

## **ABSTRACT**

This diploma thesis explores the aspects of racism in two contemporary British novels, namely, *Queenie* (2019) by Candice Carty-Williams and *Open Water* (2021) by Caleb Azumah Nelson. The aim of this thesis is to explore how both authors portray racism. The motivation behind this objective is to demonstrate that the two novels serve as a reflection of the issue of racism in modern-day British society. Furthermore, the present thesis focuses on the distinction between overt and covert manifestations of racism in order to highlight that racism is not always explicit. The first section of this thesis relies predominantly on contemporary studies and publications on the subject to provide the crucial terminology and concepts, setting a theoretical framework for the literary analysis conducted in the latter part. The second section offers an interpretation of overt and covert forms of racism and their effect on the protagonists which have arisen in the two literary works, *Queenie* and *Open Water*. This part explores how racist behaviour, and attitudes impact the lives and identities of the main protagonists, impinging on their mental health, self-perception and interpersonal relationships. The purpose of emphasising the consequences is to raise awareness of racial issues as well as promote empathy and understanding.

## **KEYWORDS**

Candice-Carty Williams, *Queenie*, Caleb Azuma Nelson, *Open Water*, racism, contemporary British fiction