

## **Abstract**

This thesis explores how French black rappers Kery James and Youssoupha relate to their black experience. It utilized the application of critical discursive analysis to selected lyrics from their songs spanning the time period from 2008 to 2023. Themes that emerged in the lyrics based on the findings of the critical discursive analysis were colonization, relating to Africa, racism, the experience of living in France, struggle for human rights, and the legacy of the *négritude* movement. The research found that racism and the experience of living in France were the most represented themes in their texts. This discourse was characterised by discrimination, a sense of exclusion and defining oneself against the universalism of the French state. Other thematic discourses about colonization, Africa, the struggle for human rights and the *négritude* movement were less present. Positive discourse, which related to positive aspects of the black experience in France, was less present. Both Kery James and Youssoupha used predominantly negative discourse to express the black experience of life in France. There is also a transnational element to their black experience, in line with theories of the black diaspora as elaborated by Paul Gilroy. The discourse that both Kery James and Youssoupha use most constructs the difficult reality of life for people of colour in contemporary France.