

Narratives of Resistance



A narrative analysis of song lyrics of
French artists with immigrant origins
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Abstract

With the purpose of better understanding issues regarding inequalities among the French population, this thesis' interest is in focusing on the voices of the second or third generation of immigrants from former colonies under French control. It attempts to answer this research question: What do urban music artists, when taking the self-attributed role of representants of the French population with immigrant's origins, have to say about the way they are treated and publicly represented?

For answering this question, this thesis deploys an experience-centered narrative analysis of recent song lyrics written by French artists of immigrant origins, while taking Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model as an analytical lens through which to analyze the data. The presentation of the results of the analysis is structured into three distinct parts. The first part concerns the historical perspectives and current French political atmosphere, as perceived and described by the artists in their narratives. It is argued that the authors of the selected songs employ the framework of post-colonialism in order to highlight what in historical or current representation is creating, nourishing or reinforcing oppression. What's more, the themes explored are colonization, decolonization, and the arrival of the first generation of immigrants from former colonies, as featured in the artists narrative, racism, Islamophobia, climate of suspicion. Building on the preceding arguments, and with considering two opposed conceptions of what rap in France expresses, the selected songs are identified as post-colonial expressions attempting to speak for the marginalized, stigmatized, or discriminated groups.

The second part was dedicated to the identity issues raised by the artists in their narratives. It was argued that they testify of difficulties such as social exclusion, discrimination, originating from the stigmatizing representation and othering perception of their identity and that was putting their Frenchness into question. The source of this othering perception was then investigated, with two main focus: origins and social status.

Finally, the third part, following the artists' narratives concluding points, concerned the aims behind their various claims. It was argued that the artist's narratives resemble a political discourse of opposition and that their main aim is resistance, through the actions of denouncing, proposing alternative frameworks and calling for action.

Overall, it was thus found that the artists were wishing to describe a life that is rendered more difficult for the groups they claim to represent, mainly because of a stigmatizing, inferiorizing or othering representation by the media, some political representants, and history as it is used

by the French Republic, that had real-life consequences in the form of social exclusion and oppression. It was what's more found that resisting this oppression was the main aim of the artists when writing these lyrics.

Key words: representation, resistance, post-colonialism, national identity, otherness, France, racism, narrative

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Introduction

“We learn more about our world—at manifest and latent levels—by analyzing music”
(Martinez 1993; Walser 1995 in Beighey & Unnithan 2012).

French society is composed of a variety of different identities. The idea of this research stands on the will to learn more about French society by hearing the voices not only of the ones that have written its history and that are writing its laws, but also the voices of those who claim to be oppressed within it. Inequalities are relatively high in France, and some parts of the population are suffering from diverse problems such as discrimination, racism, exclusion, etc. It is an interesting fact to note that part of the French population is sometimes described as the second or third generation of immigrants, or persons with immigrant origins. Such denominations, for persons who are officially French citizens, can lead the social researcher to ask these questions: Why point out at these persons’ origins especially? Why carry on counting generations for these persons’ ancestors especially? Do these origins make them different than other French persons? Could these denominations be a symptom or a hint of certain problems that this group suffers from? Thus, this study will focus on analyzing some of its members’ personal narrative, and aim at understanding their claims, in order to better understand what is happening within the French society.

As stated in the above quote, analyzing music is a way to do so. This is why it was decided to collect stories in the form of recent song lyrics from French artists of immigrant origins. Claiming that these stories can constitute narratives, they will be analyzed in order to answer this research question:

What do urban music artists, when taking the self-attributed role of representants of the French population with immigrant’s origins, have to say about the way they are treated and publicly represented?

To answer this question, this qualitative study will display an experience-centered narrative analysis, while taking Stuart Hall’s encoding/decoding model as an analytical lens through which to analyze the data collected. The theoretical framework of this thesis will incorporate diverse scholars’ observations concerning primarily the concept of Otherness, to which was

added theoretical considerations on post-colonialism, racism and oppression, stigmatization, identity, national identity, and resistance.

The presentation of results of the analysis will be composed of three distinctive parts, that were structured according to the central themes that emanated from the data. The discussion will thus be incorporated into the three different parts of analysis, as a way to let the narratives unfold naturally in a data-driven structuring approach. The first part will aim at demonstrating that the collected stories are embedded within a postcolonial framework of understanding, through the evocation of parts of French history, current political atmosphere and the concept of 'suburb narrative'. The second part will explore the identity issues encountered by the selected artists through their emphasis on differences and incompatibility, the stigmatization they claim to be subjected to and the questioning of their Frenchness. The third part will focus on the conclusions drawn by the authors of the selected songs after having developed their narrative. It will be claimed that these are inscribed in a political discourse of opposition and aiming at resisting against oppression.

Methods

For the purpose of answering my research question, it was decided to perform a narrative analysis while using Stuart Hall's Encoding/Decoding model as a critical analytical lens.

1. Philosophy of research

In this subsection, both epistemological and ontological considerations for this study will be clarified.

Epistemology is "the philosophical study of the ways in which we can distinguish between knowledge that can be considered by most experts to be scientifically true and information that is not valid and reliable" (Bakker 2010, p. 2). In other words, it is the philosophical study that concerns the nature and justification of knowledge.

In this study, an interpretivist approach to epistemology is taken with the assumption of the necessity to distinguish between the "objects of natural sciences" and objects of social sciences, and therefore the need to consider the "subjective meaning of social actions" that people perform (Bryman 2008, p. 16). Through the adoption of an interpretivist approach, this thesis attempts to explicate the meaning inherent to the subjective human behavior of the chosen French artists of immigrants origins.

Ontology "problematizes taken-for-granted assumptions about things seen and unseen" (Bakker 2010 (2), p. 2). In other words, it is the study of the nature of existence.

In this thesis, the ontological stance taken is the one of postmodernism, and more precisely of poststructuralism. This approach to philosophy of research focuses on "contextualized meaning-making, rather than on universal truths" and explores social items "in terms of how they contribute to the experience and identity of people in context" (Combs & Freedman 2012, p. 1036). What's more, specific aspects of people's experience are studied (*Ibid.*). In this study, this ontological approach is taken while performing an experience-centered narrative inquiry, for which importance on context has been considered, as it is central to meaning-making of the chosen artists stories.

2. Narrative analysis

The goal of narrative research is to understand “the social worlds throughout the exploration of meaning-making in people everyday experiences” (Patterson 2008). For doing so, it is important that the stories collected and constituting the researcher’s data are situated “within their wider social and historical context” (*Ibid.*).

Narrative research has notably emerged with the will of diverse marginalized groups to claim identity (Langellier 2001 in Kohler Riessman 2005, p. 1), as its methods are “appropriate for studies of social movements, political change, and macrolevel phenomena” (Kohler Riessman 2014, p. 3). According to Catherine Kohler Riessman, personal stories of experience as told by individuals can constitute a narrative, in the sense that the events recalled are “selected, organized, connected, and evaluated as meaningful to a particular audience” (Kohler Riessman 2005, p. 1). If she admits that the span of what constitutes a narrative depends from researcher to researcher, Kohler Riessman insists that “narratives do not speak for themselves or have unanalysed merit” and thus “require interpretation when used as data in social research” (2005, p. 1-2). In other words, the data constituted by the narratives must be analyzed so to be relevant for research. For doing so, several methods can be adopted, as the methods contained in narrative analysis are diverse and constitute a “repertoire” (Quinn 2005 in Kohler Riessman 2014, p. 4), that can be adopted and adapted by the researcher according to the specificities of his or her study (Kohler Riessman 2014, p. 4). In this thesis, the experience-centered approach is used.

2.1 Experience-centered narrative research

Narrative analysis aims at studying the narratives of chosen participants. Experience-centered narrative research is focusing more precisely on “narratives as stories of experience, rather than events” (Squire 2008, p. 2). According to Squire, when using an experience-centered approach, the researcher “assumes that narratives:

- are sequential and meaningful
- are definitively human
- ‘re-present’ experience, reconstituting it, as well as expressing it
- display transformation or change” (*Ibid.*)

This means, firstly, that, unlike in an event-based narrative approach, personal narratives could be addressing a broader experience (*Ibid.*). This also means that the personal story delivered by

the participant may even include “imaginary events” alongside with real ones, can include “present and future stories about others as well as well as oneself”, and may also be disseminated in different versions of a personal stories, sometimes even contradicting themselves (*Ibid.*). Secondly, Squire considers that it is definitely human to tell stories, as humans are “deeply social” and “storytelling constitutes and maintains sociality” (Denzin 1989 in Squire 2008, p. 2). Thirdly, Squire considers that narratives are about representation and reconstruction, simply because it is not possible to repeat exactly how life events and stories occurred and “stories are performed differently in different social contexts” (2008, p. 3). This results in “multiple and changeable storylines” (Ricoeur and Bruner in Squire 2008, p. 3), and as such, as “just one of many narratable ‘truths’” (Squire 2008, p. 3). Finally, narratives are considered to be about transformation in the sense that they “involve the violation of normality and an attempt, through human agency, at its restoration” (Bruner 1990 in Squire 2011, p. 3).

2.2 Material and data collection

Most narrative research uses interviews as their empirical material. Yet, it is possible to decide to work with other types of material such as biographies (Bury 1982, Freeman 2004), autobiographies, diaries and letters (Tamboukou 2003), or poems (Castro & Clark-McGhee 2015). Within the experience-centered tradition of narrative research, it is also possible to use “non-oral media, and some non-first person and non-experimental material” as all these types of material are comprised “within the tradition’s broader understandings of narrative sequence and meaningfulness” (Squire 2008, p. 2).

The material used in this study consist in song lyrics that have been written and performed by French artists of immigrant origins. The selection has been made after a broad listening of a diversity of song from a diversity of artists fitting this last criterion, and have been achieved with these following criteria in mind: They had to consist in or at least resemble a personal story or narrative. This was ensured by checking for keywords such as “I”, “Us”, “We” and more general reading backed up with knowledge about the artists. To be selected, the song also had to display narratives that could be interesting to analyze in the context of my primary conceptual framework, that is to say, they should mention at least one of these themes: national identity or Frenchness, oppression or stigmatization, race, and representation. Finally, for coherence purposes, it was decided to select songs written in the same decade. This is why, and also from a concern for studying on data as recent as possible, only songs from the 2010s were selected. All the song lyrics have been translated into English by myself.

As such, the material used in this study can be qualified as non-experimental. It must be noted that this could lead to some limitation, as compared for example with an interview-based set of data, considering that song lyrics are texts that are written for various purposes, and some of these purposes may be different than just telling one's story. But, as argued earlier, even narratives obtained through interview induce a "re-presentation" of the events, through reconstruction and expression, and these song lyrics can thus be considered to fit into an understanding of narrative sequence (Squire 2008, p.2).

The material is composed of the translated transcription of 10 song lyrics:

- Tout ce qu'ils veulent, by Dub Inc, appearing on their 2010 album "Hors contrôle"
- Menace de mort, by Youssoupha, appearing on his 2012 album "Noir D*****"
- Lettre à la République, by Kery James, appearing on his 2012 album "92-2012"
- Pain au chocolat, by IAM, appearing on their 2013 album "Arts martiens"
- Fautes de français, by Lino featuring Doku, appearing on Lino's 2015 album "Requiem"
- Putain d'époque, by Dosseh featuring Nekfeu, appearing on Dosseh's 2016 album "Yuri"
- Musique Nègre, by Kery James featuring Lino and Youssoupha, appearing on Kery James's 2016 album "Muhammad Alix"
- Racailles, by Kery James, appearing on his 2016 album "Muhammad Alix"
- Rappeur 2 force, a 2017 single by Médine
- Les pleurs du mal, a 2018 single by Dinos

The songs will be referred to with their translated title, as follows:

- 'All they want' 2010
- 'Death Threat' 2012
- 'Letter to the Republic' 2012
- 'Chocolate croissant' 2013
- 'French errors' 2015
- 'Damn time' 2016
- 'Negro music' 2016
- 'Scum' 2016
- 'Rapper of Strength' 2017
- 'The tears of Evil' 2018

2.3 Analysis process and interpretation of the data

As Squire's description of analysis process concerns studies which collected their data throughout interviews, it cannot be completely applied in the case of this study. Some of her advice, however, are still relevant here. These mostly concern the interpretation of the data. Squire indeed advises to begin with a thematic description of the material collected and to "develop and test theories that give a predictive explanation of the stories, moving back and forth between the interviews themselves and generalizations about them in a classic 'hermeneutic circle', using a combination of top-down and bottom-up interpretive procedures" (Squire 2008, p. 4-5). In this analysis, this is done by the development of a conceptual framework as the analysis goes, and by the use of analytical tools either created for this study or borrowed from critical discourse analysis. Squire what's more insist that "experience-centered narrative analysis is distinguished by its attention to the sequencing and progression of themes within interviews, their transformation and resolution" (Squire 2008, p. 5). In this analysis, this was what motivated the analysis structuring approach, by firstly analyzing the claims of the artists categorized into two different broad themes, and then examining the conclusive aims of the artists after having expressed their various claims. Squire further adds that it is not common for researchers to "expect a single interpretation to emerge" and that "there are multiple valid interpretations, multiple narrative 'truths'" (Freeman 2003 in Squire 2008 p. 5). In order then to build a relevant interpretation of the data, Squire advises the researcher to constantly check his or her ongoing interpretation "against the materials and actively seek out contrary cases" (2008, p. 5). In this analysis, this is done notably by considering different of sometimes oppositional angles in analyzing the topics that emerge in the data.

3. Encoding/Decoding

In his Encoding/Decoding model, Stuart Hall proposes to rethink the way we conceptualize mass-communications, and more precisely the process through which communication circulates. Instead of a linear conception of "sender/message/receiver", Hall proposes to think about this process "in terms of a structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments - production, circulation, distribution/consumption, reproduction" and thus to consider it as a "complex structure in dominance" (Hall 2001, p. 163). In Hall's model, the messages ("the product") circulate in the discursive form of "symbolic

vehicles constituted within the rules of ‘language’” (Hall 2001, p. 163). According to Hall, for the communicative process to be completed, “the broadcasting structures must yield encoded messages in the form of a meaningful discourse”, that will then “be appropriated” as such and “meaningfully decoded” (Hall 2001, p. 165). Without decoding, the messages would not “have an ‘effect’ (however defined), satisfy a ‘need’ or be put to a ‘use’” (Hall 2001, p. 165). Indeed, the meanings appropriated to the messages by decoding is what will bring “very complex perceptual, cognitive, emotional, ideological or behavioral consequences” (Hall 2011, p. 165). The differences between the meanings assigned during the coding and the decoding moments may vary according to the levels of understanding or misunderstanding between the sender and its audience (Hall 2001, p. 166). According to Hall, it can also vary according to “the structural differences of relation and position between broadcasters and audiences” (Hall 2001, p. 166). Considering that “Reality exists outside language, but it is constantly mediated by and through language”, Hall argues that “discursive ‘knowledge’ is the product not of the transparent representation of the ‘real’ in language but of the articulation of language on real relations and conditions” (2001, p. 166). This is why, according to Hall, coding is necessary for the creation of “intelligible discourse” (2001, p. 166). Hall argues that there is a “dominant cultural order” that is constituted by societies through the imposed “classifications of the social and cultural and political world” (Hall 2001, p. 169). Thus, Hall claims that “the different areas of social life appear to be mapped out into discursive domains, hierarchically organized into dominant or preferred meaning” (Hall 2001, p. 169). These meanings, are troubled when any non ‘normal’ event “breach our expectancies and run counter to our ‘common-sense constructs’” and must be mapped into the “maps of problematic social reality” in order to start making sense (Hall 2001, p. 169). The word “dominant” here, is chosen by Hall because, even though events can be decoded within diverse “mappings”, “there exists a pattern of ‘preferred readings’ and because both dominant and preferred reading “have the institutional/political/ideological order imprinted in them and have themselves become institutionalized” (Hall 2001, p. 169). Hall further mentions a “rank order of power and interest structure of legitimations, limits and sanctions” and exemplifies what is included in the domains of “preferred meanings”, which, Hall argues, “have the whole social order embedded in them as a set of meanings, practices and beliefs” (Hall 2001, p. 169). That’s why, according to Hall, interpretation matters (p. 169). In order for the communication exchange to exist, there must be a relative “degree of reciprocity between encoding and decoding moments”, but it is important, according to Hall, to recall that “this ‘correspondence’ is not given but constructed” (Hall 2001, p. 171).

Hall identifies three different (“hypothetical”) positions adopted in the decoding phase of the mass-communication process (2001, p. 171).

Firstly, Hall describes the “dominant-hegemonic positions”, in which the message is decoded “full and straight”, and the decoder “is operating inside the dominant code” (p. 171).

Hall claims that mainstream media communication obeys to some “professional codes” that may “serve to reproduce hegemonic definitions specifically but not overtly biasing their operations in a dominant direction” and thus that “ideological reproduction [...] takes place here inadvertently, unconsciously” (Hall 2001, p. 172). Therefore, when the dominant-hegemonic position is adopted by the decoders, they can be unconsciously absorbing and accepting ideological discourses.

The second position identified by Hall is the “negotiated position” (2001, p. 172). He claims that this position exists notably because of the ‘totalizing’ and “truncated” connections that are made in the dominant definitions of events massively adopted by encoders. The legitimacy of hegemonic definition is generally acknowledged by decoders in the negotiated position, but they also are “reserving the right to make a more negotiated application to ‘local conditions’, to its own more corporate positions” (Hall 2001, p. 172). It is a position that operates through “particular or situated logics” that are “sustained by their differential and unequal relation to the discourses and logics of power” (p. 172).

Finally, the third position identified by Hall is the “oppositional” position, from which decoders may understand “both the literal and the connotative inflection given by a discourse but [decode] the message in a globally contrary way” (p. 172). This type of viewer disposes of their own “alternative framework of reference” within which he or she “retotalize the message” after having “detotalize[d]” it “in the preferred code”. (p. 171-172). In other words, it corresponds to “oppositional reading” of the mainstream broadcasters.

This model has been applied, adapted and revisited by scholars in various fields such as teaching (Goering and Wei 2014), and is even applied to study other things than mass-communication, for example in Hussein and Pyeaam’s study of a historical poem (2016). In his study of prisoners’ responses to television representation of incarceration (2013), Bill Yousman starts by resetting some of the elements that can be considered as oversimplifications in Hall’s initial model (p. 200-203). He, for example, notes Hall’s precision that the three reader's positions in his model (dominant, negotiated, oppositional) does not constitute “sociological groups” (Hall et al. 1994 in Yousman 2013, p. 201). In Yousman’s words: “these positions can operate almost simultaneously within audience readings of various moments in a single text” (p. 201). Another point Yousman insists on, is the fact that “in the act of encoding, there is always an attempt to

fix meaning in a particular way” even though the message can and will be understood in a various set of ways (p. 202), and notes that this is typical of how ideologies work : “as it sets the limits and boundaries for interpretation and pushes one particular meaning over any possible alternatives” (Hall 1980 and Hall et al. 1994 in Yousman 2013, p. 202). This relates to the fact that audiences and “those who signify the world to them” are not in the same positions of power (Hall et al. 1994 in Yousman 2013, p. 202). He further adds that encoders “do have a tremendous amount of power to set limits on what meanings may be drawn” (p. 202).

What Yousman intends in his methodology, is to claim that textual analysis does not suffice and that contextual analysis is also required to understand the hegemonic power of media. This is why he chooses, after having interviewed prisoners about their life in prison, to confront them to media representation of life in incarceration, in order to collect and analyze their responses and interpretations of these messages.

The material analyzed in this study is a corpus of song lyrics which all, in various ways, mention or respond to representations of the authors or their peers within media and declarations of representants of the political power. This is why the encoding/decoding model is used and adapted as an analytical lens through which the analysis of the artists’ narratives will be performed. The choice of the encoding/decoding model as an analytical lens originated after having had a first contact with the material and noticing the importance of representation in the artists’ narratives, many of whom use television recordings, quotes from politician’s declarations or speeches, directly in their text as a way to illustrate their claims.

Theoretical and conceptual framework

1. Othering

The analysis section of this study is structured into three different parts, the first two parts being articulated according to a broad categorization of the various descriptions and claims of the artists about the way they are usually treated and represented, and the last one is based on the analysis of the conclusions drawn and reactions given by the artists towards the persons or institutions they claim mistreat and misrepresent them. The first part contains theoretical considerations about post-colonialism, racism, and oppression. The second part incorporates theoretical considerations about identity and national identity, rejection and stigmatization. The third part comprises theoretical considerations about resistance. Throughout the analysis it has been found that the elements of the data comprised in the two first part are embedded in an Othering process the artists feel is being performed about them by diverse actors such as the media, politicians, institutions, etc., and that the elements of the data comprised in the third part consist in the artists' reaction or answer to the consequences of this Othering. The main concept that will theoretically guide this study is, thus, Otherness.

1.1 The discursive process of Othering

Othering can designate “instances of perpetuating prejudice, discrimination, and injustice either through deliberate or ignorant means” (MacQuarrie 2010, p. 2). As a discursive process, it is the construction by a “dominant in-group” (the Self) of one or several “dominated out-groups” (the Other) through the stigmatization of a difference that can either be real or imagined (Staszak 2008, p. 2). Staszak adds that this difference is “presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination” (*Ibid.*). This process is inherent to the concept of identity as, to determine who is oneself, one needs to determine who is the other (Okolie 2003, p. 2). The perceived differences between the Self and the Other that are emphasized may be either positive or negative, but in many cases, they depict an inferiorisation of the Other by the Self (Tekin, 2010, p. 12, 14 and 161). Tekin indeed describes cases in which the Self conceives the Other as different but also as worse, and sometimes as binarily opposed (Tekin 2010, p. 213).

As mentioned earlier, othering relates in some way to all theoretical concepts used in the analysis. These concepts are deployed below.

1.2 Post-colonialism

According to Kathleen Wininger, post-colonial theories aim at the revelation of “the depth of harm done by the process of creating a colony” and “offers models of reconstituting identity” (2001, p. 883). In other terms, it is concerned with the legacy of colonization regarding both now-independent states (geographical borders) and society (social, economic and cultural practices) (Wininger 2011, p. 883-884). These theories may be employed notably in politics, anthropology, philosophy, psychology and literary criticism (Wininger 2011, p. 884).

Wininger cites Edward Said’s critique of Orientalism as the critique of “a method of diminishing the cultural accomplishments and complexity of the Middle East and East” which, in turn, led to strong injustices, and that claims to put the Western scholarship’s objectivity into question (Wininger 2011, p. 884).

Orientalism in Said’s work indeed describes the stereotypical and biased way in which the Orient has been studied and depicted by Western scholars, writers, and artists. Orientalism thus is less about describing real differences between the West and the Orient, and rather about projecting, or making an “imaginative examination” of the Orient (Said 1978, p. 7-8). These projections are most often realized so to confer a “positional superiority” to the West (Said 1978, p. 7.). Otherness is a central element of Edward Said’s critique of Orientalism, and it is sometimes considered as the most significant form of Othering (Sharp 2011, p. 2). It is possible indeed, and according to Said, to see a process of Othering in the way the Orient has been represented by Orientalist scholars, artists, and intellectuals: the West (‘Self’) defines itself and thus at the same time defines the Orient (‘Other’) by emphasizing and stigmatizing differences (Said 1978). According to Said, Orientalism “is a cultural and political fact” (1978, p. 13). Also considering that knowledge and the way it is produced is political (Said 1978, p. 10-11), it is then possible to think, according to Said, that Orientalism is the fruit of ties between the Western scholarship of the nineteenth century and the imperialist powers, that need to justify the colonization of the Orient. Said’s Orientalism is hence considered as one of the base texts for postcolonialism.

In this thesis, the first part is dedicated to the portion of the artists narrative that was identified as belonging to the post-colonialist discourse. Wininger and Said conceptualization were used

to identify parts of the artist's claims as post-colonialist and to assist in the interpretation of their meaning and aims. Other author's observations will be used as well, notably to look at the specific case, like for example postcolonialism in rap lyrics in Laurent Béro's article "French rap, a Postcolonial music product?" (2008).

1.3 Racism and Oppression

Wininger cites Fanon as one of the most prominent representants of the psychological dimension to post-colonialism (2011, p. 884). She describes indeed "a divided consciousness" that inhabits the colonized, the division being made between the Self "inhabiting a local culture" and the Self "translated into the culture of the colonizer" (Wininger 2011, p. 884).

In his book 'Black Skin, White Masks', Frantz Fanon investigates issues of race and the oppression of Black people. Criticizing the argument of Octave Mannoni according to whom it is better to be a black person in France than in the US, Fanon claims that Europe is based on a racist structure, and that France is a racist country in which the "bad nigger" myth is part of the collective unconscious (Fanon 2011, p. 136).

About the oppression of black people in France, Fanon claims that not being white was never a reason to suffer before 'the White man' imposed discrimination, oppression, and colonisation, on 'the Black' man, thus making him willing and wishing to become himself a white man, and regain his humanity, in a logic of perceived inferiority (Fanon 2011, p. 141). This relates to Musolf's claim that oppression is sustained by imposing "ideologies of inferiority", as will be argued in the subsection about resistance (2017).

Furthermore, Fanon describes a society in which, as a black man, his skin color is a central element of his daily life in spite of himself (Fanon 2011, p. 158). He declares feeling less like a man and more like "a nigger" (*Ibid.*).

In this thesis, this feeling of being systematically stigmatized and oppressed that will be the departure point of the analysis in order to understand the postcolonial messages that are expressed in the chosen song lyrics. Frantz Fanon's arguments are used in order to give insight to the testimonies of racism and oppression, as well as the claims about colonization that are made by the artists of the selected songs.

1.4 Stigmatization

In his article “Stigmatization of Mexican Immigrants: the pervasive nature of negative perception” (2013), Adrian Velazquez uses features of social exclusion theory in order to describe the effects of Mexican immigrant stigmatization in the United States of America. It is the conceptualization of stigmatization presented in this article by Velazquez that will be used in this thesis to understand the narrative of French artists with immigrants origins.

Stigmatization must be understood as depending on societal contexts (Major & Eccleston 2005 in Velazquez 2013, p. 69). Examples of stigmas as given by Velazquez in his article are “higher criminal propensity”, “uneducated”, “antagonistic to American values”, “incapable of adapting to American culture” and are all understood by the authors of being a question of perceptions or sometimes “misperceptions” (2013, p. 76). In other words, stigmas in Velazquez article are represented as ultimately deriving from negative stereotypes that “affect discriminatory actions” (2013, p. 77 and 84) and is thus, strongly embedded in the terrain of perception by an ‘Other’ (2013).

Stigmatization against immigrants is a phenomenon that leads to social exclusion, a concept defined by Behrman *et al.* as: “the denial of equal access to opportunities imposed by certain groups of society upon others” (Behrman *et al.* 2003 in Velazquez 2013, p. 68). This exclusion, although not systematically occurring to each and every immigrant, has effects that remain a daily reality for many of them (Velazquez 2013, p. 70). What’s more, stigmatization is considered by Velazquez to represent a “catalysts that generate social conflict” and to increase the affected part of the population’s vulnerability to “institutional and legal violence” (2013, p. 84) and a limitation of their access public resources (2013, p. 76).

In the analysis, Velazquez’s observations will be used in order to interpret the social exclusion, othering and stigmatization the artists are claiming to be subjected to in their narrative.

2. Identity

Identity can mean and is used to designate diverse things, as demonstrated by Roger Brubaker (2001), who identifies the five main ways in which identity is usually conceptualized in research (p. 71-73). He thus claims that identity, depending on the way it is conceptualized, is sometimes found to carry contradictory theoretical implications (Brubaker 2001, p. 72).

For the concerns of this study, it is important to note that identity can be understood both as an individual and as a collective phenomenon (Brubaker 2001 in Jandey 2011, p. 57). In its

collective dimension, identity encompasses “fundamental and perceptible”, objective or subjective, similarity between groups or category members (Brubaker 2001 in Jandey 2011, p. 58). Moreover, such similarities may be felt or perceived (*Ibid.*). In its individual dimension, identity relates to something deep, constant, and fundamental, and “a central aspect” of the individual (*Ibid.*). Moreover, Brubaker evokes identity on the individual level as “[something to value, cultivate, encourage, recognize and preserve]” (*Ibid.*). In the analysis, these two theoretical dimensions to identity will serve as to identify what identities are performed in the artist's narratives.

2.1 National identity

National identity's fundamental attributes, as identified by Anthony Smith are “historic territory or homeland”, “common myths and historical memories”, “a common, mass public culture”, “common legal rights and duties for all members”, “common economy with territorial mobility for members” (Smith 1991 in Guibernau 2004, p. 133). Montserrat Guibernau, however, claims that the main flaw of Smith's definition of national identity is that it involves citizenship, notably because it ignores nations without states and the fact that citizens of a state may have different national identities (2004, p. 133-134). She then proposes, drawing on some of the features of Smith's definition, her own definition of national identity in the twenty-first century (Guibernau 2004, p. 125 and 134) : “a modern phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature, one by means of which a community sharing a particular set of characteristics is led to the subjective belief that its members are ancestrally related” (Guibernau 2004, p. 136). She claims that this definition can be applied to members of the nation-state, but also to groups that can be said to constitute a nation but that does not currently have their own state (*Ibid.*). Further, she identifies five dimensions to her definition of national identity: “psychological, cultural, territorial, historical, and political” (*Ibid.*).

The psychological dimension of national identity is considered emerge from “the consciousness of forming a group based on the ‘felt’ closeness uniting those who belong to the nation” that generally becomes evident to its members when difficult times arise (Guibernau 2004, p. 135). The cultural dimension involves emotional investment as well as transmission of “values, beliefs, customs, conventions, habits, languages and practices” (Guibernau 2004, p. 136). Othering is involved as well, as Guibernau adds that the members, that “recognize one another as fellow nationals” (Gellner 1983 in Guibernau 2004, p. 136), “imagine and feel” this

membership and thus their community or nation as particular and distinctive from other communities or nations (Anderson 1983 in Guibernau 2004, p. 136).

The historical dimension involves a search or designation, as ancient as possible, of the community's ancestors, as a reason for pride, proof on continuity and bond between members (Guibernau 2004, p. 136-137). History in the context of national identity is used in a selective manner, nationals tending to remember and celebrate valuable events and omitting others so to forge an 'image' of their nation that renders them unique, capable and even somehow "superior" to the rest (Guibernau 2004, p. 137).

Concerning the territorial dimension, Guibernau argues that members of a nation are more concerned about other members of their nation than about outsiders, despite "globalization and emerging cosmopolitanism" (2004, p. 138). She claims indeed, that though globalization may have rendered "the 'other'" more visible, members of a nation tend to still think of the other members of their own nation are "more 'human' than outsiders" (Guibernau 2004, p. 138).

Finally, the political dimension in Guibernau's article includes her most critical argument towards Smith's conception of national identity. She considers indeed, that including citizenship as a core element fails to address the "cultural and linguistic homogenization" that nation-state pursued, as they imposed the dominant group's cultural elements to the other groups of the territory (Guibernau 2004, p. 139).

From these five fundamental dimensions, Guibernau explicates state strategies in terms of "nation-building", aiming at the cultivation of "a cohesive, loyal, up to a point, homogenous citizenry" (Guibernau 2001 in Guibernau 2004, p. 140). Among these strategies, the ones that are relevant to this study are:

- "the construction and dissemination of a certain image of the 'nation', often based upon the dominant nation or ethnic group living within the state's boundaries and comprising a common history, a shared culture and a demarcated territory"
- "the creation of common enemies, imminent, potential or invented"
- "the progressive consolidation of national education and media systems"

Guibernau mentions people of immigrant origins, minorities, and ethnic communities as an example of citizens of a country that may own a different national identity from the one that is "promoted" by the country (Guibernau 2004, p. 140). She claims that there are two main approaches to conceptualize these differences within the political institution: one is to generate multiple identities and the other is to differentiate citizenship and national identity and "thus

separating membership of the state from the sentiment of belonging to the nation” (Guibernau 2004, p. 140).

In the analysis, national identity is one of the central themes of the second part. Guibernau's conceptualization will be used in order to understand some of the artist's claims surrounding their feelings of belonging to the nation and the othering they perceive, as persons of immigrants origin. State strategies at national identity building and the historical dimension to national identity as understood by Guibernau will also be used in order to understand the political context in which the artists are deploying their narratives. The analysis will also grow on author's observations, most notably the one of Brigitte Jandey (2011) in order to look at the specific case of French national identity and Frenchness.

3. Resistance

According to Gil Richard Musolf, telling one's own story, formulating one's own narrative can be considered a “social weapon” and is already the first step in the act of resisting oppression (2017, p. 12). Arguing indeed that revolutions are forged in people sharing the same pain and desires coming together in solidarity and “using language concepts, epistemology, and ontology” altogether (Musolf 2017, p. 12). Oppression implies that the people who are oppressed see their cultural practices shaped and this is done “so that they become complicit in their own subordination” (Seymour 2006 in Musolf 2017, p. 12). This is why Musolf claims that interaction between the oppressed is the key to the emergence of resistance (Musolf 2017, p. 12). He argues indeed that resistance is created first by the development of a “counterhegemonic definition of the situation” that allows “critical consciousness and the possibility of a manifesto”, that is the commencement of “alternative epistemology and ontology to the ruling ideas of society” (Musolf 2017, p. 12). What's more, he adds that for these several steps to happen, the group who is oppressed must be convinced that they can succeed despite, as mentioned earlier, the subordination, the “ideologies of inferiority” imposed by the oppressor, and the direct effects of social exclusion and disadvantages caused by the oppression (Musolf 2017, p. 12 and 13). Hence Musolf's focus on agency, as something that can re-erect the Self as a “meaning maker” (Musolf 2017, p. 12). It is agency indeed, according to Musolf, that enables the persons who suffer from oppression to conceive a fairer societal model as it “grounds transformations in identity and subjectivity, resulting in epistemological emancipation” (2017, p. 13). This first step, identified as “linguistic resistance” by Musolf, may

then be followed by an engagement into collective action of resistance, that may end up in the achievement of social justice (2017, p. 13).

In the third part of the analysis section, it will be argued, using Musolf's arguments on the first steps to resisting, that resistance is the main aim of the authors of the selected songs when deciding to tell the story of how they are represented and treated within the French society. The analysis will also incorporate theoretical elements borrowed to other scholars, notably for looking at the specific case of rap as cultural politics and means of resistance.

Analysis

1. Historical perspectives and postcolonial claims

“I have my inheritance on my epidermis” (‘French errors’, paragraph n°1)

In this first part of analysis, it will be argued that, when analyzing the narrative constituted by the chosen song lyrics, it was found that the artists’ choices notably of historical references and claims about contemporary political atmosphere can be classified as belonging to the postcolonial discourse and displayed testimonies of social exclusion and oppression.

1.1 A colonial past

1.1.1 References to colonization and decolonization

One of the first element that was found in most of the selected song lyrics is messages referring to France’s history, the way it is studied and mainly represented, hence the choice of Kery James in ‘Letter to the Republic’ to address the letter composing his song to “the Republic” generally and not, for example, the current government or political representatives. ‘Letter to the Republic’ indeed starts with a clear and critical reference to colonization, accusing “the Republic” and “all those racists” that constitute it, according to James, to have “built their nation on blood” (paragraph n°1). This accusation goes on in paragraph n°2, where James is mentioning the lootings and killings that occurred in Africa during French colonization and decolonization, as well as the torture and atrocities that were committed by the French army during the Algerian war of independence against France. Other references to colonization are made in the song, for example in paragraph n°5, when Kery James invites the listeners to: “Ask the Senegalese infantrymen and the Harkis, who took advantage of who?”, and then later in paragraph n°8, when James qualifies France’s history as “aggressive” and claims that “For [France], to decolonize is to destabilize”. In ‘Negro Music’, James, Lino, and Youssoupha make again a reference to colonization, and to its ongoing consequences by claiming that “the West Indies are looted by the metropolis” (paragraph n°4). In ‘The tears of Evil’, Dinos also mentions colonization through these words “At the beginning, we were kings, with gold as clothes. They came to loot us, all in the name of Christianity” and “they are just enslavers” (paragraph n°4).

Médine mentions this topic as well in his song ‘Rapper of Strength’ by declaring he was: “born from the colonial cut” (paragraph n°8). Language and vocabulary belonging to the lexical field of French history and especially to the colonization and decolonization periods can be found in these texts, and especially in ‘Letter to the Republic’ (paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 7).

1.1.2 Postcolonial claims

These references do not stand alone and are accompanied by strong critical judgments by the artists, and by what was interpreted in this study as postcolonial claims and attempt to represent history in a way that is more representative of the suffering endured by the people who have been colonized (Wininger 2011). Indeed, in paragraph n°2 of ‘Letter to the Republic’, James insists on the responsibility of France for the “colonial past”, claiming that it is France that “chose” to “tie [its] history to ours”, “ours” here referring to the history of Africans and immigrants from former colonies. This argument is taken further by James in paragraph n°5, in which he implies that France “took advantage” notably of the Senegalese infantrymen (colonial corps of infantry which served in the French army) and the harkis (Algerians who served on the French side during the Algerian war of independence against France). In the same paragraph, James adds that “The Republic is only innocent in your fantasy”, insisting once more on the responsibility of France. Additionally, very strict judgments can be found towards this part of French history, like for example in ‘Damn Time’: “History has shown that they are ready for the worst of filth. Strategy of fear to make the masses agree. The filth they will perpetrate on the rest of the globe” (paragraph n°5) and “My land is not poor, no, it is that it has been impoverished” (paragraph n°9). This idea of claiming the responsibility of the colonizer relates to Frantz Fanon’s argument in his book “White Skin, Black Masks” (1967), in which colonial exploitation and racism are said to be comparable to the ideologies of Nazism, and the former imperialist powers called to recognize their responsibilities (Césaire 1945 in Fanon 1967 p. 90, Fanon 1967 p. 89-91) More generally, all above-identified claims of the artists reflect Fanon’s post-colonialist demonstration and considerations relating to the consequences of colonization, may they be economic consequences for the colonized lands, psychological consequences for the colonized peoples, or structural consequences for today’s former colonized and former colonizer’s societies (Fanon 1967).

Furthermore, the diverse use of “negro” and “niggers” (‘Negro Music’, ‘Letter to the Republic’, paragraph n°7; ‘The tears of Evil’, paragraph n°5; ‘Damn time’, paragraph n°8 and 9; ‘Scum’, paragraph n°22) can be interpreted as a will to reassign and reappropriate a colonialist

denomination, or, as in Aimé Césaire's early definition of Négritude as "the simple recognition of the fact that one is black, the acceptance of this fact and of our destiny as blacks, of our history and our culture" (Césaire 1939 in Cushman *et al.* 2012).

Going further, in paragraph n°10 of 'Negro Music', the will of the artists to "burn the books of Fernand Nathan" can be interpreted as the will to rewrite history. Nathan is indeed one of the most eminent editors of school books that are officially used by the Republican institution of Education in France. By burning these books, the authors show a will to erase the official version of history as it is currently taught in the Republican school, and eventually to replace it with a fairer version for the colonized populations. Relating to the arguments displayed in the theoretical framework section, one could interpret this claim of the artists as a wish to replace historical education programmes for programmes that are not written solely by Western scholars. This argument indeed can be brought closer to Said's Orientalism (1978), as a critique of the hegemony of Western scholarship. It can as well recall the thesis defended by Jack Goody in his book 'The theft of history', in which he claims that the West has imposed its historical narrative on the rest of the world, stripping in some way Asia and African of parts of their own history (Vergopoulos 2011, p. 123).

The claims relating to colonial history have been interpreted as slightly different in 'Rapper of Strength'. Médine indeed seems to recognize that efforts have been made by the Republic to acknowledge parts of its responsibility but is not satisfied for all that he declares "You offer me a memorial, it's too kind. But the victim's whiner is not for me" ('Rapper of Strength' 2017, paragraph n°8).

1.2 Immigration in France : Historical perspective

1.2.1 Immigrant origins

Besides colonization and decolonization, other historical elements are mentioned throughout the different song lyrics. It is for example the case in paragraph n° 5 of 'All they want', where the authors evoke the migration of their "fathers" to France, in 'Letter to the Republic': "Us the Arabs and the black people, we are not here by accident, every arrival has its departure!" (paragraph n°3) and in 'The tears of Evil': "Landed in France, thinking of taking back our money. But we did the opposite, we give them much more than before" (paragraph n°5).

These refers to the mass influx of immigrants from the former colonies that France has known in the last half of the 20th century (Tribalat 2012, p. 140; Barou 2014 p. 642-643), as the former

colonies were left with major and enduring problems following decolonization (Wininger 2011, p. 884). This phenomenon is understood by artist Kery James as a strategy of France to obtain “cheap labor” forces (‘Letter to the Republic’, paragraph n°4), a fact that he puts in opposition to what he thinks France presented as “charitable work” (*Ibid.*). He adds that France wanted this situation at first, and claims “Thanks to it you stuffed yourself until indigestion” (paragraph n°4). This argument is close to the one found in the paragraph n°7 of ‘All they want’, in which the artists blame France for committing what they call “selective immigration”, blaming France for not hosting anyone that needs it but to select the ‘useful’ candidates instead.

1.2.2 The struggle for integration

One of the main blame that has been put on early generations of immigrants from former colonies is their lack of integration (Barou 2014, p. 643). Kery James answers to this specific blame in his song ‘Letter to the Republic’ by claiming: “None integrates within rejection. None integrates within the French ghettos, penned, Between immigrants, let’s be reasonable.” (paragraph n°7). This claim can be backed by researcher Jacques Barou, who argues in his 2014 article, ‘Integration of immigrants in France: a historical perspective’, that racial discrimination has been a strong obstacle to integration and that especially persons from Africa and North Africa were excluded, notably because of a negative image “associated with juvenile delinquency and French urban riots” (p.652).

According to Laurent Béro, these elements of narrative concerning decolonization in the previous subsection and these concerning the first generations of immigrants from the former colonies in this subsection, can be considered as expression of a rap artist that becomes conscient of “[where he comes from]” and “[who he is]” (2008, p. 66). He indeed argues that there is still today a “[social separatism]” that is what remains of old policies and juridical statuses concerning former African, Caribbean, and indigenous slaves (Béro 2008, p. 66). He claims that this is seen for example in the fact that Paris and the suburbs are divided into areas destined to host taxpayers, and others destined to host non-tax payers, and cites studies proving the social marginalization and low education level of most of representants of this urban art, claiming that these population are situated in a “[submitted social position]” (Béro 2008, p. 66). It is thus possible to interpret that, when mentioning about the first generations, the ones of their parents or grandparents, the artists are making a chronological bridge between the event that fostered emigration of their ancestors, and their own situation today, arguing that conditions in which each of these steps occurred were unfair to the people from former colonies. Previous

quotes have indeed shown that decolonization is considered by the artists to have had destabilizing consequences on formerly colonized countries, thus fostering a mass immigration considered to have been orchestrated by France to its advantage and in a way that was not assisting immigrants to integrate properly into their host country.

1.3 Contemporary period: a climate of suspicion

‘Letter to the Republic’ consist of a letter the artist is addressing to ‘the Republic’ as a personified character. As seen above, several of the artists choose to address messages and claims or to describe the way they have been treated, either as individuals or as a group, by addressing to the Republic, institutions or France in general. Through analysis of the lyrics, however, it appears that it is mostly to contemporary politicians and elected representatives of the Republic that Kery James is addressing his letter to (paragraphs n°5, 7, 10, 11, 13). It is also the case for the other songs that have been analyzed in this study, for example: ‘Scum’ (2016) appears to be directly addressed to politicians from the main French political parties at the time (The Republicans and the Socialist party), the government (Socialist party), and some politicians in particular, such as former president of the Republic Nicolas Sarkozy (The Republicans); ‘Negro Music’ (2016) appears to be mostly addressed to some politicians and public persons in particular in each different paragraphs, such as anti-immigration aspiring presidential candidate Henry de Lesquen, former president Jacques Chirac, French controversial humorist Michel Leeb, etc. This could be interpreted as a will to address both France as a whole, its history and values, as seen above, and the contemporary aspects of French political and public life that affects the daily life of its population, as will be seen below.

The most recent events that some of the artists refer to is what they claim to feel as an increase in the Islamophobic and anti-immigrant climate among the French population and political discourses, often linked by the artist to the recent rise in terrorist threatening in the country. In ‘All they want’ indeed, we learn that according to the artists, the “deleterious climate” is present “today more than yesterday” (2010, paragraph n°5). This change of atmosphere appears in the paragraph n°2 of ‘Chocolate croissant’ (2013) as well, in which the artists of IAM declare that the “the speech hardens”. The connection to recent terrorist threats in France is made in paragraph n°5, where the artists mention the racist terms that were used to designate them in the past and claim that nowadays they are instead perceived as “all terrorists and master pyrotechnists”, adding a reference to a recent terrorism-related event: “the worst ones see Merah

everywhere”. ‘Merah’ here refers to terrorist Mohammed Merah who committed attacks on a military base and a school in March 2012. Going further with this idea, the artists of IAM claim “They think we are all heavily armed, waiting patiently, a nice opportunity to shed blood” (paragraph n°6), “fear unloads”, (paragraph n°6), “As if the same were killing in Darfur and robbing the Carrefour [supermarket], as if the guys in Baghdad were attacking, were coming into our streets, armed, stealing cars” (paragraph n°7). Furthermore, the title, chorus and introductory paragraph of ‘Chocolate croissant’ are intended to mock the resented Islamophobic declaration of an influent French politician, Jean-François Copé. The title is inspired by a story that was told by M. Copé during a speech, in which he said that a young school kid got his chocolate croissant confiscated by his Muslims schoolmates who professed that he should not be eating in daylight during Ramadan. The Islamophobia of this declaration is denounced and critiqued by IAM members in their chorus: “What should we write? Clumsy couplets to terrorize little Jean-François” (‘Chocolate croissant’, 2013). The use of the word “terrorize” here seems to show to the will of the artists to denounce what they interpret as Jean-François Copé surrendering exactly to what terrorism is meant to: inspire terror among the targeted population. Part of the mocking orchestrated in this song lyrics thus stands in this interpreted meaning of the caricature the artists intended to narrate: terrorism has rendered part of the population afraid of getting their chocolate croissant taken away from them at school break, terrorism has won in its mission to inspire fear and destroy fraternity within the nation. These types of recent events have been mentioned as well in ‘Death threat’, where artist Youssoupha declares: ““But I do not hope that my name suddenly reminded you of the one of Fofana” (paragraph n°7). The name Fofana here refers to Youssouf Fofana, a gang leader sentenced in 2006 for committing atrocities and murdering a young Jewish person.

Additionally, when mentioning notably the terrorism theme, some of the artists raise the question of double standard and Islamophobia. Dosseh and Nekfeu indeed, ask in their song ‘Damn time’: “When a pedophile priest touches a kid are French Christians asked to go out on the streets?” (paragraph n°1). This was analyzed as an oppositional reading of some declarations by media journalists, politicians, and even the Pope, who, after the Charlie Hebdo shootings of January 2015, and again after the Paris and Nice attacks, decided to ask Muslim persons and Muslim community representatives if they were condemning the attacks. In the same song, however, the artists seem to disagree with the fact that the rise in Islamophobia is due to the rise of the terrorist threat: “Do not believe that the French are all racist since the attacks. So much of them were already before that” (paragraph n°2). Nevertheless, the public conflation

Muslim/terrorist that was interpreted as what the artists wish to claim, like for example in this quote from 'Death threat' : "And in their stupidity they confuse crime and Islam" (paragraph n°1) and is an argument that was made by Mythen, Walklate, and Khan in their article 'I'm a Muslim, but I'm not a terrorist: victimization, risky identities and the performance of safety'(2009). They indeed argue that security measures officially taken after the 2005 bombings in the United Kingdom had notably the consequence of a peak in racism against Muslims minorities, as it "labelled [them] as dangerous, risky 'others' that threaten the security of the nation" (Mythen *et al.* 2009, p. 738). They describe what's more a "constant connection of Muslims with terrorism", that is in opposition to labels that are cast on White people when a similar terrorism event occurs but committed by a White terrorist (Mythen *et al.*, p. 743). If Mythen, Walklate, and Khan are studying the situation in the United Kingdom specifically, they claimed that the rise of racism they describe for minorities in Britain following terrorist attacks is similar to the one in other European countries, especially in France (Allen and Nielsen 2002; van Swaaningen 2005; Quraishi 2005, in Mythen *et al.* 2009, p. 738).

The emphasis on the event, but also on the security measures taken by the State as a cause for the peak of racism can also be seen in some of the artist's narratives. They indeed seem to describe a heavy atmosphere of suspicion. This is especially the case for the songs that came out after the Paris attacks on November 13th, 2015. From this date indeed, the State of emergency was declared, as a group of emergency dispositions notably allowing authorities to track, and search homes of persons suspected to have a connection with a terrorist activity and to reduce their civil liberties (Asia News Monitor 2017). These dispositions were re conducted several times, and appear to be mentioned and criticized in several of the songs selected in this study. In 'Damn time' indeed, the artists ask: "And for what reason do I doubt each official version and the effectiveness of the state of emergency and of your S cards?" (2016, paragraph n°4). "S cards" here, refers to state security indicators, which are notably used by French intelligence to watch on potentially dangerous persons. These are mentioned also in 'Scum' where Kery James asks: "Is this the kind of text that can earn me an S card?" (paragraph n°21). The question asked by James was interpreted as rhetorical and aiming at denouncing the targeting of minorities in terms of counter-terrorism investigations (Mythen *et al.*) In the same song, the artist criticizes the long-term aspect that the State of emergency had taken, alongside with the atmosphere of suspicion, by saying "The state of emergency has become the norm" (paragraph n°21).

1.4 Racism and Islamophobia

References to racism and/or Islamophobia were found in all songs and seem to relate to almost all other topics mentioned in this study, as a thematic suffering which is omnipresent in the artists' lives. Often an integrated part of some other elements of narrative, the occurrences of racism being mentioned alone and as such are analyzed in the sub-part below.

This theme is mentioned often in the various artists narrative either by directly naming it through the use of words such as “negrophobic” (‘Negro Music’ 2016, paragraph n°4), “Islamophobic” (‘Letter to the Republic’ 2012, paragraph n°11), “xenophobic” (ibid), “racism” or “racist” (‘Letter to the Republic’ 2012, paragraph n°1,13; ‘French errors’ 2015, paragraph n°5; ...), or through the use of more constructed stories that show the authors reactions to how they are sometimes portrayed. Example of this last claim can be found in ‘Negro Music’ where Kery James reacts to “the noise and the smell” declaration that was made by Jacques Chirac in 1991 about African Families in the suburbs. Chirac, who was at the time the mayor of Paris, indeed argued that Muslim and Black immigrants were causing more problems than European immigrants, because they have “[three or four wives, about twenty children, and earn about 50 000 francs in social benefits, naturally without working!]” and continued with “[if you add to this the noise, and the smell, the French worker living next to him becomes mad]” (Video archive Ina). James answers this by simply saying “I feel that I disturb France” (paragraph n°4). Later in ‘Letter to the Republic’, James claims “You treat us like nobodies on your public channels and you expect us to chant “Long live the Republic!” (paragraph n°11), emphasizing once more on the injustice of such expectations considering what he claims to be the systematic racist treatment that is reserved to French persons of immigrant origins. These claims recall, as mentioned in the theoretical framework section of this study, the claims of Frantz Fanon to be considered differently because of his race, in a dehumanizing way, and that, the French society, puts race as a central element of his life (2011, p. 158).

Furthermore, one of the artists demonstrates this feeling of being rejected to an extreme level through this declaration: “Who will defend all our writings? It’s neither the CRAN nor the LICRA” (‘Negro Music’, paragraph n°16). ‘CRAN’ here refers to the Representative Council of France’s Black Associations, and ‘LICRA’ the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism. Both these associations are meant to fulfill a mission of defense against racism and discrimination. The artist hence here expresses a feeling a rejection reaching such level that

even organizations that are supposed to be defending him against the oppression he denounces are accused of not being willing or failing to do so.

1.5 Suburb Narratives

1.5.1 The main element of postcolonial discourse in France?

According to Laurent Béro, these typical suburb narratives are the illustration of postcolonialism in France (2008, p. 76). He argues indeed that the suburbs are often associated with the “[mediatic overbid surrounding insecurity]” (2008, p. 76).

Muslim French rappers from North Africa are, according to him, attempting to “[rehabilitate their culture and their beliefs]”, reminding that they have origins in countries that were once under French colonization (Béro 2008, p. 73-74). Same goes for the revendication of blackness that can be found in some of the rap lyrics and is considered by Béro to go in parallel with the doubts they may have about the political power, doubts that are “[conditioned notably by the French colonial history]” (Béro 2008, p. 74). He defends the claim that these artists propose their own information, in order to fight against “[socio-mediatic logics that stigmatize French Muslim adolescents and young adults]”.

1.5.2 Suburb narrative: A myth?

According to Karim Hammou however, it has become obsolete to consider rap music as the expression of the suburbs in France (2015, p. 78) Hammou argues indeed that several factors allow the hypothesis to be refuted. These factors include notably an increase and a diversification of the audience of rap music, and the difficulty to determine the social status of this audience, notably because it is composed in majority of students (Hammou 2015, p. 78). Despite this last claim, the author manages to argue that the children of working classes actually represent a minority among rap fans (*Ibid.*), a fact that could fragilize his first claim. The second factor brought up by Hammou is the emergence of concurring approaches to rap such as: rap as a professional practice, rap as an object of public policy, etc. (Hammou 2015, p. 79). It could nonetheless be argued that the existence of concurring approaches is not a sufficient fact to render one obsolete. The third factor that tends to break this conception of rap as the expression of the suburbs, according to Hammou, is the fact French rap is heterogeneous, and cannot be analyzed in a “[monolithic]” way (2015, p. 79). In the conclusion of his 2015 article, Hammou

claims that “rap as the expression of the suburbs” can be considered as a myth created by academia, the early 1990s media and the “[political imagination who abundantly used hip-hop as a tool of control of the youth of working-class areas]” (Hammou 2015, p. 80). Despite parts of his approach that could be considered as less convincing, Hammou’s main aim is to bring nuance in the ways rap is commonly understood and studied, claiming that social sciences researchers have been almost forced to understand rap as the expression of the suburbs because this belief has been fed by “[artistic, academic, trading, political and judiciary means]” (Hammou 2015, p. 80).

Following this advice, and as already mentioned in the methods part of this study, the narrative researcher needs to situate the stories “within their wider social and historical context” (Patterson 2008). Considering these contexts, and the fact that this study focuses not on rap itself but on the author’s narratives, it is thus possible to claim that the texts analyzed are expressions emanating from the suburbs, as the artists themselves often mention, and, at least in the mind of their authors, and as will be argued in the next part of analysis, constitute attempts to represent the marginalized, stigmatized and discriminated populations that are commonly living in these areas (Downing 2016, p. 522). It is also important to consider, as indicated in the research question of this study, that the focus has been put not exactly on the chosen artists as speaking for the suburbs, but as speaking for the French population with immigrant origins, and that analysis has shown that the representation sometimes derived to be the one of the suburb’s population. From this angle, the argument of Laurent Béro that rap displays the typical suburb narrative, which is the illustration of postcolonialism in France is thus incomplete.

1.6 Conclusion

In this part, we have seen that history and political atmosphere are central points to most of the artists selected in this study. Throughout the analysis, it has been understood that the several tensed historical periods involving France, its former colonies, and the concerned populations, are decoded by the artists through the framework of post-colonialism. This framework appears to be in opposition to what the artists claim to hear in the mainstream versions of history as it is used in the French context, and in current political atmosphere and discourses, that they claim are racist and Islamophobic, especially, for some artist, since the terrorist attack wave that impacted France in the recent years. At the end of this part, the narratives of the studied song lyrics were identified as expressions of the marginalized populations of the suburbs notably.

2. Identity issues

“Identity cannot be summed up to one word” (‘All they want’, paragraph n°4)

As their narrative unfolds, the artists are performing various identities. Through this performance, they express different observations and claims about mainly the following issues: difference, stigmatization and its consequences, and national identity and ‘Frenchness’. Once again the exploration of these issues by the artists have notably been made through the oppositional decoding of what they claim is a false, distorted or discriminative representation of them that they claim has been performed by the media, politicians, or the French society in general.

2.1. Performed identities: the artists as a representant

Being an artist of immigrant origins was one of the criteria for choosing the songs to be analyzed in this study. However, analysis has revealed that depending on the songs, and sometimes on the paragraphs within each song, various identities could be performed as the artists’ narratives unfolded. The list of specific identities that the artists were attempting to represent or incarnate, as identified in the analysis, included notably: black people, Muslims, suburbanites, but also “the people” in general, French citizens, etc. It is for example possible to cite these extracts : “Us the Arabs, the black people” (‘Letter to the Republic’, paragraph n°3), “child of immigrants” (‘All they want’, paragraph n°3), as messages aiming at defining exactly who the artists are speaking for or in the name of.

Among these messages, it is also possible to find some not only aiming at defining but also sharing the pride of owning a specific identity, like for example in ‘Negro Music’: “I feel handsome, black, I rise to high level” (paragraph n°2). A third different type of messages relating to the artists feelings of belonging to a specific identity is the mentioning of a people or a place as one’s kin, or motherland through the use of possessive pronouns : “That *my* Africa is too strong” (‘Negro music’, paragraph n°4), “On all the continents of the world, *my* folks are not well” (‘Damn Time’, paragraph n°9).

2.2 Stigmatizing representation

2.2.1 Highlighting differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ as a questioning of one’s own identity

Before engaging with the topic of the stigmatization that was found within the various artist's claims, it is important to note that an emphasis on the differences between the group they incarnate, and ‘the rest of the French population’ was found in some of the songs. Through analysis indeed, it even seemed to be the main theme of Lino and Doku’s song ‘French errors’: “We speak the same language but we do not understand each other” (chorus), “Do you hear me when I speak?” (paragraph n°8), etc. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter of this study, identity can both be understood as a collective phenomenon or at the individual level. As understood by Brigitte Jandey, identity at the individual level implies subjectivity, self-assessment, and feelings of belonging (2011, p. 59). Jandey further argues that “belonging is culturally referenced, and therefore, exclusive”, that is to say, it implies a comparison with an ‘Other’ (2001, p. 59). In other words, the feeling of being French exists through the acknowledgment of the other’s “similarities and differences”, and the consideration that someone else is not French (Jandey 2011, p. 60). It is thus possible to interpret the emphasis on differences that have been made by some of the chosen artists as a questioning of their own identity and belonging to French society with regards to the dividing framings of them they claim is being performed regularly or systematically in the mainstream media.

The artists indeed slowly bring up what they think is the explanation for this incompatibility between them and the other part of the French population, may the claims be about ethnicity : “I have my inheritance on my epidermis” (‘French errors’ 2015, paragraph n°1), or social issues: “Do you see me despite the gap?” (‘French errors’ 2015, paragraph n°8). Unlike in some of the other songs, ‘the other’ here does not appear to be blamed by the artists for its lack of comprehension towards the artists’ group, as indicated in this sentence from paragraph n°2 : “How do you want us to understand each other when it is TF1 that introduce us?”. TF1 here refers to one of the main French TV channels, which is considered by some to follow a right-wing editorial policy and is often criticized for its framing of certain issues concerning notably immigrants (Harsin 2015). The incompatibility is thus identified by the authors as a question of representation.

The same idea of an emphasis on differences is found in a more caricatural and illustrated way in ‘The tears of Evil’ (2018): “Disagree because we do not know how to play the piano, neither cello” (paragraph n°6). The interpreted claim of the artist here is to denounce a gap between two different worlds, two different social level, that exists only by the spite the upper classes are perceived to feel about the artist’ group. The latter can seem instead to intend to prove that he is educated, for example by choosing to name his song after the iconic poetry volume “The Flowers of Evil” by French poet and philosopher Charles Baudelaire. Such idea of a gap is again found in a more literal way in ‘Death Threat’ (2012): “We are not of the same world” (paragraph n°6).

2.2.2 Stigmatizing representation and its consequences

Either celebrated, for example in the context of black empowerment or used as an illustration of a social and cultural gap, differences are not emphasized by all the artists chosen in the study. This may be because one of the main claim found in the chosen artists’ narrative is the exacerbation of the perceived difference by the others, leading to stigmatization.

Going along with the previous subsection on Islamophobia and racism, the analysis has shown that the stigmatization the artists are claiming to be victims of is one of the major ways in which they narrate the way they are treated and represented. Example of these claims can be found in ‘Rapper of Strength’: “press clippings heals badly” (paragraph n°9). To understand this quote, it is important to know that the word for “clippings” in French also means “cut”. Further, Médine adds: “The media hates me, not an area of my body without scar” (‘Rapper of Strength’, paragraph n°14). Similar claims have been made by Kery James in ‘Letter to the Republic’: “And it’s towards Muslims that all your shots go” (paragraph n°11) and by IAM in ‘Chocolate Croissant’: “We feel the impact of each remark of the press” (paragraph n°3). These press articles or politician declarations depicted as perceived punches, shots or cuts are aimed at illustrating the sufferings of those targeted by this hurtful representation.

In their third paragraph, the authors of ‘Chocolate Croissant’ exemplify: “Suspicious often target us, seriously it’s annoying. The wrong names on the resume and there’s the job that goes away. It all depends on something we have not decided: where we come from, who we are, all these facts we can not deny” and further by claiming “As if the evil was engraved in our faces” (paragraph n°7), and “Oh it’s beautiful, these lawsuits without lawyer” (paragraph n°10). All

these arguments tend towards a complaint of the authors that through the constant stigmatization occurring against them in the media, their life becomes severely affected, with discriminative phenomenon such as difficulty to get employment, increased xenophobia and/or racism, etc. These are issues that can be categorized under the label of social exclusion, as already mentioned in the theoretical framework section, as a problem deriving directly from stigmatization (Behrman *et al.* 2003 in Velazquez 2013, p. 68).

Stigmatization is indeed identified in some of the song lyrics as the source to related problems endured by the social groups impersonated or represented by the authors. These problems endured can be understood as consequences of social exclusion, itself deriving from stigmatization.

Precarity, for example, has been found to be depicted mainly in 3 of the 10 song lyrics analyzed in this study. In ‘Scum’ indeed Kery James raps: “You have never know precariousness. You live away from our realities” (paragraph n°3) and “We work more but we earn less [...] We contribute to pensions that we may never see” (paragraph n°16). James here seems to show, as it is mainly the case for this whole song, a will to denounce the current system and political order, that will be discussed in the third part of the analysis. Other mentions of precarity are found in ‘Chocolate Croissant’ : “With us the shortage is ravaging” and “Eternal blown off, squatting the bench of unemployment all year long” (paragraph n°3) and in ‘Tears of Evil’ : “Nothing in the wallet” (paragraph n°3), “Often broke” (paragraph n°5), “We are looking for a full-time job, but we only find some on the street” and “the brothers end up pissed, with nothing left and indebted” (paragraph n°6).

Social exclusion, precarity and the diverse problems the artists depict in their narrative are thus clearly identified by them as consequences of discrimination deriving from the stigmatizing representation and othering that is performed about them and as seen in the theoretical framework section (Velazquez 2013).

2.2.3 Knowing who to blame: media and political power responsibility

There almost seems to be a consensus on the responsibility surrounding the problem of stigmatization among the authors of the chosen songs. The artists are indeed mentioning “debates” (‘Letter to the Republic, paragraph n°11), the media and the press (‘Rapper of Strength’, paragraph n°9,14; ‘Chocolate Croissant’, paragraph n°3; ‘Negro Music’, paragraph n°14), and political strategies aiming at finding a ‘culprit’ to France’s problems such as the economic crisis (‘Letter to the Republic’, paragraph n°5, 11; ‘French errors’, paragraph n°3),

rather than blaming the population in general. In other words, it seems to be politicians and media, the way they portray and represented them, that are guilty of the stigmatization they are denouncing within their narrative. They moreover sometimes claim that this stigmatization is leading to extreme rejection ('Negro Music': "Of over-breathing the rejection, my lung got perforated" paragraph n°8). This rejection is sometimes felt like a refusal to acknowledge them as part of the French society, as will be argued in the following subsection.

2.3 National identity and Frenchness

2.3.1 Questioned Frenchness: a question of perception

Stigmatization, either performed against an individual or a community is a central to the third aspect to French identity as identified by Brigitte Jandey, as she explains that being or feeling French does not automatically results in other French persons 'perceiving' you as such and that this perception is "rooted in someones else's perceptions and gaze" (2011, p. 60). The example taken by Jandey to exemplify this claim is the one of second or third generation North-African migrants, as "one [who] is born in a country but one [who] is looked on as a migrant" (2011, p. 60 and 73). This may thus result in prejudices and stigmatization.

2.3.2 The roots of the Othering: a question of origins?

Such stigmatization finds its roots in emphasizing differences that are not simply summed up to ethnic differences. The main reason for this can be that, as argued by Brigitte Jandey, it would be "nonsense" to consider that there is a French ethnicity (2011, p. 59), and it is rather more correct to consider France's population as a patchwork of different identities" (2011, p. 57). The same type of idea can be found in Dub Inc's song 'All they want': "And these three colors on the flag do not suffice to color the picture of this country, of this so beautiful people" (paragraph n°4). National identity can be considered as the main theme in 'All they want'. In the first paragraph, the artists of Dub Inc claim that "each of us got his/her own identity but for all the same nation. Each of us got his/her own culture but for all the same country", emphasizing at the same time on the differences, and on the shared identity, using the term "us" this time to designate not only the immigrants or the, for instance, the Muslims but the French population as a whole. This song, that has been analyzed as slightly more positive and hopeful than the other songs considered in this study, include claims such as "All we want is to feel at

home” (chorus), and “born in France, yeah, I love it, it’s my land” (paragraph n°4). This last quote, however, does not stand alone, as Dub Inc members’ love for their country is not unconditional: they love it “when it respects its son, and when it takes [them] into consideration” (paragraph n°4). Later on in the song, Dub Inc members accuse France of doing selective immigration and claim: “You sing the Marseillaise (national anthem) like a punitive sanction” (paragraph n°7), thus showing disagreement in the way France operates regarding immigration policies and with some of the politicians who would be tempted to accept refugees and immigrants on ethnic or religious bases (Le Parisien, 8th September 2015). This recalls at the same time the debate on National identity, as a theme that comes back on political agendas regularly in France (Aubérot 2011), and that often incorporates declarations by politicians such as the designation of Gauls as ancestors of the French people (L’Obs, 20th September 2016), or the “Christian roots of France” that should, according to some politicians, appear in the French constitution (Marianne, 10th January 2016). These ideas relate to Guibernau’s historical dimension to National identity, as already mentioned in the theoretical framework section, that involves the designation of the nation’s ancestors, and the search for ancestors that are as ancient as possible (Guibernau 2004, p. 136-137). Nevertheless, both talking about Gauls as the ancestors of the French people and of the “Christian roots” of France, is mostly considered to rather be politician fantasies than historical truths by historian scholars (Aubérot 2011, p. 20). It thus possible to sense, to some degree, an unjustified obsession of ethnicity and religion in some of the current representatives of the political power in France.

To understand thus on what criteria can someone be perceived as ‘not French’ despite his or her citizenship, Jandey propose to focus on speech, accents and language command. She quotes a study by Zsuzsanna Fagyal on the speech of multiethnic (but often born in France) suburban youth who is accused of lowering the level of French language in French schools. This study concluded that “the incriminated youths did, in fact, have a perfectly usual command of French when they wanted to” but would often “display a Northern African accent, even when it was not their own” (Jandey 2011, p. 61). These types of unfair accusations are expressed in the author's’ narrative in various ways, for example through the accusation of being “illiterate” that can be heard in ‘Death Threat’, or in the title of ‘Negro Music’ that can designate a concept that can be understood as opposite to formal or serious music. For Jandey, the results of Fagyal’s study, and those of other studies show that these youth actually *choose* to speak a “distorted” French. This last claim is interpreted by Jandey as something that “may indicate a need to step away from a national identity that does not have much significance for them” (2011, p. 61).

These youths are suffering from prejudices because of their accent, because this accent “provokes an immediate feeling of strangeness, negatively labeled” (Conein and Gadet in Jandey 2011, p. 63). Jandey thus considers that “these youths are refused a national identity that they themselves reject” (2011, p. 64). This claim can be seen in ‘All they want’ where the artists proclaim: “Your national identity remains again a screw-up much rather than an alternative” (paragraph n°7) or in ‘French errors’ : “The Marianne frustrate our theses” (paragraph n°6), “Marianne” here referring to a symbol of the French Republic.

2.3.3 The roots of Othering: a question of social status?

According to Jandey, this rejection is linked in a higher degree to the social background rather than to national background or origins. Indeed, she demonstrates using Fagyal’s argument that the accent of these youths, though it can be influenced by “occidental varieties of Arabic”, is actually very close to the old Parisian working-class accent, that “when these youths are treated like foreigners, they are merely being signaled out as different from the upper class” (2011, p. 64).

In the light of these arguments, Jandey attempts to describe “the French canon”, as the standard that youths of foreign origins try to resist to with their choice of pronunciation which is a “symbolic act” (2011, p. 65). Investigating what could be considered as the ‘right’ pronunciation, Jandey finds out that the standard has been dictated by upper-classes, “a privileged minority in the country”, implying that “French identity is the privileged possession of a small section of the French upper classes” (2011, p. 66). Jandey further argues that “one needs to adopt the standard codes of ‘good society’ in order to be regarded as genuinely French” (2011, p. 66). A sense of this upper classes dominance is heard in ‘Scum’, when artists Kery James, addressing the political representants, declares: “Republican or PS (Socialist party), keep your promises in your Hermes bags” (paragraph n°3) and “You have never known precariousness, you live away from our realities” (paragraph n°4). Through these claims, James seems to attempt to depict the leading political class as upper class and unable to understand the issues concerning the everyday life of the people they govern.

According to Jandey, this situation is the main reason these citizens have to protest against: if the national canon for what it means to be French is adapted from one particular identity, the one of the bourgeoisie, it is thus rejecting other types of persons (2011, p. 77). As a result, part of the population can feel excluded from this restrictive definition of Frenchness: they want to

be regarded as the citizens they are instead of the migrants they are considered as. In Jandey's words, they want "to be considered and looked at as fully French, as part of the country they were born" (2011, p. 73). This feeling of not being regarded as fully French, or being refused the ownership of a full French national identity becomes evident in some of the songs through claims such as: "I am French approximate." ('Rapper of strength', paragraph n°3), "To be binational is roughly to be a citizen" (paragraph n°7), "French of guilty origin" ('Chocolate Croissant' paragraph n°3), "given your tensed origins" ('French errors' paragraph n°7), or even in the title of the song by Lino and Doku: "French errors".

2.3.4 Inequalities regarding Republican values

In the conclusion of her article, Jandey argues that the French Republic's ideal of identity does not fit the reality of French citizen of migrant origin as "Liberté [Liberty], Egalité [Equality], Fraternité [Brotherhood], the 'universal' republican motto, does not apply to them" (2011, p. 77). This especially recalls this quote from 'Damn Time': "Liberty, Equality, already I do not believe that much, but for their fraternity, it is clear that we will have to wait for it" (paragraph n°2). As already mentioned above in this part of analysis, she attributes this idea to the argument that the French identity was created by the bourgeoisie, which can only be a problem in a society which is and has always been plural (2011, p. 77).

Finally, according to Jandey, French society needs to ensure the possibility for each citizen "to identify with the country as a community" (2011, p. 77). She argues that this is done not solely by integrating difference in the National identity canon, but rather by providing the "social and cultural means of highlighting this multiplicity as an active component of a real collectivity and as a rightful constituent of the national identity" (2011, p. 77).

2.4 Conclusion

As a conclusion, this part presented the analysis of the identity issues brought up by the artists in their narrative. We have seen that through performing diverse identities, the artists were acting as representants of certain groups for whom they claim to speak. What's more, we have seen that they describe what they decode as a stigmatizing representation that is made of them by mainstream media and political representants. This representation was said to be 'othering' them, highlighting differences, and the social and cultural gap between the groups the artists claim to represent and 'the other part' of France's population, pushing them to question their

own identity. It was then argued, still following the artists' narrative, that this stigmatizing representation has for consequence discrimination, social exclusion, leading to problems such as precarity among the groups represented by the artists. Then the question of French national identity and Frenchness was raised, as a central element included in the song lyrics. It was argued that if the Frenchness of the artists' groups was put into question, it was a question of perception of their level of Frenchness by others. Origins were firstly examined as one of the possible roots of this othering, by focusing on the variety of ethnic identities found in the French population, as opposed to the exclusive ideal of French national identity that some politician attempt to create by obsessing on ethnic issues. Language was then used in order to examine Frenchness among the population with immigrant origins, and it was found that when non-French features of languages were shown in second or third generations immigrants, this was mainly a question of choice, an argument that could indicate a relative disinterest or rejection of the French national identity by the youth of immigrant origins. It was then investigated whether the othering may find its source in questions of social status instead, as the 'French canon' for French national identity was identified as being adapted from the lifestyle of upper classes, leading parts of the population being refused the ownership of such national identity. Finally, inequalities regarding French Republican values of Liberty, Equality, and Brotherhood were highlighted, as this point was found both in the song lyrics and theoretical material supporting this part to be a conclusive claim supporting national identity issues for people of immigrant origins.

3. Political claims, opposition and resistance

“Who can pretend to rap without taking a stand?” (‘Death threat’, paragraph n°8)

In this part, the interest was turned forward the part of the chosen artists narrative that concerned conclusions drawn by the artists after bringing their claims up to the public. Through analysis, the main types of reaction to the elements that were constituting the two first parts of analysis in this study have been resignation, and denunciation accompanied with calls to take action for others. It will be argued that these claims were made by the artists within a discourse that is eminently political. Then, considering that political rap can be understood as comprising “messages that translate individual experiences into calls for attention to oppressive forces” (Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 134) and is thus not only a cultural practice but also “a blueprint for social resistance” (Rose 1994, Abrams 1995, Mc Donnell 1992, Kelley 1997 in Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 134), it will be argued that these narratives mainly aim at resistance.

3.1 Resignation and disenchantment

When facing the various problems linked to Islamophobia, discrimination, stigmatization and all other issues mentioned so far in this study, some of the artists seem to show feelings of resignation in their narrative.

This is the case for example of the members of IAM, who in the chorus of their song ‘Chocolate croissant’ describe their ambitions as “so many bottles in the sea” and ask “What can we say? What can we do?”. In paragraph n°3 of the same song, when describing the long-term unemployment that touches their kin, they justify this resignation by declaring “It’s not that there is no will, it’s just the faith that went away.” (‘Chocolate croissant’). The same type of argument can be found in Dinos’ song (‘The tears of Evil’) which contains in its third paragraph what can be interpreted as a sign of desperation “we will pray for the sky, hoping that a miracle will come” (paragraph n°3), and “I’m not expecting anything anymore” (chorus). To him, this resignation is spread and shared among generations, as paragraph n°7 shows that even his parents do not really have hope for his future. It can also be seen in cases where the situation seems to get worse with time, as for example in ‘Scum’ when the author concludes his song by referring to his other song ‘Letter to the Republic’ by saying “Nothing has changed since Letter to the Republic” (paragraph n°25).

This theme of disenchantment is spread in the songs, especially when it comes to politics. In ‘Scum’ indeed, Kery James declares “We feel that going to vote, It’s choosing which of you will fool us” (paragraph n°2), emphasizing this further in paragraph n°10 in which he says to politicians that “no one believes in [them]”, and in paragraph n°11 when advising them to “observe the abstention rates”.

The same resignation scheme is sometimes found when considering the topic of racism and integration into the French society. In ‘Letter to the Republic’ Kery James’ final sentence (paragraph n°14) is as well using this same tone of resignation as the other examples shown in this part: when talking about France’s lack of consideration for him and the people who are like him, he declares “I don’t lack affection, understand that I don’t wait for it to like me anymore”. James here seems indeed resigned, but instead of supporting a desperate thesis like other seems to have been doing, the artists decide to stop ‘waiting’ and this leads him to call for action.

3.2 Resistance

3.2.1 Denunciation: the artist as a messenger

The will to denounce becomes clear in quote such as : “I’m working for my people, I’m trying to open their eyes” (‘The tears of Evil’, paragraph n°5), “I detangle the truth from the fake” (‘Negro Music’, paragraph n°10), “The street thinks it, I put it into music, And for those who do not know it yet, I make it public” (‘Scum’, paragraph n°4), “I have the strength of culture, facing the culture of strength” (‘Rapper of Strength’, paragraph n°2). In the following subsection, it will be argued, as already mentioned in the theoretical framework section, that the denunciation discourse the artists engage in are, for most, political statements, and constitute the first step for resistance.

Some of the claims found in the various song lyrics are of course directly concerning the perceived hypocrisy and injustice of the framing that is being made of the social groups the authors incarnate, such as for example in ‘Death threat’ : “We have the unstoppable critics, From a France that forgets that the words of its anthem are more violent than gangsta rap” (paragraph n°3), and further: “But how to stay wise, when you see the picture, of the life that we are offered?” (paragraph n°8). Turning the blame back on their accusers is a strategy that has been used in the songs by several authors, such as for example Kery James who cites the names of several politicians who have recently been convicted by justice and asking this

question: “All those I mentioned were convicted, and it is the guys from the ghettos that they treat as damned?” (‘Scum’ 2016, paragraph n°7).

The same strategy of ‘asking the right questions’ is sensed in ‘Damn time’ for example, where the authors ask: “Where do their weapons come from? Who gives the weapon to them” (paragraph n°3), or in ‘Letter to the Republic’: “Who can lecture them? You? Abusers of social property, ‘misappropriater’ of funds. Real bandits in suits, you hypocrites. Do the French people have the leaders it deserves?” (paragraph n°10), taking the opportunity to cast a doubt on whether he thinks ‘the other part’ of France’s population is accepting the misbehaving he has just denounced.

It must also be noted that some of the denunciations that are made, as the one we have just seen, are not concerning directly the authors or their social groups. The song that emphasizes this idea the best is ‘Scum’ which is the most politicized song of this study, even though the artist claims to be completely out of any political game (paragraph n°4). In ‘Scum’ indeed, it is possible to find claims and accusations unrelated to the author’s personal story or the one of the groups he incarnates, for example in paragraph n°8 : “You do the same to France, but until it bleeds, until it drowns like Greece or Italy” or in paragraph n°15 “Everyone knows it’s obvious, you are completely subject to finance, Scum, you vote the laws that the rich order”. It can also be considered to be the case for the mention of France’s policies surrounding refugee issues that can be found in paragraph n°5 of ‘Rapper of Strength’. When this occurs, the song lyrics take the form less of a personal or collective narrative, and more of a clear political opposition discourse.

Mocking the political powers, denouncing, and expressing oneself can be achieved notably through the creation of music “as a ‘cultural glue’ that fosters communal resistance” (Rose 1991, 1994, 1995 in Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 134). It is thus possible to consider that rap artists produce “cultural politics” through their lyrics (Rose 1991, 1994 in Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 134). Additionally, rap cannot be confined to an “expressive cultural phenomenon” as argued by Beighey & Unnithan in their study of American rap lyrics, as it must also be understood as “a resisting discourse” against “White America’s racism and its Eurocentric cultural dominance” (Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 140-141). This claim can be transferred to the French case, as the contemporary struggle of French people of immigrant origins can to some extent compared to the one of Afro Americans, and, as argued by Frantz Fanon, Europe, as well as the United States of America, is based on a racist structure (2011, p. 136). For that matter, the authors of ‘Negro Music’ mentioned elements of US history throughout their song, comparing their struggle to the one of US civil rights activists: “I had a nightmare, Martin

Luther a dream” (paragraph n°2), “Like Huey P. Newton, calibrated on a wicker throne” (paragraph n°3), “Ass down, I took your place, I take myself for Rosa Parks (paragraph n°5). They seem to praise the heroes of US civil right history, and at the same time reject what was interpreted as them seeming to consider as a hypocrite representation of black people through the person of Barack Obama: “My art is sap, keep your "Yes we can"”(paragraph n°3).

3.2.2 Calls for action: the artist as a leader

Finally, often situated at the end of the song lyrics, explicit calls for action can be found in some of the studied songs, as what can seem as a natural conclusion to the authors’ narratives and resistance approaches. It is the case for example of Kery James in ‘Scum’ : “Do not take too much people for fools, beware” (paragraph n°11), “We are just waiting for the European spring” (paragraph n°16), or in ‘Letter to the Republic’: “Let no one be surprised if tomorrow it starts bursting” (paragraph n°14).

The resistance though is also often expressed in different ways, such as crude statements of opposition towards the media and/or the political order, such as for example in Médine’s song ‘Rapper of Strength’: “I repeat to you, fuck Le point, fuck Marianne (*French newspapers*). At home, their edits serve as cat litter” (paragraph n°11), or by revendicating a certain truth as an alternative to what is proposed at the mainstream level.

Thinking in terms of Hall’s encoding/decoding model (2001), it is thus possible to claim that the authors clearly adopt an oppositional reading of mainstream media and political discourses when considering the topics, as seen throughout this analysis, of history, immigration, integration, race, national identity, culture, but also politics and livelihood of some of the social groups they claim be the representants of through their art. Even for the artists that show signs of resignation and never seem to be calling for action in their song lyrics, there is a clear will to denounce the actions and representation that is made of them, an action that already means resisting (Musolf 2017, p. 13).

3.3 The ‘violent’ versus the inoffensive rap

3.3.1 Media support and underground rap

Other studies have shown that this is not always the case in rap lyrics, and that artist who do not choose to rap about societal issues are often the ones that are the most put into the spotlight

by media, as they reflect an image that is ‘inoffensive’ (Béru 2008, p. 68; Rose 1991 in Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 141) This fact can be heard once in ‘Scum’ when Kery James declares: “You will never again see me at Skyrock” (paragraph n°22). “Skyrock” here refers to one of France most popular radio, which is blamed by the artist to have derived from its former goal of broadcasting rap music, and to now only promote commercial hits, and to consider that ‘text’ songs are worthless nowadays (Kery James interview for Konbini). It is thus possible to argue that the ‘underground’ aspect of this type of song is imposed by the media who see and portray these oppositional artists “as potentially dangerous” (Rose 1991 in Beighey & Unnithan 2012, p. 141). From the point of view of the artist this can be seen as an unwanted situation (“The underground fills neither the pockets nor the stomach of the kids” ‘Damn time’, paragraph n°8), but one that they would not change, as seen for example in paragraph n°7 of ‘Damn time’, in which the artists claim to have needed to “simplify” his texts after he was advised to stop rapping “too loud”, but in the end decides to quit this resolution and remain faithful to his public anyways. The same idea of faithfulness to one’s audience is found as well in ‘Scum’ for that matter, a song in which, after blaming ‘Skyrock’ to have stopped supporting politically involved rap music, as mentioned earlier in this part, Kery James defines himself and the other rappers who are like him as “survivors” (paragraph n°23), claims to “make protest music” as opposed to them who he considers are “sell[ing] advertising space” (paragraph n°24) and ends up claiming : “You used me, I used you, for my message to reach the highest number, now I can do it without you, I have an audience that supports me, I did things, the people remember” (paragraph n°25). In this last quote, James affirms his adopted role both as a messenger and a leader, who will carry on protesting for the sake of the public, thanks to the support of his audience, and despite an obvious lack of support by specialized media such as Skyrock.

3.3.2 Resistance as a duty?

3.3.2.1 Offensive declarations and scandals: a tradition for politically involved rap

The same kind of idea of a duty, either responding to one’s fanbase, like for ‘Damn time’ or ‘Scum’ or either emanating directly from the genre itself is seen in the first and the last paragraph of Youssoupha’s lyrics : “our art is to annoy you, no death threats, rap does not come out of sockets but this is the only hardcore sound since rock has no more balls” (‘Death threat’, paragraph n°1) and “Who can pretend to rap without taking a stand?” (paragraph n°8). In this last quote, Youssoupha’s statement serves firstly as an attack both to those who would want rap

to settle down and be more consensual, and to the rappers that do so (Béru 2008, p. 68) and as a defense to the accusations carried against him. ‘Death Threat’ indeed begins with television recordings presenting various television shows in which the topics discussed are complaints filed against rappers for having expressed something perceived as offensive. We hear for example that the ministry of Interior brought French rap band La Rumeur to trial for declaring “Hundreds of us have been shot by the police” (‘Death Threat’, introductory recordings), or that the band Ministère A.M.E.R. casted scandal with their song “Sacrifice of chicken”, ‘chicken’ here being slang for ‘police officer’. The last piece of television recording composing the introduction to Youssoupha’s song concern the artist’s own offensive declaration being discussed on television by journalist Eric Zemmour, who was the one concerned by Youssoupha’s phrase: “It is a death threat, Youssoupha’s song, it must be quoted, anyway, it is “I put a ticket on the head of the one who will silence this idiot Eric Zemmour”” (‘Death Threat’, introductory recordings). Youssoupha hence puts himself at the end of a long list of rap artists being traditionally misunderstood, perceived as aggressive and/or dangerous and attacked for these reasons by the media. He thus write the song ‘Death Threat’, as already mentioned above as a declaration of the duty he considers rap ties him to: denunciation of injustices, and as an advocacy of defense, declaring in his last paragraph (n°8): “There is rage in our words, but how to stay wise when you see the picture of the life we are offered?” and “I pleaded self-defense in my statement”.

3.3.2.2 Offensive declaration and political involvement as a strategy of self-defense

This idea of self-defense is meant to justify the rappers perceived aggressivity of deriving from the constant stigmatization, exclusion, and oppression they claim to suffer from especially in media coverage. It is interesting to note that Eric Zemmour, the journalist Youssoupha is accused of having threatened, is considered by some as an anti-Muslim polemist whose every participation in the media is denigrated by some. It can be heard for example in ‘Scum’, a song in which, after complaining that the people have to pay for everything (“Radar, we pay! Toll, we pay! Pollution, we pay!” (paragraph n° 17), ask these questions: “What are you doing with all that money? What was Eric Zemmour doing on a public channel?” (paragraph n°18), precising why this last fact is scandalous according to him: “Paid to spread hatred, sowing seeds harvested by the FN. For you, even Marine Le Pen became respectable. Anyone who fights Islam can sit at your table”. FN here refers to the National Front, the far right party presided by Marine Le Pen and considered by some to be defending a xenophobic ideology.

With the lyrics of ‘Scum’ adding context to those of ‘Death Threat’ about how Eric Zemmour may be considered in the world of rap in France, it becomes more evident why Youssoupha is pleading ‘self-defense’ : denouncing as resistance and defending oneself against the oppression brought by some parties, politicians or public person and, as highlighted in ‘Scum’, authorized by public media, who would on the other hand discourage politically involved rap music and artist, and rather support carefree and oblivious lyrics (Béru 2008, p. 68). An example of this preference by the media is shown in Béru’s study of French rap as a postcolonial product by the fact that some songs from the same band, IAM, were more or less mediatized according to the political involvement or absence of such in their lyrics (2008, p. 68). Rappers who show such involvement instead will be considered as “too violent” and “[asked to justify their critical remarks against the establishment]” (Béru 2008, p. 64), as seen earlier with ‘Death Threat’ introductory television recordings

3.3.3 Instrumentalization of hip-hop despite obvious disdain

For that matter, Béru points out in his conclusion a phenomenon that can as well be seen as hypocrite. He indeed mentions the political instrumentalization that hip-hop is subjected to, with the selection of some artists to deploy a “[cultural weapon]” in order to “[satisfy and distract the socially and geographically marginalised populations]” through the organization for example of music festivals and writing workshops with rappers (Béru 2008, p. 76-77). These initiatives are notably interpreted by Béru as a way to “[buy social peace]” since rap is otherwise considered as part of the “[culture of the poor]” (Hoggart 1970 in Béru 2008, p. 70), that does not require to learn music theory or master a musical instrument (Béru 2008, p. 70). This has been a reason for some to consider rap with disdain, as seen for example in one of the television recordings added in the middle of ‘Death Threat’, showing Eric Zemmour’s opinion about rap lyrics: “I think rap is a subculture, huh, uh, illiterate But I’m sorry, but have you ever heard the lyrics of rappers? Excuse me but ...”, the word ‘illiterates’ being repeated by Youssoupha in the following paragraph (n°5), and a similar disdain is felt in the mock radio announcement of the introduction of ‘Negro Music’: “Obviously, for him, rap, this ‘filthy’ music, is negro music” (paragraph n°1). Disdain is also one of the clues to understanding this quote from ‘Negro Music’: “Controversial in my verses, like a concert of Black M in Verdun”. The artists here are mentioning a highly polemic event that occurred in 2016 at the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Verdun, one of the most important battles of the first world war. At this occasion, black rapper Black M was invited to perform, but the concert had to be canceled after major

protestations emanating from a part of the political class in France (France 24, 2016). The protestations could be classified into two different categories: the first ones attacking directly Black M, on its perceived lack of patriotism, and ‘different’ origins, rendering him not legitimate to sing for such event, claims to which Black M responded by revealing that his grandfather served in the second world war as a Senegalese infantryman, making him as legitimate as any other French artist (Le Monde, 2016). Other types of protestations were concerning the musical genre performed by Black M: rap indeed was considered unadapted for commemorating such an important historical event (*Ibid.*). Whether concerning the artist’s origins or his art, this story that is referenced in ‘Negro Music’ is thus tainted with the disdain many politicians feel for rap or rap artists. As already mentioned, this spite that some of the media and political representatives may have for rap and urban music is part of the stigmatization the artist wishes to denounce as part of their resisting discourses (Musolf 2017). It is finally, and as argued earlier, possible to consider, as Béru does, that there is a distinctive line between rappers who ‘collaborate’ with the system and the ones that act right in opposition to it, that could be seen for example in this quote from ‘Letter to the Republic’: “Far from the transparent artists, I write this text like a mirror” (paragraph n°8). One could argue that this distinction is not only made between artists but public persons in general, as seen for example in ‘Rapper of Strength’: “I am neither a black friend nor an Arab friend. Go see Lydia Guirous or Sophia Aram” (paragraph n°9). Lydia Guirous and Sophia Aram here refer respectively to an Arab politician and an Arab humorist and commentator, who Médine seems to blame for their compliances with a system that he claims oppresses their peers, and that can appear, as seen in the theoretical framework section, as a lack of agency to resist, by not putting into question the subordination imposed by the oppressor through ideologies of inferiority (Musolf 2017).

3.4 Conclusion

Overall, we have firstly seen in this part of analysis that the selected song lyrics, after having displayed various claims surrounding history and political atmosphere, and identity issues, were drawing conclusions that could be categorized, for some, as expression of resignation and disenchantment, and, for others, as expressions of resistance. It was argued that, when taking on the role of a messenger, the authors, with their claims and attempts at denouncing, all belong to a specific category of urban music artists that is considered as politically involved artists, as opposed to the ones in the same musical genre who are considered as more consensual. This is

due to some of the selection criteria for choosing the song in this study, which was to constitute narrative that evoked some specific topics, as already mentioned in the method section. Then, it was argued that, when taking on the role of a leader, the artists displayed calls for actions to their audience, initiating resistance through the proposal of alternative frameworks. It was then argued that there was a lack of media and political appreciation and support for politically involved rap. The latter indeed was identified as traditionally causing scandals, and protesting was then claimed to be constituting a strategy a self-defense and a duty incumbent to such artists. Finally, the instrumentalization of hip-hop by cultural policies was investigated as a way to investigate artists' claims of being in opposition with the oppressing system, and rejecting the ideologies of inferiority that disable oppressed groups from resisting.

We have thus seen that the personal and collective narratives of the chosen artists that was unfolded throughout the previous parts of analysis was not achieved in vain, or for the only aim of telling one's story, but rather with the greater aim of denouncing and thus resisting an oppression that is perceived as systematic and targeted against the group or groups these artists attempt to represent and defend through their art.

Conclusion

In this study, a narrative analysis of the lyrics of ten selected songs written by French artists of immigrant origins has been performed, while taking Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding model as an analytical lens through which to analyze the data, in order to answer this research question: What do urban music artists, when taking the self-attributed role of representants of the French population with immigrant's origins, have to say about the way they are treated and publicly represented?

The first part of analysis concerned the historical and contemporary perspectives taken by the authors in the elaboration of their narrative and argued that they mainly do so through the use of a post-colonialist framework. Firstly, the focus was turned forward the colonial past of the country. The many references to colonization and decolonization were interpreted as postcolonial claims and as aiming to offer a different view of historical elements of French history, that acknowledges the suffering and enduring consequences of the French colonial period both for formerly colonized countries and for the people who are born or have origins from these countries. Secondly, after having clarified why the artists address both France in general (its history and its values) and the contemporary politicians, public persons or discourses, a more recent historical period was identified in the songs as the one describing the arrival of the first generation of immigrants from former colonies, corresponding to the generation of the parents or grandparents of the artist deploying their narrative today. Besides attacking France for the ways it benefitted from this mass influx of immigrants at first, the artists denounce the lack of will that France showed to foster their integration. Thirdly, the focus was put on the parts of the artists narrative evoking the contemporary period and the climate of suspicion the artists claim to be living in. It was claimed that the political atmosphere and trust in them was perceived by most of the artists as having lowered in the recent years. If some artists question the fact that this degradation may emanate from the recent rise in the terrorist threat that France has recently known, they also blame France for adopting counter-terrorism measure that some claim increases once more the suspicion that targets part of the population and thus ravages social unity. For that matter, some artists also question the conflation between Muslims and terrorists that parts of the political and media representatives are accused to be making.

Then, the focus has been put on the Islamophobia and racism that the artists claim to be suffering from, and this was identified as one of the central elements of post-colonialism. By decoding what has been said about them, or how they are usually represented in the media, the artists denounce a treatment that discriminates them on basis of religion, race, or origins. Finally, two opposing views concerning the message that rap music conveys were compared. The first one considered rap lyrics as typical suburb narrative and the illustration of postcolonialism in France. The second considered that the understanding of 'rap as the suburb narrative' was a myth and that it was hurtful for academia to still consider it in this manner. It was claimed that in this context, considering the criteria for choosing the song that have been analyzed, and considering as well that this study was focusing on the narrative that constituted the lyrics, the songs of this study could indeed be understood as a narrative of stigmatized, discriminated or marginalized people, from the suburbs notably but not solely.

In the second part of this analysis, identity issues emerging from the artists narrative were analyzed. The first subsection concerned the artist as a representant and looked at ways the artists were defining themselves and revendicating certain identities, both as ways to precise who they claim to be speaking for, and to share pride of who they are. Secondly, the focus was turned on stigmatization. As this study concerns representation and the way it is decoded by the persons that are represented, being stigmatized by both media and politicians has been found to be one of the most recurrent claims present in the artists narratives. Firstly, the parts of the lyrics in which the artists were putting emphasis on differences between them and their group and the rest of the French population were analyzed as a questioning of their own identity, and an incompatibility that was directly deriving from the representation that is usually made of them. Some of the artists indeed testified of what was interpreted as a social and cultural gap. This hurtful representation and perceived stigmatization were then identified as the source of other problems raised by the artists in their lyrics, namely discrimination, social exclusion, and thus precarity. It was also argued that the responsibility of such stigmatization was allocated by the artists to the media and political representatives. Then, the question of French national identity and Frenchness was addressed. Following the approach of Brigitte Jandey about Frenchness in perspective, the importance of the other's perception in one's identity and feeling of belonging was highlighted. Investigating for the roots of such othering, the question of origins was firstly raised, as one that appears in the artists narrative. It was claimed that this approach of considering origins and race in the formulation of a French national identity was as well a preoccupation of some of the current French political representatives. Nevertheless, it was

argued, following Jandey's argument, that when examining what it means to be French, by taking language command as a criterion, it seemed to be less a question of origins and more of social status. The 'French canon' as identified by Jandey indeed was described as adapted from and for the upper classes, rendering other parts of the population unable to recognize themselves in it. The thus perceived inequalities regarding the Republican values and definition of Frenchness were emphasized as they were expressed through the artists' narratives.

Finally, the third part of analysis was looking at the political claims, opposition, and resistance aspects found in the artists' narratives, and it has been argued that the artists' claims are made within a political discourse, and can be understood as a way of pursuing resistance.

The first aspect of the artists narrative that was discussed was what resemble expression of resignation and political disenchantment, that were, for some, the source for their will of resistance. Then the resistance theme was then approached, firstly by examining the diverse denunciation claims that were found in the artists' narratives. Some of the artists indeed seemed to put themselves in the position of a messenger, informing their peers but also the political representatives of what they consider as wrongdoings by the political power. Claims directly concerning issues regarding them and their peers were raised, as well as claims that are concerning more general issues, inscribing the artists' voices in a political opposition discourse. This discourse was then identified as 'cultural politics' and introduced as a mean of resistance. Another element of resistance was seen in the way the artists also position themselves as leaders who call the people for action through the proposing of alternative frameworks. Finally, considering these alternative frameworks, the opposition between perceived 'violent' and perceived 'inoffensive' rap was explored, through the ways in which one is deterred and one is supported by the media and cultural policies. Being part of the underground branch of rap or urban music indeed seemed in some of the song lyrics as a situation that was imposed by a lack of will from the media to promote politically involved music. The latter seemed, according to what was found in some of the artists' lyrics, to come with the duty of resistance against the political order, that has been described by some as a strategy of self-defense against the oppressing representation and treatment that is reserved to them. Finally, the ways in which urban music has been instrumentalized by the political powers was evoked, and put in perspective with the disdain for their art the artists claim to face in the politicians and media representatives, as one more argument the politically involved artists can have to consider negatively the ones of their peers they blame for what they consider as collaborating with their

oppressors, and thus of not committing to their duty, either as rappers, urban music artists, but also simply as persons of immigrant origins, to be actively practicing resistance.

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Appendixes

Song lyrics translation

1. 'All they want' 2010

Dub Inc - Tout ce qu'ils veulent (Hors contrôle, 2010)

Title translation : All they want

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation) :

Paragraph n°1 :

Ohhh eh oh, Give me again

He yo, each of us got his/her own identity but for all the same nation

Each of us got his/her own culture but for all the same country, but we are sure that ...

Chorus :

All they want is a France that shuts its mouth

Once again the wheels are in motion!

All they want is a nation as idol,

Once again the sentence has been declared!

All we want is to feel at home,

Facing adversity here I stay

You close the door but you're welcome at my place

My identity is growing ceaselessly!

Paragraph n°2:

I fight your wishes to see me leaving this country

I fight for my brothers, the moral and our lives.

I fight like those laws do

I fight lies and spite

I fight, and in your pact a f* irony.

I track your speech, I track your proud face,

I track all your men when they send the charters back

Even the chilliest ones become angry in times of war.

Paragraph n°3:

Child of immigrants, for all we do our parents give us the right
Of not doubting about who we are, about what we do here
Values are getting lost no anthem would bring them back
A thousand colors on the flag because three are not sufficient
We don't choose where we're born, not always where we go
Undocumented brothers, giving them at least the choice
We even kill the men, some become preys
We create laws for that!

Chorus

Paragraph n°4:

Born in France, yeah, I love it it's my land
When it respects its sons, and when it takes us into consideration
We remain straight, proud, our roots, our fathers,
The fruit of a common history, love and hate go together
And these three colors on the flag
Do not suffice anymore to color the picture
Of this country, of this so beautiful people
Identity cannot be summed up to one word.

Paragraph n°5:

What our fathers did, leave, or run away from their land
Change hemisphere, beware all those sectarians,
The adaptation to this nation
Was done by the sweat of their forehead
Here to win a pain to find markers
A deleterious climate, today more than yesterday
So much questions and confusions
Being French is not only a decision !

Chorus

Paragraph n°6:

I keep it to myself and my texts become more precise
Again a text that reveals your weaknesses
What comes out of your speech hurt in summ
I protect them when my kin are disturbed
As foreign as when I'm talked about nobility
And all your laws will apply to nobody

Paragraph n°7:

You take what interests you, selective immigration
You sing the Marseillaise (national anthem) like a punitive sanction
Your national identity remains again a screw-up
Much rather than an alternative
Stop takings us for fools,
Your policy is hiding behind your words,
Stop takings us for fools !

Chorus

2. 'Death Threat' 2012

Youssoupha – Menace de mort (Noir D**, 2012)**

Title translation : Death threat

Introductory recordings translation:

- “The two singers of the band NTM, “Fuck your mother”, were sentenced by the court of Toulon to three months in prison and six months prohibition to exercise their profession throughout the French territory.”
- “Scandal with the police unions, first scandal, because of "Brigitte, wife of a cop", second scandal in 1995, so in the second CD which was called 95200, with "Sacrifice of chickens"”
- “Mr. R, for the last album, "politically incorrect" has attracted the wrath of a southern MP”
- “Nicolas Sarkozy even canceled the concert that was to take place last week. Sniper members obviously responded immediately”
- “La rumeur” has been around since 1996, and the Ministry of the Interior has lodged a complaint against you, there will be a trial, because you said: "Hundreds of us have been shot by the police."”
- “It is a death threat, Youssoupha's song, it must be quoted, anyway, it is "I put a ticket on the head of the one who will silence this idiot Eric Zemmour”

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation):

Paragraph n°1 :

The accusations are serious but as usual we deal with it
It's true we are too harsh, and our art is to annoy you!
No death threats, rap does not come out of sockets but
This is the only hardcore sound since rock has no more balls
It's a new record of controversy, it is said that I sing Evil
I told you that there are spies, ladies and gentlemen
And in their stupidity they confuse crime and Islam
They would have found me nicer if I was just slam

Paragraph n°2:

Ideal culprit, Mercenary MC

Rumor says NTM is Moral Sniper like Mr R (*this sentence is hard to translate as it's built with actual rap bands names that correspond to French words*)

Not easy to ignore that
Not easy to operate alone
If I was Orelsan (*French white rap singer*)
Clearly I would be pissed!

Paragraph n°3:

We have the unstoppable critics
From a France that forgets that the words of his anthem
are more violent than gangsta rap
I stand for the cause of the brothers in the south
Who dream of the North
But freedom of speech is falling
Is under threat of death

Chorus :

It is high time that things get moving
There is never an irreversible trend
Sentences are unequal
I rap and what you hear is illegal

Television recording:

"I think rap is a subculture, huh, uh, illiterate, ... But I'm sorry, but have you ever heard the lyrics of rappers ? Excuse me but ..."

Paragraph n°5 :

Since the time I was checking this guy who leads you to the rod and
Speaks of race in mind and treats us of illiterates
Say I was the type to react on the BPM
I do not hold out the cheek like the one that was born in Bethlehem
A single line in "by dint of saying it"
Where I express all my contempt and there begins the delirium
Accusative words against rappers I find 10,000

Paragraph n°6 :

It is true that we touch the bottom at this jester Morandini (*French TV host*)
But without rancor; From my pen I know the drill
And the right wing is unleashed, shows me at the front page of the page of the Figaro
(*French newspaper*)

Another article to make the barometer lie
Who confirms to me that some shitty journalists are dishonest
We are not of the same world, the hexagon (*France*) is not well

Paragraph n°7 :

But I do not hope that my name suddenly reminded you of the one of Fofana
And the police bark for the court to bite me
It's enough for a judge to charge me for death threats

Chorus

Paragraph n°8 :

There is rage in our words
But how to stay wise
When you see the picture
Of the life that we are offered?
I pleaded self-defense in my statement
Who can pretend to rap without taking a stand?

3. 'Letter to the Republic' 2012

Kerry James – Lettre à la République (92-2012, 2012)

Title translation: Letter to the Republic

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation):

Paragraph n°1 :

Letter to the Republic

To all those racists with their hypocrite tolerance

Who built their nation on blood

Now they set themselves up as pontificators

Paragraph n°2 :

Pillagers of wealth, killers of African men

Colonizers, torturers of Algerian men

This colonial past is yours

You were the ones who chose to tie your history to ours

Now you must take this upon yourself

The smell of blood follows you even if you wear perfume

Paragraph n°3 :

Us, the Arabs, the Black people

We are not here by accident

Every arrival has its departure!

Paragraph n°4:

You wanted the immigration

Thanks to it you stuffed yourself until indigestion

I think that France never did charitable work

Immigrants are just cheap labor

Paragraph n°5 :

Keep for yourself your republican illusion

Of a sweet France tarnished by African immigration

Ask the Senegalese infantrymen and the Harkis
Who took advantage of who?
The Republic is only innocent in your fantasy
And your hands are white only from your lies

Paragraph n° 6:

Us, the Arabs, the Black people
We are not here by accident
Every arrival has its departure!

Paragraph n°7:

But did you think that with time passing
The Niggers will mutate, end up becoming white?
But Human nature swept away your projects
None integrates within rejection
None integrates within the French ghettos, penned
between immigrants, let's be reasonable
How can you point at communitarianism?
That you initiated since Nanterre's slums

Paragraph n°8 :

Pyromaniac and firefighter, your memory is selective
We did not come in peace, your history is aggressive
Here, it is better than there, we know it
Because for you, to decolonize is to destabilize
And the more I observe history, the less I feel indebted

Paragraph n°9:

I know what it is to be black since schoolbag times
Even though I am not ungrateful, I don't wish to thank you
Because, in the end, what I own here, I earned it
I grew up in Orly, in France's favelas
I blossomed
In the scrubland, I'm at war since childhood
Drug trafficking, robbery, violence... crimes!

What do my brothers do if not money like in Clear Stream?

Paragragh n° 10:

Who can lecture them? You?
Abusers of social property, 'misappropriater' of funds
Real bandits in suits, you hypocrites
Do the French people have the leaders it deserves?

Paragragh n°11 :

At the heart of debates, of heartless debates
Always pointing fingers at the same ones in your bitter France
In the middle of economic crisis, a culprit is needed
And it is towards Muslims that all your shots go
I don't fear to write it: France is Islamophobic
For that matter no one hides anymore in the xenophobic France
You treat us like nobodies on your public channels
And you expect us to chant "Long live the Republic!"

Paragragh n° 12:

My respect is being violated in the country that is said to be about Human rights
Hard to feel French without having the Stockholm syndrome
Because me I am black, Muslim, "banlieusard" (suburbanite) and proud
When you see me, you put a face on what the other France hates

Paragragh n°13 :

It is the same hypocrites that talk to us about diversity
Who expresses racism covered with laicity
[Who] dream about a unique French, with only one identity
[Who] persist to discriminate, the same minorities
Facing the same electors, the same fears are raised
We oppose the communities, to hide precarity

Paragragh n°14:

Let no one be surprised if tomorrow it starts bursting

How to like a country, which refuses to respect us
Far from the transparent artists, I write this text like a mirror
Let France watch itself in it if it wants to see itself in it
It will see fly away the illusion it has about itself
I don't lack affection
Understand that I don't wait for it to like me anymore.

4. 'Chocolate croissant' 2013

IAM – Pain au chocolat (Arts martiens, 2013)

Title translation : Chocolate Croissant

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation):

Paragraph n°1 :

- Hello Madam
- Hello Jean François, how are you?
- I'm fine
- What would you like today?
- I would like a chocolate croissant please
- Mhmm, you probably don't know, but it's pretty dangerous to eat this right now.
- Oh?
- I suggest you a croque monsieur or really safest, the 100% pork sausage roll

Paragraph n°2 :

There are some who still wonder what we do there, with our boubous and our scarves
Always the same words we hear, but it's better this time
Banalized, the speech hardens, and we put up with it
We feel the impact of each remarks of the press

Paragraph n°3 :

Who said that man has no predator?
With us the shortage is ravaging, ubiquitous in the sector
Eternal blowned off, squatting the bench of unemployment all year long
It's not that there is no will, it's just the faith that went away

Paragraph n°4 :

Suspicious often target us, seriously it's annoying
The wrong names on the resume and there the job that goes away
It all depends on something we have not decided
Where we come from, who we are, all these facts that we can not deny

Paragraph n°5:

Before we were “bougnoles” [*racist term designating Africans*], niggas or swarthy

Now we are all terrorists and master pyrotechnists

And it's on again, people go crazy, hate celebrates its return

The worst ones see Merah everywhere

Paragraph n°6:

They think we are all heavily armed

Waiting patiently, a nice opportunity to shed blood

Because of their thirst for power, dirty sentences they sway

Fear unloads and its fruits are full of violence

Paragraph n°7 :

Applying themselves to give a hateful image of us

Yet we know that there are thieves who will never make it to the front pages

As if the evil was engraved on our faces

They judge us, in the eyes, as French of guilty origin

Chorus :

What can we say? What can we do ?

Our ambitions, so many bottles in the sea, bitter

What should we write?

Clumsy couplets to terrorize little Jean-François

What can we say? What can we do ?

Flirt with the girl from hell, bitter

What should we write?

Clumsy couplets to terrorize little Jean-François

Paragraph n°8 :

We took our first steps in the heart of a violent desert

Where the madman is right, from where I wanted to take off like a kite

Flags flapping in rafales

But the sons desperately harnessed to the asphalt

Paragraph n°9 :

They want culprits, who have the profile
Go-fast, killers, wholesalers, big macs
Leeches that take advantage of the system, it's easy
And the opinion closes the Delsey

Paragraph n°10 :

Oh it's beautiful, these lawsuits without a lawyer,
No judge, they say on the radio: All losers
Justice is right hand and 22
Problems are solved quickly

Paragraph n°11 :

That's what we hear from everywhere
As if the same were killing in Darfur and robbing the Carrefour [supermarket]
As if the guys in Baghdad were attacking
Were coming into our streets, armed, stealing cars

Paragraph n°12 :

Here are the authors, showing proof
An old compass accompanied by a poor carpet
A recipe from master Machiavelli
Recalibrated in Charles Martel model

Paragraph n°13 :

Karcher-style ad effect
We have a crazy game, we throw all our cards on the ground
Meanwhile the small offender grow in the shade
And neighborhood graduates leave to work in London

Chorus

5. 'French errors' 2015

Lino featuring Dokou – Fautes de français (Requiem, 2015)

Title translation: French error

Lyrics translation and paragraph delimitation:

Chorus:

We explain things but we do not listen to each other
We speak the same language but we do not understand each other
We move in the same direction but we do not follow each other
We grew up together but we do not know each other
We do not listen to each other
We do not understand each other
We do not follow each other
We do not know each other

Paragraph n°1:

I roll on the margin, I live between brackets
The ink flows on the page, I break in 16
I walk, I'm alone in the crowd, I have my inheritance on my epidermis

Paragraph n°2:

From my ten-floor tower, I wrote these dull lives
To go forward without the comma with our acute accents
Where the Mondéo goes, my voice feels like experience
The screen turns on the passions, under pressure
How do you want us to understand each other when it is TF1 (*French TV channel*) that
introduce us?
Question mark.

Paragraph n°3:

Can we blame misery?
Everywhere, the crisis needs a scapegoat
A return to Babel, time goes too fast, I write
Conflict of civilizations, who benefits from the crime?

The reason is missing, we even know who is wrong
Religion is a diversion while many of us fall
I'm on my way, will have to get ahead of the dramas
To put out the fire before it burns and to correct the French errors

Chorus

Paragraph n°4:

Plural solitude in these twin cities
Too much gravel, we forget the taste of honey
Vision of a world that has the color of keyboard keys
The melody sounds wrong, as everything comes out of their mouths

Paragraph n°5:

It smells like wild animal on the pavement of my childhood
We were white, black, Arab, it's not that I insisted from the sandbox
The story begins as a racist joke
Our lives are coming together, cultures are clashing
We judge ourselves, we bury the past, future, we sing the shocks

Paragraph n°6:

The Marianne frustrate our theses
Me, I have the impression that our raps are bandages on a prosthesis
The temperature climbs, justice is a wallflower
We went from "Touche pas à mon pote" (*French anti-racism movement of the 1980s*) to
"Islam and pastry"

Paragraph n°7:

Behind walls between quotation marks, you count the ellipsis
It seems that you are predestined, given your tensed origins
Don't shoot, will have to get ahead of dramas
To extinguish the fire before it burns, to correct the French errors

Chorus

Paragraph n°8:

Do you hear me when I speak?

Did you leave when I leave?

Do you feel when I feel you?

Do you see me despite the gap?

Paragraph n°9:

There are so many French errors that it's hard to understand each other,

Separated by the comma, how do you want us to get along?

The writing of the penguin is to write between the lines

Appearances in parentheses when the inkwell empties

Chorus

6. 'Damn time' 2016

Dosse featuring Nekfeu – Putain d'époque (Yuri, 2016)

Title translation: Damn time

Lyrics translation and paragraph delimitation:

Paragraph n°1:

Bastard, tell me what is the fuck?
Tell me, why do people go so far?
When a pedophile priest touches a kid
Are French Christians asked to go out on the streets?

Paragraph n°2:

Liberty, equality, already I do not believe that much
But to their fraternity it is clear that we will have to wait for it
Do not believe that the French are all racist since the attacks
So much of them were already well before that

Paragraph n°3:

Bastard, I'll tell you what is the problem
It's just that in the current times
Waking up every day is an overpriced gift
Where do their weapons come from?
Who gives the weapon to them?
Who benefits from crime, who benefits from IS?

Paragraph n°4:

And for what reason do I doubt each official version?
And the effectiveness of the state of emergency and your "S" cards (*State security indicators*)?
And why when someone gets mugged in the subway
Before rescuing him, they grab their iPhone 6S?

Paragraph n°5:

It's hard for me not to give a damn about all what is happening
History has shown that they are ready for the worst of filth
Strategy of fear to make the masses agree
The filth they will perpetrate on the rest of the globe

Paragraph n°6:

And you nothing but you swallow, and you nothing you gobble
You're concerned only when blood splatters your boots
In order for your 'troubles to be solved, you have to kill yourself
Cannon on your temple, press the trigger of the glock

Paragraph n°7:

One day a friend told me: "Your problem is that you rap too loud
You're wasting your energy for who? you give caviar to pigs "
So I had to simplify my texts
But there are fans who do not agree
They demand the old Dosseh
Sorry but the law of the greatest number prevails

Paragraph n°8:

Bastard, tell me what is the fuck?
The underground fills neither the pockets nor the stomach of the kids
On the life of my family, when we want to be a boss we are inspired by the bosses
Are seals really gay?
So we say "Faggot like a seal" ?
I ask the question for real
It intrigues me, nigga, what the fuck?

Paragraph n°9:

I have a problem with this game
Who underestimates me as Mahrez (*Football player*) in the OM (*Marseille football team*)
The big identity crisis that my people are going through
Niggers are willing to believe in everything except themselves

On all the continents of the world, my folks are not well
My land is not poor, no, it is that it has been impoverished
There is all the nuance, did you understand me?
At very high risk is the mission I'm doing

Paragraph n°10:

In short, and you my beautiful, what's the problem?
You thought you knew men? Huh?
Go wipe your Rimmel, read poems
In a few months it's the sales
Tell yourself that the next time you'll just have to be livelier
That the love story is a deadly poison
Whose antidote is the love story that comes after
So if I have many stories it's just to survive

Paragraph n°11:

Bastard, tell me what is the fuck?
What is your damn problem?
We live a fucking time
I do not see any damn problem
Bastard, tell me what is the fuck?
What is your damn problem?
We live a fucking period
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

Paragraph n°12:

Share the cake with your guys even if it makes only one slice for you
So many tasks, I do not miss any more
Just a talking
To taint your reputation, go and don't stop 'cause
As soon as you accept a service, it kills you faster than a bullet
Life is like running, under the threat of a caliber

Paragraph n°13:

The old one, I renounce it, only a residue remains
Violent like a Rolling Stone under heroin, man, stop
I find the Nobel Prize ironic when I think about Rohingyas

Paragraph n°14:

Bastard, tell me what is the problem?
They have all kinds of plans to better confine our dreams
I say what I think, after I have problems

Paragraph n°15:

A new kind of white come to confirm the rule
The flame of the FN (*National Front, French extreme right party*) on the wall and my youth
is burning
Screaming: "Do we have to burn them to make them end up in an urn?"

Paragraph n°16:

Fuck, I want to touch your 5 senses
I'm not at school anymore though, I still have absences
I'm going with my shrab to mosque, it's Friday
After dinner at my zinc for Shabbat, that's what is beautiful

Paragraph n°17:

We cultivate honor and fraternity, young people know
We ignore the speeches of their intelligentsia
But that does not mean it's us against them, no
Engrain the small is less restrictive than imitating the wise people
What is the fucking fuck?

Paragraph n°18:

Before God, there is no number one
I'm just trying to be good man, me
Before God, there is no number one
Boy, i'm just trying to be good man, me
Before God, there is no number one

I'm just trying to be good man, me
Before God, there is no number one
Boy, what's your fucking problem, huh?

Yuri! Hey

Fire, fire, fire, fire

Hey! What is the fucking fuck?

7. 'Negro music' 2016

Kery James – Musique nègre (Muhammad Alix, 2016)

Title translation : Negro music

Lyrics translation and paragraph delimitation :

Paragraph n°1 :

You're listening to Suburban FM
President of a radio, coarser than courteous, Henry de Lesquen wishes to become the next
President of the French
In the parody that composes his program, he proposes to ban the negro music from the media
that are supported, or authorized by the State
Obviously, for him, rap, this "filthy" music is negro music
Michel Audiard wrote: "the idiots, they dare everything, and that's even how we recognize
them"
These remarks have not left the world of rap indifferent
"Negro Music" is the title of the new song by rapper Kery James, the author of the very
disturbing, but unifying, "Racailles"
Accompanied by Prim's Parolier and Lino, Kery James responds to Henry de Lesquen, and
the least we can say is that the black poet does not shoot blank bullets

Paragraph n°2 :

A guy who writes for others, they call that a nigger ("*ghostwriter*" is "*nègre*" in French)
A black man hovering over them, I call that an eagle
I had a nightmare, Martin Luther a dream
In my nightmare, I had slapped Michel Leeb
The most famous big lips
I feel handsome, black, I rise, to high level

Paragraph n°3:

High level, the crowd gets up
Shit I fucked between Shaka Zulu and Twelve Years a Slave
My art is sap, keep your "Yes we can"
If you reduce me to dancing, Kentucky Fried Chicken

Negro I disturb, I am the nose of the sphinx exploded
Like Huey P. Newton, calibrated on a wicker throne

Paragraph n° 4:

I came back to shock their quotas
Breaks the quotas of deep France
Tricart like Joker on Gotham
Like a big grafitti on the Mona Lisa
I say that the West Indies are looted by the metropolis
That my Africa is too strong
And that the cops are often negrophobic

Paragraph n°5:

Strong is my music, imagine, fuck the Illuminati codes
Here no fragile niggers, red, yellow, navy green
Ass down, I took your place, I take myself for Rosa Parks
I take myself for Toussaint Louverture kicking Bonaparte's ass

Chorus :

Negro music
Not calibrated for radio we make negro music
What insolence !
Negro music
Keep your "Yes we can", we make negro music
I came back to shock their quotas, to shock their quotas
Negro music
Not calibrated for radio, we make negro music
What insolence !
Negro music
Keep your "Yes we can"

Paragraph n°6:

On the boulevard of life, I'm in the blind spot
A Nigger who challenges them is a dead nigger
Since "the noise and the smell" I feel that I disturb France

I take a tour at Guerlain, I put some perfume of violence

Paragraph n°7:

What arrogance, what insolence
Like Sarkozy in Dakar, I shock the audience
I do not feel more European than the British pound
I'm committing negrocide on the ground like Malcolm Sterling

Paragraph n°8:

Of over breathing the rejection, my lung got perforated
I could die of infection like a Traoré
Negrophobes like Alain Soral in a text message
Everywhere on the globe, it's hard to be a nigga
The stories become ...

Paragraph n°9:

Stories become legends
Legends become myths
I roll sticks in the rims, Blacks, Kemites
Dirty black, mower
I exceed the limits
I borrow the rocky voices
I burn like the sun at its zenith

Paragraph n°10:

Catchy, my music, has the finger raised
Look at what I'm confined to, I detangled the truth from the fake,
Dark attitude like these Negroes coming out of Compton
And according to the Vatican, I deserved my chains
Dude, if I'm lying, Hell is waiting for me
I reignite the fire of the revolt
I burn the books of Fernand Nathan

Paragraph n°11:

Kery told me "Bors, no blasphemy" I put the safety catch
I'm rapping my naked truth, like Crazy Horse
I knock without insulting them
Not calibrated for radio, acclaimed by the street
I move between the swastikas
The burnt crosses

Paragraph n°12:

To deliver, I have millions of fights
To shock the forces of evil
From below we are France, Negro, like Alexandre Dumas
Since the primary, their skull does not cash the sound of the tam-tam
Negro music slays the nightingale, our faces in prime time

Chorus

Paragraph n°13:

Negro music for a feat
There it is Kery James who invites me
Sector Ä, Simply Black
Ménage à Trois and Mafia K'1 fry
I'll be last if there's only one left
I met petty looks
Controversial in my verses
Like a concert of Black M in Verdun

Paragraph n°14:

Because we are criticized in our fights
My blackness in coma
Your press pretended when Laurent Blanc was talking about quotas

Paragraph n°15: (Untranslated)

Na bangaka lisusu te

Ngai na bangaka butu te
Ngai na bangaka kaka nzambe
Ngai na bangaka mutu te

Neg lakay se sa mwen yé
Map rété la yo pe relé
Musique nou yo pa aimé
Coulè nou yo dénigré

Paragraph 16:

West Indies, radical negro
Haiti, kingdom of Africa
Who will defend all our writings?
It's neither the CRAN nor the LICRA

Chorus

8. 'Scum' 2016

Kery James - Racailles (Muhammad Alix, 2016)

Title translation : Scum

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation) :

Paragraph n°1 :

« You're tired, huh?

You're tired of this gang of scum.

We'll get rid of it »

Paragraph n°2 :

Scum!

We should clean you up with a Kärcher

The day the people wake up, you'll get serve badly

Scum!

We feel that going to vote

It's choosing which of you will fool us

Paragraph n°3 :

Scum!

Republicans or PS (*Socialist party*)

Keep your promises in your Hermes bags

Scum!

You have never known precariousness

You live away from our realities

Paragraph n°4 :

Scum!

The street thinks so, I put it into music

And for those who do not know it yet, I make it public

I do not support any party, I'm not doing anything in your schemes

Your electoral programs are just nursery rhymes

Paragraph n°5 :

Scum!

We take the same and start again
The same promises, the same lies
The same steal, the same ones dive
The same are in the shit, the same endure

Paragraph n°6 :

Scum!

The same liars are trading the same accounts
The same clerks serving the same clutches
The same sons of the poor are incarcerated
The same sons of the rich are trained to rule

Paragraph n°7 :

Waiting for a man of the people to emerge
It's rare to find an elected official with a blank criminal record
My hate of the system is still intact
Which of you can throw the stone at Cahuzac?

Scum!

Claude Gueant, Scum! Balkany, Scum! Jean-François Cope, Scum!
Philippe Herman, Scum! Harlem Desire, Scum! Alain Juppé, Scum!
All those I mentioned were convicted
And it is the guys from the ghettos that they treat as damned ?

Paragraph n°8 :

Scum!

You were shocked by the band Tandem
You do the same to France, but until it bleeds
Until it drowns like Greece or Italy
You have bruised the country until agony

Scum!

Cumulative mandates how far will you go?
Is it the accumulation of wages that you want?

Paragraph n°9 :

Scum!

Like all France from below, I do not believe in politicians anymore

I continue the fight, I believe in the citizen awakening

Scum!

To change things, you have to want it

You have no deep cause except the power

Paragraph n°10 :

Scum!

You do politics without conviction

Sometimes you even do it to avoid jail

Scum!

In suit and tie are the real thugs

You no longer believe in anything, no one believes in you

Paragraph n°11 :

Scum!

Just observe the abstention rates

Do not take too much people for fools, beware

Scum!

Do you feel the wind spin like your jackets?

Between you and the street, there are only the CRS (*riot police*)

Paragraph n°12 :

Scum!

Out of breath, your system is in a dead end

To try to struggle, like a cul de jatte

Scum!

You are elected for something

You do not do more

You do the opposite,

In addition, it does not bother you

Paragraph n°13 :

Scum!

And if the people have the idea to rebel
You have an army of well trained and zealous cops

Scum!

Social dialogue lies in a coffin
The cops shoot at the flashballs, you can lose an eye

Scum!

You raise anti-police sentiment
Use the police as a privatized army

Paragraph n°14 (Television recording) :

« Politics, whether woman or man, for me in any case and for the moment,
Maybe tomorrow I will have changed my mind, it became useless.

It is a service provider.

These fucking debts, which annoy everyone,
Which exhaust the peoplet, who put them on their knees and so on,
We can not eliminate them,
Like you politicians: you can not eliminate them, these fucking debts ...
Because the bank; it is stronger than you! »

Paragraph n°15 :

Scum!

Everyone knows it's obvious
You are completely subject to finance

Scum!

You vote the laws that the rich order
After 49.3, nothing surprises me

Paragraph n°16 :

Scum!

We work more, but we earn less
We are just waiting for the European spring
We contribute for pensions that we may never see

All the money we make, you take it back

Scum!

Every end of the month

It feels like a slave to the banking system

Paragraph n°17:

Scum!

Even the rich know the game, enjoy tax loopholes

Small SMEs are crumbling under the social load

Scum!

Radar, we pay!

Toll, we pay!

Pollution, we pay!

Paragraph n°18 :

Scum!

Oh ! What are you doing with all that money?

What was Eric Zemmour doing on a public channel?

Scum!

Paid to spread hatred

Sowing seeds harvested by the FN

For you, even Marine Le Pen became frequentable

Anyone who fights Islam can sit at your table

Paragraph n°19 :

Scum!

Unable to govern, you divide

Scum!

Unable to gather, you stigmatize

Scum!

Blinded by the power your hearts are veiled

Much more than the face of this veiled woman

Paragraph n°20 :

Scum!

All your so-called principles of secularism
Do not concern this Saudi girl on the Champs-Elysees
For you, everything is trading, everything is about money
You are even ready to deliver the suburbs to Qatar

Scum!

Your game is cloudy

Scum!

Your speech is double

Paragraph n°21 :

Scum!

In the country called "Human Rights"

Scum!

The state of emergency has become the norm
And you claim to teach the world
Impose democracy with mortar
Without mercy, you stumbled against Gaddafi
Today, what is the state of Libya?
The street knows it, I put it to music
Your media keep it quiet, I make it public
I stand up to you like a Minguettes guy
Is this the kind of text that can earn me a S card?

Paragraph n°22 :

Right in my boots
I never drop my pants
Head up, I'm honest
I'm doing Hip-Hop
You call it Negro music
I'm going out independant
You will never again
Go to Skyrock
(Never never)

Paragraph n°23 :

They do not like what I am, what I defend, what I wear
It's mutual
They disguised the R-A-P
I am part of the survivors
They praised the mediocrity
They made Hip-Hop variety
They played clashes to divide us
As long as it makes the audience, we can turn on

Paragraph n°24 :

When a rapper gets hurt
Will hold a concert in the name of peace
Yeah!
I make protest music
You sell advertising space
Scum!
I sacrificed myself for my little brothers
You play things that send them to the graveyard
Scum!

Paragraph n°25 :

Money and violence in your playlists
You stupefy mine, it pleases the elites
Scum!
You used me, I used you
For my message to reach the greatest number,
Now, I can do it without you
I have an audience that supports me
I did things, the people remember
The street vomits you, I make it public
Nothing has changed since Letter to the Republic

9. 'Rapper of Strength' 2017

Médine – Rappeur 2 force (2017)

Title translation : Rapper of Strength

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation):

Paragraph n°1 :

I'm the kind of guy who, in a strip club, looks at the audience
Like heroin hiding among the hosts, the tone is biblical
I promised to stop provocation, I did not promise to stop lying
I read that writing caused death, so I decided to stop reading
My words come from my pen, my pen comes back from the forge

Paragraph n°2 :

I have the strength of culture, facing the culture of strength
Designed for the missionary
Called Medine like the city, M. Mayor
It was said of my rap that it was too schooly
They did not taste my dictionary punch

Paragraph n°3 :

Do not like, fivefold tax control
When they manage France like turfists
I am French approximate
I feel like a giraffe with vertigo
'S' card, it smells like a police search
My neighborhood gives reason to the catastrophists

Paragraph n°4 :

In the war, there is not only the negative
At least it makes us revise the geography
Hostage, taking, handcuffed, quick
In lifeboats, there is no VIP square

Paragraph n°5 :

Their policy is modernizing
We do not stop hunger with heavy fire
Ra-ta-ta on refugees
We are not in the music video of Maya Mathangi
Ra-ta-ta-ta on civilians and artists, the reply will be civilizing

Paragraph n°6 :

I do not expect anything from a government that robs Peter to dress Paul
We are in the midst of an earthquake, and these idiots start a round of golf
They will only get drafts by dynamiting our buildings
Their promises are loyalty cards for crematoriums

Paragraph n°7 :

Being green with anger increases my strength like Lou Ferrigno
Soon, I will take solfeggio classes Rue de Solférino
To be binational is roughly to be a citizen
Even when growing up, small bikes do not become big bikes

Paragraph n°8 :

Born from the colonial cut
In this story, no one comes back on what was said
You offer me a memorial, it's too kind
But the victim's whiner is not for me

Paragraph n°9 :

Press clippings heals badly
Only the classifieds of real in your newspaper
I am neither a black friend nor an Arab friend
Go see Lydia Guirous or Sophia Aram

Paragraph n°10 :

No gang signs with fingers

I get cramps on the middle finger only for the State
If you show your drug and your weapons
Is it that you do “customs declarant” rap

Paragraph n°11 :

I write things that should not be said
Fortunately my right hand does not read them
I repeat to you, fuck Le point, fuck Marianne (*French newspapers*)
At home, their edits serve as cat litter

Paragraph n°12 :

All these jerks will be turned off, without having been enlightenmened
Ask them what they think of us is asking dogs what they think of street lights
They make laws to break them, their smiles are advertising
For this garbage, selective sorting of waste starts at the borders

Paragraph n°13 :

The game falls into ruin
I climb like the castles of Uncharted
Rappers and journalists believe they’re in the jungle like El Chapo and Sean Penn
I destroy their faces, there will be no “Akhi (“*my brother*”), delighted”
The swan sings before you die, you better die before singing

Paragraph n°14 :

The media hates me
Not an area of my body without scars
Do you know what is said in Jamaica:
All the tears of Africa do not grow corn

Paragraph n°15 :

Din records, new way of life
We do not tell gypsies that they are camping
My team arrives by the main lines
In the GMO tanks we are the worm in the fruit

Paragraph n°16 :

Independent, grandiloquent

In less than a year, the Ten Commandments are reissued

The game I reinvent, I will mark my time

Even though I sell one album like the Wu-Tang clan

Paragraph n°17 :

This is the new, big sound

My new slogan, the one that says neither laugh nor cry but understand

It's not Sagan, by the way

I may become a consultant at Culture France

Paragraph n°18 :

It's the strength of culture in the face of the culture of force

It's the strength of culture in the face of the culture of force

It's the strength of culture in the face of the culture of force

It's the strength of culture in the face of the culture of force

Rapper of strength

Rapper of strength

Rapper of strength

Everything is a question of ratio of power

10. 'The tears of Evil' 2018

Dinos – Les pleurs du mal

Title translation : The tears of Evil

Lyrics translation (and paragraph delimitation) :

Paragraph n°1

We fall apart and we love each other in a calamitous way

Because with us the sky is dull like ...

(Let the sound turn a little)

We hate and love each other, in a calamitous way

Because with us the sky is dull like a station of line 2

Paragraph n°2

They do not understand our lives because they do not know what we've lived

We could make fake smiles but even that we can do more

Say to racists that we fuck them

Tell the usher that we will not move

He returns to masturbate on Conforama (*Furniture store*) catalogs

Paragraph n°3

I have a team that's my family, I'm down the balls of what we say

I came into the world without a label, without a publisher, without a record company

Nothing in the wallet, we had everything in our heart

Dad is an honest man, Mom is a hustler

You know where I come from, the voices rise and the teaching stops once the student exceeds
the meter 80

In fact, life has hit us in the face so that we end up with stitches

We will pray the sky, hoping that a miracle will come

Hyenas feel the tumor and I'm in Iraqi mood

Chorus :

I'm not expecting anything anymore, it's not the rhetoric that warms up when I shudder

If my deep thought had a title, it would be:

They can all go fuck themselves
I'm not expecting anything anymore, it's not the rhetoric that warms up when I shudder
If my deep thought had a title, it would be:
They can all go fuck themselves

Paragraph n°4

There is no law in my city
They say we are made in the image of their God
Of course there is no black in the Bible
But there are rapists in the Church, say like that it seems crazy
But hey, since they have no beards, I think everyone is getting down their balls
At the begining we were king, with gold as clothes
They came to loot us, all in the name of Christianity
Our beliefs are not ours, they are just slavers
Cross of wood, iron cross, it is not as far as I would go to paradise

Paragraph n°5

Landed in France, thinking of taking back our money
But we did the opposite, we give them much more than before
We could have stayed at the bled, and then rebuild Africa but we are due to the name of the
money and especially not the Holy Spirit
Often broke we cross the purple seasons
400 scars, memory in the skin like Jason Bourne
I'm working for my people, I'm trying to open their eyes
But you know how are the negroes between them

Chorus :

So I do not expect anything from anyone, it's not the rhetoric that warms when I shudder
If my deep thought had a title, it would be:
They can all go fuck themselves
I'm not expecting anything anymore, it's not the rhetoric that warms up when I shudder
If my deep thought had a title, it would be:
They can all go fuck themselves

Paragraph n°6

We fly, we bleed because here we have no violent scenes
Disagree because we do not know how to play the piano ...
Neither cello
We imagine the worst
When we see the Scénic
We get bad blood as if we were leukemic
We are looking for a full-time job, but we only find some on the street
Because the agencies do not understand and Busta Flex does not respond anymore
That the brothers end up pissed, with nothing left and indebted

Paragraph n°7

21 joints a day as if it was the summer solstice
The father thought I would not be seen at 20
The mother thought I would become slimy at 20
Capitol, Sony or Def Jam
Understand my style is not their slave
Money and money, glad that my rhyme pleases you
I'm obscure, I'm only with an eye like Jean-Marie LePen
We're just missing our shortcomings, our troubles and our misfortunes
Who wants the war prepares an advance, who wants peace prepares a No man's land

Chorus

Paragraph n°8

Yeah, let them all get fucked ...
Jules ...
I'm lighting up my city
And I would like to say, if you allow it
France, France and her government must know that: France itself no longer interests people to
seek visas to come here
Stop using immigration as a stamp to get elected where to stay in power

Original song lyrics

1. Tout ce qu'ils veulent, Dub Inc

Ohhh eh oh, Give me again
Hé yo, chacun son identité mais pour tous la même nation.
Ohhh eh oh, Give me again
Chacun sa culture mais pour tous le même pays mais on est
sûr que ...

Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une France qui ferme sa gueule,
Une fois de plus la machine est lancée!
Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une nation comme idole,
Une fois de plus la sentence est tombée!

Tout ce qu'on veut c'est se sentir chez soi,
Face à l'adversité ici je reste.
Tu fermes ta porte mais t'es le bienvenu chez moi.
Mon identité grandit sans cesse!
(Boum)
J'attaque tes envies de m'voir quitter c'pays.
J'attaque pour mes frères, la morale et nos vies.
J'attaque comme le font ces lois
J'attaque mensonge et mépris
J'attaque, et dans ton pacte une putain d'ironie.
J'traque ton discours, j'traque ton air fier,
J'traque tous tes hommes quand ils renvoient les charters,
Même les plus tranquilles deviennent vénères en tant
d'guerre.
Give the faya hého, give the faya hého.

Enfants d'immigrés tout c'qu'on fait nos parents nous
donnent le droit,
De ne pas douter de ce que l'on est, de ce qu'on fait là
Les valeurs se perdent aucun hymne ne les ramènera.

Mille couleurs au drapeau car trois ne suffisent pas,
On n'choisit pas où on naît pas toujours où on va,
Frères sans papier, donnant leurs au moins le choix,
On tue même les hommes certains deviennent des proies,
On crée des lois pour ça!

Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une France qui ferme sa gueule,
Une fois de plus la machine est lancée,
Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une nation comme idole,
Une fois de plus la sentence est tombée.

Tout ce qu'on veut c'est se sentir chez soi,
Face à l'adversité ici je reste.
Tu fermes ta porte mais t'es le bienvenu chez moi,
Mon identité grandit sans cesse!

Né en France, yeah, je l'aime c'est ma terre
Quand elle respecte ses fils, et qu'elle nous considère,
On reste droit, fier, nos racines, nos pères,
Fruit d'une histoire commune, amour et haine vont de pair.
Et ces trois couleurs sur le drapeau
Ne suffisent plus à colorer ce tableau,
De ce pays, de ce peuple aussi beau,
L'identité ne se résume pas à un mot.

Ce qu'ont fait nos pères, quitter, ou fuir leur terre,
Changer d'hémisphère, gare à tous ces sectaires,
L'adaptation à cette nation
S'est faite à la sueur de leur front,
Ici gagner une galère pour trouver des repères,
Un climat délétère, aujourd'hui plus qu'hier
Tant de questions de confusions,
Être français n'est pas qu'une décision!

Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une France qui ferme sa gueule,
Une fois de plus la machine est lancée,
Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une nation comme idole,
Une fois de plus la sentence est tombée.

Tout ce qu'on veut c'est se sentir chez soi,
Face à l'adversité ici je reste.
Tu fermes ta porte mais ne t'es le bienvenu chez moi,
Mon identité grandit sans cesse!

J'prends sur moi et mes écrits se précisent,
Encore un texte qui dévoile vos faiblesses (faiblesses)
C'qui émane de vos dires blesse en somme,
Je les protège quand on touche aux miens,
Aussi étranger que quand on me parle de noblesse (noblesse)
Et toutes vos lois ne s'appliqueront à personne.

Tu prends c'qui t'intéresse immigration sélective,
Tu chantes la Marseillaise comme une sanction punitive,
Ton identité nationale reste, encore une belle connerie
Bien plus qu'une alternative,
Cesse de nous prendre pour des idiots,
Ta politique se cache derrière tes mots,
Cesse de nous prendre pour des idiots!

Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une France qui ferme sa gueule,
Une fois de plus la machine est lancée,
Tout ce qu'ils veulent c'est une nation comme idole,
Une fois de plus la sentence est tombée.

Tout ce qu'on veut c'est se sentir chez soi,
Face à l'adversité ici je reste.
Tu fermes ta porte mais t'es le bienvenu moi,
Mon identité grandit sans cesse!

Ohhh eh oh, Give me again

Tout ce qu'on veut c'est se sentir chez soi,
Tu fermes ta porte mais t'es le bienvenu chez moi.

2. Menace de mort, Youssoupha

Les accusations sont graves, mais comme d'hab on fait avec, c'est
Vrai qu'on est trop hard, et puis notre art est de vous vexer
Pas d'menace de mort, le rap ne sort pas de douilles, mais
C'est le seul son hardcore depuis qu'le rock n'a plus de couilles, c'est
Un nouveau record de polémique : on dit qu'je chante le mal
Je vous l'avais dit qu'il y a des indics, ladies and gentleman
Et dans leur bêtise, ils confondent "crime" et "Islam"
Ils m'auraient trouvé plus gentil si je ne faisais que du "slam"...
Coupable idéal, MC mercenaire
La Rumeur dit qu'les NTM sont des Sniper de la morale comme Monsieur R
Pas facile d'ignorer ça, pas facile d'opérer seul
À la place de Orelsan, moi c'est clair que j'aurais l'seum
On a les critiques imparables
D'une France qui oublie qu'les paroles de son hymne sont plus violentes que celles du gangsta
rap
J'défends la cause des frères au Sud qui rêvassent du Nord
Mais ma liberté d'expression en chute est sous menace de mort

Il est grand temps qu'ça déménage
Il n'y a jamais de tendance irrémédiable
Les sentences sont inégales
J'fais du rap et c'que t'entends est illégal
Il est grand temps qu'ça déménage
Il n'y a jamais de tendance irrémédiable
Les sentences sont inégales
J'fais du rap et c'que t'entends est illégal

Depuis le temps, j'guettais ce type qui vous mène à la baguette, mais
Parle de race en tête et puis nous traite "d'analphabètes", j'ai
Dit qu'j'étais du genre à réagir sur le BPM
Je ne tends pas la joue comme celui qui a vu le jour à Bethléem

Une seule ligne, dans "À force de le dire"
Où j'exprime tout mon mépris, et là, s'amorce le délire
Des mots accusateurs, pour les rappeurs, j'en retrouve dix mille
C'est vrai qu'on touche le fond chez ce bouffon de Morandini
Mais sans rancune, de ma plume j'connais le taro
Et la droite se déchaîne, m'affiche à la une du Figaro
Encore un article pour faire mentir le baromètre
Qui me confirme que certains journalistes de merde sont malhonnêtes
Nous n'sommes pas du même monde : l'Hexagone va mal
Mais j'espère pas que mon prénom vous a subitement rappelé celui de Fofana
Et la Police aboie pour que le tribunal me morde
Ça suffit pour qu'un juge m'inculpe pour "Menace de mort"

Il est grand temps qu'ça déménage
Il n'y a jamais de tendance irrémédiable
Les sentences sont inégales
J'fais du rap et c'que t'entends est illégal
Il est grand temps qu'ça déménage
Il n'y a jamais de tendance irrémédiable
Les sentences sont inégales
J'fais du rap et c'que t'entends est illégal

Bien sûr qu'il y a d'la rage dans nos propos
Mais comment rester sage, vu l'image de la vie que l'on nous propose ?
J'ai plaidé "légitime défense" dans ma déposition
Qui peut prétendre faire du rap sans prendre position ?
Il y a d'la rage dans nos propos
Mais comment rester sage, vu l'image de la vie que l'on nous propose ?
J'ai plaidé "légitime défense" dans ma déposition
Qui peut prétendre faire du rap sans prendre position ?
Il y a d'la rage dans nos propos Mais comment rester sage, vu l'image de la vie que l'on nous
propose ?
J'ai plaidé "légitime défense" dans ma déposition
Qui peut prétendre faire du rap sans prendre position ?

Il y a d'la rage dans nos propos
Mais comment rester sage, vu l'image de la vie que l'on nous propose ?
J'ai plaidé "légitime défense" dans ma déposition
Qui peut prétendre faire du rap sans prendre position ?
Il y a d'la rage dans nos propos
Mais comment rester sage, vu l'image de la vie que l'on nous propose ?
J'ai plaidé "légitime défense" dans ma déposition
Qui peut prétendre faire du rap sans prendre position ?

3. Lettre à la République, Kery James

Lettre à la République
A tous ces racistes à la tolérance hypocrite
Qui ont bâti leur nation sur le sang
Maintenant s'érigent en donneurs de leçons
Pilleurs de richesses, tueurs d'africains
Colonisateurs, tortionnaires d'algériens
Ce passé colonial c'est le vôtre
C'est vous qui avez choisi de lier votre histoire à la nôtre
Maintenant vous devez assumer
L'odeur du sang vous poursuit même si vous vous parfumez
Nous les Arabes et les Noirs
On est pas là par hasard
Toute arrivée a son départ !
Vous avez souhaité l'immigration
Grâce à elle vous vous êtes gavés, jusqu'à l'indigestion
Je crois que la France n'a jamais fait la charité
Les immigrés c'est que la main d'oeuvre bon marché
Gardez pour vous votre illusion républicaine
De la douce France bafouée par l'immigration africaine
Demandez aux tirailleurs sénégalais et aux harkis
Qui a profité d'qui ?
La République n'est innocente que dans vos songes
Et vous n'avez les mains blanches que de vos mensonges
Nous les Arabes et les Noirs
On est pas là par hasard
Toute arrivée a son départ !
Mais pensez vous qu'avec le temps
Les Négros muteraient, finiraient par devenir Blancs ?
Mais la nature humaine a balayé vos projets
On ne s'intègre pas dans le rejet
On ne s'intègre pas dans les ghettos français, parqués
Entre immigrés, faut être censés
Comment pointer du doigt le repli communautaire

Que vous avez initié depuis les bidonvilles de Nanterre
Pyromane et pompier, votre mémoire est sélective
On n'est pas venu en paix, votre histoire est agressive
Ici, on est mieux que là-bas, on le sait
Parce que décoloniser pour vous c'est déstabiliser
Et plus j'observe l'histoire beh moins j'me sens redevable
Je sais c'que c'est d'être Noir depuis l'époque du cartable
Bien que je n'sois pas ingrat, j'n'ai pas envie de vous dire merci
Parce qu'au fond c'que j'ai, ici, je l'ai conquis
J'ai grandi à Orly dans les favelas de France
J'ai "fleury" dans les maquis j'suis en guerre depuis mon enfance

Narcotrafic, braquage, violence... Crimes !
Que font mes frères si c'n'est des sous comme dans Clear... stream
Qui peut leur faire la leçon ? Vous ?
Abuseurs de biens sociaux, détourneurs de fond
De vrais voyous en costard, bande d'hypocrites !
Est-ce que les Français ont les dirigeants qu'ils méritent ?
Au coeur de débats, des débats sans coeur
Toujours les mêmes qu'on pointe du doigt dans votre France de rancœur
En pleine crise économique, il faut un coupable
Et c'est en direction des musulmans que tous vos coups partent
J'n'ai pas peur de l'écrire : La France est islamophobe
D'ailleurs plus personne ne se cache dans la France des xénophobes
Vous nous traitez comme des moins que rien sur vos chaînes publiques
Et vous attendez de nous qu'on s'écrive "Vive la République !"
Mon respect s'fait violer au pays dit des Droits de l'Homme
Difficile de se sentir Français sans le syndrome de Stockholm
Parce que moi je suis Noir, musulman, banlieusard et fier de l'être
Quand tu m'vois tu mets un visage sur c'que l'autre France déteste
Ce sont les mêmes hypocrites qui nous parlent de diversité
Qui expriment le racisme sous couvert de laïcité
Rêvent d'un français unique, avec une seule identité
S'acharnent à discriminer, les mêmes minorités

Face aux mêmes électeurs, les mêmes peurs sont agitées
On oppose les communautés, pour cacher la précarité
Que personne ne s'étonne si demain ça finit par péter
Comment aimer un pays, qui refuse de nous respecter
Loin des artistes transparents, j'écris c'texte comme un miroir
Que la France s'y regarde si elle veut s'y voir
Elle verra s'envoler l'illusion qu'elle se fait d'elle-même
J'suis pas en manque d'affection
Comprends que j'n'attends plus qu'elle m'aime !

4. Pain au chocolat, IAM

- Bonjour Madame
- Bonjour Jean François, ça va ?
- Oui
- Je te sers quoi aujourd'hui ?
- Je voudrais un pain au chocolat s'il vous plaît
- Mhmm, tu ne dois pas être au courant mais c'est assez dangereux d'en manger en ce moment
- Ah bon ?
- Je te suggère plutôt un croque-monsieur ou vraiment le plus sur, le rouleau à la saucisse pure porc

Il y en a qui se demande toujours ce qu'on fout là, nos boubous et nos foulards
Toujours les mêmes mots qu'on entend, mais ça passe mieux ce coup-là
Banalisé le discours se durcit, et nous, on encaisse
On sent l'impact de chaque propos relaté par la presse
Qui a dit que l'homme n'a pas de prédateur ?
Chez nous le manque fait des ravages, omniprésents dans le secteur
Éternels recalés, on squatte le banc ou le chômage à l'année
C'est pas qu'il n'y a pas l'envie, c'est juste la foi qui a détalé
Les soupçons nous ciblent souvent, sérieux c'est saoulant
Les mauvais noms sur le CV et voilà le job qui s'en va
Tout dépend d'une chose qu'on n'a pas décidée
D'où on vient, qui on est, tous ces faits qu'on ne peut pas renier
Avant on était des bougnoules, négros ou basanés
Maintenant on est tous terroristes et maîtres artificiers
Et c'est reparti, les gens deviennent fous, la haine fête son retour
Les plus atteints voient des Merah partout
Ils pensent qu'on est tous armés jusqu'aux dents
Attendant patiemment, une belle occase pour verser le sang
À cause de leur soif de pouvoir des sales phrases qu'ils balancent
La peur débarque et ses fruits sont gorgés de violence
S'appliquant à donner de nous une image détestable
Pourtant on sait qu'il y a des voleurs qui ne feront jamais les premières pages

Comme si le mal était gravé sur nos visages
Ils nous jugent, au regard, comme des français d'origine coupable

Qu'est-ce qu'on peut dire ? Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire ?

Nos ambitions, tant de bouteilles à la mer, amer

On devrait écrire quoi ?

Des couplets maladroits pour terroriser le petit Jean-François

Qu'est-ce qu'on peut dire ? Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire ?

Flirter avec la fille de l'enfer, amer

On devrait écrire quoi ?

Des couplets maladroits pour terroriser le petit Jean-François

On a fait nos premiers pas au cœur d'un désert violent
Où l'écervelé a raison, d'où je voulais décoller comme un cerf volant

Les drapeaux claquaient dans les rafales

Mais les fils désespérément harnachés à l'asphalte

Ils veulent des coupables, qui ont le profil

Des go-fast, des tueurs, des grossistes, gros macs

Des sangsues qui profitent du système, c'est easy

Et l'opinion ferme la Delsey

Ah c'est beau, ces procès sans avocat

Ni juge, ils disent à la radio : Tous des tocards

La justice c'est main droite et 22

Les problèmes sont résolus en moins de deux

C'est ce qu'on entend, de partout

Comme si les mêmes tuaient au Darfour et braquaient les Carrefour

Comme si les types qui à Bagdad attaquaient

Venaient dans nos rues, armés carjacker

Voici les auteurs, preuve à l'appui

Une vieille boussole accompagnée d'un pauvre tapis

Une recette de maître Machiavel

Recalibrée en mode Charles Martel

Effet d'annonce pur style Karcher

On a un jeu de fou, on jette toutes nos cartes à terre

Pendant ce temps les petites frappes prennent du volume à l'ombre
Et les diplômés des quartiers partent bosser à Londres

Qu'est-ce qu'on peut dire ? Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire ?

Nos ambitions, tant de bouteilles à la mer, amer

On devrait écrire quoi ?

Des couplets maladroits pour terroriser le petit Jean-François

Qu'est-ce qu'on peut dire ? Qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire ?

Flirter avec la fille de l'enfer, amer

On devrait écrire quoi ?

Des couplets maladroits pour terroriser le petit Jean-François

5. Fautes de français, Lino featuring Doku

On s'explique les choses mais on s'écoute pas
On parle le même langage mais on s'comprend pas
On avance dans la même direction mais on n'se suit pas

On a grandi ensemble mais on s'connait pas
On s'écoute pas
On ne s'comprend pas
On ne se suit pas
On s'connait pas

J'roule sur la marge, j'vis entre parenthèses
L'encre coule sur la page, j'repars en 16
Je marche, j'suis seul dans la foule, j'ai mon héritage sur l'épiderme
De ma tour d'dix étages, j'écrivais ces vies ternes
Avancer sans la virgule avec nos accents aigus
Où la Mondéo circule, ma voix sent l'vécu
L'écran allume les passions, sous tension
Comment tu veux qu'on s'comprenne quand c'est TF1 qui fait les présentations?
Le point d'interrogation, est-ce qu'on peut blâmer la misère?
Partout, la crise a besoin de bouc émissaire
Un retour à Babel, l'temps passe trop vite, j'écris
Conflit d'civilisations, à qui profite le crime?
La raison manque à l'appel, on sait même plus qui a tort
La religion fait diversion pendant qu'on chute à la pelle
J'saute le pas, les drames faudra devancer

Éteindre le feu avant qu'ça crame et corriger les fautes de français

On s'explique les choses mais on s'écoute pas
On parle le même langage mais on s'comprend pas
On avance dans la même direction mais on n'se suit pas
On a grandi ensemble mais on s'connait pas

On s'écoute pas
On ne s'comprend pas

On ne se suit pas
On s'connait pas

Solitude plurielle dans ces métropoles jumelles
À trop grailler l'gravier, on oublie l'goût du miel
Vision d'un monde couleur touches de clavier
La mélodie sonne faux, comme tout c'qui sort de leur bouche
Ça sent l'fauve sur l'pavé d'mon enfance
On était blancs, noirs, arabes, c'est pas qu'j'insiste dès l'bacs à sable
L'histoire commence comme une blague raciste
Nos vies s'conjuguent, les cultures s'entrechoquent
On s'juge, on enterre le passé, futur, c'que chante les choque
Les Marianne raturent nos thèses
Moi, j'ai l'impression qu'nos raps sont des pansements sur une prothèse
La température grimpe la justice fait tapisserie
On est passé d'"Touche pas à mon pote" à Islam et pâtisserie
Derrière les murs entre guillemets, tu comptes les points d'suspension

Paraît qu'à ça t'es prédestiné, vu tes origines sous tension
Shoote-le pas, les drames faudra devancer
Éteindre le feu avant qu'ça crame, corriger les fautes de français

On s'explique les choses mais on s'écoute pas
On parle le même langage mais on s'comprend pas
On avance dans la même direction mais on n'se suit pas
On a grandi ensemble mais on s'connait pas

On s'écoute pas
On ne s'comprend pas
On ne se suit pas
On s'connait pas

M'entends tu quand j'te parle?
Me suis-tu quand je pars?
Me ressens-tu quand je te palpe?

Me vois-tu malgré l'écart?
Y'a tellement d'fautes de français qu'on a du mal à s'comprendre
Séparés par la virgule, comment veux-tu qu'on s'entende?
L'écriture du manchot, c'est écrire entre les lignes
Apparences entre parenthèses quand l'encrier se vide

On s'explique les choses mais on s'écoute pas
On parle le même langage mais on s'comprend pas
On avance dans la même direction mais on n'se suit pas
On a grandi ensemble mais on s'connait pas
On s'écoute pas
On ne s'comprend pas
On ne se suit pas
On ne se connaît pas

6. Putain d'époque, Dosseh featuring Nekfeu

Laud-sa, dis-moi quel est l'fuck ? Dis-moi, pourquoi les gens sont autant dans l'abus ?
Est-ce que quand un curé pédo' touche un gosse, on demande aux chrétiens d'France de sortir
dans la rue ?

Liberté, égalité, d'jà j'y crois pas tant qu'ça, mais alors, fraternité : c'est clair qu'on attendra
Crois pas qu'les Français sont tous cistes-ra depuis les attentats, y'en a pas mal qui l'étaient
déjà bien avant ça

Laud-sa, j'avais t'dire quel est l'blème, c'est qu'par les temps qui courent s'éveiller chaque jour
est un cadeau hors de prix

D'où leur viennent leurs armes ? Qui est-ce qui leur refourgue ? À qui profite le crime, à qui
profite l'E.I. ?

Et pour quoi j'doute de chaque version officielle ? D'efficacité d'état d'urgence et d'vos
fiches S

Et pourquoi quand quelqu'un s'fait agresser dans l'trom' avant d'lui porter secours, ils sortent
leur iPhone 6S ?

J'ai dû mal à m'en battre les couilles de c'qui m'dépasse, l'histoire nous a montré qu'ils sont
prêts aux pires des crasses

Stratégie d'la peur pour faire consentir les masses au sale qu'ils vont perpétrer sur le reste du
globe

Et toi rien qu't'avales, et toi rien qu'tu gobes, t'es concerné que quand le sang t'éclabousse les
bottes

Pour qu'tes 'blèmes s'résolvent, t'as qu'à t'foutre en l'air, canon sur ta tempe, presse la gâchette
du glock

Un jour un ami m'a dit : "Ton problème c'est qu'tu rappes trop fort
Tu gaspilles ton énergie pour ketchi, tu donnes du caviar aux porcs"

Alors j'ai dû simplifier mes écrits, mais y'a des fans qui sont pas d'accord

Ils réclament du Dosseh tah l'époque, désolé mais la loi du plus grand nombre l'emporte

Laud-sa, dis-moi quel est l'fuck ? L'underground remplit ni les poches, ni le bide des gosses

Sur la vie d'mes proches, quand on veut être un boss on s'inspire des boss

Les phoques sont-ils vraiment tous gays, pour qu'on dise "pédé comme un phoque" ?

J'me pose la question pour d'vrai, ça m'intrigue, nigga, what the fuck ?

J'ai un problème avec ce game qui me sous-estime comme Mahrez à l'OM

La grosse crise identitaire que traverse mon peuple, les négros sont prêts à croire en tout sauf
en eux-mêmes

Sur tous les continents du monde, les miens sont dans l'mal, ma terre n'est pas pauvre, non,
c'est qu'on l'appauvrit

Là est toute la nuance, est-ce que tu m'as compris ? À très haut risque est la mission que
j'accomplis

Bref, et toi ma belle, quel est l'problème ? Tu croyais connaître les hommes ? Hein ?

Allez essuie ton Rimmel, lis des poèmes, dans quelques mois c'est les soldes
Dis-toi qu'à la next time tu devras juste être plus vive, qu'une histoire d'amour c'est un poison
mortel

Dont le seul antidote c'est l'histoire d'amour d'après, donc si j'enchaîne les histoires c'est juste
pour survivre

Laud-sa, dis-moi quel est l'fuck ? Quel est donc ton foutu problème ?

On vit une putain d'époque, j'n'y vois aucun foutu problème

Laud-sa, dis-moi quel est l'fuck ? Quel est donc ton foutu problème ?

On vit une putain d'époque, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

Partage le gâteau avec tes gars même si ça te fait qu'une part
Tellement de tâches, je ne nique plus de tes-pu, suffit qu'une parle

Pour entacher ta réputation, pars et t'arrête plus car

Dès que t'acceptes un service, ça te tue plus vite qu'une balle

La vie c'est comme un running, sous la menace d'un breli-ca

Ah, l'ancien, moi j'le renie, il n'en reste qu'un reliquat

Violent comme un Rolling, Stone sous héroïne gars, stop

J'trouve le Prix Nobel ironique quand j'pense aux Rohingyas

Laud-sa, dis-moi quel est l'problème ?

Ils ont toutes sortes de plans pour mieux confiner nos rêves

Je dis c'que j'pense, après j'ai des problèmes

Une nouvelle sorte de blanc venu confirmer la règle

La flamme du FN sur l'mur et ma jeunesse qui s'consume hurle :

"Faut-il qu'on les brûle pour qu'ils finissent dans une urne ?"

Fuck, moi je veux toucher tes 5 sens

J'suis plus à l'école pourtant, j'ai toujours des absences

J'accompagne mon shrab à la squée-mo, on est vendredi

Après on dînera chez mon zinc' pour shabbat, voilà c'qu'est beau
On cultive honneur et fraternité, les jeunes savent
On ignore les discours de leur intelligentsia
Mais ça veut pas dire qu'est nous contre eux, non
Engrainer les petits c'est moins contraignant que d'imiter les gens sages, quel est le foutu fuck
?

Devant Dieu, y'a pas de number one
J'essaie juste d'être un homme bon, oim'
Devant Dieu, y'a pas de number one
Boy, j'essaie juste d'être un homme bon, oim'
Devant Dieu, y'a pas de number one
J'essaie juste d'être un homme bon, oim'
Devant Dieu, y'a pas de number one
Boy, quel est donc ton foutu problème, hein ?

7. Musique Nègre, Kery James featuring Lino and Youssoupha

Introduction :

Vous êtes sur Banlieusards FM

Président d'une radio, plus grossière que courtoise, Henry de Lesquen souhaite devenir le prochain Président des Français. Dans sa parodie de programme, il propose de bannir la Musique Nègre des médias, soutenus, ou autorisés par l'État. Évidemment, pour lui, le rap, cette musique "immonde", c'est de la musique nègre

Michel Audiard écrivait : "les cons, ça ose tout, et c'est même à ça qu'on les reconnaît" Ces propos n'ont pas laissé indifférent le monde du rap. "Musique Nègre" c'est donc le titre de la nouvelle chanson du rappeur Kery James, l'auteur du très dérangeant, mais fédérateur, "Racailles". Accompagné du Prim's Parolier et de Lino, Kery James répond à Henry de Lesquen, et le moins que l'on puisse dire c'est que le poète noir ne tire pas à blanc

Un mec qui écrit pour les autres, ils appellent ça un nègre
Un Noir qui plane au-dessus d'eux, j'appelle ça un aigle
J'ai fait un cauchemar, Martin Luther un rêve
Dans mon cauchemar, j'avais giflé Michel Leeb
Les grosses lèvres les plus célèbres
Je me sens beau, noir, je m'élève, jusqu'au "high level"

High level, la foule on lève
La merde j'la fous entre Chaka Zoulou et Twelve Year a Slave
Mon art c'est la sève, garde tes "Yes we can"
Si tu me réduis à la danse, au Kentucky Fried Chicken
Négro j'dérange, j'suis le nez du sphinx explosé
Comme Huey P. Newton, calibré sur un trône en osier

Je suis revenu choquer leurs ghotas
Brise les quotas de la France profonde
Tricart comme Joker sur Gotham
Comme un gros tag sur la Joconde
Je raconte que les Antilles sont pillées par la métropole
Que mon Africa est bien trop forte

Et que la flicaille est souvent négrophobe
Forte est ma musique, imagine, fuck les codes Illuminatis
Ici pas de négros fragiles, rouges, jaunes, vert-kaki
Le cul posé, j'ai pris votre place, je me prends pour Rosa Parks
Je me prends pour Toussaint Louverture bottant le cul de Bonaparte

Musique nègre
Pas calibrée pour la FM, on fait de la musique nègre
Quelle insolence !
Musique nègre
Garde tes « Yes we can », on fait de la musique nègre
Je suis revenu choquer leurs ghotas, choquer leurs ghotas
Musique nègre
Pas calibré pour la FM, on fait de la musique nègre
Quelle insolence !
Musique nègre
Garde tes "Yes we can"

Sur le boulevard de la vie, je suis dans l'angle mort
Un nègre qui les défie est un nègre mort
Depuis le bruit et l'odeur je sens que je dérange la France
Je fais un tour chez Guerlain, je mets du parfum de violence
Quelle arrogance, quelle insolence
Comme Sarkozy à Dakar, je choque l'assistance
Je me sens pas plus Européen que la livre sterling
Je fais mon négrocide au sol comme Malcolm Sterling
À trop respirer le rejet, j'ai le poumon perforé
Je pourrais mourir d'infection comme un Traoré
Des négrophobes comme Alain Soral dans un texto
Partout sur le globe, c'est chaud d'être un négro
Les histoires deviennent des...

Les histoires deviennent des légendes
Les légendes deviennent des mythes

Je roule des bâtons dans les jantes, Noirs, Kémites
Sale noir, faucheuse
Je dépasse les limites
J'emprunte les voies rocheuses
Je brûle comme le soleil à son zénith
Accrocheuse ma zic a le majeur levée
Regarde à quoi on me cantonne, le vrai du faux, je démêle
Sombre attitude comme ces nègres sortis de Compton
Et d'après le Vatican, j'ai mérité mes chaînes
Mec, si je mens, l'Enfer m'attend
Je rallume le feu de la révolte
Je brûle les bouquins de Fernand Nathan
Kery m'a dit "Bors, pas de blasphème" j'ai mis le cran de sûreté
Je rappe ma vérité nue, genre Crazy Horse
Je cogne sans les insulter
Pas calibré pour la FM, acclamé par la street
J'avance entre les croix gammées
Les croix cramées
À livrer, j'ai des millions de combats
À en choquer les forces du mal
D'en bas c'est nous la France, négro, comme Alexandre Dumas
Depuis la primaire, leur crâne encaisse pas le son du tam-tam
Musique nègre égorge le rossignol, nos gueules en "prime time"

Musique nègre
Pas calibrée pour la FM, on fait de la musique nègre
Quelle insolence !
Musique nègre
Garde tes "Yes we can", on fait de la musique nègre
Je suis revenu choquer leurs ghotas, choquer leurs ghotas
Musique nègre
Pas calibrée pour la FM, on fait de la musique nègre
Quelle insolence !
Musique nègre

Garde tes "Yes we can"

Musique négrière pour un feat
Là c'est Kery James qui m'invite
Secteur Ä, Tout Simplement Noir
Ménage à Trois et Mafia K'1 fry
Je serai dernier s'il n'en reste qu'un
J'ai croisé des regards mesquins
Controversé dans mes versets
Comme un concert de Black M à Verdun
Puisqu'on nous critique dans nos combats
Ma négritude dans le coma

Votre presse a bien fait semblant quand Laurent Blanc parlait de quotas

Na bangaka lisusu te
Ngai na bangaka butu te
Ngai na bangaka kaka nzambe
Ngai na bangaka mutu te

Neg lakay se sa mwen yé
Map rété la yo pe relé
Musique nou yo pa aimé
Coulè nou yo dénigré

West Indies, négro radical
Haïti, royaume d'Africa
Qui va défendre tous nos écrits ?
C'est ni le CRAN, ni même la LICRA
Prim's

Musique nègre
Pas calibrée pour la FM, on fait de la musique nègre
Quelle insolence !
Musique nègre
Garde tes "Yes we can", on fait de la musique nègre

Je suis revenu choquer leurs ghotas, choquer leurs ghotas

Musique nègre

Pas calibrée pour la FM, on fait de la musique nègre

Quelle insolence !

Musique nègre

Garde tes "Yes we can" nègre

Garde tes "Yes we can"

8. Racailles, Kery James

Introduction :

Vous en avez assez, hein ? Vous en avez assez d cette bande de racailles. On va vous en débarrasse

Racailles !

On devrait vous nettoyer au Kärcher

Le jour où le peuple se réveille vous allez prendre cher

Racailles !

On a le sentiment qu'aller voter

C'est choisir par lequel d'entre vous on veut se faire entuber

Racailles !

Républicains ou PS

Rangez vos promesses dans vos sacs Hermès

Racailles !

Vous n'avez jamais connu la précarité

Vous vivez à l'écart de nos réalités

Racailles !

La rue le pense, j'le mets en musique

Et pour ceux qui l'ignorent encore j'le rends public

Je n'soutiens aucun parti, j'marche plus dans vos combines

Vos programmes électoraux ne sont que des comptines

Racailles !

On prend les mêmes et on recommence

Les mêmes promesses, les mêmes mensonges

Les mêmes tapent dans la caisses, les mêmes plongent

Les mêmes sont dans la hess, les mêmes mangent

Racailles !

Les mêmes menteurs trafiquent les mêmes comptes

Les mêmes commis au service des mêmes pontes

Les mêmes fils de pauvres sont incarcérés

Les mêmes fils de riches sont formés pour régner

En attendant qu'un homme du peuple émerge

C'est rare de trouver un élu avec un casier vierge

Ma haine du système est toujours intacte
Lequel d'entre eux peut jeter la pierre à Cahuzac ?

Racailles !

Claude Guéant, Racailles !, Balkany, Racailles !, Jean-François Copé, Racailles !

Philippe Bernard, Racailles !, Harlem Désir, Racailles !, Alain Juppé, Racailles !

Tous ceux que j'ai cité ont été condamnés
Ce sont les mecs de cités qu'ils traitent comme des damnés

Racailles !

Vous étiez choqués par le groupe Tandem
Vous faites la même à la France, mais jusqu'à ce qu'elle saigne
Jusqu'à ce qu'elle coule comme la Grèce ou l'Italie

Vous avez meurtri le pays jusqu'à l'agonie

Racailles !

Cumul des mandats jusqu'où vous irez ?
Est-ce le cumul des salaires que vous désirez ?

Racailles !

Comme toute la France d'en bas j'crois plus aux politiciens
J'continue le combat, j'crois au réveil citoyen

Racailles !

Pour changer les choses il faut le vouloir
Vous n'avez pas de cause profonde si ce n'est le pouvoir

Racailles !

Vous faites de la politique sans conviction
Parfois vous en faites même pour éviter la prison

Racailles !

En costume-cravate sont les vrais voyous
Vous ne croyez plus en rien, plus personne croit en vous

Racailles !

Y'a qu'à observer les taux d'abstention
Faut pas trop prendre les gens pour des cons, attention

Racailles !

Sentez-vous le vent tourner comme vos vestes ?

Entre vous et la rue, y'a plus que les CRS

Racailles !

A bout de souffle, votre système est dans un cul de sac

A essayer de se débattre, comme un cul d'jatte

Racailles !

Vous êtes élus pour un truc

Vous ne le faites pas plus

Vous faites l'inverse, en plus

Ça ne vous gêne pas

Racailles !

Et si le peuple a l'idée de se rebeller

Vous disposez d'une armée de flics bien dressés et zélés

Racailles !

Le dialogue social gît dans un cercueil

Les keufs tirent aux flashballs, tu peux y perdre un œil

Racailles !

Vous faites monter le sentiment anti-policier

Usez de la police comme d'une armée privatisée

Interlude:

Le politique, qu'il soit femme ou homme, pour l'instant, peut-être que demain j'aurais changé d'avis, il sert plus à rien, c'est un prestataire de service. Ces putains de dettes, là, qui emmerdent tout le monde, qui mettent les peuples à plat, qui les mettent à genoux et ainsi de suite, on n'arrive pas à les éliminer, comme vous les politiques : vous arrivez pas à les faire éliminer, ces putains de dettes... Parce que la banque elle est plus forte que vous !

Racailles !

Tout le monde le sait c'est une évidence

Vous êtes complètement soumis à la finance

Racailles !

Vous votez les lois que les riches ordonnent

Après le 49.3 plus rien ne m'étonne

Racailles !

On travaille plus mais on gagne moins

On attend juste le printemps européen

On cotise pour des retraites qu'on ne verra peut-être jamais

Tout l'argent qu'on fait rentrer vous nous le reprenez

Racailles !

Chaque fin de mois à découvert

On a l'impression d'être esclave du système bancaire

Racailles !

Même les riches connaissent le jeu, jouissent des niches fiscales

Les petites PME croulent sous les charges sociales

Racailles !

Radar, on paye !

Péage, on paye !

Pollution, on paye !

Racailles !

Oh ! Qu'est-ce que vous faites avec tout ce fric ?

Que foutait Eric Zemmour sur une chaîne publique ?

Racailles !

Payer pour propager sa haine

Semer des graines récoltées par le FN

Pour vous même Marine Le Pen est devenue fréquentable

Quiconque combat l'Islam peut s'asseoir à votre table

Racailles !

Incapables de gouverner vous divisez

Racailles !

Incapables de rassembler vous stigmatisez

Racailles !

Aveuglés par le pouvoir vos cœurs sont voilés

Beaucoup plus que le visage de cette femme voilée

Racailles !

Tous vos prétendus principes de laïcité

Ne concernent pas cette saoudienne sur les Champs Elysées

Pour vous tout se négocie, tout est question de gent-ar

Vous êtes même prêts à livrer les banlieues au Qatar

Racailles !

Votre jeu est trouble

Racailles !
Votre discours est double
Racailles !
Au pays dit des droits de l'Homme
Racailles !
L'Etat d'urgence est devenu la norme
Et vous prétendez faire la leçon au monde entier
Imposer la démocratie à coups de mortier
Sans pitié vous avez buté Kadhafi
Aujourd'hui dans quel état se retrouve la Libye ?
Racailles !
La rue le sait, j'le met en musique
Vos médias le taisent, j'le rends public
J'vous tiens tête comme un mec des Minguettes
Est-ce le genre de texte qui peut me valoir une fiche S ?

Droit dans mes bottes
Je n'baisse jamais mon froc
La tête haute j'suis intègre
J'fais du Hip-Hop
Vous appelez ça de la musique nègre
J'sors en indé
Tu m'verras plus jamais
Mettre les pieds à Skyrock
(Jamais, jamais)
Ils n'aiment pas c'que je suis, c'que je défends, c'que je porte
C'est réciproque
Ils ont travesti le R-A-P
Je fais parti des rescapés
Ils ont encensé la médiocrité
Ils ont fait du Hip-Hop de la variété
Ils ont joué les clashes pour nous diviser
Tant que ça fait de l'audience, on peut s'allumer
Quand un rappeur se fera buter

Ils organiseront un concert au nom de la paix
Yeah !
J'fais d'la musique contestataire
Vous vendez des espaces publicitaires
Racailles !
J'me suis sacrifié pour mes p'tits frères
Vous vous jouez des trucs qui les envoient au cimetière
Racailles !
Fric et violence dans vos playlists
Vous abrutissez les miens, ça plaît aux élites
Racailles !
Vous vous êtes servi de moi, j'me suis servi de vous
Pour que mon message passe au plus grand nombre, maintenant j'peux le faire sans vous
J'ai un public qui me soutient
J'ai fait des choses, le peuple s'en souvient
La rue vous vomit, j'le rends public
Rien n'a changé depuis Lettre à la République

9. Rappeur 2 force, Médine

Je suis le genre de mec qui, dans une boîte de strip-tease, regarde le public
Comme de l'héroïne planquée parmi les hosties, le ton est biblique
J'ai promis d'arrêter la provoc', j'ai pas promis d'arrêter de mentir
J'ai lu qu'écrire causait la mort, alors j'ai donc décidé d'arrêter de lire
Mes mots viennent de ma plume, ma plume revient de la forge
J'ai la force de la culture, face à la culture de la force
Conçu à la missionnaire
Baptisé Médine comme la ville, monsieur le Maire
On a dit de mon peu-ra qu'il était trop scolaire
Ils n'ont pas goûté à ma patate dictionnaire
Don't Laïk : quintuple contrôle du fisc
Lorsque eux gèrent la France comme des turfistes
Je suis Français approximatif
Je me sens comme une girafe avec le vertige
S Fiche, ça sent la perquis'
Mon quartier donne raison aux catastrophistes
T'façon dans la guerre, y a pas que du négatif
Ça fait au moins réviser la géographie
D'otage prise, menottage, vite
Dans les canots de sauvetage, y a pas de carré VIP
Leur politique se modernise
On ne stoppe pas la faim avec des tirs nourris
Ra-ta-ta sur les réfugiés
On est pas dans le clip de Maya Mathangi
Ra-ta-ta-ta sur civils et artistes, la réplique sera civilisatrice
Je n'attends rien d'un gouvernement qui dépouille Pierre pour habiller Paul
On est en plein tremblement de terre, et ces cons débutent une partie de golf
Ils n'obtiendront que des courants d'air en dynamitant nos immeubles
Leurs promesses sont des cartes de fidélités pour des crématoriums
Être vert de colère décuple ma force comme Lou Ferrigno
Bientôt, j'irai prendre des cours de solfège Rue de Solférino
Être binationaux c'est être citoyen grosso modo

Même en grandissant, les petits vélos ne deviennent pas de grosses motos
 Issu du découpage colonial
 Dans cette histoire, personne ne rétro-pédale
 Tu m'offres un mémorial, c'est trop aimable
 Mais la pleurniche de victime c'est pas pour oim'
 Les coupures de presse ça cicatrise mal
 Y a que les petites annonces de vraies dans ton journal
 Je suis ni l'ami noir, ni l'ami arabe
 Va voir Lydia Guirous ou Sophia Aram
 Pas de signes de gang avec les doigts
 J'me fais des crampes au majeur que pour l'État
 Si t'exhibes ta gue-dro et tes armes
 C'est que tu fais du rap de déclarant en douane
 Moi j'écris des trucs qui ne se disent pas
 Heureusement que ma main droite ne les lit pas
 Je te le répète, fuck Le Point, fuck Marianne
 Chez nous, leurs éditos servent de litière au chat
 Tous ces cons vont s'éteindre, sans avoir été des Lumières
 Leur demander ce qu'ils pensent de nous c'est demander aux chiens ce qu'ils pensent des
 réverbères
 Ils font des lois pour les enfreindre, leurs sourires sont publicitaires
 Pour ces ordures, le tri sélectif des déchets, ça commence aux frontières
 Le game tombe en ruine
 Je l'escalade comme les châteaux d'Uncharted
 Rappeurs et journalistes se croient dans la jungle comme El Chapo et Sean Penn
 Je leur mets la gueule en chantier, y aura pas d'Akhi, enchanté
 Le cygne chante avant de mourir, toi tu ferais mieux de mourir avant de chanter
 Boum, tchak, les médias m'haïssent
 Pas un endroit de mon corps sans cicatrices
 Sais-tu ce qu'on dit du côté de la Jamaïque :
 Toutes les larmes de l'Afrique font pas pousser le maïs
 Records Din, nouveau mode de vie
 On ne dit pas des gitans qu'ils font du camping
 Mon équipe arrive par la voie des grandes lignes

Dans les bacs d'OGM on est le ver dans le fruit

Indépendants, grandiloquents

Dans moins d'un an, on réédite les Dix Commandements

Le game je réinvente, je vais marquer mon temps

Même si je vends qu'un album comme le clan du Wu-Tang

C'est le nouveau son, grand

Mon nouveau slogan, celui qui dit : « ni rire ni pleurer mais comprendre »

C'est pas du Sagan, soit dit en passant

Je deviendrai peut-être consultant chez Culture France

C'est la force de la culture face à la culture de la force (x4)

Rappeur 2 force (x3)

Tout est une question de rappeur 2 force

10. Les pleurs du mal, Dinos

Jules...

On s'déteste et on s'aime, de façon calamiteuse

Car chez nous le ciel est terne comme...

(Laisse tourner un peu le son)

On déteste et on s'aime, de façon calamiteuse

Car chez nous le ciel est terne comme une station de la ligne 2

Ils comprennent pas nos vies parce qu'ils savent pas c'qu'on a vécu

On pourrait faire de faux sourires mais même ça on y arrive plus

Dis aux racistes qu'on les baise

Dis à l'huissier qu'on bougera pas

Qu'il retourne se branler sur des catalogues Conforama

J'ai qu'une équipe c'est ma famille, j'm'en bas les couilles de c'que l'on dit

J'suis venu au monde sans label, sans éditeur, sans maison de disques

Rien dans l'porte monnaie, on avait tout dans l'cœur

Papa est un homme honnête, Maman est un hustler

Tu sais là d'où j viens, les voix s'élèvent et l'enseignement s'achève une fois qu'l'élève dépasse
le mètre 80

En fait, la vie nous a frappée en pleine figure si bien qu'de fil en aiguille on fini avec des
points d'suture

On priera l'ciel, espérant qu'un miracle vienne

Les hyènes ressentent la tumeur et moi j'suis d'humeur irakienne

J'attends plus rien de personne, c'est pas les beaux discours qui réchauffent quand je frissonne

Si ma pensée profonde avait un intitulé, ça serait :

Qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer

J'attends plus rien de personne, c'est pas les beaux discours qui réchauffent quand je frissonne

Si ma pensée profonde avait un intitulé, ça serait :

Qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer

Y'a pas d'loi dans ma ville

Ils disent que nous sommes fait à l'image de leur Dieu

Bien sûr y'a pas d'noir dans la Bible
 Mais y'a des violeurs à l'Eglise, dis comme ça ça paraît fou
 Mais bon vu qu'ils ont pas d'barbes, j'crois qu'tout l'monde s'en bas les couilles
 À la base on était rois, avec de l'or en guise d'habits
 Ils sont venus nous piller, tout ça au nom du Christianisme
 Nos croyances sont pas les nôtres, elles sont justes esclavagistes
 Croix d'bois, croix d'fer, c'est pas pour autant qu'j'irais au paradis
 Débarqués en France, pensant reprendre notre argent
 Mais on a fait tout l'inverse, on leur en donne bien plus qu'avant
 On aurait pu rester au bled, et puis reconstruire l'Afrique mais on est dus-per au nom du fric et
 surtout pas du Saint-Esprit
 Souvent dans l'rouge, on traverse les saisons pourpres
 400 ans d'cicatrices, mémoire dans la peau comme Jason Bourne
 J'bosse pour mon peuple, j'm'efforce d'leur ouvrir les yeux
 Mais tu sais comment sont les nègres entre eux

 Alors j'n'attends plus rien de personne, c'est pas les beaux discours qui réchauffent quand je
 frissonne
 Si ma pensée profonde avait un intitulé, ça serait :
 Qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer
 J'attends plus rien de personne, c'est pas les beaux discours qui réchauffent quand je frissonne
 Si ma pensée profonde avait un intitulé, ça serait :
 Qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer

 On vole, on saigne car chez nous y'a pas d'violence saine
 Désaccordés parce qu'on sait pas jouer du piano...
 Ou même du violoncelle
 On a que notre art de rue comme Luciano
 On s' imagine le pire
 Quand on voit passer le Scénic
 On s'fait du mauvais sang comme si on était leucémiques
 On cherche un job à plein temps, mais on en trouve que dans la rue
 Car les agences nous comprennent pas et Busta Flex ne répond plus
 Que les frères finissent pétés, en chien et endettés

21 joints par jour comme si c'était le solstice d'été
Le daron pensait que j'deviendrais pas vieux avant l'temps
La daronne pensait que j'deviendrais Baveux à 20 ans
Capitol, Sony ou Def Jam
Comprenez mon style n'est pas leur esclave
Du pez et du pez, content que ma rime te plaise
J'suis obscur, j'dors que d'un œil comme Jean-Marie Le Pen
On n'fait qu'rappeler nos carences, nos peines et nos malchances
Qui veut la guerre prépare une avance, qui veut la paix prépare un No man's land

Alors j'n'attends plus rien de personne, c'est pas les beaux discours qui réchauffent quand je
frissonne

Si ma pensée profonde avait un intitulé, ça serait :
Qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer
J'attends plus rien de personne, c'est pas les beaux discours qui réchauffent quand je frissonne
Si ma pensée profonde avait un intitulé, ça serait :
Qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer

Ouais, qu'ils aillent tous se faire enculer...
Jules...
J'éclaire ma ville
Et moi, je voudrais dire, si vous le permettez
Que la France, il faut que la France et son gouvernement sachent que : la France elle même
n'intéresse plus les gens pour chercher des visas pour venir ici
Arrêtez d'utiliser l'immigration comme un timbre pour vous faire élire ou pour rester au
pouvoir