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The Role of Racial Minority Teachers in Anti-racist Education

ABSTRACT/RESUME

The role of teachers in combating racism is an important one. The article examines the role(s) which racial minority teachers play in anti-racist education. A review of the recent literature shows that significant benefits have been attributed to racial minority teachers in teaching racially diverse students. No in-depth studies have been conducted on the participation, status and role of the racial minority teacher within the context of the anti-racist education policy framework. However, the Toronto Board of Education has done the most to promote, research and evaluate the issue. The paper concludes with a discussion of why anti-racist education, and more equitable representation of minority teachers, has been difficult to achieve, and what additional research is required.

L'implication des enseignantes et enseignants dans la lutte contre le racisme en est une de grand importance. Cette communication a pour but d'examiner le rôle ou rôles que jouent les enseignantes et enseignants de minorités raciales dans l'éducation antiraciste. Une revue de la recherche académique nous démontre comment les enseignantes et enseignants de minorités raciales peuvent avoir une influence positive sur une population étudiante de plus en plus diverse au niveau raciale. Aucune étude complète n'a été faite sur la participation, le statut et le rôle de l'enseignant provenant de minorités raciales dans le contexte du cadre politique de l'éducation antiraciste. Toutefois, le Conseil scolaire de Toronto a peut-être fait le plus à l'égard de faire de la recherche et évaluer ce phénomène. Cette communication se termine avec une discussion sur la difficulté à mettre en œuvre l'éducation antiraciste et aussi d'augmenter l'effectif des enseignantes et enseignants de minorités raciales en plus d'identifier des pistes de recherche.

INTRODUCTION

The need for anti-racist education in Canada is growing. Dramatic demographic shifts in the past two decades (Badet, 1994), accompanied by a public policy focus on equitable rights (Abella, 1984; Lewis, 1992; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (MET), 1993a), have placed educators and teaching institutions under significant pressure to combat racism. Lyons and Farrell (1994) identified the general aspects of anti-racist curriculum, which is superseding the earlier emphasis on multicultural education. Anti-racist education is concerned with making explicit power relations, institutional culture, the social construction of race and the overlapping forms of oppression which marginalize some groups and individuals (Thomas, 1984; Lee, 1985; Walcott, 1994; Dei 1993a, 1994). In contrast, multicultural education aims to create a greater degree of tolerance, sensitize students

about other cultures, and focus on the similarities among groups through positive representations of the diverse elements of society (Magsino, 1989; Young, 1990).

The literature (Baker, 1983; Irvine, 1989; D'Amato, 1993) points to advantages from increased racial minority teacher representation, and some recently developed anti-racist education policies emphasize the importance of the racial minority teacher (Toronto Board of Education, 1975, 1979, 1984; Ontario MET, 1993a, 1993b). At the same time, the role and impact on educational outcomes of racial minority teachers remains unclear. In any case, the need for racial minority teacher representation has been most often framed around (employment) equity considerations rather than educational effectiveness.

The first part of the paper reviews the recent literature about the role of teachers, especially racial minority ones, in education. Based on these arguments, the article summarizes the value that has been attributed to racial minority teachers in the learning process. The second part of the article examines how the Toronto Board of Education has attempted to implement anti-racist education, particularly with regard to the representation of racial minority teachers. By linking together theoretical discussions of the role of the teacher with current educational policy, the paper provides insight into the broader institutional framework which underpins the issue. The conclusion of the article discusses how education decision-makers deal with the issue of anti-racist education policies, and what additional research is required in this field.

FROM MULTICULTURAL TO ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

A criticism of multicultural education, especially in the Canadian context, is that teachers are not considered to be "change agents", but rather facilitators in a teacher-student dynamic. In contrast, in anti-racist education, teachers are expected to instill critical thinking skills and openly discuss tensions and contradictions in society as well as validate the needs, concerns and experiences of students, whatever their background. Magsino (1989), Young (1990), Goldman (1993) and Martin (1994) have questioned the idealism of multicultural education and whether it is a viable concept in a complex society.

Lee (1985:8-9) emphasizes that anti-racist education starts with the view that racism is part of the daily, institutional and school reality. Anti-racist education links together various sources of oppression, including gender, class and sexual orientation, in addition to racial origin.' Dei (1993a) has developed a theoretical framework for anti-racist education which focuses on "power relations in the school and society, recognizes the importance of personal experience and lived realities as a source of knowledge, and explores the perspectives of different social groups in society" (p.36). All groups and individuals must be allotted "space" and be given a "voice" in the education system in order to start the movement toward the elimination of systemic barriers (Dei, 1993a:47).

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Throughout the literature on anti-racist education, the role of the teacher is emphasized as critical in connecting students, especially those from a racial minority, to the school culture, the administration and the curriculum (Delpit, 1988). Ogbu (1978) was among the first to attempt to show how educational institutions fail in

"connecting" with minority students. In his book, *Minority Education and Caste: the American System in Cross-cultural Perspective* (1978), he argues that structural inequities (i.e., racial stratification) rather than psychological deficiencies are responsible for the imbalance in American society. An opposing viewpoint is offered by Herrnstein and Murray (1994) and Rushton (1994), who directly link race with educational outcomes.

Researchers have proposed that six roles exist for teachers in anti-racist education. These are: 1) cultural compatibility; 2) de-mystifying the hidden curriculum; 3) development of attitudes; 4) expressing lived experiences; 5) "connecting" with students; and 6) "connecting" with communities.

1. Cultural Compatibility

D'Amato (1993) found similar outcomes to those of Ogbu, and postulates that "cultural compatibility between teachers' and children's ways of doing things is essential, but less for cognitive than for political reasons" (p. 204). In a U.S. study of student teachers' perspectives of a diverse group of elementary children, New and Sleeter (1993) found that:

White boys were perceived as most teachable, unless they behaved inappropriately and appeared to be from low-income homes... Asian American children were also valorized as model children. Latino children tended to be invisible, in that the [student teachers'] who observed them had relatively little to say about them (p.12).

The study concluded that teachers focus on children's non-academic behaviour, rather than their academic work, and clearly express preferences for certain types of behaviour.

Hilliard (1989:68-9) has suggested that when teachers misunderstand the behavioural style of students, the results can be four-fold. Such misunderstandings lead educators to: 1) make mistakes in estimating a student's or a cultural group's intellectual potential; 2) misread achievement in academic subjects such as creative expression; 3) misjudge students' language abilities; 4) have difficulty establishing rapport and communication. As a result of such misconceptions student achievement is negatively affected.

2. De-mystifying the Hidden Curriculum

Irvine (1989) identifies the "hidden curriculum" as a key determinant in the teaching process. She characterizes this curriculum as "the unstated but influential knowledge, attitudes, norms, rules, rituals, values, and beliefs that are transmitted to students through" the organizational management and social relationships of schools (Irvine, 1989:5). The "hidden curriculum":

...teaches the majority of black and low-income children obedience and deference to authority, docility, subordination, extrinsic motivation, external control, dependence, and fatalism (Irvine, 1989:5).

As a result, the curriculum reinforces and reproduces structural inequities which exist in society.

3. Development of Attitudes

Baker (1983) has analyzed how students develop attitudes towards racial differences in the classroom and society. She characterizes the role of the teacher as the:

individual who determines how and when students begin to explore the pressures in society that encourage racist and sexist attitudes. The attitude of the teacher is crucial in helping students develop attitudes that will prepare them for a harmonious existence in a society that is culturally diverse (p. 43).

The Scarborough Board of Education (1991) noted in a review of the research that:

...there is a strong relationship between a child's perceptions of teachers' racial attitudes and the child's perception of her or his own value. It is therefore important for teachers to examine their racial attitudes and identify and be aware of those attitudes, which, while not intentionally discriminatory, have a discriminatory effect. It is also essential that teachers be sensitive and aware of differing interpretations that children from diverse cultures hold (p.1).

Ijaz and Ijaz (1981), Moodley (1985) and Henry (1992) have also emphasized the role teachers play in modifying, and in some cases changing, attitudes and perceptions related to racial identity in students. These researchers are aware of the dangers of allowing educators who may have little understanding of the issues, or may not demonstrate a whole-hearted commitment, to attempt this type of attitudinal transformation.

4. Expressing Lived Experiences

Thomas (1984) postulates the role of the teacher is to do more than just provide information, but rather to be involved in the classroom by providing students with the ability to express their own "lived experiences". According to Thomas, teachers must engage those students in the majority group to recognize and fight against racism. She also suggests that teachers develop collective strategies in the form of "political education", such as developing networks, presenting and using alternative pedagogical and curriculum frameworks.

Dei (1994) argues that the underachievement of Blacks is in part "grounded in the institutionalized policies and practices of exclusion and marginalization that organize public schooling" (p. 18). He also has outlined several of the symptoms and conditions of this phenomenon: i.e., Black youth do not feel connected to the system, they do not feel that their experiences are considered relevant, either within the official or hidden curriculum, and they are very leery of the "classroom pedagogy of many teachers" (Dei, 1993b:19).

5. "Connecting" with the Students

Where race is concerned, the disregard for a student's culture, and thus, his/her potential for achievement, may lead the student to question his/her own ability. One recent Canadian study concluded that:

...there is a strong relationship between a child's perceptions of teachers' racial attitudes and the child's perception of her or his own value. It is

therefore important for teachers to examine their racial attitudes and identify and be aware of those attitudes, which, while not intentionally discriminatory, have a discriminatory effect (Scarborough Board of Education, 1991:1).

A study in Ontario found that many Black students feel a lack of connectedness with their schools and the education system (Dei, 1994). Racial minority teachers can create the necessary connectedness because they, like racial minority students, may have the same cognitive orientation and experience (Kailin, 1994).

6. "Connecting" with Communities

As the role of the teacher has evolved over the past twenty years (Fullan and Connelly, 1987; Ontario Ministry of Education, 1988; Ontario IECO, 1992; Thiessen et al., 1992), so has the need for teachers to be connected with the community in which they teach, and to the parents of students. One U.S. study reveals that, regardless of ethnicity or minority status, all parents are concerned about the education of their children (Chavkin, 1989). However, "minority parents reported that they were intimidated by the staff and institutional structure of the schools and that often they felt awkward about approaching school personnel, particularly if they had previous negative contacts with the schools" (Chavkin, 1989:120). Moreover, this same study noted that the benefits to improved parent-teacher relations are numerous, including "increased student attendance, positive parent-child communication, improved student attitudes and behaviour, and more parent-community support of the school" (Chavkin, 1989:119). Bempechat (1992) puts the issue in clear terms:

Achievement is optimal when principals, teachers, parents, and community members share a common vision of the school's mission: to foster high achievement, to maintain discipline and order, and to respect one another's needs (p.44).

Without a common vision students will not reach their potential.

THE APPLIED CONTEXT

We now examine how school boards have begun to address the issue of anti-racist education. The discussion is focused on the Toronto Board of Education (TBE) because of its large size, the racial composition of the city, and the general acknowledgement of its leadership in this field. The demographic situation in Toronto has created a marked imbalance between the representation of racial minorities at the secondary teaching level (10%) and students in the classroom (45%).²

Policies Focusing on the Toronto Board of Education

Prominent in the TBE's assessment of creating a more equitable, multicultural and anti-racist education system has been the policy that the "community" be reflected in the classroom at the teaching level. As early as 1975 in *The Bias of Culture: An Issue Paper on Multiculturalism*, the TBE recognized the importance of the racial minority teacher.

In 1979 the TBE's *Final Report of the Sub-Committee on Race Relations* specifically recommended that there should be an increase in the number of visible/ethnic minorities entering the teaching profession and that "potential teacher-trainees should not be deterred from pursuing a teaching career because of accent, intonation and phrasing" (p. 10).

However, a 1982 TBE report underscored the stark reality for racial minorities in one of the country's most progressive school boards noted that:

... there were 8,404 people working for the Toronto Board, of whom 665, or about eight per cent, were non-whites. This is extremely low considering that Toronto has a population of about 25 per cent non-whites. There were three black principals, but no Asians, Southeast Asians, or Native Indians at the principal level. Of the 36 highest positions at the Board..., there was only one black and no Asians — and incidently, just four women (as cited in Lampkin, 1985:677).

In 1984, the *Report on the Race Relations Program: Phase II* identified the primary target areas for reform including the curriculum, the practice of teachers, principals and the management of schools, assessment and placement, and administration. This report was the first of its kind in Canadian schools, and clearly demonstrated the interest on the part of the Toronto Board in going beyond the problem-definition stage.

The 1987 report on *Representation of Visible/Racial Minorities in the Toronto Board of Education Work Force* indicated that little had changed. In 1987, there were only 2 (6%) visible minority principals, 6 (11%) vice-principals and 214 (9.2%) teachers at the secondary level (Chong, 1987b:21;27). Both the elementary and secondary levels had registered only minor improvement over the period 1981-1987. External observers, such as Lewis (1992) have also noted the discrepancy in teacher representation. In his report on race relations for the provincial government he asked:

Where are the visible minority teachers? Why are there so few role models? Why do our white guidance counsellors know so little of different cultural backgrounds? (Lewis, 1992:20-21).

Barriers to entry into, and limited promotion in, the teaching profession were highlighted in the early years of the Board's research on equity matters (Tsuji, 1986; Cheng, 1987a). In 1992 the TBE undertook A *Survey of 1989-1990 Teaching Job Applicants*, which provided the first indepth glimpse into the recruitment and application side of the employment equation. The report revealed two findings. The first is that there is a significant pool of racial minorities applying to the Board for teaching positions:

The study estimates that 11% of the applicants for elementary teaching positions were members of racial minorities. A quarter (26%) of those who sought secondary teaching positions were non-white. The size of the racial minority job applicant pool for the secondary panel seems to resemble the city's composition (20%) more than that of the elementary panel.... The largest non-white ethnic groups in both panels were East Indian, Chinese, and Caribbean (Cheng et al., 1992:1).

The second finding is the low success rate of racial minority applicants:

In both (panels), the overall success rate of white applicants was around

twice that of non-whites: 31% of whites vs 16% of non-whites in the elementary panel: 21% of whites vs 9% of non-whites in the secondary panel... in both the elementary and secondary panels, whites consistently experienced higher success rates than non-whites, regardless of the type of academic attainment, type of teaching qualifications, length of teaching experience, and country of training and experience (Cheng et al., 1992:1).

The report identified that teacher hiring favoured White females first, who had a higher than average chance of success. White males had an average chance of success. At the bottom were non-White females, who had a substantially less-than-average chance, followed by non-White males, who had the least chance of success.

The Broader Institutional Context

Recent Ontario employment equity legislation, along with provincial educational policies' require school boards to alter not only their human resources policies, but also their approach to education. The assumptions of provincial policy speak to the need to achieve equity, without focusing in any explicit way, on the educational outcomes of the students.

Notwithstanding government legislation to alter the behaviour of school boards, there will be little change unless teacher training and recruitment are altered. One part of the explanation for the imbalance in minority teachers and students is teacher training (Can, 1995). The racial composition of Ontario's teaching corps has remained relatively homogeneous. One observer noted that:

Teacher education institutions report that their teacher candidates are overwhelmingly white (upwards of 90 percent) and Anglo-Saxon. About half are in the 21-24 age group and there is relatively little ethnic diversity. (Smith, 1989:31).

However, the faculties of education in Ontario are not representative of the larger community. For example:

There are no visible minorities in any of the 57 academic administrative positions; and men comprise 100 per cent of the deans, one of the two directors' positions, 86.7 per cent of the senior ranks of deans and associate deans combined, 100 per cent of graduate directors and 84.2 per cent of the chairs of departments and programs (Smith, 1992:90).

Smith (1992:23) found that only 12 of the 513 professors working in faculties of education in Ontario were racial minorities, in addition to six faculty members of aboriginal origin. The study also indicated that there were no faculty of East Indian or Chinese origin.

Some studies (Cheng 1987a, 1987b, 1987c; Cumming et al., 1989) have shown that discriminatory barriers and racism are built into hiring at educational institutions. Beyon, Toohey and Kishor (1992) found that racial minorities (Chinese and South-Asian Canadians) were well represented in some fields in universities as a whole in British Columbia, but due to a number of factors had a relatively low student representation in the faculties of education, which raises questions about barriers and perceptions related to the teaching profession.

Despite this under-representation of racial minority teachers it should be noted that the Toronto Board of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training have put in place a number of initiatives aimed at improving the situation. These include primarily working with the province's faculties of education to improve outreach and selection (Ontario, Ministry of Education and Training, 1993c).

The Flemington School Case Study

One example where teacher race has arguably made a significant difference in student outcomes, parental involvement, teacher retention, and anti-racist curriculum is the Flemington (elementary) School in the North York Board of Education, located in an area with a highly diverse population in the Metropolitan Toronto region. Having identified the Flemington School as one which faced many educational and social challenges, the board officially designated it as an "anti-racist school" (Tator and Henry, 1991; Simons, 1991). The school is comprised largely (60-70%) of Black students, half of whom are of Jamaican heritage, with the remaining number representing a range of other ethnic groups. This new vision or approach enabled the school to re-create itself, emphasizing strengths and focusing on key areas of concern. Of particular importance were changes in teacher recruitment, such that the:

...criteria for hiring focus on people who understand the issues of anti-racism and... who are willing to make a strong commitment to the school's goals.... A related aim in teacher recruitment is to promote equity on the staff. When a vacancy occurs, the principal uses the board personnel files to find staff who are both qualified and suitable for the position but who also reflect the varied backgrounds of the Flemington community (Simons, 1991:9).

The changes in the composition of staff, including a new Black principal, combined with initiatives such as a strong parent/community program and special programs for students at-risk (especially Black males) increased the academic achievement of students (Simons, 1991).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The central theme of this article is that there are significant benefits for students, and for the education system at-large, attributed to a diverse, representative teaching corps. Although most observers and researchers agree with this, some do not. The argument has been made that teachers are:

...unauthentic agents of cultural transmission. Expecting teachers to communicate cultural content from highly complex cultures, without reifying, fragmenting and trivializing them to the ridiculous is not unproblematic. (Moodley, 1985:16).

Given the limited research on the subject of racial minority teachers within the context of anti-racist education, there remain significant gaps in the literature.

There are three sets of questions which require additional research. First, is the race of the teacher more important to students from some racial groups than others? This is a key question since achievement levels for some racial minority groups are

comparatively high. Little research has been undertaken on questions such as: How are the relatively high educational outcomes for students of Chinese origin correlated with social class, the profession of the parents of these students, their historical experience in Canada, etc.? Do the easily quantifiable outcomes (i.e., drop-out and graduation rates) indicate progress in students' level of self-esteem, comprehension and attitudes about racism and power relations? Do changes in outcomes for a particular racial group indicate that all members are progressing at a similar level?

A second set of questions pertains to the role of White teachers in anti-racist education. How does the assessment of White teachers of their own status and privilege contribute to the over-arching vision which underpins the educational culture for students? Are their efforts in promoting anti-racist education diminished or negated because of their race? What recognition is given to the fact that White teachers in general are permitted a larger 'marge de manoeuvre' than racial minority teachers?

A third set of questions for further research is, given that the literature often refers to racial or visible minorities as if they formed one homogeneous block, what could be learned about teacher race that may assist in the implementation of equity policies? What is needed is a more complete, richer understanding of why and how some groups are marginalized, and more importantly, how institutions can develop and implement policies, programs and curriculum which will be readily adopted and used.

Research on anti-racist issues is hindered by methodological problems, such as the unwillingness of educational institutions to collect data by race. Even when data have been collected there is the difficulty of drawing causal conclusions in a system where many variables may be of relevance. Not only is the collection of data contentious, but so are the ways the data are analyzed and subsequently used.

One conclusion from the applied review is that although (some) schools and boards in Ontario have begun to recognize the importance of anti-racist education and the role of racial minority teachers, there has been little change in the representation of racial minority teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, there appears to have been only a marginal shift in the overall institutional cultures of educational organizations required to address issues related to racial diversity. What explains the situation?

A study for the TBE identified several factors which had slowed or perturbed the implementation of the Board's race relations policy, including a "lack of monitoring, evaluation and accountability by senior board staff" (Tator and Henry, 1991:75-6). Also cited was the over-bureaucratization of the education system, lack of support from senior levels of the administration, and the low status of the people charged with implementing the policies (Tator and Henry, 1991:88). Specifically related to the under-representation of minority teachers, the recruitment practices of boards and the pool of eligible teacher college graduates has also been a major factor. As a result, policy statements do not match the reality in the classroom. In other words, the (good) intentions appear to be there, but change has been very slow,

Our conclusion is not altogether bleak in that, while difficult to measure, progress has been made on some aspects of anti-racist education. First, strides have been made in identifying and eliminating racist, as well as sexist, references in the curriculum.

Second, formal policies, some conceived in response to community demands and others as a result of state intervention, are now evident in the educational system. Third, isolated success stories, such as the Remington school, can be identified. Fourth, the role of the racial minority teacher has begun to be recognized as important over the past two decades in research and policy documents.

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NOTES

1. Dei (1994) uses the term "integrative anti-racism" and has argued that anti-racist education must recognize the "interlocking systems of oppression", while, at the same time, acknowledging the "privilege" of those teaching anti-racist education.
2. The findings of the 1991 TBE Every Secondary Student Survey (Brown et al., 1992) illustrate demographic changes which have taken place in Toronto. The proportion of students whose mother tongue is not English has increased from 33% to 45% since 1987, with the largest increases being Chinese (14%), Portuguese (7%), Vietnamese (5%). In 1991 just over half (54%) of the Toronto secondary students were White, and about one third (30%) were Asian. Slightly over half (57%) of the students were born in Canada, while nearly a quarter were born in Asia. More than half (57%) of foreign-born students have arrived here only since 1987, which represents 25% of the population of Toronto's secondary schools; a high proportion of students from Africa, the Middle East and Central America have been here only four or fewer years. Data from the Board (TBE, 1993) indicate similar trends for the elementary panel.
3. The Ontario government released a policy document in 1993, *Changing Perspectives: A Resource Guide for Antiracist and Ethnocultural-Equity Education* (Ontario, Ministry of Education and Training, 1993b), which charges boards with the responsibility of developing and implementing anti-racist education policies and practices starting in 1995. To facilitate and ensure compliance with this policy the government also released a companion document for school boards entitled *Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation* (Ontario, Ministry of Education and Training, 1993a).

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ETHNIC VOICE/VOIX ETHNIQUE

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La musique des andes à Montreal

ABSTRACT/RESUME

Cet article, fonde sur une enquete menee en 1992, entend examiner les traits les plus caracteristiques de groupes et de musiciens sud-americaains representatifs de la musique des Andes à Montreal. La presentation de ces musiciens, de leur repertoire et de leurs conceptions musicales sera precedee d'un rapide historique qui permettra de situer la musique des Andes clans ses origines et son evolution. En confrontant les conduites musicales et les strategies identitaires des groupes et des musiciens avec la culture autochtone, nous nous efforcerons de confirmer notre hypothese de depart. Elle pose en principe que cc sons ses racines autochtones qui louden', en Amricque du Sud comme à Montreal, l'originalite de la musique des Andes.

Based on a study that was conducted in 1992, the present article will examine the most typical features common to South American groups and musicians characteristic of the music of the Andes in Montreal. A presentation of the musicians, their repertoire, and musical creations will be preceded by a brief historical outline situating the music of the Andes in terms of its origins and evolution. By comparing the musical orientations and ethnic strategies of groups and musicians with the aboriginal culture, I will endeavor to confirm the initial hypothesis. which postulates that the originality of Andean music, whether in South America or Montreal, stems from its aboriginal roots.

Introduction

La musique sud-americaine est largement pratiquée à Montreal. Ce phenomene -onstitue l'une des consequences heureuses de l'arrivee regulicre des emigrants¹ depuis ces dernieres annees et, comme il entraine avec lui de nombreuses manifestations interessantes, il nous a paru utile d'en souligner lcs principales caracteristiques. Devant t'ampleur de ces manifestations, - ii nous a fallu toutefois quelque peu limiter notre tir. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'analyse qui suit se hornera à l'e-tude de la musique des Andes de trois pays: le Perou, le Chili et la Bolivie.³

Cette etude s'appuie sur In reneontre et l'observation (à l'aide d'entrevues, d'e-coutes et de realisations de documents audiovisuels) de cinq groupes et de trois musiciens juges, en raison du volume et de la qualite de leur repertoire sans doute, mais aussi de l'audience dont ils disposent clans la communautc d'origine sud-americaine comme clans les milieux infamies (le nomhre de concerts publics constituant

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