From Shadow to Streets: The Rise of Chinese Cultural Visibility in Auckland

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- *"We are **invisible** here, you know, in election or national event? We don't make our voice … I want to do something the society recognise us. Maybe express our opinions or participating in events in a name of Korean people."* From a Korean immigrant research participant, (Kim, 2021)

The context of Moon Festival

- It is led by Chinese community for the celebration of Mid-Autumn festival, our traditional cultural heritage.
- It is driven by **bottom-up initiatives**, reflecting the spirit of community development (Ife, 2016) .
- It is It began to emerge only **recently**, around 2020.
- It has **significant influence**, with a rough estimated over 10,000 local interpersonal interactions daily.
- It is **innovative** way of **outdoors** festival celebration comparing to the traditional festival **"close-door"** events of NZ Chinese community
- Our **research object** is to gain the insights of the initiative

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The concept of Visibility from social work perspective

- In her studies towards the history of black actress 1900-1960 in U.S., Regester (2010) relates the concept of **Visibility** to the racial politics of American Africans. American African actresses were **Othering** and could only act as **Shadow** of white actresses. They were invisible because the dominant refused to see them. **Invisibility** is seen as a sign and outcome of **social exclusion**.

- In his review of the history of early Asian immigrants to NZ, Todd(2015) links the **invisibility** of Asian migrants in the narrative to the historical **discrimination**.

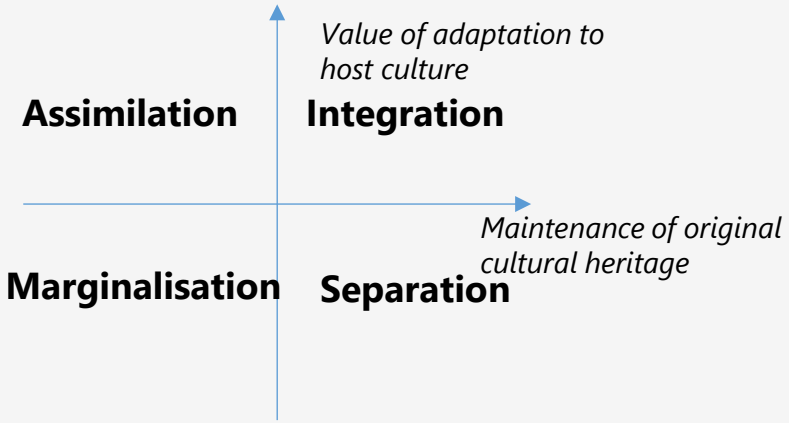
- While the **Visibility** of marginalised groups may be seen as recognition or acceptance from the dominant groups, it can be seen as social control and surveillance from a Foucauldian approach. **Hypervisibility** can lead to **stigmatisation** of the marginalised group. Sözer(2014) argues that we should shift our focus from the status of **Visibility/Invisibility** to who defines and controls the **Visibility**. The true **empowerment** to the vulnerable community is to let them decide "*whether or not and to what extent, when and how, a community is willing to reveal or conceal information about itself*."

- While NZ social context allows free expressions of disagreement with the government policies, the leadership of Muslim community restrains themselves from over exposing islamic unhappiness, to avoid to induce the antipathy from wider society (Kolig,2009). This echoes to Liu (2020)'s findings in her quantitative research that the NZ Muslim affiliated migrants have relatively strong willingness to protest but not reflect on their actual behaviours. The framework of **Visibility** can be helpful to understand Muslim community.

Immigrants' visibility & Integration

- Kim (2021) suggested that immigrants' needs to be **visible** in NZ society comes from their aspiration to be recognised as a "full" member of this society. He referred to this journey of **seeking membership** as "Knocking the door to integrate", with strategies of *"utilising past knowledge"* and *"extending the safe zone into local communities"*.

- Berry(1997) proposed a very influential two dimensions' acculturation model, where immigrants' **integration** is defined as they holding positive attitude of adaptation to the host culture, while confidently maintaining their original cultural heritage.



- Choy et al., (2021)'s systematic review concluded that migrants falling into "Integration " category of Berry's acculturation model have most positive mental health outcomes, while on contrast "Marginalisation" indicates the highest risk.

- Joseph (2017) regarded **Societal** level as the highest level of Integration over **Community, Economic and Legal,** featured with **Inter-ethnic network.**

Methodology – mixed qualitative methods

- Our **research object** is to gain the insights of the community initiative

- While I was trained in quantitative research in psychology, I am recognising the trends of acknowledging the underestimated qualitative research methodology. APA has invited experienced researchers to publish *Essentials of Qualitative Methods book series* to teach qualitative research method since 2021. A recent review(sees self-report (Corneille & Gawronski, 2024) as a better measurement than implicit measures.

- Inspired by my collegues Helen (2024) and Flora (2021)'s research, I see the value of **Autoethnography** in our field of social work, with its significant emphasis on personal reflection.

- **Collaborative- Autoethnography** fits our position in this research well, as first-generation migrants, cultural insider, key participants/organisers in the Moon Festival with academic background. I am very cautious of the limitation of Autoethnography from personal bias while it is inevitable. I hope the collaborative component can help with managing this limitation.

- **Focus group** is also going to apply to data collection to get the insights from other event participants and organisers, with the approach of **Phenomenological Methodology** aiming at making sense of people's **lived experience (**Creswell & Poth, 2018**)**. We plan for **3 groups** with **5-6 participants** each (Hennink et al., 2019). We hope listening to other people's and compare to our narrative can also dig some meaningful findings while manage the limitation of Autoethnography.

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