

UNNAMING AS A PROTEST AGAINST INVISIBILITY IN RALPH ELLISON'S INVISIBLE MAN AND RICHARD WRIGHT'S NATIVE SON

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Abstract

*This investigation will highlight education as the basic factor which triggers social stratification. In a given society as the case between blacks and whites, skin color means less in social disparities while literacy does. It is at the beginning of the process of domination and alienation. This article aims to show that education triggers social classification and permits the rich to dominate the poor. As study field, I will fetch my argumentation in Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man* (1952) and Richard Wright's *Native Son* (2018). And on the basis of irony as rhetoric figure mainly used by Ralph Ellison and the naturalism used by Richard Wright, the article aims to reveal how through the process of unnaming, both novelists have combated and denounced the grounding presence of invisibility in their community. This lack of education triggers domination, exclusion and exploitation.*

Keywords: *unnaming, education, exclusion, alienation, invisibility.*

Introduction

Being without being, is what Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright diagnose through the process of unnaming their characters in their respective works, *Invisible Man* and *Native Son*. This diagnosis reveals facts and aspects around which their complaints were built. Invisibility echoes in both writers' works and copes with the notions of domination and alienation they developed in their works. Being without being, is the fact of denying one's, his financial, political and social existence. It generates the social stratification namely poor and rich. What is the basic element that triggers invisibility and what are the drawbacks of such social plague? These are the questions that the article aims to elaborate on so that to bring about the upper class' (white people) domination over the lower class (black people). On the base of Karl Marx's concept of class conflict, they have depicted alienation major facts which are timeless matters for the world when taking into account the period, of publication of their novels till now. There is a total social stratification in both novels due to

an unbalanced educational background. The whites' supremacist ideology and domination are due to black people's illiteracy. This social discrepancy is veiled by the use of irony in *Invisible Man* and it is portrayed with naturalism in *Native Son*. To make meaningful the concept of invisibility, the article will evolve in two parts. It will tackle first of all how education is a source of enlightenment in the first part and in the second part, will follow the consequences of illiteracy which are exclusion exploitation, dehumanization.

I. Education as a Source of Enlightenment

Negro Americans are in desperate search for an identity. Rejecting the second class status assigned them, they feel alienated and their whole lives become a search for answers to the questions: who am I, what am I, why am I, and where (R. Bone 1958, p.297).

Without a clear response to these questions bring about a void, an invisibility. This extract reveals the profound reasons of unnamning the main character of the novel. When scrutinized his complaints through the process of unnamming evolves around a point which triggers the narrator's alienation. And this point is education.

Manning Marable, in his novel, *How Capitalism Underdeveloped Black America*, states that "White racists from George Fitzhugh in the 1850s to George Wallace in the 1960s saw blacks' demand for access to schoolhouse as a threat to the preservation of white supremacy" (M. Manning, p.368). It is an ironic statement because education is cherished due to its power to free one from alienation, to discard the veil of ignorance. But, how come that education became a threat? It is because it breaks apart the white racists' hegemony and restores a society of equality. Education is a threat for the white man but for the black man it is a treasury to purchase and acquire. The lack of this treasury animalizes one and that is why Ralph Ellison unnames his character to question his educational background.

In the very last sentence of his novel Ralph Ellison, launches an ironic appeal through this sentence "Who knows but that, on the lower frequencies, I speak for you? (R. Ellison, p.450). He addresses an audience. But who is this audience? He is addressing the whole world

about the importance of literacy. It is a subtle appeal, that is why he talks about 'lower frequencies', to the black community that through his entire novel he denounced alienation but this alienation has been effective thanks to the poor educatioanl background of black people. It is even an urge to pursue education because it humanizes and makes one's visibility effective.

Only education has this power to withdraw someone out off the embers of domination and alienation. Education breaks down the shackles of inequality and forms a classless society. Therefore, the pursuit of literacy for black people becomes a reluctant struggle as mentioned in the following passage by Bell:

Every day it seemed we complained about the long walk to the little white wood frame schoolhouse and our father told us again and again about the many miles he had walked to attend school. We wanted to shut out his words_his experiences. They kept coming back returning as we grew_as we learnt that education fo black folks was hard to come by was struggle, was necessary_a way to be free
(B. Hooks, p.62)

The long distances walked by both father and children are the symbol of the harshness which characterizes the difficulties in acquiring education. To walk so long distances is the proof of the necessity to possess literacy and the children could not chase away their father's words and experiences because they are the pathway leading to their freedom and visibility.

Education is the only available war to be fought by any community for its social advancement. Education or educational institutions are the symbols or places where ignorance and blindness are dispelled from one's face. Education is the departure point of civilization and freedom for any human being. Its lack deprives one of his social, political and financial advancement. In their literary works Ralph Ellison criticizes blacks' education and one can see that it is the basic fact that facilitates their alienation through exploitation, dehumanization and exploitation. The first scene is that of ten black students fighting a battle royal.

Why black school boys are led to fight a battle which is a symbol of brutality and brainlessness? So, through the battle they do not only take away education from black people but the author shows what an illiterate looks like an animal. An illiterate is a savage and inhuman that is why the narrator is without name. This anonymity means nothingness and inexistence for anyone who is illiterate. To be named means that you exist but for them: "All of the town's big shot were there in their tuxedoes, wolfing down the buffer foods, drinking beer and whisky and smoking black cigars" (R. Ellison, p.19), these young black students are more entertaining objects than persons. They are animals than human beings. So, education is the channel through which one escapes from alienation as submitted to the ten black student boys.

Through the battle which is fought by black students, Ralph Ellison ironises on the stereotypes such animosity, and this animosity starts with illiteracy. The fight in the presence of all the important figures of the society means that blacks do not deserve being educated but to be animals. So through, the process of anonymity, the author complains about the stereotypes stuck on black people. In short, these stereotypes can be erased only if one is literate.

An illiterate is a blind and an easy to be manipulated as ironically illustrated in the following passage: "All ten of us climbed under the ropes and allowed ourselves to be blindfolded with broad bands of white cloth" (R. Ellison, p.21). To be blindfolded means to be misguided with the back turned to the real goals. The white 'broad bands of white cloth' are the symbol of misguiding and manipulation with aim to render them weak and exploitable. To unname his character Ralph Ellison sheds lights on facts such education which lack dehumanize or accelerate the process of dehumanization. So, to avoid being manipulated and turned one against another like stated in the following extract: "I want you to run across at the bell and give to him right in the belly. If you don't get him, I'm going to get you. I don't like his looks. Each of us was told the same. The blindfolds were put on" (R. Ellison, p.22). The passage reveals that those who blindfold them aim to make them fight among themselves. Therefore, since they are uneducated and easy to be manipulated, they accept and behave like they wanted them to behave.

So, these black boys do not exist because they are moved and controlled by other persons. And the last sentence proves that the process of domination, control over them and manipulation is effective

whern they are told to do what they have do as soon as the blindfolds are put on. To escape such misfortune, education becomes the pathway as the invisible narrator says: "I wanted to deliver my speech more than anything else in the world, because I felt that only those men could judge my truey ability and this stupid clown was ruining my dream" (R. Ellison, p.25).

Through this eagerness to deliver a message, which means to be equal to the oppressor, acquiring education should be the leitmotiv of the oppressed like the black people in the present context but beyond, for any society, if it wants to be free financially, politically and socially. Education is the pathway to achieve one's dream. And to be uneducated, your dreams are ruined and one with ruined dreams remains at the bottom of the social scale. So, the process of animalization as portrayed by the battle royal is the oppressor's dream to ruin his oppressed's dream to come out of domination and exploitation. Education is the most available fight one should fight for the sake of freedom and visibility and to have a name, an identity.

After delivering his message the narrator is propelled to a black college. To be sent to a black college is an exclusion and calls forth an idea of educational segregation. And with irony, the narrator says that: "It was a beautiful college" (R. Ellison, p.32). Was the college beautiful through its buildings or teachings? By making the case purely black with the black college, the author gives possibilities of appreciation about what is going on in black educational institutions. And the contrast between the beauty and the teachings on the college is put forth in the following excerpt:

It's so long ago and far away that here in my invisibility i wonder if it happened at all. Then in my mind's eye i see the bronze statue of the College Founder, the cold father symbol, his hands outstretched in the breathtaking gesture of lifting a veil that flutters in hard, metallic folds above the face of a kneeling slave ; and i am standing puzzled unable to decide whether the veil is really being lifted or lowered more firmly in place ; whether i am witnessing a revelation or a more efficient blinding (R.Ellison, pp.33-34)

The scent of blinding the ten black school boys in the battle royal is drained into the black college, the narrator's new educational

institution. If the statue is the symbol of tribute to the honour of the founder, his gesture of lifting the veil puzzles the reader. It is ironic all the same that the narrator cannot decipher the gesture, if it consists in lifting up or putting it firmly down. Such confusion is the ideology of the type of education given to the black persons. The author means that the only gesture to arise the slave from his knees and stands is education. He therefore questions what black people receive as education and to what extent black leaders contribute to make it effective? The slave on his knees is the representation of a whole community down on its knees. So, in the last sentence the narrator does not know if he witnesses a revelation or a more efficient blinding, which means that there is a problem as far as blacks' education is concerned because an efficient teaching cannot create such a doubt in one's vision.

The point is that those who blindfolded the ten black boys in battle royal aiming to mis-educate them are present even in educational institutions said purely black as it is visible in the excerpt below: "And oh, oh, oh, those multimillionaires" (R. Ellison, p.34). These rich men are the white philanthropists who fund the black college. What puzzles is the presence of these rich white men on the black school. Why do they invest in a black college? Behind their benevolence there is a hidden idea that of controlling the black world since its own institutions such as education. One community becomes easy to control when it is uneducated. The act of funding the black is an act of corruption and undermining black educational system to bring about weak persons as stated in the following passage:

Through you and your fellow students I become let us say, three hundred teachers, seven hundred trained mechanics, eight hundred skilled farmers and so on. That way I can observe, in terms of living personalities to what extent my money, my time and my hopes have been fruitfully invested (R. Ellison, p.41)

The different teachings that the students receive in this college are another puzzle for the narrator. To assume jobs like mechanics and farmers means ironically to be dependent of the funder's ideology because he orientates their social directions. And he does it so that to be above and them below. He stratifies the society so that he is at the

commanding wheel and the black community to be at the bottom. To stress the deficient quality of teaching in black colleges, the narrator says that: "Why do I recall, instead of the odour of seed bursting in springtime, only the yellow contents of cistern spread over the lawn's dead grass? why? And how? How and why?" (R. Ellison, p.34). He has no memories because nothing good goes on in the college. Black students are not prepared to be some towering and influential leaders for their community. They are trained to remain weak and invisible. And an answer to his questions resides in the following passage:

Even your parents were young. Slavery was just recently past. Your people did not know in what direction to turn and, I must confess, many of mine didn't know in what direction they should either. But your great Founder did. He was my friend and I believed in his vision. So much that sometimes I don't know whether it was his idea or mine (R. Ellison, p. 36)

Mr. Norton's words reveal that his interest in the black college is not his idea but that of black leaders. Black leaders helped to shape the present educational system which turns the black students to manual jobs. So, the voice is no more that of the narrator or that of Mr. Norton but that the author who accuses the black elite to fail to lead its community on the path of freedom. They accept the white philanthropists' millions instead of fighting for an efficient educational. Therefore, the author is ironically launching an appeal to developing communities' leaders about the importance of education. One of their imperative tasks is to instill education as the basic and cement of their social advancement. It is education which breaks down the shackles of domination and invisibility. This criticism against the black leading class is visible through the following excerpt:

And as I gaze, there is a rustle of wings and I see a flock of starlings flighting before me and when I look again the bronze face, whose empty eyes look upon a world I have never seen, reins with liquid chalk-creating another ambiguity to puzzle my propping mind. Why

is a bird-soiled statue more commanding than one that is clean? (R. Ellison, p.34)

The statue's empty eyes are the symbol of the great founder's blindness. He fails to choose the right education for his community. The invisible world on which the Founder's statue looks upon is the projection on a future will reveal domination and exploitation of black due to their state of illiteracy. He is commanding in a soiled posture because he does great things to dehumanize his community, he does not lift up the veil of ignorance above the slave's head, he lowers it down more firmly. He conducts them in a land where they will be dominated. In these conditions, blacks cannot have names, they do not exist or if they exist it is only in domination and exploitation.

To unname his main character, Ellison complains about the black living conditions and beyond the conditions of the poor. These living standards are conditioned by the educational background of any individual. Black people or the have-nots' social advancement stagnates because they illiterate. Illiteracy is the mother of ignorance and alienation and with naturalism, Richard Wright the educational issue in this way: "How far did you go to school Bigger? To the eighth grade, mam (R. Wright, p.61). Bigger's poor educational level makes of an invisible and unnamed being. He becomes with this poor educational background an everlasting subordinate of Mr. Norton and his community. Thus, illiteracy is impotency.

Education is a menace and a weapon for freedom as stated in the following excerpt: "White racists from George Fitzhugh in the 1850s to George Wallace in the 1960s saw blacks' demand for access to schoolhouse as a threat to the preservation of white supremacy (M. Maning, p.368). By closing the doors of education to the black community, they succeed to erase their names therefore their existence. They succeed to discard the threat because an educated has eyes to ask questions about his being and this questioning is the beginning of his freedom. Education preceeds visibility that is why it is the secret weapon of the oppressor like put forth in *The Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, by Frederick Douglass:

Very soon after I went to live with Mr. And Mrs. Auld, she very kindly commenced to teach me the A, B, C. After I had learned this, she assisted me in learning to spell words of

three or four letters. Just at this point of my progress, Mr. Auld found out what was going on and at once forbade Mrs. Auld to instruct me further, telling her, among other things, that it was unlawful, as well as unsafe to teach a slave to read (F. Douglass, p.78)

Mr. Auld's attitude is conceivable because by permitting his slave's instruction, he creates an opponent who will be equal to him. Instruction dispells the spirit and flesh of inferiority and restores that of visibility and human characteristics So, Ellison unnames his chararxcter to complain about the absence or the poor quality of teaching that the young people receive. This poor educational background does not guarantee a brilliant landscape for them.

Education should be the focus and pursuit of the poor because it breaks the barrier of inferiority and gives the poor the intellectual, finacial and political power as it is visible in Schuyler's satiric novel *Black-No-More*: "Negro Announces Remarkable Discovery Changes Black to White in three days" (G.S. Schuyler, p.19). Dr. Crookman's discovery shifts in image from that of black, poor and invisible into that of wellknown, respectable and visible person as in the following excerpt: "Yes, Dr. Crookman was telling the reporters while the eagerly took down his statements" (G.S. Schuyler, p.20). Dr. Crookman is no more an anonymous person.

His educational backgrouund names him and gives him visibility. His popularity creeps beyond his own community and reaches other communities. Illiteracy is thus one of the complaints that Ralph Ellison and Richard Wright, focus on in their works. Literacy is the beginning of the journey toward real freedom and visibility. Its lack brings about exclusion and animalization that is why in The Future of the Race by Henry Louis Gates Jr and Cornel West it is interestingly stated that:

What we need are books that can bit us like a most painful misfortune, like the death of someone we love more than we love ourselves, that makes us feel as though we had been banished to the wood, far from human presence, a suicide. A book must be the ax for the frozen sea within us (C. West, H. L. Gates Jr., p.54)

For the author, there is an urgent need for his community to adopt books because books are the weapons to possess to be equal to the oppressor. The misfortune and profound regret will be to be uneducated because illiteracy glues one at the bottom of the social scale and opens doors to his alienation and invisibility. The author wants to say that, any community or people who lack education has a stagnated social development.

II. Illiteracy as a Source of Exclusion, Exploitation and Ignorance

“Father, if he hasn’t anything else to do, let him drive me to my lecture at the University tonight” (R. Wright, p.54). This statement by Mr. Dalton’s daughter, reveals that her driver does not have or opportunity to attend a school. This fact makes of him a simple driver and remaining at the bottom of social scale. In this posture Bigger Thomas cannot be visible in the society. It will always remain a subordinate to Miss Mary Dalton because of his illiteracy. This subordinate position is symbolized by the typical education reserved to black people as stated in the following passage: “I’ll be late for my swing class at the Y.W.C.A Vera said” (R. Wright, p.19). Vera, as a black girl, does not have educational background like Mary Dalton a white girl.

Vera’s poor educational level makes of her an inferior being to Dalton not because of her skin colour but due to her poor intellectual level. With such poor educational level, she cannot be posted at a ruling post. Thus, Illiteracy facilitates exclusion and animalization. A possibility to keep one ignorant and docile is to take away from him any possibility of instruction as Frederick Douglass puts it in his novel:

If you teach that Nigger (speakingly of myself) how to read, there would be no keeping him. It would unfit him to be a slave. He would at once become unmanageable, and of no value to his master. As to himself, it could do him no good but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontent and happy (F. Douglass, p. 78)

Mr. Auld’s persuasive talk to his wife reveals that to master a person or a whole community, they should deprive him or it of education. ‘To unfit him to be a slave’, means that illiteracy and animalization go hand in hand. Illiteracy is an opium to maintain a poor still poor. The only harm that literacy causes to a person is to open his

eyes and gives visibility and human traits. To become unmanageable means to trouble the upper class as in the following: "Thus, as the underprivileged become better educated they are more likely to upset the peace. It is no revelation that the privileged have always been suspicious of universal education because it may ultimately lead to the devolution of their advantage" (A. Kern, p.5). The passage reveals that education is the breaker of hegemony in a society but illiteracy stresses this hegemonic domination. An educated does upset a ruling or a hegemonic class for the sake of doing it but because he comes to this revelation which was hidden to him for so long that education permits him to see.

To unname his character, Ralph Ellison, puts ironically on the stake the factors that make of a poor an everlasting subordinate and nonexistent. This nonexistence is expressed through one's incapacity of achieving a task because he does not have the skills as expressed in the passage below: "I could fly one plane if I had a chance" (R. Wright, p.25). Bigger Thomas is incapable of flying because he is excluded from the educational system which permit him like any other boy of his age to take this chance of enjoying a flight as it is said in the excerpt: "Them white boys sure can fly, said Gus" (R. Wright, p.24). They prevent him to have this chance to make him an uneducated and unfitted for flying a plane. In this posture of uneducated, the poor remains always in a posture of dominated and exclusion.

Illiteracy brings about exploitation because the uneducated lacks the skills and qualifications to be posted at a good and well-paid job. His state of ignorance blinds him about his real potentiality and value on working place. He becomes easy to be exploited like in the following passage: "We are the machine inside the machine" (R. Ellison, p.178). Through this sentence the old man, Brockway is the pillar on the working place. He is the one who makes the firm thrive up. But how much he gets as a salary. He still remains poor because he is illiterate and this intellectual blindness makes of him an object to be used, exploited and thrown after use. Unskilled worker like him is a source which provides or helps to provide wealthy while remaining poor but he boasts himself due to ignorance as stated in the following extract:

They thinks'cause everything down here is done by machinery, that's all there is to it. They crazy! Ain't a continental thing that happen down here that ain't as iffen I done put my black hands into it! Then machines

just do the cooking, these here hands right have done
the sweeting (R. Ellison, p.178)

If the different machines mean less in the process of production and that all the work is accomplished by the black man, he can be said the real chief, the owner of the firm. But ironically, he is the one at the bottom and the white man at the top. This reversal of position is due to his ignorance and desimpowerment due to his intellectual handicap. He cannot have a name, he is an invisible. He cannot complain about his social standard; he is vulnerable because of his illiteracy. Illiteracy traces the path leading to exploitation and dehumanization. In a conversation, Mrs. Dalton puts a sarcastic question to Bigger Thomas in the following terms:

How far did you go to school Bigger? To the eighth grade, mam. Do you ever think of going back? Well, I gotta work, mam. Suppose you had the change to go back? Well, I don't know, mam. The last man who worked here went to the night school and get an education. Yessum. What would you want to be if you had an education? I don't know, mam. And you ever think about it? Na'm (R. Wright, p.61).

This conversation shows that Bigger Thomas has a poor educational level. And the opportunity that the Dalton family gives to the poor black worker is the night school. But there is an irony in Mrs. Dalton's inquiry and motherly attitude toward Bigger Thomas. Because she would never like to see Bigger Thomas acquiring or having the same educational background like her daughter Mary. She is not sincere in her benevolent attitude toward Bigger Thomas. She is investigating Bigger Thomas' future intentions and through this investigation, the author shows the gap between blacks' education and that of white people. This educational disparity is at the beginning of black alienation and dehumanization by white people. Bigger Thomas' answers to her two last questions show that he would never have this education she is about and that is why he never thinks about it. And this posture of an illiterate makes of him an invisible person.

The author through this extract reveals how blacks' educational level is poor when compared to that of the white people. While the white boys and girls are attending Universities, black boys and girls are attending schools where they are taught how to deal with manual jobs.

With this skills consisting of handling manual jobs, they become manpowers for the white world. To wrap up, education is the pathway leading to an autonomy and freedom. Education is at the beginning of social fragmentation, stratification and class formation. Consequently, the oppressor fears education like stated in the following passage:

Since the several northern Whites did not agree with the idea of Universal education for African Americans, they instead placed focus on adapting the education system to the region's traditional social structure and racial values. To this end, the Hampton-Tuskegee-Tuskegee model of industrial education, was posited as the great compromise for ensuring education for African-Americans and controlling the race problem in the South (A. N. Smith, p.49)

The refusal of a universal education means an educational segregation with a typical education for the black community. This particular and typical education closes the doors of humanization and freedom to the black community. It is an education which permits them to acquire some skills not be outstanding persons but to accomplish manual jobs. So, ironically an educated is a threat as stated: "Southern planters were fueled by fears that the education of African Americans would mean the end of African Americans' plantation labor" (A. N. Smith, p.51). The extract puts forth the key role that education has in the social advancement. It breaks down the barriers of inequity and assumptions of inferiority or superiority of one race over another one. This seems a misfortune for the planters to see black people acquire literacy because that ends their supremacy. In short illiteracy creates a society of classes.

Illiteracy is at the beginning of any process of alienation. Those who are short of education become the subordinate of those who possess it. They are blind and suffer from the veil of ignorance. They become easy to be exploited. So the fact of unnameable characters, Ralph Ellison shows that his social status makes of him nonexistent, a void and in such token he cannot have a name. This process or state of nothingness starts with his illiteracy. This illiteracy brings about exclusion, exploitation and dehumanization. Such education alienates black boys by driving them in the street to become gangsters as stated in Ann Petry's novel *The Street*, in the following passage:

His mother's a whore, Grey Cap repeated. Does nasty things with me, he elaborated. She don't either, Bub said indignantly. And you stop talking about her. Yah! Who's going to make me? Your mother's a whore. Bub doubled up his fist and reach for for aand found the boy's nose. Why, you_the boy aimed a blow at Bub_ a blow that slantered off as Bub ducked. Grey Cap pushed close against him, then knocked him off balance so that he went sprawling backward on the pavement (A. Petry, pp.248-249)

The special education granted to them rushes them in the street to become the masters of the violence. They seem to be taught that the only available mean to show manhood is the street. Therefore, when the white children are at Universities or colleges, black children are in restricted in streets fighting among each other or are in restricted scholls named black colleges where the only teaching consists of orientating them toward manual jobs. Grey Cap by bullying his mates in the streets, he feels confidents while his future is a jail.

With an inexistent educational background, Grey Cap like any other black boy will be at the mercy of the white community and this disparity is visible in the following passage : "All the classrooms she had ever taught in were permeated with the same mixture of odors, the dusty smell of chalk, the heavy suffocating smell of pine oil used to lay the grin and disinfect the worn old floors, and the smell of the children themselves"(A. Petry, p.235). The infrastructure in this schoool witness that the teaching which goes on there is not pleasant and efficient.

The authorities seem not interested in the educational future of the black boys and this assumption echoes well in the following passage: "70 years after the Brown decision, major disparities remain in the quality of education for black students in America" (M. Altman, p.5). The quality of education depends on that of the infrastructure. Since the infrastructure and education, itself are of poor quality, consequently the black students are prepared to go through a social failure, to remain subordinate to the white man.

The disparity is also the lack of black teachers in schools with a high percentage of black students as it said in the passage below: "Even in schools with more than 90% students of color the teacher workforce is only 17.3% black and 47.8 white on average (M. Altman, p.6). The

majority of black students is taught by teachers who care less for their social advancement. They can be said to hate them. Thus, an education coming from these cannot be effective and efficient. They are veiled instead of having the veil of ignorance and domination lift up. They are mis-educated.

So, when children are not schooled where conventional education is taught, they shape their own education which is a self-destructive one as it is shown in the following passage:

Work for Poppa. Come for Poppa. Act right for Poppa.

Hear what Poppa say. His body rocked back and forth as he talked to the dice, oblivious of everything, the street, the big man, the impatient little circle around him. Come on, roll'em! What the hell! Christ, you going to kiss them dice all day? Roll'em, boy! Roll'em! (A. Petry, p.246)

These black boys around their mates who rolls the dice are the students and their classroom is the street. To talk to the dice becomes their daily course. Such education makes of them some invisible and unnamed persons. Black children are miseducated and this is what Ellison symbolized by the unaming process. Such education turns them into violent persons and exposes them to self-destruction.

Conclusion

This article has investigated the theme of unaming in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Richard Wright's *Native Son*. This politics of unaming is the fight and denunciation of the social gap between blacks (lower class) and whites (upper class). Literacy is a lamp torch which brights and breaks down the social barriers. When it is taken away from a community it plunges it in a posture of dominated. So, blacks' invisibility is triggered by their illiteracy which conducts to their exclusion, exploitation and alienation. They are exploited and dehumanized because they have a poor educational level. Their illiteracy makes them the laughing stock of the society. So, through the present article, education becomes compulsorily because it brings about equality between communities and provides liberty. Education is the departure point of any social development.

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