible man was hospitalized as an experiment. Despite his pain, doctors are conducting experiments. "I was no longer afraid," he said after being released from the hospital. Not of important men, trustees, or others; knowing that there was nothing I could expect from them, there was no reason to be afraid." (Ellison, 1995, p.295).

He was no longer afraid of others at the time. After enduring so many traumas, the invisible man mutated into a zombie and began to doubt his identity. "We, he, him — my mind and I were no longer going around in the same circles," he said, switching between sobriety and confusion (Ellison, p.295). Traumatic events can be an effective trigger for entering a trance state. At the time, the traumatized invisible man had become numb and absent-minded as a result of his traumatic experience.

2.4 Double Consciousness Reflected in *Invisible Man*

Invisible Man is a rich work of art that dramatizes double consciousness in an unprecedented way. The novel can be viewed as an attempt to completely rethink the concept

of double-consciousness. What appears authentic about *Invisible Man* concerning this concept is that its author has dramatized the concept in a way that provides a resolution to the tension of the African-American "warring souls." *Invisible Man* is the work that has reflected Du Bois' concept of double-consciousness. The novel is structured as a prologue, twenty-five chapters, and an epilogue; however, while the prologue and epilogue are set in the present, the twenty-five chapters are set in the past and are reminisced about by the narrator in his hole. His decision to live underground is based on his previous frustrating experiences, which have turned him from innocence to initiation.

This journey is a search for identity that has subjected him to various forms of humiliation and self-effacement by people who don't realize his uniqueness. Part of the narrator's misfortune is due to his double-consciousness, which endows him with two selves, whose successful fusion is not always guaranteed. Throughout the novel's first stages, the narrator has always sacrificed his individuality to accommodate the preferences of others; his flaw was that he did not succeed in merging successfully his two selves, his two warring souls, to use Du Bois' language.

Invisible Man is a work in which Du Bois' two warring souls finally find harmony, turning double-consciousness into an asset. Ellison concludes his novel *Invisible Man* by allowing his protagonist to resolve the tension between his two opposing selves of double-consciousness. Ellison expresses the novel's central theme of double-consciousness in a variety of ways, causing the concept to reverberate throughout the entire novel. Liminality is a prominent feature of the novel that emphasizes double-consciousness. Interest in liminality has contributed to shedding some light on a spatiotemporal stage that has long been forgotten. The term liminality, which is derived from the Latin word *limen*, which means "boundary" or "threshold," was coined by the French folklorist Arnold van Gennep, who used it in his 1909 book *Rites de Passage*. However, Victor Turner, a British anthropologist, was

the one who later developed the concept in his book *The Forest of Symbols: Ndembu Ritual Aspects* (1967).

With this latter, the term gained much breadth through its wide application to a variety of recent research fields. Turner divides liminality into three stages: 'preliminal,' 'liminal,' and 'postliminal,' and contends that the liminal, or central,' stage is the most critical of the three because it denotes a 'betwixt and between' phase. The significance of the liminal phase stems from the liminal persona's position has left one state but has not yet entered another, as best exemplified by Robert J. Butler's declaration that "liminality describes the ' betwixt and between' phase of rites of passage when an individual has left one fixed social status but has not yet been incorporated into another." This liminality, as Victor Turner puts it, or boundary maintenance, as Frederic Barth puts it, pervades the entire novel. Because of its volatility, it is a source of instability. It belongs to two sides whose borders are so murky that distinguishing between them is as difficult as separating the narrator's two hermetically sealed selves.

A close reading of *Invisible Man* reveals the novel to be an endless series of liminalities. These liminalities, which pervade the novel, are intended to reflect doubleness in general and the narrator's double-consciousness in particular. The unnamed inchoate narrator is constantly torn between two poles throughout the novel. He is involved in a new position as soon as he flees the previous one. To begin, the story of the Invisible Man takes place between a prologue and an epilogue, which serve as the novel's borders. According to Berndt Ostendorf, "the novel's Prologue and Epilogue could be read, both in form and content, as essays on liminality and transition." The hole serves as the prologue's starting point, and it serves as the epilogue's ending point. The prologue and epilogue provide the novel with two liminalities, the first at the beginning of the novel introducing the reader to the novel and providing information about the narrator, and the second dealing with the Invisible Man's prospects of social reintegration following a period of hibernation.

However, while the prologue and epilogue formally serve the purpose of framing the novel, each plays a radically different, if not opposing, role in the overall meaning of the novel. Though identical, the narrator in the prologue is vastly different from the one in the epilogue, who has undergone a process of initiation, emphasizing the significance of these two sections in understanding the novel's message, which is heavily reliant on the protagonist's transition, maturity, and growth. In summary, the prologue and epilogue depict the Invisible Man in his final stage, but the former explains the motivations and causes of the narrator's hibernation, while the latter suggests an almost final resolution. It should be noted that both the prologue and the epilogue take place after the events of the novel. Because they share the same temporal aspect, namely the present time, the prologue and epilogue can be superimposed, emphasizing simultaneity and doubleness.

The narrator's double-consciousness has taken on new meaning in his underground haven, which serves as a sanctuary because he is situated in an invisible, placeless place where he has the opportunity to tune his two selves together so that he can adequately fulfill his social roles. The protagonist is placed in a border area, what Mary Louise Pratt refers to as "the contact zone," to emphasize his duality and, as a result, to erase the borders between the two spheres that are at the root of White segregationist behavior, a condition that has a significant impact on the physical and psychological fate of the black man.

Ellison's "Invisible Man" is a difficult character to grasp. His identity is constantly in flux. The "Invisible Man's" invisibility has a dual value; it is due to his attempt to gain a sense of African and American aspects of his identity. However, the identity of the "Invisible Man" is contradictory because, if identity is existential (affirming one's existence by defining one's essential self), then this definition presupposes a constant world. However, because the Invisible Man lives in a capricious, illusory world, he is unable to be seen, and his existence

is distorted in an unpredictable, illusory world. As a result, he creates an identity that orders the clamor of the outside world.

The story's search for identity is based on the narrator's need to express to us an account that establishes his identity as an invisible man. The first sentence of the book could not be clearer: "I am an invisible man." The actions and depictions of the Invisible Man will help to determine his identity. It is also worth noting that, according to Ellison, meaning and history are not fixed, and thus it is up to the culture or individual to change rather than simply accepting their identity as a given. Concerning the text of the Invisible Man, it is necessary to consider the histories and narratives that the Invisible Man employs to establish his identity.

Also, what events cause him to believe that these narratives are insufficient for establishing his identity? Ellison may be implying that identity is fundamentally constructed and that in order to have an authentic identity, one must construct it themselves, mindful of how larger social institutions will seek to establish a narrative that determines one's identity for them otherwise. This, in turn, incorporates African-American perspectives and heritages in the formation of identity. As a result, identity becomes a mash-up of various influences and histories, and it is up to the individual to forge their own identity. However, Ellison recognizes the specific struggle of blacks in America and its impact on their identity.

Race is an important factor in identity formation, particularly in America, but Ellison's formation reveals how social institutions interact with individual development and history rather than a straightforward naturalism. His story takes on a Bildungsroman structure as he progresses from naiveté about the world to ultimate knowledge about the false identities imposed by society. The novel's early identity formulations demonstrate the power of social institutions and historical narratives shaped by the dominant culture. The concept of Double Consciousness frames the story.

Invisible Man's history is framed by his grandfather's Double Consciousness, who advises him to "undermine the system while pretending to uphold it: 'I want you to overcome 'em with yeses, undermine 'em with grins, agree 'em to death and destruction, let 'em swoller you till they vomit or bust wide open... 'learn it to the younguns.'" (Ellison, 16). The grandfather's advice to deceive and mislead assumes a power structure from which Blacks are unable to escape, and thus their involvement necessitates a social identity distinct from their genuine beliefs and feelings. As a result, Invisible Man's education and disposition for understanding the world come from a culture that suggests one cannot have a true identity.

This worries Invisible Man because he is so confident in his American identity and his ability to succeed in American society. The issue of Double Consciousness provides a lens through which to examine Invisible Man's story as a reaction to understanding his African-American heritage in a white-dominated society where Black people could not infiltrate without concealing their African identity. The mask then becomes his identity. Invisible Man initially struggles to build his social identity by relying on the principles of American idealism. His opportunity to give a speech at the club represents a significant step toward his becoming an ideal American.

The inconsistency between his idealistic beliefs and his unethical treatment at the hands of his rich white benefactors is predicated on his belief that his eventual compensation will compensate for the overwhelming shame he has suffered. This is Invisible Man at his most naive, and the treatment he receives exemplifies a society that will not consider him equal, which means he will not have access to the opportunities he believes are guaranteed to him. He transforms into the image of the town's elite, just like the other battle royal contestants he assumed he was superior to due to his level of education and accomplishments, fighting for scarce resources provided by a white ruling class that disregards the humanity of its black citizens and regards them all as subordinate.

This is his first instance of invisibility, as he is not celebrated, acknowledged, or even heard by the audience for his academic achievements. This is Invisible Man's take on American identity, one shaped by the country's democratic history, but his role in society will never be recognized because the white dominant group refuses to acknowledge his sacrifice in the pursuit of a larger presence. This can be seen in the way they assert their dominance and control over an environment by dispensing seemingly insignificant sums of money in exchange for the entertainment and amusement of watching the penniless fight aimlessly over the "opportunity" to advance themselves.

He is naive in believing that he will eventually be repaid; this reflects the fact that his identity is rooted more in assimilating to American culture while suppressing his Black heritage. This episode's hyperbolic and surreal effect suggests that it is more of a metaphor for his experiences as a black man in white southern culture, a developing developmental theme of the inadequacy of social institutions and structures. We must see the Invisible Man as a historian from the start. Invisible Man aspires to write a history that accounts for those who are frequently left out of history, but there is also the risk that he is writing history to accommodate or portray things in a particular light as well.

The motif is most obvious when Invisible Man takes Mr. Norton, a white college benefactor, for a drive and runs into Jim Trueblood. This event brings him to his first real question of identity and its role in being shaped by institutional structures, as these moments establish the contingency of truth and propel Invisible Man into uncertainty. Trueblood's narrative also represents the ability to establish your own truth, as well as the narrator's ability to use existing social institutions and histories to make sense of his story. He, like Invisible Man, exists outside of current culture and society. Trueblood's role as a foil for the Invisible Man is emphasized further by the fact that the Invisible Man regards him as primitive and beneath him due to his "Negro" influenced cultural heritage.

“We were embarrassed by the earthly harmonies they sang...How all of us at the college hated the black-belt people, the ‘peasants’ during those days! We were trying to lift them up and they, like Trueblood, did everything it seemed to pull us down” (Ellison, 47). The irony is obvious here, as Invisible Man adopted the same hegemony as the white town leaders who saw him as inferior. Invisible Man attempted to distinguish and distance himself from this culture because he believed it was the source of his limitations and that school represented a genuine opportunity for him to succeed. Trueblood characterizes a history that both Invisible Man and Norton view with modern detachment; as if the history of slavery in America has become nostalgic, they discuss the slavery roots of Trueblood's housing area. Trueblood appears to represent both a vernacular outside of modern perspectives and a southern heritage intimately linked to African-American history in *The Invisible Man's* narrative.

Invisible Man's experience in the South prepares him for another chance to define himself in the North. Invisible Man, in relocating to the North, retains his optimism and trust in American social and political structures, believing that he is undertaking to create an identity consistent with his original conception of social mobility and success. However, when he arrives in the North, he is quickly rebuked and finally departs from this initial understanding of his identity when he is told that his perception of reality has deceived him. This is a significant blow to the Invisible Man's identity.

The brotherhood experience represents the most promising identity. When "Invisible Man" begins his job as a speaker, he steps into an identity that he believes suits him because it builds on his previous knowledge, bridging the gap between his academic education, which he believed would place him higher in society, and his real-world education, which disillusioned him and caused him to become socially conscious. The Brotherhood renames and defines him as a spokesperson for their purposes. Invisible Man is initially perplexed by

this. "It's very strange, I thought, but things are so unreal for them normally that they believe that to call a thing by name is to make it so. And yet I am what they think I am..." (Ellison, 379).

The invisible man observes how reality's conditions are illusory; a postmodern critique of the modern world in which the sign becomes reality; the community is led to believe that the signs of things are things in themselves. As a result, existence is also illusory. Nothing has a true essence; simply naming something transforms it into that thing. Even though the invisible man is aware of this, he is unable to escape this illusory reality. He is unable to define himself outside of his reality. While the ability to simply change your name and adopt a new persona is false and fatally transitory. He believes that this persona accurately reflects the need for community and the current reality to define identity. His identity is founded on a fictitious reality. As a result, reality and identity are determined by the community.

He is being seen, but it is not his true essence, because there can be no "true essence" in an illusory and changing world where identity is shaped in part by that world. Because this is the most overtly political and social identity, it is also the most direct critique of both modernist and Afro-social movements and narratives. The Brotherhood demonstrates how the social structure, with whites as the dominant group, makes blacks ashamed of their cultural heritage. When a party guest stereotypes Invisible Man and asks him to sing a "spiritual," he disrespects and delegitimizes African-American artistry and cultural heritage.

This alludes to a larger issue in the novel about how one uses one's heritage to define oneself and how delegitimizing vernacular forms of expression through stereotyping can alienate oneself from one's own history and culture. This episode demonstrates how the minority culture's identity problem is always subsumed by the dominant culture through subtle incidents that affect individuals on a psychic level. Spirituals are associated with a

second-class identity and status, making them a taboo rather than a potential form of identity and creative expression. It eliminates a potential opportunity for identity formation because the spirituals have been transformed from their original artistic legitimacy and appropriated into a stereotype.

However, Invisible Man's identity with the Brotherhood is ultimately destroyed because it was a mask given to him by the Brotherhood. While attempting to free him, the brotherhood makes him more invisible. When he begins to assert some of his own uniqueness, the Brotherhood chastises him. At first, he is unaware that this institution's ideologies and authorities are manipulating his identity in the same way that previous institutions have. He believes in the narrative and ideology of this system with the same zeal as he did in his earlier American idealism, and he believes he has discovered a true American reality. Ironically, just as Invisible Man is determined to discover reality, he is duped into believing an illusionary narrative of a social institution.

In this institution, Invisible Man recognizes his invisibility when he realizes that the Brotherhood does not care about individuals, particularly the people he thought he was helping in Harlem, but only about a larger cause, and thus their reality is illusory as well as dependent on total commitment to ideology. "Here I had thought they accepted me because they felt that color made no difference when in reality they didn't see either color or men" (Ellison, 508). While Invisible Man recognizes the illusion, he continues to use the social justice narrative and cause to define himself, eulogizing Tod Clifton and forming some of his own relationships while following his grandfather's advice of "yessing them to death."

Invisible Man withdraws from society because the social institutions available to him do not allow him to define himself due to false ideologies that provide their justification for power. Invisible Man finds a space where he can create his own meaning and establish an identity outside of the influences of social institutions' shaping of narrative by dropping out

of society. He constructs his own narrative and ironic identity to define himself, and because he is invisible, he cannot be defined by the illusionary realities he has encountered. This solves his identity problem because his invisibility allows him fluidity in that he never establishes an existence dependent on the world and thus is not subject to the malleability of the external.

"When he decides to write his own story, he disregards the meaning provided by other ideologies in favor of one that is primarily self-generated." The novelistic *The Invisible Man* demonstrates that we can never completely escape our history and heritage, nor is it the message that we should. The *Invisible Man* is able to create an identity that allows him to be the agent by using narratives of history, America, Southern "Negro" heritage, and Bildungsroman. The fact that it is framed as *Invisible* demonstrates how America's and Modernity's outside culture and society produce illusionary realities and consuming narratives that are unable to recognize the individual human in his particularity.

2.5 Delusion of Grandeur Reflected in *Invisible Man*

Mr. Norton is a northern white man who founded and financially supports the southern Negro college that the narrator attends in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952). The narrator inadvertently drives the northern, white philanthropist through the backwash of the college community and is thus expelled from the edenic campus environment. Mr. Norton serves as a structural springboard for launching the *Invisible Man* on his quest for knowledge and self-identity. It should be noted, however, that Norton is not the philanthropist he appears to be. He is motivated by self-interest and guilt. He has psychologically and mentally raped his own daughter, if not physically (as Trueblood did), and his philanthropy to Blacks has become a monument to her memory.

Norton also suffers from grandiose delusions. He sees himself as a god directing the affairs of Black people, whom he despises. "That has been my real life's work, not my

banking or my research, but my first-hand organization of human life," he says of his involvement with the college. His philanthropy is merely a cover for controlling the fates of others. Norton, in his arrogance, regards himself as a master builder. "if you become a good farmer, a chef, a preacher, doctor, singer, mechanic—whatever you become, and even if you fail, you are my fate". (Ellison, 40)

He repeatedly reminds the Invisible Man that black people are associated with his "fate," his "destiny." However, it should be remembered that it is the Mr. Nortons of America who are responsible for the Golden Day, the human zoo located on the college community's outskirts. Many of the Golden Day's patients (political prisoners) are doctors, lawyers, teachers, civil servants, preachers, politicians, and artists. The Black men detained in this mental facility represent the breadth of human endeavor. They, like the Invisible Man, were most likely educated by other Nortons at this Black college or other Black colleges. However, once Blacks were educated and began to compete in the mainstream, the metaphorical Nortons herded them into institutions out of fear of the talented, intellectually competent professionals they had created. In short, all of the country's Mr. Nortons are self-righteous delusional hypocrites.

The second example that represents grandiose delusion is Ras. Ras the Exhorter (later Ras the Destroyer) represents the nationalistic view of African Americans in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952). Ras serves as a foil to the narrator, whereas the narrator seeks an integrated universe, Ras's primary concern is nation-building for Black Americans. As a result of his experiences, the narrator suspects any exclusive organization or group. He believes that Blacks who do not integrate into society are "outside of history," and he dismisses Ras's nationalist rhetoric as nonsense. Marcus Garvey has been linked to Ras. Both the fictional character and the historical figure share a compelling vision of Black nationalism, and they both advocated for social justice for Blacks.

Ras, riding a great black horse through the streets of riot-torn Harlem, is "dressed in the costume of an Abyssinian Chieftain." Ras is also an abbreviation for Rastafarian, a Jamaican religious group whose members trace their ancestors back to Ethiopia and Haile Selassie. When Ras calls on Blacks to unite, he, like Garvey, is not limited to Harlem; he is pleading for nationalism throughout the Black diaspora. While Ellison (via the narrator) may dismiss Black nationalism as disruptive, Ras stands as a symbol of the malignant force that results from America's blindness (blindness represented in the organization of the brotherhood and in Mr. Norton's philanthropy) to the needs of the black community.

While Ras is a strong character in the novel, Ellison's use of comics undermines his dignity and makes him appear clownish at times. Ellison uses the comic to downplay his regality even in scenes where he appears majestic. Despite Ras's proud demeanor on this occasion, Ellison describes him as having "a haughty, vulgar dignity." Instead of being robbed in the skin of a lion or a leopard, as is customary for African royalty, Ras wears a cape "made from the skin of some wild animal," which makes Ras appear wild. Ras's appearance is "real, alive, and alarming," but the narrator insists it was "more out of a dream than out of Harlem."

Ellison's portrayal of Ras foreshadows the negative images of the West Indian male and depicts grandiose delusion perfectly. However, elements of the surreal and comic pervade the novel, and Ras suffers no more than other characters from Ellison's pen.

You my brother, mahn. Brothers are the same color; how the hell you call these white men brother? Shit, mahn. That's shit! Brothers the same color. We sons of Mama Africa, you done forgot? You black, BLACK! You — Godahm, mahn!... You African. AFRICAN! Why you with them? Leave that shit, mahn. They sell you out. That shit is old-fashioned. They enslave us — you forget that? How can they mean a black mahn any good? How they going to be your brother? ... What you trying to deny by betraying the black people? Why you fight against us? You young fellows. You young black men with plenty education; I been hearing

your rabble rousing. Why you go over to the enslaver? What kind of education is that? What kind of black mahn is that who betray his own mama? (Ellison, 370–71).

In this conversation Ras is addressing brother Clifton and encouraging him to join his side for the segregation and power of the black people, which is the epitome of grandiose delusion.

Dr. Bledsoe personifies manipulation and deception. He not only opposes the black population, but he also opposes the people who gave him his position, the whites. This man is completely delusory, believing that he controls the trustees rather than the other way around. His ideas are flawed because he fails to recognize that, no matter how many times he tells himself, he did not grant himself this power. The trustees granted him power because they are the ones who truly have power. He admits to acting up in front of "big white folks" on occasion (Ellison, 142). If he truly possessed all of the power he claims, he would not need to pretend to the white people. However, Bledsoe assures the narrator that he does have power and that, while white people may "tell everybody what to think," they cannot control him because of his alleged power. Bledsoe's illusion of power and superiority complex is not his only flaw.

Because he has control over the white and black populations, he believes he can treat everyone else as inferiors. This is evident throughout Dr. Bledsoe's conversation with the narrator, in which he tells him of the heinous crimes against humanity he would inflict on anyone who dared to defy him. He stated that he would lynch all other blacks if they ever stood in his way of power, even though the deed is part of his own ancestry. Ironically, Dr. Bledsoe tells the narrator that he is tearing the race apart when he is the one who is going against his people through his threats. Dr. Bledsoe would not be the villain he is if his malice ended here.

He goes even further, admitting that he betrays the white trustees. This vile man claims to be in command of them. He is the one who exposes them to the things he wants

them to see. He makes it appear as if he founded the very institution he is a part of. However, as previously stated, it was the trustees who allowed him to rise to power, and it is their decision to fire him if they so desire. To add to his long list of transgressions, it is later revealed that the letters of recommendation he gives the narrator are letters of defamation. This act demonstrates that he has no intention of assisting people of his race and that, despite his criticism of the narrator for not bringing honor to the black race, he and others like him were the reason that the fight for equality was so long and tedious.

Dr. Bledsoe represents Booker T. Washington because they both believe that black people should remain in their proper place, which is below the white population. Dr. Bledsoe worked tirelessly to achieve a high standing at the college while attending. He believes that the black population must stay where they are for him to be where he is—a higher position than they are in. This is similar to Booker T. Washington's belief that black people must surrender their civil and political rights to the whirlwind. The two are similar in that they both try to keep the black population down so that white people can live peacefully alongside them.

2.6 Conclusion

One traumatic event after the other, starting from the college to the paint factory to the brotherhood, and lastly to Harlem Riots the Invisible Man developed an inward twoness in his dealings with the blacks, and the whites with a profound difference. These traumas made the Invisible Man unable to visualize his identity. This inability made him delusional with unrealistic goals such as; solely making a radical change in the black society, by creating different versions of himself in which he attends to the needs of his oppressors whether black or white. The secondary characters are no more different than our narrator. From Dr. Bledsoe to Mr. Norton, to Ras, and Brother Jack, all of these characters were delusional whether with gaining power over both black and white people, thinking that one is responsible for the

whole black community, to going back to Africa and starting a new nation. They all were delusional with the thought that they possess unhuman-like powers to make a change. Double consciousness and delusion of grandeur, were the main cause for all the horrific events in *Invisible Man*. Therefore, we can claim that these mental illnesses caused the deteriorating state of black people.

General Conclusion

This work aimed to identify how can racial oppression give rise to mental illnesses and to what extent the latter leads to the deterioration of black people. Based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of racial discrimination and traumatic events in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, it can be concluded that mental illnesses such as grandiose delusion, and double consciousness. Which are a direct result of mental trauma and racial discrimination that impede black people from achieving their purpose, and goals in their lives. The results of this research indicate that grandiose delusion and inward-twoness could render black people unable to achieve a full human identity. Which in turn, hinders them from attaining an equal social status as that of the white people.

This research clarifies how can racial discrimination give rise to mental illnesses and to what extent the latter leads to the deterioration of black people. Yet, also raises the question of mental trauma that is caused by racial oppression and, and how it is linked to mental illnesses such as delusion of grandeur and double consciousness. Characters such as the Invisible Man, and Ras the Exhorter are the representation of a black man suffering under racial oppression. Which brings both characters to face traumatic events such as the paint factory incident and the battle royal in front of a white audience. These traumatic events force the Invisible Man to develop an inward-twoness as a way to deal with future traumatic experiences as such. As for Ras, racial oppression turns him into a savage that leads his followers into the Harlem Race Riots with the delusional thought of taking the black community back to Africa.

By way of conclusion, racial oppression and discrimination engenders double consciousness and delusion of grandeur in black people. We also come up with a link between these mental illnesses and the decadent state of black people. As can be seen in

Ellison's usage of Dr. Bledsoe as a black leader deluded with grandiosity. Such leaders in the black community do more to harm the black people than to help them. As seen in the way he sends the Invisible Man to New York with letters of defamation which renders him unable to get a job. In a word, we can say that racial oppression causes mental trauma. Which causes GD and DC. These in turn are the main reason for the decadent state of the black people. Last but not least, this work fills in the gap of the little amount of research conducted on grandiose delusion, and double consciousness and how it affects black people.

List of acronyms and Terminology

PTSD: Post Stress Trauma Disorder

GDS: Grandiose Delusions

DC: Double Consciousness

Liminalities: Boundary or Threshold

Prologue: the introduction to a book

Epilogue: the ending to a book

inward -twoness: double consciousness

Decadence: a state of deterioration

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