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Creating a Diasporic Archaeology of Chinese Migration: Tentative Steps Across Four Continents

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Abstract This article calls for a specific form of comparative inquiry within historical archaeology as drawn from diaspora studies. Such a project encourages archaeologists to compare research from emigrant areas alongside work at overseas sites. This diasporic approach provides new potentials for engaging with the modern world by intersecting with both traditional and new aspects of archaeological practice. In order to showcase these aspects of a diasporic approach, the author explores three case studies from Montana, Peru, and New Zealand – connecting each to its related home area. The case studies explore how data drawn from a group's homeland can support established heritage practices, engage with modern social problems, and illuminate complexities arising within sites based on ethnolinguistic differences within populations.

Keywords Chinese migration · Diaspora studies · GIS

Introduction

Historical archaeologists are calling for new paradigms in regards to research on the archaeological signatures of Chinese communities, especially as old paradigms like assimilation/acculturation have fallen aside (Voss 2005). A growing number of historical archaeologists are approaching the archaeology of this group in new ways, including the investigation of feminizing discourses in nineteenth-century California (Williams 2008), challenges to tropic representations of Chinese immigrants as feminine and passive (Baxter 2008), and the use of transnational perspectives (Kraus-Friedberg 2008). This recent trend conceptualizes Chinese migrants as heterogeneous with multifaceted identities across class, gender, and racial axes. Recent archaeological work with Chinese diaspora sites are also seeking ways to

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engage descendant communities. However, few have taken a specifically *diasporic* approach while studying this group. The articulation of a diasporic framework encourages historical archaeologists to create multisited, multiscaled projects exploring how Chinese migrants dealt with situations in diverse host society settings as a heavily racialized minority (Orser 2007, pp. 153–159).

I include three case studies to demonstrate the heterogeneity of the Chinese diaspora itself as well as a continuum of host society settings. They include a cemetery in Montana, a "mummy" unearthed by Peruvian archaeologists, and a long-term settlement in southern New Zealand (Fig. 1). The diasporic aspect of this project comes into play with the addition of emigrant area information. By invoking the terms "diasporic archaeology" I specifically seek to create an archaeological project comparing sites across time and space demonstrating not only the heterogeneity found within the Chinese themselves, but also the affects of such difference within various overseas host society settings as well. This is accomplished with the inclusion of emigrant area data in digital format (available to the reader, see below) and a sensitivity to intersections between the case studies and modern issues.

What is *Diasporic* About the Archaeology of Chinese Communities?

The term diaspora has become increasingly used in the past two decades in relation to the migration of the Chinese people. The development of journals such as *Diaspora: The Journal of Transnational Studies* highlights and complicates the widespread appearance of this term. In this section, I clarify my own position on the meaning of diaspora, its applicability to the Chinese, and the scant use of a diasporic

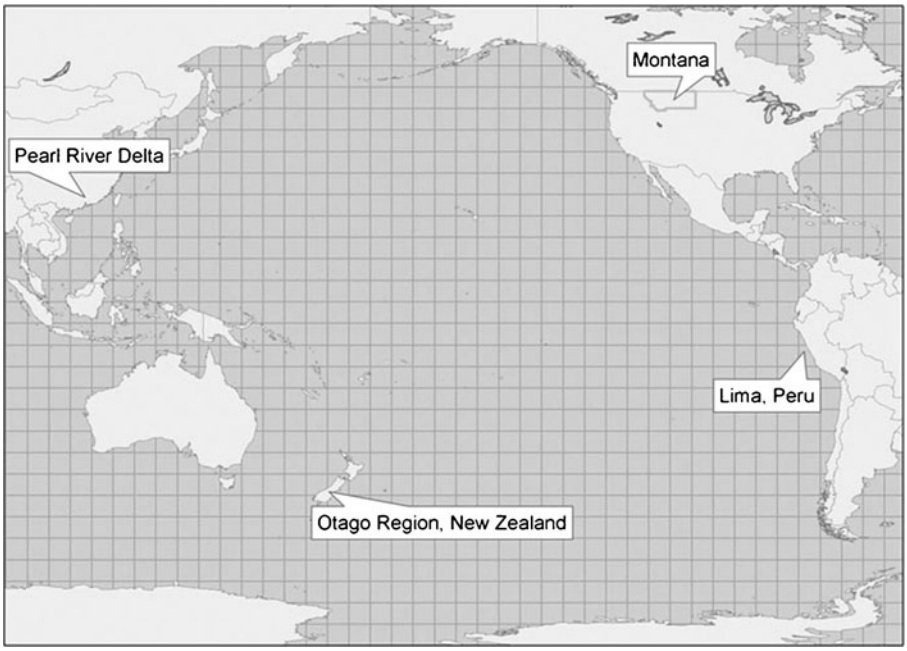

Fig. 1 Areas mentioned in text

framework by other archaeologists. My exploration seeks to address several basic questions: How does a diasporic framework encourage comparative, multi-sited discussions of Chinese communities worldwide? Can the utilization of a diasporic framework help intersect archaeological research about this group with modern problems? What are the benefits to local communities and archaeological practitioners themselves of employing such a framework?

Scholars have gone back and forth on the appropriateness of referring to the Chinese as a diasporic group. One perspective suggests that such conceptualizing is inappropriate because the term homogenizes the Chinese as if they were "bound together by some basically similar feature or set of features, either their ethnicity, their inherited Chinese cultural legacy, or deeply ingrained entrepreneurial skills, or all of these" (Mackie 2003, p. 22). Wang (2003) also discusses the term and fears that it reduces the cultural complexity of the Chinese into a single entity. Further support of this kind against a diasporic framework is echoed by Ronald Skeldon (2003, p. 63) in his view that diaspora "appears to imply some form of uniformity." The fear that diaspora as a concept is unable to handle heterogeneity as expressed by these authors represents a poorly articulated, and under-theorized point of view (Vertovec 1998).

A diasporic framework signals exactly the type of heterogeneity present among the Chinese within China and abroad. Nonini and Ong (1997, p. 18) value this emerging concept over the increasingly outdated "overseas" through their "affirmative view of diaspora as a pattern that marks a common condition of communities, persons, and groups separated by space, an arrangement, moreover, that these persons see themselves as sharing." Instead of creating representations of the Chinese as homogeneous, a diasporic framework emphasizes the situational and complex connections between intra-group difference and the numerous overseas locations. As such, it encourages the incorporation of emigrant area information to produce a "baseline" understanding of intra-group heterogeneity in the homeland prior to migration.

In regard to archaeology, a handful of authors utilize a diasporic framework. Gil Stein (1998) provides an early diasporic framework for archaeology by examining the inherently heterogeneous aspects of prehistoric urban communities. Lilley (2006) uses a diasporic framework to connect the Lapita peoples of the South Pacific across space and time in order to show the utility of the concept in prehistoric circumstances. In a separate piece, he uses it to discuss internally displaced groups such as Australian Aborigines (Lilley 2004). These uses draw upon a diasporic framework to create projects aimed at testing hypotheses. The term "diaspora" itself is not new in historical archaeology and is routinely used by those researching people of African descent, but it was accepted by this group with little to no theorized discussion (Lilley 2006, p. 295).

Following in the footsteps of others who write about diaspora(s), a brief overview of the term's intellectual trajectory demonstrates its complex but manageable heritage. Many are aware of the Greek roots of the word *diaspora* roughly translated as a "scattering of seeds" (Heilbron 1998). The experience of the Jewish groups expelled from their homelands has formed the basis for understanding the term. Initially, naïve uses of diaspora drew on an essentialist discourse which defined the word solely in terms of the violent displacement of the Jewish Diaspora throughout

history, even though this group has exhibited a wide variety of migratory patterns during its long and documented history. Keeping this in mind, researchers "should be able to recognize the strong entailment of Jewish history on the language of diaspora without making that history a definitive model" (Clifford 1994, p. 306). Furthermore, a diasporic archaeology can draw upon Hsu's (1979) reminder that anthropology is inherently comparative and that cross-cultural comparisons are the hallmark of our parent discipline. In this regard, Cohen (1997) has been particularly helpful in establishing a set of criteria in setting the foundation for comparative studies of diasporic experience. Cohen draws on Safran's (1991) earlier work and creates nine criteria for naming and comparing diasporas:

- dispersal from an original homeland, to two or more foreign regions;
- alternatively, expansion from a homeland in search of work, trade or colonialism;
- a collective memory and myth about homeland;
- an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety, and prosperity;
- the development of a return movement;
- strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time;
- troubled relations with host societies, either as a lack of acceptance or possibility of another calamity;
- sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries; and
- the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism.

The Chinese who migrated around the world and their relationships with emigrant areas in South China form a key representative diaspora, one that has lasted for at least a millennium. Ideas about historical forces such as colonialism (Mintz 1986; Wolf 1982) and numerous host society settings (Wong 2006) are seen within these criteria as requiring a macro- and micro-history awareness. These configurations look at imagined communities that move beyond the simple center-periphery relations drawing on ethnic boundaries to a "configuration of cultural forms in today's world as fundamentally fractal; that is, as possessing no Euclidean boundaries" (Appadurai 2003, p. 44). In order to create a diasporic archaeology of Chinese migration we have to understand how each geographic context results in unique experiences drawing on the mixture of emigrant-area traditions reconfigured through contact with various host societies. While such a consideration may not represent a novel realization, Cohen's (1997) criteria proves useful in conceptualizing such differences and then forming research strategies that help us reflexively avoid casting the Chinese diaspora in reductionist terms (i.e., looking for some kind of pan-Chinese uniqueness, relying on outdated theories like assimilation, and so forth).

Identity remains a hallmark of archaeological research into minority communities. Discussions of identity across the social sciences continue to focus on hybridity (Hall 2003) as the central result of complex identity politics. These arise from ongoing social and cultural rearrangements while living within host societies as phenotypically marked communities (Gilroy 2003). A central difficulty of examining diasporic identity is its complexity as each group's "culture cannot be reduced to any national or ethnically based tradition" (Clifford 1994, p. 316). Many authors overtly or implicitly invoke W.E.B. DuBois' (1907, pp. 3–4) concept of "double

consciousness." DuBois formulated this idea to name the daily difficulty of African Americans living during Jim Crow. Those of African descent grapple with the contradiction of being legal American citizens while treated as subhuman due in part to the mobilization of hate by America's white supremacist society beginning in the nineteenth century. It is important to remember that DuBois' discussion of double consciousness spoke to problems still affecting African Americans. Members of the Chinese diaspora were forced to form a double consciousness of their own. The experience of the Chinese abroad was complicated through interactions with host societies, their different emigrant backgrounds, and various legal standings of the Chinese at different times and places. Chinese migrants remained visibly marked by their phenotypic differences while simultaneously navigating complex terrains of citizenship and national discourse. These discourses sought to define who was "fit" to become a citizen, or even spend time within a nation's borders (Molina 2006). Hall (2003) and Gilroy (2003), among others, provide a rich array of possible questions transplantable to archaeological studies of the Chinese diaspora. Hall specifically demonstrates that diaspora studies open "up spaces to think about imagining a community apart from the rhetorics of kinship and the naturalized heterosexism and patriarchy that it perpetuates" (Helmreich 1992, p. 247). This suggests that such a framework is a powerful tool for subjugating dominant national hegemonies, something a handful of archaeologists are increasingly thinking about (McGuire 2008; Silliman 2006, p. 148). The intersection of visible difference and diverse national rhetorics affected how Chinese migrants lived their lives. These effects are often visible archaeologically and through a diasporically driven comparison of sites we can begin to tease out how different national imaginaries affected a heterogeneous Chinese population.

While some of the above case studies address identity, this is not my goal. Dufoix (2008) represents recent thinking on diaspora as he discusses its inability to better describe phenomena, including individual or collective identity. I agree with Dufoix's (2008, p. 107) assertion that the "usefulness of the word rests in its existence as a rallying cry." The motivation here is to create a new comparative project for archaeology. This enthusiasm is similar to those who work within a transnational framework. Transnationalism has become popular in the past ten years as a descriptive device for research into Chinese migration, and a number of authors invoke the term (Chan 2006; Hsu 2000; Ong and Nonini 1997; Thunø 2007). The major similarity all transnational scholars share is tracing the flows of ideas, objects, services, and people. While the term is closely bound to the idea of diaspora, it focuses on describing *flowscapes* originating in (South) China and spreading across the planet, and seems equally insufficient for understanding identity as is diaspora. Furthermore, many theorists consider transnationalism as a kind of alternative modernity (Nonini and Ong 1997). Therefore, if historical archaeologists are going to employ a transnational framework to understand identity, they have to demonstrate how it predates the recent past. In order to do so, many cite historic transnational media as one example demonstrating transnationalism's pre-modern roots (Benton 2003; Smith 2001). It is precisely with arguments like this that historical archaeologists have begun utilizing this framework (Baxter 2008; Kraus-Friedberg 2008). I consider the transnational approach as one methodological tool in a broader diasporic framework. While diasporic projects initially involve the

description of transnational flows of people and ideas, it transforms into a study of diasporic experience by looking at the ways in which individuals adapt to different social environments at different times, in different places, and from different backgrounds. Ultimately, it is the drive of a diasporic framework to create comparative projects which motivates this article.

In summary, a diasporic archaeology seeks to accomplish three goals. First, create a realistic picture of the diaspora's "baseline" culture. This appears essentializing and reductionist at first, but it refers to the development of a nuanced understanding of the true complexity and heterogeneity inherent among the group in their homeland areas. The second goal centers on the establishment of archaeological and historical research at different locations. This aspect of a diasporic archaeology examines the similarities and differences arising from the experience of double consciousness in various locales and at different times, and feeds into the third goal. How do differences in homeland culture and host societies affect basic choices of the group abroad? The possible questions here include classic questions of historical archaeologists about consumption as ideological performance and changes in everyday habits like food culture. Additionally, new questions can be posed such as how intra-ethnic differences in the homeland are maintained or adjusted in overseas contexts. The rest of this article focuses on these goals in creating a diasporic archaeology of Chinese migration.

Linking Chinese Immigrant and Emigrant Areas

The previous section outlines the utility of working from a diasporic framework and how it encourages archaeologists to participate in comparative research between overseas and emigrant locations. Research useful to historical archaeologists within the southern provinces of China is often thought to be unavailable outside of Chinese language sources (Greenwood 1980, p. 119) or because such work has not yet taken place (Voss and Allen 2008). This section will point researchers in the direction of historic datasets available online or in English of interest to archaeologists. Finding useful historic information is easier than many think, a key benefit of working with one of the world's oldest literate societies.

The vast majority of pre-1950s Chinese migration originated in Guangdong and Fujian provinces in southern China (Mei 1979; Pan 1999, pp. 20–43). Cultural anthropologists continue to conduct meaningful work in these emigrant areas, called *qiaoxiang*, much of which is probably not directly related to work by historical archaeologists as it focuses on the affects of economic and political changes over the past half century (Faure and Siu 1995; Guldin 2001; Thunø 2007). In addition, historical ethnicity in Guangdong and Fujian provinces represents a diverse landscape where several language groups and numerous, distinct cultural groups reside. The single largest group, the Han, have their roots as an ethnic majority in Asia's ancient past, perhaps as long as 4,000 years ago (Fei 1988, p. 17). The Han themselves were "the product of a fusion of cultural elements" (Cohen 1991, p. 119). The ethnic groups who existed on the periphery of the Han core actively constructed their identity in relation to the Han. For example, the Hakka—a group who migrated into Fujian and Guangdong from the north and subsequently around the world—

refused to practice foot-binding as one way to differentiate themselves from the Han (Cohen 1991, p. 120).

Today, 56 ethnic nationalities, including the Han are identified by the Chinese government. While the most diverse minority populations are found in southwest and west China, ethnic diversity exists in Guangdong and Fujian as well and making sense of these divisions can be confusing to researchers who are unfamiliar with China. These groups are represented by three main speech groups; Min, Cantonese, and Hakka. Min, as a "supergroup," has eight varities, while Yue has seven, and Hakka another eight (Pan 1999, pp. 24–25). These subsequent 23 subgroups in turn represent dozens if not hundreds of regionally distinct groups who utilize a variety of ethnic markers to signal their unique identities. Such markers include clothing, situational choice of dialect, and architecture.

Additional concerns and resources present themselves to historical archaeologists attempting to connect immigrant areas to their respective *qiaoxiang*. For instance, home villages can often be identified via numerous overseas records. Sources of *qiaoxiang* names come from grave markers, historic documents, and family records. Translating such information is still problematic for historical archaeologists with little or no Chinese language skills. However, it is increasingly easy to get such information translated as Chinese language programs develop at universities and in communities worldwide, or by entering the information into online dictionaries such as <http://www.nciku.com/> which allow users to enter (draw) Chinese characters. This partially eliminates the need for a reading ability in Chinese; although, translating large documents like this is probably still too time-consuming, but for translating inscriptions on grave markers or short phrases it works fairly well.

China has been home to a formal political hierarchy for at least two millennia. However, this organization was rarely inert and organic changes to political boundaries occurred at various rates through time. The changing structure of China's administrative hierarchy during the past two centuries has resulted in a changing relationship between villages and their parent administrative offices. The uses of macro-regions which transgress political boundaries are how most members of the Chinese diaspora divide China into homeland areas. The two prominent macro-regions for the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Chinese diaspora are the Lingnan (occupying most of the modern boundaries of Guangdong and Guangxi Provinces) and the Southeast Coast (encompassing the far eastern corner of Guangdong, Fujian, and Zhejiang Provinces) (Pan 1999, pp. 20–21) (Fig. 2). As these macro-regions demonstrate, self-identification among the Chinese diaspora is complex and requires an understanding of Chinese political history as well as detailed knowledge of South China historical geography. The hierarchy of village through province to macroregion highlights the multiple levels of emigrant identity already present among Chinese prior to immigrating overseas. The numerous clan and place associations in Chinese communities worldwide attest to the importance of geographic origin among members of the Chinese diaspora. Of course, simply identifying emigrant village locations provides little historic information concerning dialect, town size, and other basic cultural attributes—unless one knows where to look. Fortunately, through a combination of sources historical archaeologists can now access emigrant-area data to compliment overseas research.

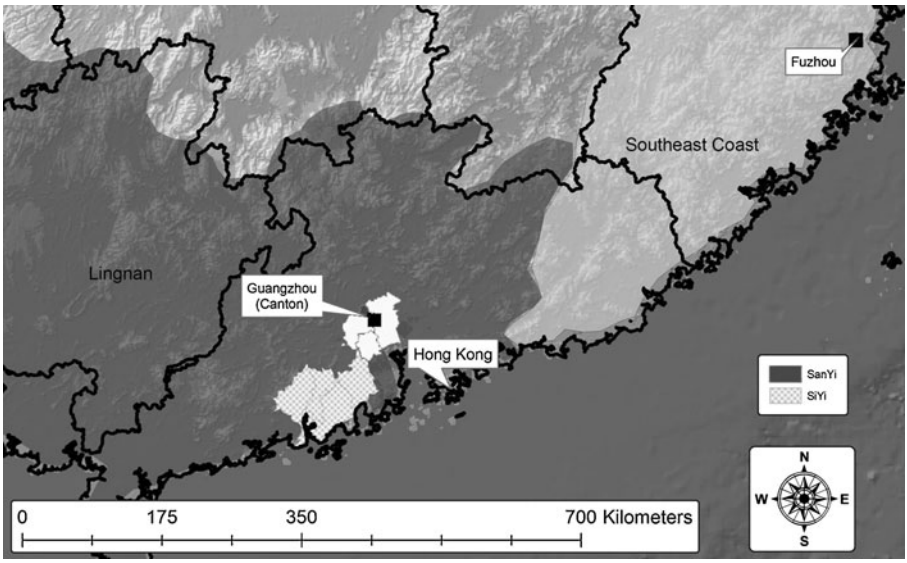

Fig. 2 Macroregions and Siyi and Sanyi areas in South China

Information Technologies and the Chinese Diaspora Homeland: Introducing the CDEAL GIS

The Chinese diaspora Emigrant Areas Locator (CDEAL) GIS was designed by the author with a specific goal in mind—providing community-level historical information for emigrant areas of the Chinese diaspora useful for historical archaeologists. The foundation for this GIS is a series of extracted files from the China Historical GIS (Bol 2008). The China Historical GIS exists as a series of raw files available for free download (http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~chgis/). These datasets house an enormous amount of time-series data detailing political boundaries, place names, environmental features (e.g., rivers, coastlines, etc.), and so on for more than two millennia. While these files are freely available, it can be difficult to access and utilize their information for inexperienced GIS users. The CDEAL GIS extracts datasets related to the historical archaeology of Chinese communities worldwide during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and places them alongside additional datasets in an easy-to-use system. The CDEAL GIS is accessible at <http://cdeal.anthroyeti.com>.

The CDEAL GIS information is multi-scalar and contains China-wide information for towns, counties, prefectures, circuits, and provinces. These data represent snapshots from 1820 and 1893, and includes detailed information for thousands of locations with an extensive data dictionary (Yue et al. 2007). This information is the result of decades of ongoing research by G. William Skinner (2001) with gazetteers from across China. The use of gazetteers within China is enjoying a revival within geography, history, anthropology, and many other disciplines. Their ability to document all manner of historic information for locations at all levels of the political structure makes such sources invaluable in developing a historical understanding of China. Gazetteers include information on town size, political structure, local

economy, trade and transportation networks, city defenses, and local histories for most locations in China. These documents are useful for modeling past settings historically (Mostern 2008) and are increasingly important to cultural anthropology projects throughout China (Thøgersen 2006). While the CDEAL GIS contains place names for all towns in China, getting detailed information for every town in currently beyond the scope of the China Historical GIS and therefore the CDEAL GIS. This fact does not prevent the datasets from providing important information for all areas though; and sometimes simply knowing the general location of a home area can assist historical archaeologists in their interpretive work, as discussed below.

In addition to data extracts from the China Historical GIS, information on the ethnolinguistic landscape of South China has been included from the *Language Atlas of China* (Wurm 1988). This text remains authoritative in documenting historic locations for various ethnolinguistic divisions throughout China (Skinner 1997). The CDEAL GIS includes other information not available in the China Historical GIS. This allows users to better navigate the various names and spellings used through time to refer to the same location, which results from the use of differing Romanization scripts through history as well the PRC's own re-naming from local dialects into Mandarin (the current state language of China) beginning in the 1950s. Therefore, the same place can often have a variety of names and spellings. For instance, the two major areas for pre-1950 migration out of Guangdong province were the *Siyi* or Four Counties area and the *Sanyi* or Three Counties area. In the Four Counties area Taishan district has been historically identified as *Taicheng*, *Toishan*, *Sunning*, or *Xinning*; Xinhui has been identified as *Sunwei* or *Sanooi*; Kaiping as *Hoipoing*; and Enping as *Yanping*. As a general rule, a greater variety of place names typically corresponds to a greater number of historic migrants.

In order to highlight how information in the CDEAL GIS is useful to historical archaeologists, the remainder of this paper looks at three case studies where emigrant information can connect individual overseas sites to a broader diasporic experience of the Chinese worldwide. I choose these studies for a three reasons. First, they represent traditional and new geographical locations of research. Archaeological work into the Chinese diaspora focuses on the western United States, Canada, and Australasia. New work is beginning to occur in Latin American and the Caribbean. These case studies include examples from all of these areas. Second, these sites are linked to different emigrant areas within China. This aspect is particularly salient for the examples from Peru and New Zealand. Finally, I have various levels of personal involvement with each site. This continuum of involvement includes consultant work (Montana), travel as a visiting researcher (Peru), and as part of a research team (New Zealand).

Three Examples of a Diasporic Archaeology of Chinese Migration

The previous section discusses the types of data available to historical archaeologists as well as an attempt to collect them in one place. The following examples illustrate how the CDEAL GIS can transnationally connect overseas and emigrant sites. These three examples also showcase the wide variety of overseas sources which can

provide emigrant area information. The three examples examine the protection of Chinese diaspora heritage in Montana, the ability to excavate racism in the form of a worker's contract from Peru, and how internal ethnolinguistic differences affect the organization of residents from a site in New Zealand.

A Grave Marker from Montana

Chinese grave markers are an increasingly common topic among historical archaeologists (Chung and Wegars 2005; Kraus-Friedberg 2008; Smits 2008). Unfortunately, there remains a general lack of emigrant area data in these studies beyond basic place names. I became aware of the grave marker discussed here (Fig. 3) while on contract with the University of Montana. This marker is simplistic and would seem to provide little information. The individual named on the marker is from the Canton River Delta and a small county north of Macau. His name was Deng Wang and he was from *Heshan xian* or Crane Mountain County (Fig. 4). As a native from this county, Deng Wang would have spoke either the Sanyi or Guangfu sub-group dialect of Cantonese (or more likely a bilingual mix of both). At least half of the county had a population density of less than 200 people/km^2. There was only one administration office during the nineteenth century and it was considered a dead-end position with little chance of promotion by the administrators stationed there. The prefecture which oversaw this county was more than 50 km away and the county capital had less than 4,000 people with no steamship or railroad travel available to its inhabitants. This information demonstrates that Deng Wang would have probably traveled some distance on foot, most likely recruited by a scout, to reach a ship that then carried him to America (most likely on the west coast); where he would once again travel far inland to settle and eventually die in Montana.

While such information may seem rudimentary, the narrative it creates is useful for interpretive literature and advocating for specific heritage management goals. This grave marker and several nearby are separate from white graves (a common feature between white and non-white burials seen in various locations where European diasporas settled) and work is currently underway to protect all the Chinese burials by extending the cemetery boundaries to include them (Chris Merritt, pers. comm.). This small bit of Deng Wang's life journey presents a compelling picture for public consumption and is helping to protect these valuable

Fig. 3 Grave marker from Montana (photo credit: Christopher Merritt, University of Montana)

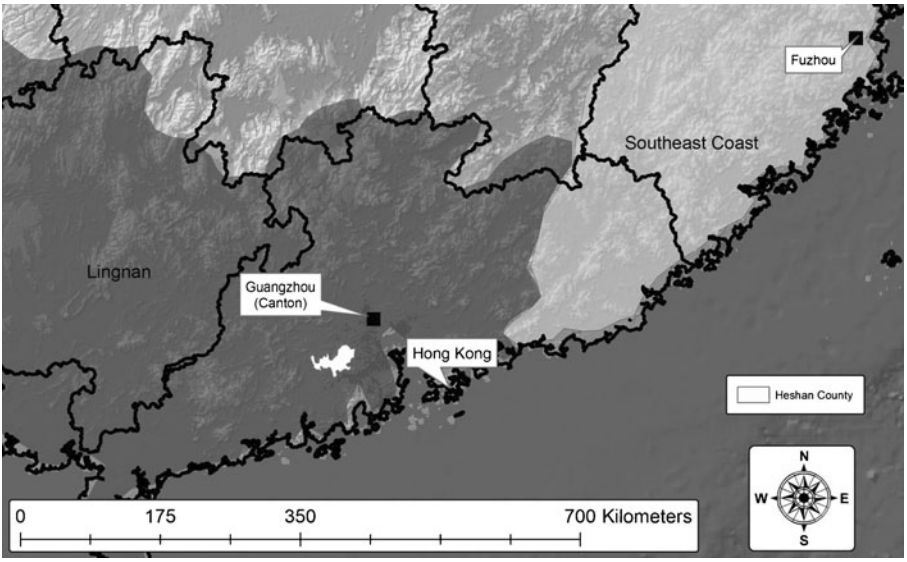

Fig. 4 Heshan County in Guangdon Province, South China

heritage resources in a state embracing the "unknown history" of its historic Chinese population.

This brief example demonstrates that even with severally limited emigrant area information it is possible to reconstruct useful and interesting aspects of an individual's life history. Additionally, the ability of researchers to find this information speaks to the ethics of archaeological practice; drawing on Rey Chow's (2002, pp. 185–191) discussion of *resentement* and a trend among white researchers to select one or two ethnic colleagues and/or students to act as proxy for an entire race, or even global region. In regard to an archaeology of the Chinese diaspora this requires researchers to remember that not all Chinese colleagues and students will have useful historical knowledge of emigrant areas. This lack of knowledge is not due to a lack of ability or drive on the part of Chinese researchers and students but a reflection of the changing nature of recent Chinese migration and the shift from South China in pre-1950 times to North China and Taiwan since the 1980s (Thunø 2007). While researchers and students from China or of Chinese descent may assist in the translation of grave markers and other Chinese language sources, it represents a potentially harmful colonial attitude to expect them to have intimate knowledge of all parts of China at all times, or to ask them to stand in as historical/primordially-identified proxies. Fortunately, most historical archaeologists are acutely aware of this and the CDEAL GIS is a tool we can draw upon to avoid such practices.

A Contract Laborer from Nineteenth Century Peru

David Babson (1990) has discussed how archaeologists might excavate material expressions of past racism and commented on the difficulty to see its effects in other contexts. Paul Farnsworth (2000) has pushed for the identification of similar

signatures of violence in the archaeological record, specifically in relation to plantation contexts. Early work on Asian American sites focused on the search for ethnic markers drawing upon now-outdated theories of acculturation and assimilation. The recent turn to investigating race, racism, and violence in regards to the Chinese diaspora demonstrates how effective archaeology can be in addressing historical continuums of racial violence (Orser 2007). However, investigations of enslavement and labor coercion of the Chinese by historical archaeologists are rare. This absence may reflect a reluctance among archaeologists to trivialize the African slave trade by over-utilizing it as a comparative, a general lack of knowledge about other forced migrations (Christopher et al. 2007), or a combination of both. Outside of archaeology, there are numerous historical treatments in regards to forced migration, external displacement, and enslavement of some Chinese workers throughout the nineteenth century. Special attention has been paid to the Caribbean (Lai 1993), the southern US (Jung 2006), Cuba (Helly 1993), and Peru (Pastor 2000; Stewart 1951). In 2006, while attending the Max Uhle Archaeological Conference in Lima, Peru, I met members of an archaeological team who had unearthed the mummified corpse of a Chinese contract laborer on the island of San Lorenzo, just off the coast of Lima (Morán and Blenke 2004). This individual and his personal possessions were preserved by the dry environment of the island. The personal possessions exhumed included coins, a comb, seeds, and a still legible worker contract folded in one of the worker's shirt pocket. Many of these artifacts are on display at the Museo Naval del Perú. The contract, as an artifact, not only addresses the concerns of Babson and Farnsworth, but also opens a door into diasporic experiences of the Chinese spanning more than two centuries.

The excavated contract itself provides a wealth of information. It states that this particular contract was signed by Li You from Xinhui county (Fig. 5). This county,

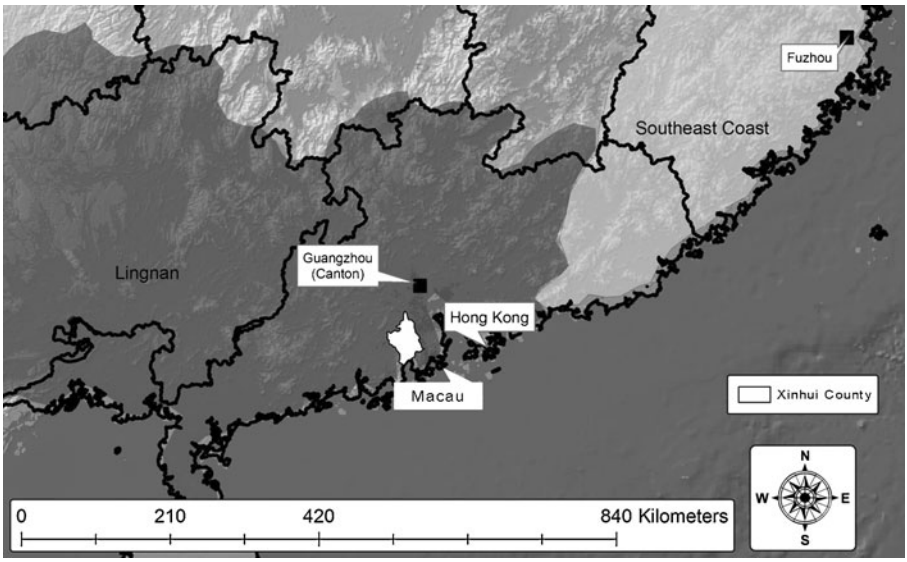

Fig. 5 Location of Li You's home county

which extends approximately 70 km north of Macau, would have been home to tens-of-thousands of individuals who were recruited from this area by the Portuguese. The general process of attracting peasants from the hinterlands north of Macau involved the employment of local Chinese as labor scouts. These scouts were employed by Portuguese merchants and routinely travelled into rural areas. Once there, they attracted the impoverished to Macau with promises of work and good pay. As these future laborers arrived at the shipyards in Macau, they would be detained in large, empty halls near or on the docks. One report describes these buildings as large and rectangular with high walls and large drums arranged around the perimeter. These drums were beaten to hide the sounds of abuse occurring to the now enslaved laborers. Ships heading for Lima would dock at these buildings and as the Chinese were loaded into them, each would be stopped and forced to sign the aforementioned contracts. These individuals suffered horribly in Macau and during the trans-Pacific voyage, invoking images of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Transportation of Chinese between 1847 and 1874 reached mortality rates as high as 30% aboard many ships during the Macau-Lima passage (Stewart 1951, pp. 67–75). In addition, treatment in Peru after arrival was often torturous and many contract laborers died undignified deaths in the guano mines along the Peruvian coast, on plantations in southern Peru, or while building railroads in northern Peru.

This contract lists the obligations of worker and employer; stating that the country of Peru employed a Guangdong businessman to recruit the worker Li You. This was not uncommon as Peru was one of the countries that utilized Chinese labor to replace slave labor in what has been termed a second slave trade due to the horrible treatment of Chinese laborers, or coolies, during the years 1847–74 (Hu-DeHart 2005; Pan 1999, pp. 248–253; Stewart 1951, pp. 3–24). The employers responsibilities as outlined by this document were (1) to provide Li You ten yuan to buy clothes, which would be deducted from his later wages once in Peru, (2) pay Li You four silver coins per month, (3) provide one-hour meals to Li You, (4) provide care to Li You should he fall ill, and (5) grant the worker three days of holiday during the Chinese New Year. In return, Li You must "voluntarily" agree to (1) travel to Peru aboard the businessman Ma Ci Shi's boat called the Si Nan Ma Wu Ci, (2) follow the ship's captain's orders, (3) work only for the employer and not undertake other or self-employment during the contract's duration, (4) allow for the deduction of money should the worker become ill, and (5) repay all debts incurred in travelling and undertaking employment in Peru. The contract ends by stating that both parties agree to its terms. Li You took his copy to the grave on a small island where he probably spent his last years mining bat guano. The nineteenth-century Peruvian guano mines began operating in the 1840s and a "Chinese Law" passed in 1849 provided paid compensation to any Peruvian citizen or their agents who introduced a Chinese contract laborer, or "coolie" to the shores of Peru (Stewart 1951, pp. 12–13). The associated living conditions near the mines were horrendous with historic accounts describing the contract laborers sometimes reduced to living in crates. In spite of all this, the Chinese did survive. The proliferation across Peru of Chinese-Peruvian fusion restaurants called *chifas*—named after the Chinese word for a restaurant or wine house, *jiujia*—attest to the presence and survival of this community since the mid-nineteenth century.

The contract would have been presented to Li You after following a labor scout to Macau. The colonial employment of scouts led many Chinese to treat their fellow countrymen very poorly (Stewart 1951, pp. 25–54). In regards to Li You's home county of Xin Hui, CDEAL GIS information shows that it was classified as an ordinary area and decidedly not metropolitan by Chinese standards of the nineteenth century. This county's governing circuit changed between 1820 and 1893, evidence of the changing political structures resulting from increased contact with European powers in the area (Collis 1946). Civil servants considered this an important post, but difficult due to the fact that it was a center of trade and received steamships for passenger and mail service. The county seat had defensive walls with 2,400 battlements and 31 sentry posts; and was situated to utilize parts of the Gangshui River as a defensive moat. This river flowed directly to Macau and hints that many contract labors in Peru came from the same county as Li You due to the ease of travel for scouts and their recruits.

Li You's grave and excavated contract provides interesting comparative data across time and space. The employment of a diasporic framework encourages comparative research across time while mitigating against an uncontrolled approach that might see the incorporation of vastly different experiences drawn upon simply because of an ethnically bounded similarity. One major comparative theme provided by a diasporic approach encourages the interrogation of institutions that have deep histories. Understanding and diagramming oppressive social structures remains a paramount concern for anthropologists who realize that a crucial first step in assuaging structural violence "is to identify the forces conspiring to promote suffering, with the understanding that these will be differentially weighted in different settings" (Farmer 2004, p. 288). I draw on Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois' (2004, p. 1) broad yet illuminating definition of structural violence as "the violence of poverty, hunger, social exclusion and humiliation" for the purposes of this article.

Historical archaeologists can help identify these structures with the incorporation of longitudinal data. Contracts similar to Li You's still play a considerable role in the modern Chinese diaspora. In the nineteenth century, such contracts were common in Guangdong because of the Portuguese presence in Macau and their trading network with Latin America and the Caribbean. Today, these contracts are commonly signed in Fujian for workers coming to Australia, Canada and the US—especially California, New York and Florida (Chin 1997, pp. 193–194). The contract's structure listing two parties and their obligations to one another in the 1800s mirrors the structure of contracts in use today. In addition, and most disturbingly, the cruel treatment of nineteenth-century Chinese in Peru and Cuba mirrors today's hidden slavery problem in the United States where over 10,000 Chinese spend each day working in the agricultural, garment, and sex industries (Human Rights Center 2004). These modern slaves are trapped in a forced labor, a hidden slavery that continues unnoticed by the American public and evocative of the darkest chapters of history many find hard to believe exist in their own neighborhoods. If archaeologists are interested in uncovering the historical roots and relations between pre-modern and modern racism, the Chinese diaspora offers some of most dire and direct comparatives. This example demonstrates how the use of a diasporic framework in regards to the Chinese can produce

comparative research that answers ongoing questions about the materiality of race and racism in historical archaeology. I spent two days watching the visible reactions of visitors to the Museo Naval del Perú. Their response to the honest depiction in the museum testifies to the ability of certain artifacts to transport us in empathic ways backwards in time. When such an artifact and its intense emotional influence are combined with the knowledge that similar circumstances exist today, it speaks directly to the historic roots of modern racism in immediate and accessible ways. Such a project becomes part of a larger development within anthropology, one aiming to resituate race at the forefront of research as a key issue in decolonizing our discipline (Harrison 1997, 1999; Orser 1999, 2001, 2004). I believe that involving historical archaeology in the resituating of race as a central concern in anthropology joins a growing chorus of archaeologists looking for ways to make our discipline meaningful to the modern world (Gadsby and Chidester 2007; McGuire 2008; Rathje 1977; Shackel and Chambers 2004; Wilk and Schiffer 1979; Wood 2002). I am not invoking the term "race" as a call to investigate identity, but rather as one way to address the myriad ways in which racial differences continue to haunt the modern world. This invocation motivates us to uncover complimentary data from other academic fields such as migration studies, history, human rights, Asian American studies and so forth. I believe the true power of an artifact like a worker's contract exists in its ability to connect the archaeological past with the modern world. Historical archaeologists who frame their research in terms of diaspora come into contact with ideas of displacement and forced migration, topics increasingly being looked at by other disciplines. These other projects include work among internally displaced people (Hampton 1998), the lasting psychological effects of slavery on modern populations (Eyerman 2001), and the ongoing politics of settlement (Anderson and Lee 2005).

Lawrence Chinese Camp, Otago, New Zealand

The Otago region of southern New Zealand remains a central area for conducting archaeological research into the Chinese diaspora (Ritchie 1993, 2003; Wegars 2003). The first major Chinese settlement in New Zealand is here, just outside the small town of Lawrence. Archaeological investigations at the Lawrence Chinese Camp (LCC) began with a surface survey by the author in 2003 (Fig. 6), and continued with three seasons of fieldwork in 2005 and 2006 (Jacomb et al. 2006). The LCC was founded in 1867 with the first of three joss houses built two years later and the original Chinese Empire Hotel constructed in 1870. Part of this hotel still stands and marks the site for visitors passing through the area. The community's peak population was reached in the early 1890s with 123 full time residents, long after the gold rush had ended in the early 1870s. The site twice suffered near destruction due to fire—once in 1882 and then again in 1898—the same year the community's founder Sam Chew Lain passed away. By the 1940s, most of the site's surface features were gone with only the Chinese Empire Hotel surviving and becoming a private residence in 1940. The final Joss House was moved during this time into nearby Lawrence where it remains in use as a private residence today. At the time of this writing, the Lawrence Chinese Camp Charitable Trust was in

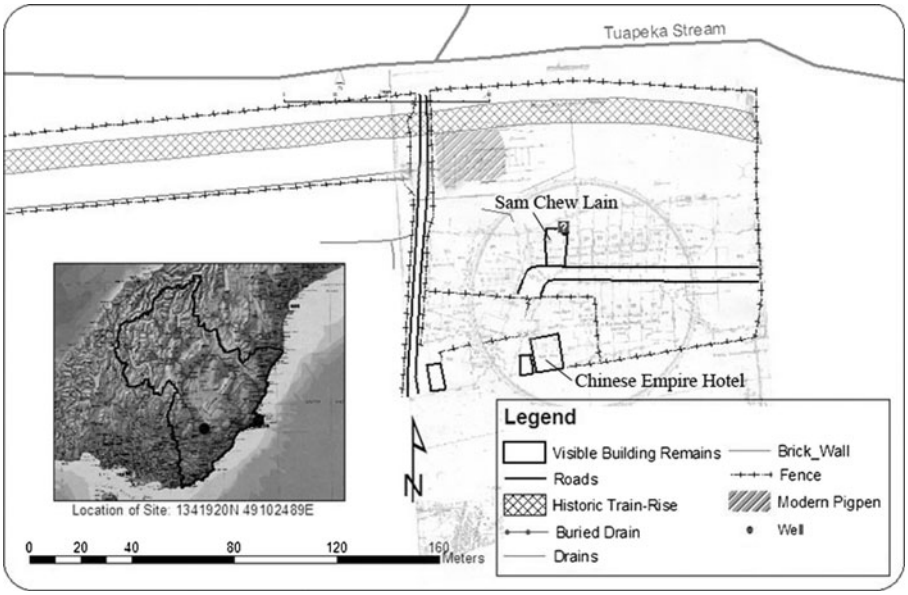

Fig. 6 2003 GPS mapping of surface features at the Lawrence Chinese Camp (LCC)

negotiations to purchase this Joss House and return it to the camp. This is part of an ongoing strategy to eventually reconstruct the camp as it existed in the 1880s.

Strictly speaking, referring to the site as the Lawrence Chinese Camp is misleading as the site is outside of Lawrence to the west, never solely populated by Chinese, and continuously inhabited for approximately 60 years. The name remains because local Pakeha (Euro-descent) and Chinese communities refer to the site as such with deep affinity and recognize its unique cultural and historical importance. The 2005 and 2006 excavations have uncovered portions of the Chinese Empire Hotel, three joss houses, an immigration barracks and portions of two additional residences (Jacomb et al. 2006).

Sites in southern New Zealand are of special interest to Chinese diaspora researchers because of Rev. Alexander Don's "Role" of Chinese. Don lived in Guangdong province in South China for two years in preparation for his Presbyterian missionary work among South New Zealand's Chinese community. This work began in 1890s and continued for more than two decades. In order to remember with whom he had previously met during these years, Don kept a diary of every Chinese he encountered and spoke with in South New Zealand. His "role" reports on the comings and goings of approximately 3,500 Chinese individuals in the Otago and southland regions between the years 1896 and 1913, and presents a unique picture of Chinese movements in an overseas location because it is so complete (Moloughney et al. 2007). The document records information about home area, level of education, which ports in China and New Zealand the individual passed through, and various comments unique to each individual. This document can also be used to investigate movements of Chinese prior to these times as Rev. Don asked his informants about their entire history in New Zealand, expanding the data's reach back to the 1860s. Don's Role of Chinese lists 231 individuals as residents at

the LCC, or as living in the nearby countryside. According to the Role, these individuals hailed from eleven counties in the Pearl River Delta region with the majority hailing from one county, Panyu (sometimes translated as Fan Yu or Poon Yue) in central Guangdong Province. These majority of residents came from two concentrations within this province. The northern concentration came from a series of towns located around Yahu while the southern community concentrations were located around the town of Nancun (Fig. 7). Of the 231 individuals recorded by Rev. Don as residing at the LCC, 183 of them were from this county.

This area was home to speakers of the Guangfu dialect of Cantonese according to the *Language Atlas of China* (Wurm 1988). Each of these communities were located directly along major waterways; the six northern cities of Jiangcun, Banhuxu, Yahu, Taiheshi, Zhuliao and Renhexu were on the Liu Xi river while the southern town of Nancun remains an important shipping community on a major bay to the south of modern-day Guangzhou. These locations were situated halfway between several administrative towns including Guangzhou (Canton). This allowed residents quick access to major transnational networks in terms of travel (e.g., steamship, railway) and information (e.g., newspapers, labor scouts, trading companies). While this area was close to Canton, it was north of more common emigrant areas in the *Sanyi* and *Siyi* and therefore represents a unique home area among the Chinese diaspora.

Many Panyu Chinese were unique in another way; they remained on friendly terms with the Hakka minority at home and worldwide. Clan wars between the Hakka and other groups in Guangdong Province during the nineteenth century meant that Hakka were not welcome among many Chinese groups overseas (Olson 1998, pp. 92–94). Guangfu speakers from northern Panyu County were one of the few groups who maintained friendly relations with the Hakka in Guangdong and abroad. This affiliation still defines relations between some overseas groups, including Kiwi-Chinese in and around the Otago Region. Perhaps this is part of the motivation when modern Chinese groups ask archaeologists about the ethnolinguistic makeup of

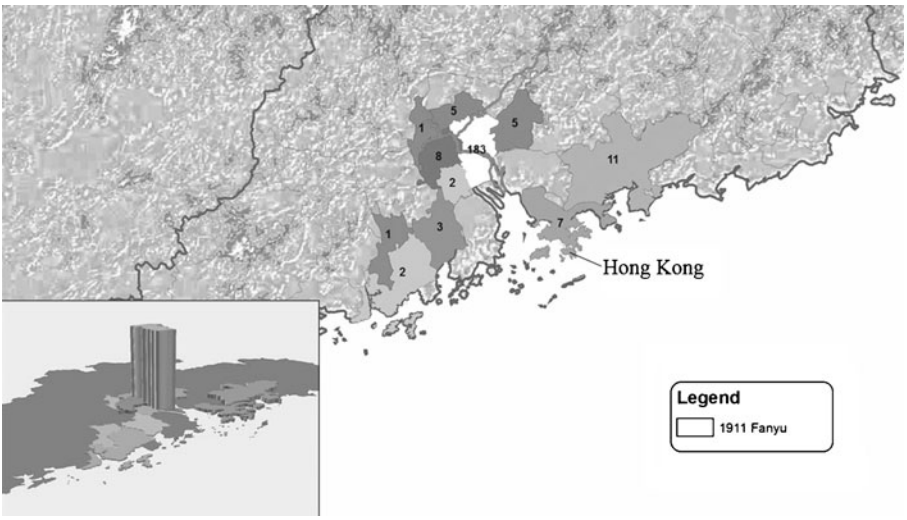

Fig. 7 Total number of emigrants to the Lawrence Chinese Camp (LCC) by county during the period 1896–1913; insert, the same totals extruded in 3D

historic Chinese diaspora sites (for a representative list of common questions posed by such groups, see Voss 2005). Archaeologists working with the local Kiwi-Chinese community in Otago today know that Sam Chew Lain was Hakka. As the LCC's most prominent citizen and owner of the Chinese Empire hotel, he had a lasting influence on the LCC's near exclusive Panyu and Hakka makeup. Knowledge of this ethnic make-up at the LCC represents both a unique diasporic experience as well as the first time that historical archaeologists can frame interpretations based on intra-ethnic affiliation. Ongoing oral history research with local residents and direct descendants is confirming that the ethnic composition along Hakka and Panyu lines remained constant throughout the site's occupation.

The information from Rev. Don's Role provides archaeologists with a unique opportunity to situate the LCC within a series of life histories beginning in South China, passing through the LCC, and on to a variety of other locations. These life trajectories include the full range of possible experiences common to global members of the Chinese diaspora. A number of residents at the LCC completed their goal as sojourner and returned home. While visiting villages in Panyu, the author identified and visited emigrant areas for LCC residents. There remains in parts of modern southeast Guangzhou (the capital of Guangdong Province) clear indications of how the "sojourning sons of Panyu" provided for their home villages, such as money to purchase and build grade schools. Other LCC residents did not return to China until after death, a common practice throughout the Chinese diaspora (Chung and Wegars 2005). However, the remains of several residents from the LCC never completed the trip when the SS Ventnor sank off the North Island of New Zealand in 1902; where a total of 499 corpses being returned to China were lost at sea (Ng 1993, pp. 66–70). This tragedy is well remembered by New Zealand's Chinese community today and the pain of so many lost at sea still resonates with descendants across the country.

Other residents remained in New Zealand and a number of LCC residents intersected the broader New Zealand society, for better and for worse. Information from Rev. Don allows us to follow some LCC residents who were eventually transported to the Seacliff Lunatic Asylum (Fig. 8). The asylum says much about the attitude of early New Zealand towards social misfits as it was the largest building in the country when construction finished in 1885. While some of the inmates may truly have had mental disorders, the majority of its occupants were interred because of their inability or reluctance to conform to the developing, puritanical social order of frontier New Zealand. Inmates at the asylum were typically sent there because of race, mental handicap, or sexual orientation (Brookes and Thomson 2001). Today, the remains of the asylum buildings is home to a backpackers.

The power of interpreting a site in terms of intra-site, ethnolinguistic organization and centering the site as one node along various life-story trajectories speaks immediately and clearly to a wide range of communities. These communities include the local residents, heritage tourists, and direct descendants. In regards to the LCC, this type of project is particularly interesting to the descendant communities who are increasingly engaged in creating a more complete picture of their ancestors within a broader New Zealand history. This renewed interest follows a 2002 apology by the New Zealand government for the imposition of a late nineteenth-century poll tax. The apology included a large cash payment currently being used to support heritage

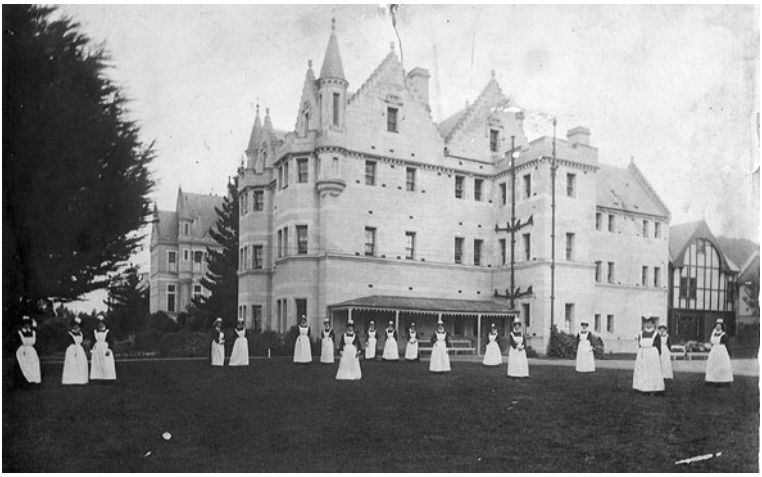

Fig. 8 Seacliff Lunatic Asylum (National Archives of New Zealand)

work around the county, including the archaeological investigations at the Lawrence Chinese Camp.

Discussion

The above examples represent only a handful of possible site comparisons arising worldwide when we look at how emigrant and immigrant situations reorganize in different contexts. The syncretic development of home area heterogeneity and overseas colonial history produces unique experiences and new cultural groups in each geographical locale (McKeown 2001). The double-consciousness of Chinese worldwide arises from complex interactions between society, citizenship, and race. The alienness assigned to the Chinese historically continues to haunt modern societies, and the false notion of a pan-Chinese identity comes under increased scrutiny (Chun 1996). Unfortunately, the representation of minority groups through essentializing tropes and as the products of culturally determined backgrounds has lasting effects. The combination of new datasets and multi-sited research as outlined through a diasporic framework helps us craft more complete narratives with scant data, highlights similarities without essentializing populations, and can explain important differences within geographically related populations.

As McKeown (1999, pp. 317–320) has shown, even implicit framings of family are often applied uncritically by a variety of social scientists studying the Chinese diaspora. The imposition of a modern, American (western) view of family creates a (potentially false) representation of Chinese diaspora sites as bachelor communities. The complex effects of anti-citizenship laws (e.g., Chinese Exclusionary Law of 1882), political economy, and overt racism can unknowingly haunt the minds of modern researchers and many times prevents us from creating such new frames of reference. After all, it took a playful yet powerful critique by Praetzellis and Praetzellis (1998) of faunal and ceramic studies as indicators of assimilation to demonstrate how political economy influences the archaeological record in direct and measurable ways.

The case studies here join others in challenging essentializing tropes of Chinese and demonstrate the heterogeneity of the Chinese at home and abroad. The founder of the LCC became a wealthy, naturalized resident of New Zealand while others returned home with mixed levels of wealth or remained in New Zealand. The solitary grave in Montana outlines the harsh life beginning in rural China and its end far from home. The Peruvian example confronts us with an individual story still tragically real for thousands of hidden slaves around the world. These admittedly brief case studies represent a first step in understanding the complex relationship between emigrant and overseas contexts and how they were re-configured in strikingly diverse yet hauntingly similar ways around the world and through time.

Where can such work lead? This article is only a first step among many and aims to understand the complex interaction of home area heterogeneity and overseas locale. These complexities result in new forms of cultural configurations such as the Peruvian-Chinese *chifas*, historical legacies of successful Chinese in New Zealand, or a nearly forgotten grave site in Montana; all evocative of disparate experiences. As additional overseas research is paired with emigrant areas a new comparative project might emerge. How did individuals from the same emigrant background prosper or fail in different American, Australian, Peruvian, Italian, or African settings? How do the Hakka fair in other contexts? Is the pattern of Guangfu and Hakka reproduced elsewhere in the world besides southern New Zealand? Such projects can explore how groups from the same home area respond to the various overseas contexts—a connective project speaking directly to issues of cultural change and continuity, and what factors affect them most powerfully. Is it an immigrant's parent culture? A host society's parent culture? The unique mixture of both in each locale? This does not end at a mere description of the past, it might help social scientists and engaged anthropologists craft policy in the present. As we create comparative projects and model modern analogues on past circumstances, we might more accurately join in modern discussions of how to protect marginalized and displaced groups. Our contributions to these dialogues provide diachronic perspectives as well as dire warnings of the human toll when past injustices repeat themselves. This type of work is increasingly appealing to students who look for the relevance of archaeology in the modern world. The realization of an engaged diasporic archaeology lays the groundwork for extending our claims beyond the process of remembering and commemorating to include confronting and transforming the world around us.

Conclusion

This article has two central goals. First, outline a diasporic framework useful for conducting research into the Chinese diaspora. This framework challenges archaeology to create comparative research based on more than ethnically-bounded similarity. The diasporic framework here is more about comparison than identity, and helps determine what similarities and differences are meaningful. Meaning derives from a better understanding of heterogeneity in regards to both emigrant and immigrant areas as well as pairing research and datasets from both. Second, the article presents three case studies exploring the utility of historical datasets in digital

form from the emigrant areas of pre-1950s Chinese migration. The three examples exist along a continuum of available data and researcher involvement.

Ultimately, this article is a heuristic device specifically engaging the growing literature of archaeological research into the Chinese diaspora; suggesting how historical archaeologists might envision new projects. Each of the case studies intersects with an aspect of today's world. This includes managing heritage resources, investigating modern inequalities such as hidden slavery, and the lasting effects of minority experience and representation within larger national settings. While this article focuses on the Chinese diaspora, I believe that the ideas behind it are applicable to other groups, time periods, sites, and topics. Diasporic groups exist beyond the African, Jewish, and Chinese examples. How they change and grow through time in various settings remains centrally important to historical archaeologists, and is growing in importance for migration studies and human rights. Likewise, additional topics beyond the one's here (e.g., racism) include research into identity, religion, household practices, and so forth. While the CDEAL GIS may become obsolete as such digital technologies often do, the ideas behind it are what matters. My hope is that this experimentation with new resources (e.g., GIS, historical gazetteers) points the way to a wider set of multi-disciplinary, collaborative projects for us all.

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