



# Fooling Invisibility - A Bakhtinian Reading of Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man

*Anselm Maria Sellen*

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Master's Thesis from the year 2009 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 1,0, University of Siegen (FB 3 Amerikanistik), language: English, comment: I will therefore take some of the concepts from Bakhtin's works pertaining to the intersubjective constitution of Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man. I am going to explore, respectively, the chronotope, carnivalesque resistance, social identities and processes of memory and identity formation. It is not my aim to reify Bakhtinian concepts by adding comprehensive knowledge, neither will I attempt to discover philosophical sources of the Russian intellectual. It is rather that I want to render visible Bakhtinian concepts in unexpected theoretical (pop-)cultural perspectives. , abstract: Chapter One Time-space and space-time: Consequences of the Chronotope in Introduction There must be possible a fiction which, leaving sociology and case histories to the scientists, can arrive at the truth about the human condition, here and now, with all the bright magic of the fairy tale. - Ralph Ellison [...] the study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract "formal" approach and an equally abstract "ideological" approach. Form and content in discourse are one, once we understand that verbal discourse is a social phenomenon - social throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning. - Mikhail Bakhtin \_\_\_\_\_ In the process of preparation for this MA thesis I was on the verge of abandoning the project. I was afraid Ralph Ellison's novel Invisible Man would become far too intimate for me, the subject too tense, the motifs too disturbing, the language too intrinsic. I feared that the novel would keep concealed and invisible the wealth I suspect between the lines. I did not, and I still don't like Ellison's Invisible Man. It felt uncomfortable and disturbing the first time I read it and with every additional reading t

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