

**Dining Out in Chinatown: Uncovering the Archaeological Attributes of a Historical Overseas Chinese Restaurant**

**Introduction**

Utilizing the Market Street artifact collection, this project will attempt to address the issue of what elements constitute a commercial dining establishment of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinatown. Investigating material remains from the Market Street Chinatown site in San Jose, I will explore the defining attributes that characterize historical Chinese restaurants in immigrant communities, with the aim of engendering a more complete understanding of how these restaurants can be identified in an archaeological context. My overarching research question is broken down into smaller, more specific components in my analysis. As there is presently no existing profile of the archaeological characteristics of a restaurant in a 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinese community, I will first need to formulate a profile on my own from documentary sources that I can use as a basis for evaluating remains from the Market Street Chinatown site. Next is an examination of the artifact profile of the materials recovered from another Market Street feature not associated with a commercial dining establishment. Then, analyzing a collection excavated from a feature that provenience and preliminary analysis suggest may have been connected to a formerly existent restaurant, I will endeavor to examine the validity of such a speculation of association by comparison with my tentative restaurant profile and the materials recovered from the other onsite feature representing a “non-restaurant” assemblage and serving as a control. This will enable an assessment of whether the collection of interest more closely resembles the artifact profile theorized for a restaurant or that of the control assemblage not related to commercial food service, and evaluation of which onsite assemblage was more consistent with the restaurant profile. Focusing on food-related artifacts, I will inquire into their respective proportions in each Market Street assemblage. I will also study quantities of different forms of

hollowware in the suspected restaurant assemblage and how they contrast to remains from the other feature and the tentative profile. Finally, I will investigate the tableware of the assemblage, examining the frequency of various vessel classes and waretypes, and making the same comparisons.

Reconstructing the activity the overseas Chinese of the Market Street Chinatown conducted in association with a specific feature, I will assess whether or not data on its artifact collection is more consistent with the hypothesis that it was related to restaurant activity. In doing so, I will address the issue of how features associated with commercial dining facilities might differ archaeologically from other regions of a site; thus, I hope to contribute to Chinese overseas studies by developing a hypothesized set of expectations for the archaeological remains of early Chinatown restaurants that can serve as a comparative source. In this paper, I will first cover the background to my research, opening broadly with a discussion of the first Chinese immigrants of the United States, narrowing my discourse down to the specific context of early Chinese around the San Jose area that is relevant to the site studied in this project, and finally following up by addressing food consumption practices and the role of restaurants in the Chinese culture. Then I will acknowledge the questions I sought to answer with my research and their larger significance, and move into the context of the assemblages examined and the methodology I followed for both documentary and material analysis. Subsequently, I will articulate some highlights from the data I collected, consider their implications, and wrap up with concluding thoughts and directions for further research.

**Historical Context:**

**The First Chinese-Americans**

The experience of the early Chinese in California was a dynamic one, afflicted with racial discrimination and socio-economic marginalization but also sustained by vibrant activity and a strong sense of community. Prior to the California Gold Rush of 1848, the number of Chinese living in the state totaled a paltry 54 (Yu 2001). It was not until reports of the discovery of gold began circulating through the Kwangtung province of southern China that Cantonese peasants began to fantasize about the *Gum San*—“Gold Mountain”—in the western United States. In 1842, the British victory over Manchu China in the Opium War dealt a harsh blow to the already weakened dynasty (Roberts 2002), and social and economic pressures continued to mount with the various onslaughts of famine and environmental difficulties. Envisioning promises of fortune awaiting them overseas in the “Gold Mountain” of California, tens of thousands Chinese embarked from their villages and headed west (Allen et al 2002). Predominantly young, male peasants of little wealth (Pratzellis 1997), most of these newcomers never struck it rich at the mines, but instead found gold of a different form: labor. With the development of industry and agriculture throughout its valleys, the emergent state of California was in need of dispensable, inexpensive labor. Several employers found the diligent and low-cost Chinese workers a welcome addition to the workforce, and quickly hired them in areas as diverse as farming, fishing, mining, canning, and manufacturing (Yu 2001). In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Chinese became a prominent fixture at construction sites of the Transcontinental Railroad, as well as in fields, ranches and industrial factories (Allen et al 2002). As gap-fillers, Chinese immigrants were also employed in service, doing laundry and working in the houses of white families as cooks, gardeners, and servants; others became merchants or entrepreneurs who established their own businesses within the confines of various Chinatowns. Mining companies, manufacturing industries (Roberts 2002), and construction firms began to contract

Chinese labor on a large scale in the 1850s and 1860s, and the Chinese population in the Golden State proceeded to swell until the Chinese became the state's predominant minority group (Yu 2001).

Since their arrival, Chinese foreigners always faced an environment of hostility and prejudice on the part of the white population of their new country. Legislation such as the Foreign Miners Tax of 1850 elucidated the pronounced anti-Chinese sentiment and inimical attitudes of Californian residents (Yu 2001). Following an economic depression that struck in the 1870s, unemployment and dissatisfaction spread, with Caucasian workers voicing the most vehement discontent. Searching for a scapegoat, they blamed the cheaper Chinese laborers for their misfortunes, and workers' groups opposed to the Chinese, such as the Anti-Coolie Association, grew in number and influence. Violent incidents of abuse, torture, and murder occurred on a daily basis; "The Chinese must go!" became a prevalent rallying cry, and those who hired Chinese were compelled to dismiss their services (Pratzellis 1997). Anti-Chinese sentiment culminated in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 (Yu 2001), forbidding Chinese laborers from entering the United States for 10 years and prohibiting all Chinese from naturalization. 10 years later, the Geary Act extended this legislation for another 10 years and also prescribed all Chinese laborers be issued a certificate of eligibility and carry their passports on them at all times. In spite of all the legislative measures taken against the Chinese, violence and resentment toward the immigrants persisted, and in the mid-1970s numerous large-scale labor disturbances and instances of harassment and discrimination erupted across the western United States (Yu 2001, Roop and Flynn 1991).

The Chinese did not passively accept such oppression; one mechanism by which they defended themselves was through developing networks of social and economic support (Allen et

al 2002). Emigrants united, establishing district associations the various members of the Chinese population could depend upon and forming coalitions such as the Chinese Six Companies (Yu 2001) that serviced Chinese communities and legally challenged anti-Chinese regulations. With the Yellow Peril movement proliferating throughout industrial and agricultural regions of California, the ethnic enclaves of the Chinese became all the more important. Chinatowns emerged in the United States where significant populations of Chinese immigrants appeared (Roberts 2002). These communities, often physically delineated by walls or fencing and consisting predominantly of males, were refuges where a marginalized and persecuted race could come together in a safe environment. Providing “physical and emotional protection for the Chinese worker and his family, a cultural homebase” (Yu 2001: 17), Chinatowns offered comfort and an atmosphere of solidarity in the face of exclusion and hostility on the part of the rest of American society. Here, resident and commuting laborers and their relatives felt at home: they could speak their own languages, practice their own customs, and celebrate their own traditions.

### **Chinese Immigrants in the Santa Clara Valley**

The Santa Clara Valley was rife with opportunities for Chinese laborers, especially in agricultural, industrial, and domestic lines of work. In the latter half of the 1860s, overseas Chinese set up San Jose’s first Chinatown. A residential and commercial community, it comprised “an area that served as a downtown for all Chinese” (Yu 2001: 21). This enclave and its four successors in San Jose were the homes of merchants, store owners, clerks, laborers, and their families (Allen et al). They sustained considerable urban populations that potentially reached figures as high as 1400 in 1876 and welcomed laborers from surrounding fields and factories (Yu 2001). Accommodating living quarters, temples, theaters, restaurants, markets,

gambling establishments, and various other stores and businesses, these communities developed into centers of social, cultural, and economic activity among Chinese in the valley.

In January of 1870, disaster swept through the incipient Chinatown at the intersection of San Fernando Street and Market Street in what constitutes part of present-day downtown San Jose in the form of a fire that lay waste to its wooden infrastructure (Roop and Flynn 1991). Subsequently, an interim Chinatown was settled on Vine Street until a second Market Street Chinatown was constructed encompassing both Market and San Fernando Streets again, in addition to an alley sandwiched in the middle of the block between San Antonio Street and San Fernando Street, two years later. Filled with “at least a dozen grocery stores, a fish market, a temple, three restaurants, numerous barber stands, clothing shops and general merchandising stores” (Yu 2001: 21), this establishment bustled with activity and exhibited a more mercantile quality than its predecessor. In comparison to other Chinese establishments that sprouted throughout the United States, this community consisted of a considerably higher proportion of women and families. By May of 1887, more than 1000 emigrants were residing or working in the Market Street Chinatown, and it served as a headquarters for the population of 3000 Chinese employed in the county of Santa Clara (Yu 2001).

During the early 1880s, the city of San Jose was burgeoning and initiated plans for growth and modernization. When beginning to actualize these plans, the citizens of the city perceived a serious impediment: the conspicuous Chinese and their “town”. A motion to remove the Chinese quarter from downtown San Jose fueled the direction of further disturbance and condemnation toward the Chinese; this was accompanied by a succession of anti-Chinese protests, conventions, and legislation (Yu 2001). Hostility against Chinese immigrants continued to build until flames engulfed the Market Street Chinatown yet again. This time, however, the

conflagration “was of suspicious origins,” and was likely attributed to arson (Roop and Flynn 1991). Following the disaster, which reportedly cost \$75,000 in damage, the community siphoned off into the Chinatowns of Woolen Mills and Heinlenville. The anti-Chinese movement persisted in the Santa Clara Valley and in the greater United States, with local, state, and federal measures targeting the Chinese and, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, all Asian immigrants (Pratzellis 1997, Roop and Flynn 1991).

Around a century later, when plans for the construction of the Silicon Valley Financial Center and the Fairmont Hotel were underway in downtown San Jose, the site of the Market Street Chinatown was uncovered. Upon this discovery, the City of San Jose Redevelopment Agency contacted ARS (Archaeological Resource Services) to oversee construction and conduct a rapid recovery excavation (Clevenger 2004). As bulldozers droned on and contractors worked at erecting a new hotel, a team of archaeologists located features and recovered artifacts in three distinct phases of excavation that occurred in 1985, 1985, and 1988. When excavation was complete, artifacts were processed by ARS (Cartier 1991); in 1989 the collection was consigned to the City of San Jose Redevelopment Agency, where it was stored in boxes and housed in a warehouse untouched for 15 years (Roop and Flynn 1991). In 2000 the collection was transferred to History San Jose, a non-profit museum, and in collaboration with Stanford University, the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project, Past Forward, Inc., and the City of San Jose Redevelopment Agency, the Market Street Chinatown Archaeological Project was initiated (Roop and Flynn 1991).

### **Food and Restaurant Practices in Chinese Culture**

To the Chinese, eating is more than a simple, every day activity, and food carries with it a significance far beyond its dietary value (Spier 1958). Foodways have been a principal

component of Chinese culture for more than 3,000 years and “Pleasure in food has been synonymous with Chinese culture way back into Chinese antiquity” (McGhee 1939: 7). Preparation and consumption of food is a philosophical and spiritual experience. Meals are meant to be shared (Roberts 2002): they are a time for families to come together in moments of intimacy and reinforce their relationships. Lavish feasts celebrate holidays and special occasions, in addition to honoring established traditions. Food can even function as a means of connecting current generations to deceased family members through the common Chinese custom of *bai-bai*, or ancestor worship, when families offer food to departed kin and then consume it in a subsequent feast (Chang 1997). Every dish holds deeper implications for those partaking of it; some are accompanied by charming tales, some are believed to have health benefits or spiritual or religious connotations, and others simply evoke fond memories.

Having arrived in a completely foreign territory, the first Chinese Americans were surrounded by the unfamiliar; the hostility and discrimination they faced everywhere they turned only exacerbated the adversity and distress of their situation (Allen et al 2002). Often unsettled by their new environment, immigrants sought solace in familiar customs and activity and tried to emulate the life as it had been in China as much as they could. Consequently, Chinatowns could be characterized as “locations where local crops were prepared and then eaten in traditional cooking styles, where traditionally prepared foods and beverages were imported from China and eaten off Euroamerican ceramics, and where meats were purchased that had been butchered in American styles and then used to prepare traditional dishes” (Roop and Flynn 1991: 6). In the face of pronounced prejudice and societal exclusion on the part of white Americans, Chinese in the western United States struggled to keep their ethnic identity in tact, and archaeological research on immigrant Chinese communities evince that their members continued to cook and

consume their food in the style native to their homeland (Roberts 2002). Faunal analysis has yielded specimen distributions and tool patterns on bones consistent with authentic Cantonese customs of butchering and consumption (Moses and Whitmore 1987). Meat was often prepared in the Chinese style: Chinese cleavers chopped flesh into small pieces ideal for use with chopsticks, and various animal body parts considered waste products by Euroamericans were cooked up as delicacies (Spier 1958). As in China, where pork was consumed in higher quantities than all other meats combined, the pig was the most prevalent specimen utilized in Chinatowns, followed by chicken, duck, and other poultry. Fish and other marine specimens were also consumed, in addition to the Chinese staple of turtles; traditional plant foods such as winter and bitter melon, Chinese olives, peanuts, lychees, and ginkgo nuts also comprised parts of overseas diets (Langenwalter 1987, Roop and Flynn 1991). By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, traditional Cantonese foods, spices, and other materials related to food preparation and consumption were regularly imported to California (Allen et al 2002). Evidently, maintaining elements of traditional Chinese cuisine in their diets was of paramount importance to the Chinese in America. For Market Street residents and patrons, eating foods reminiscent of home probably comforted them by mitigating the effects of the culture shock they faced in their new environment.

As one means through which the Chinese in America could maintain their traditional foodways, restaurants have held central significance in Chinatowns across the United States. The term “restaurant” represents a broad class of dining establishments, all characterized by the commercial preparation and service of various foods and beverages ordered by the customer with the intention of being consumed on the premises (Kiefer 2002). The roots of modern-day restaurants extend into the inns, boarding houses, cookshops, and taverns of the past, where hosts

served meals to patrons, who were frequently travelers, in a communal setting (Chang 1997). Menus were nonexistent, as diners could not place any orders but simply ate from the prepared meal set before a table where all were seated together. With its emergence, the restaurant introduced a new dining experience, one that offered privacy and autonomy to customers. Restaurants catered to the individual, with “individual tables, individual orders, flexible dining times convenient to the patrons, and payment by item ordered” (Kiefer 2002: 6); they exemplified an industry truly devoted to service. While Paris was designated the restaurant capital of the world during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the earliest of these establishments actually made their first appearance in the Hangzhou district of 13<sup>th</sup> Century China. Thus, the restaurant has deep roots in Chinese society. During the Song dynasty (1127-1279), the capital city of Hangzhou had become a vibrant commercial center, whose dynamic wealth and trading activity incited business establishments providing individual table service to order to develop from teahouses and taverns (Chang 1997). The first Chinese restaurants served a wide array of foods, from specialized cuisines to regional cooking, and arrived in the United States with the early Chinese immigrants of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Research Questions**

The earliest Chinese restaurants in the United States were meant to cater to overseas Chinese who yearned for the flavors of home. They allowed emigrants from Canton to maintain their custom of Yam Cha, drinking tea with family and friends while snacking on light hors d’ouvers-style dishes such as har kaa, a shrimp based filling wrapped in a thin chewy dough and cha shu bau, sweet flour buns stuffed with barbequed pork; they also served traditionally cooked Peking duck and roasted pork and wok-fried meals flavored with various Cantonese hoisen, chili, and soy-based sauces (Jen 2005). In serving immigrants the accustomed dishes of

their native land, they provided them with a sense of familiarity and cultural continuity and allowed them to reinforce their ethnic identity and connections to their home country (Roberts 2002) by maintaining consistency in their diet. These institutions functioned not only as hubs of nutritional and cultural sustenance, but also as social centers where all members of the community (Wood 1926), from those residing in neighboring tenements to those who lived and worked in distant orchards, could converge, embrace each other's company, and foster a sense of ethnic solidarity in a world of hostility. In addition, restaurants bore profound economic implications, generating demands on various suppliers and wholesalers both within and external to the local Chinese community (Lee 1948), and eventually becoming tourist attractions that lured in curious American diners.

Starting in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Anglo-Americans began patronizing some of these dining establishments for a taste of the exotic, and their Chinese cooks began accommodating their dishes to fit the tourist palate. Non-Chinese customers were presented with their own "American menus", written in English and offering a standard fare of simple meat and vegetable dishes stir-fried in a sweet-and-sour sauce, followed by a fortune cookie (Lovegren 1999). Gone were the staples of authentic Cantonese cuisine, such as chicken feet or shark's fin soup; unlike the menus transcribed in Chinese that those of Asian descent ordered from, these menus listed items such as chop suey, orange chicken, and General Tso's chicken (Jen 2005). In an attempt to appeal to American clientele beyond its cuisine, Chinese restaurants were outfitted in a Euroamerican fashion with elegant, wood-carved interiors and attended by waiters sporting crisp, western-style tuxedos. These later restaurants marked a sharp departure from their predecessors and also from other contemporary restaurants that did not solicit a Western clientele. Much less ornate (Roberts 2002), Chinese restaurants catering primarily to members of their own community

tended to display simpler décor and more traditional menus, and their internality to the community rendered them especially significant to overseas Chinese culture. Operating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in a rather insular environment, the restaurants of the Market Street Chinatown site probably represented these less elaborate dining institutions fairly circumscribed to the immigrant population; establishments of this sort will be the focus of my research.

For all the significance the restaurant held in early Chinatowns, these food service establishments have scarcely been studied, especially those dating back to the time of the Market Street community, probably because there is so little information available on them. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, few outsiders gained access to Chinese communities and their restaurants, and these dining facilities were not particularly formal institutions; what little documentation and records related to these businesses were produced has seldom been preserved. Few archaeologists have attempted to study the material remains of restaurants and their implications, most likely because it is so difficult to conclusively associate a feature or certain artifacts to a particular restaurant, as it is often difficult to pin down a specific context for a given assemblage. The Market Street Chinatown comprised of a minimum of three Chinese restaurants (Yu 2001), although in Chinatowns of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many of the establishments that served food to hungry patrons were not “restaurants” in the conventional sense. Doubtless other forms food service outside of restaurant and domestic contexts, such as communal pig-roasting or merchant stores serving meals, existed in the Market Street society as well, but restaurants are distinctive on account of their unique blending of commercial and communal food service. Whether catering to a banquet for a special celebration, or simply filling the stomach of a famished worker with a bowl of beef noodle soup, Chinese restaurants were a crucial and often overlooked component of overseas Chinese societies, and an understanding of their archaeological attributes will allow for further

inference into various aspects of the lifeways of members of immigrant Chinese enclaves, from food consumption to cultural identity to economic practices.

In an effort to gain insight on the social, cultural, and economic activity of these individuals, I will address the archaeological characteristics of overseas Chinatown restaurants in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This will entail exploring documentary sources for information to construct a profile delineating the attributes of a restaurant-related artifact assemblage. I will also inquire into what an assemblage explicitly unrelated to restaurant activity from the Market Street Site looks like, and how this compares to another onsite collection suspected of being affiliated with restaurant practices. In terms of food-related artifacts, hollowware, and tableware, I will study whether this potential restaurant assemblage is more consistent with the theoretical restaurant profile or with the controlling “non-restaurant” assemblage.

**Assemblage Context and Provenience:**

Documentary evidence from the ARS site reports cites that two of the three restaurants which were known to have existed in the Market Street Chinatown were situated somewhere in the west half of lots 3 and 6. An overlay of the ARS feature map over a Sanborn Insurance map (Figure 1) depicts Features 85-31:14 as being within this vicinity and situated in a probable commercial district of the community. In addition, the ARS report identified Feature 14 as a bone-roasting pit, which could indicate restaurant activity; Feature 14.5 was not by itself specifically acknowledged in the report, but regarded as a subdivision of feature 14 (where it was situated). As 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 represent the same feature, and Feature 14.5 is just a part of Feature 14, they can be conflated into one for the purposes of this project. It is plausible that this bone-roasting pit was utilized by a restaurant establishment, implicating association between Feature 14/14.5 and restaurant practices. I reviewed all 85-31:14 and 14.5 catalog entries

recorded in the ARS Report for site 85-31, but my analysis assemblage focused primarily on only all ceramic remains recovered from these features: this encompassed tableware—including Asian porcelain bowls and fragments of serving dishes and Euroamerican Whiteware—and stoneware, such as extra large good storage jars and soy sauce pots.

Feature 85-31:20 was completely analyzed by Elizabeth Noelani Clevenger in 2003, and it consists of 257 distinct items. Spatial analysis indicated this rectangular wood-lined pit was proximal to tenement housing, the Market Street Chinatown temple, and mercantile establishments that appear to have operated as stores during the community's occupation. Provenience and the considerable occurrence of items distinctive to household settings confirm a significant domestic dimension to the context of this assemblage, which represents non-commercial food practices. Food preparation and consumption associated with Feature 20 may have occurred within individual homes, or it may have also occurred in the more communal setting of the temple or various shops. This form of communal dining was distinct from that which characterized restaurants, for it was not commercial. Individuals typically did not pay for their meals, which they often ate off of their own plates and bowls they had brought from home, as unlike restaurants, these forms of food service did not provide diners with tableware (Roberts 2002); such a distinction would manifest itself in material remains through diversity in vessel waretypes. Clearly unrelated to restaurant activity, the 85-31:20 collection represented the “non-restaurant” assemblage, and it provided a sense of the archaeology of regions of the Market Street site without restaurant affiliation. Data on this assemblage, primarily relating to ceramics, was incorporated into my project, serving as a controlling framework against which I could compare the Features 14 and 14.5 collection. The collection consists of glass, metal, and

ceramic materials, in addition to fauna, organics, and miscellaneous small finds, including opium pipes and toothbrushes.

**Methodology—Developing a Restaurant Profile:**

The first component of my research consisted of establishing a distinct tentative profile of an overseas Chinese restaurant assemblage against which I could compare the findings from features 85-31:14 and 14.5 and effectively evaluate whether or not they could be associated with a commercial dining facility. This required an investigation of historical Chinese restaurants to develop an understanding of what the category of restaurant entails; an examination of how it is distinguished from other sites of commercial, communal, and domestic food preparation and consumption, and how these differences might be manifested archaeologically, was especially instrumental. Presently, historical literature on Chinese restaurants in 19<sup>th</sup> century immigrant communities in the United States is practically inexistent, and there is a sparse amount of information available on their archaeological attributes from which I can construct a restaurant profile. By studying texts discussing archaeological research in other Chinatown sites in the United States dating back to time periods approximating that of the Market Street enclave, I attempted to draw inferences on the material distinctions of historical restaurants in overseas Chinese communities. I explored the nature of the remains recovered from any features or areas associated with restaurant activity, situating them against assemblages from domestic and non-restaurant-related features. Other material I consulted was literature discussing food practices and table service in Chinese customs. In addition, I investigated historical documents detailing qualities of commercial dining institutions in 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinatowns, such as restaurant reports, reviews, and menus; similarly, I sought historical illustrations and photographs depicting their appearance and structure. From this array of sources, I was able infer certain archaeological

characteristics potentially diagnostic of a historical Chinese restaurant artifact assemblage, and I incorporated these details into my hypothesized profile. While several variations are certain to have existed among early Chinese restaurants, my research aims to highlight some of the broader, more general archaeological attributes of these establishments.

#### 1) Frequency of Food-Related vs. Non-Food-Related Artifacts:

Perhaps the most distinguishing attribute of the restaurant profile is the pre-dominance of food-related artifacts within the assemblage. Research on the Los Angeles Chinatown, which dated from 1880 to 1933, uncovered an extensive trash pit, Feature 29, measuring 2.2 meters by 2.2 meters in length and width and 1.3 meters in depth. Greenwood inferred that this structure accommodated deposits from a restaurant establishment, and a notable percentage of all materials recovered from this pit were food-related ceramics (Greenwood 1996). Features associated with families and households rather than restaurants are likely to contain various household, personal, recreational, ceremonial, and health and hygiene related items that would be less prominent in commercial dining areas (Wegars). For instance, the Ying On Compound of the archaeological Chinese site recovered in the Tucson Urban Renewal Project was the site of a feature, TUR 2:22 associated with domestic activity in the early 1900's. The artifact inventory for this feature encompassed a vast multitude of materials: household furnishings such as decorative stained glassware, recreational commodities such as ashtrays, clothing remnants such as buttons, notions such as needles, toiletries such as hair brushes, and medicinal items such as medicine bottles. Artifacts such as these unrelated to foodways would probably not appear commonly among remains associated with a restaurant, as they are rather tangential to restaurant practices (Lister and Lister 1989). Since the primary activity associated with such an

establishment is commercial-scale food preparation, service, and consumption, most artifacts found in a restaurant assemblage should be food-related.

## 2) Stoneware:

A feature associated with a commercial dining establishment is also likely to contain markedly high quantities and frequencies of stoneware containers—diagnostic of large-scale commercial food preparation—especially in relation to other onsite features. Such food service enterprises likely required much hollowware to store all the food-related supplies needed for preparing and serving meals on a commercial scale. The deposit from Feature 29 of the Los Angeles Chinatown included “1071 discrete stoneware items,” comprised of spouted pots, wide-mouthed storage vessels, and large jars for shipping bulk materials (Greenwood 1996: 43). As might be expected from a restaurant assemblage, this collection encompasses notably high frequencies of extra large storage containers, large barrel jars, and wide-mouthed receptacles, which would be necessary for storing the large quantities of food-associated supplies utilized in large-scale food service. While such classes of ceramic vessels might be less common in domestic or non-commercial dining settings, they are likely to be especially prevalent among restaurant collections: large jars were intended for shipping materials in bulk, which restaurants commonly needed to do, and wide-mouthed storage vessels could be easily filled and their contents easily accessed, making them convenient assets in the often hectic activity of restaurant kitchens (Chang 1997). Glazed on the inside, wet foods could be stored in the shouldered jars, while the large barrel containers, which were unglazed inside, could conserve large quantities of dry goods (Mueller 1987). The immensity of extra large food containers was especially conducive to the shipping, preserving, and preparation of significant amounts of food

(Greenwood 1996), essential in the commercial food service of restaurants, which had to cater to considerable numbers of people.

Spouted receptacles were typically used for holding and pouring various oils, sauces, and other liquid foods. Table service generally included the use of one such pot at each dining table, meaning there was little necessity for a household to retain more than one, since in a domestic setting there was typically one dining table to a home (Spier 1958). Restaurants, on the other hand, often included multiple dining tables, and each table likely required one spouted pot. Since each restaurant was responsible for a greater degree of table service, more such jars were needed. Other forms of communal dining engaged in a type of food preparation and consumption that was less typically less established and commercial in nature than that of restaurants (Roberts 2002). The food service of activities such as community pork roasts or temple feasts, on the other hand, did not cater to diners on a regular basis, thus it would not have as pronounced a need for wide-mouthed jars facilitating quick food preparation or large stoneware vessels accommodating extensive stores of supplies as restaurant service (Chang 1997); this type of food service was also more casual, so it also probably did not consist of formal table settings (Roberts 2002), meaning that spouted pots might not be particularly frequent.

### 3) Tableware Classes

A restaurant assemblage would also encompass a larger proportion of tableware in comparison to an assemblage from a domestic or other type of setting, as tableware is intrinsically tied to food service and consumption. Assemblages of different contexts are typically associated with a variety of activities in addition to food preparation and consumption, and food practices are not as intensive. The individual soup-rice bowl was the staple of the

Chinese table setting as much as rice was the staple of the Chinese diet. At the minimum, table service always included one such bowl for each individual seated, who could consume anything from white rice to braised noodles to stir-fried meat from these vessels. Household table settings typically consisted of one bowl to each member of the family (Moses and Whitmore 1987); some early immigrants to the United States, typically single laboring men, managed with no tableware other than a standard ceramic bowl and spoon, accompanied by a pair of chopsticks (Wegars 2001). Historical images depicting late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Chinese restaurants indicate that in such establishments, each diner at a table usually had a bowl of his or her own (Lister and Lister 1989). Thus, these bowls can be interpreted as providing a measure of the MNI of individuals served, in the sense that the number of bowls within an assemblage indicates the minimum number of people who might be eating at a particular meal. As restaurants generally catered to more individuals, an artifact collection related to restaurant activity might consist of more soup-rice bowls.

Findings from features associated with restaurants in other overseas Chinese enclaves dating back to a time period approximating that of the Market Street Chinatown indicate higher frequencies of tea pots and condiment dishes, which, similar to spouted receptacles, typically numbered one per dining table. Less affluent households and more casual areas of food preparation and consumption often did not even retain such vessels (Greenwood 1996). Since large-scale food service distinct from restaurants generally did not consist of any formal table service, tableware was seldom provided, and people simply brought their own bowls and vessels to eat off of (Spier 1958). Thus, these forms of communal dining would not correlate with the same high frequencies of tea pots and condiment dishes associated with restaurant activity. In addition, large serving dishes are expected in restaurant assemblages, where they were probably

used to serve more sizeable communal dishes, such as a whole roasted duck or steamed fish (Lovegren 1999), to parties bigger than an individual family. These large serving vessels were scarcely found in domestic settings, where there was seldom any need to serve such large meals to so many people; they were often seldom utilized in non-restaurant communal dining, which did not need to be equipped to serve meals to large parties on a consistent basis and in a formal setting.

#### 4) Tableware Decorative Styles and Value

Data from Feature 29 in the Los Angeles Chinatown also revealed that while the proportion of the ceramics in this assemblage characterized by the hand painted Four Seasons pattern—a polychrome pigment floral design depicting symbols the four seasons of the year surrounding a peach, representing longevity—numbered 64%, the frequency of Four Seasons vessels across the entire Los Angeles Chinatown collection was only 44.4% (Greenwood 1996). Among ceramics, the Bamboo pattern has been the most frequently encountered in overseas Chinese sites (Mueller), probably because it was one of the cheaper waretypes: ceramic inventories from the Kwong Tai Wo Company, a vendor of Asian ceramic tableware dating from 1871 to 1896, suggest Four Flowers and Celadon decorated vessels were pricier and more precious (Clevenger 2004). Similar to Feature 29 from the Los Angeles site, Feature 12 of the Riverside Chinatown excavation, was identified as connected to a restaurant establishment, the Bamboo Gardens Restaurant (Pratzellis 1997). The artifact collection from Feature 12 contained a particular class of notched elliptical restaurant wares. All tableware recovered from this feature had the same pattern of thickly enameled surfaces and appliquéd polychrome symbols and floral designs; this style of adornment did not occur in any other onsite assemblages not associated to a restaurant (Pratzellis 1997). Perhaps restaurant operators exhibited a tendency

toward serving customers on tableware of more valuable waretypes or rare decorative styles. As restaurants needed to appeal to customers who were paying to dine in their facilities, they represented a more established form of food service and probably hoped to augment the quality of their patrons' dining experiences.

#### 5) Tableware Standardization

Regardless, the pronounced predominance in the Feature 29 collection from the Los Angeles Chinatown of one style over other patterns, and the presence of only a single watype in the Feature 12 assemblage of the Riverside site suggests restaurant assemblages may be characterized by consistency in tableware decoration. High degrees of homogeneity are rarely apparent in other assemblages not associated to commercial dining activity (Greenwood 1996), and are diagnostic of a restaurant facility. As with more expensive waretypes, standardized tableware probably also formalized dining experiences and enhanced the service of restaurants.

#### **Methodology—Material Analysis:**

Having constructed a profile for historical overseas Chinese restaurants, material analysis of the collection from features 14 and 14.5 could now be conducted effectively: I evaluated the data from my assemblage of interest by situating it within this contextual information. After gathering data on this assemblage, I compared the archaeological profile of this collection with the artifact profile of 85-31:20. By contrasting data on the Feature 14 and Feature 14.5 collection to the assemblage embodying domestic and non-commercial communal dining, I tested for the emergence of notable differences suggesting its distinctiveness from the “non-restaurant” control assemblage. I also compared data on the 85-31:14 and 14.5 collection with the hypothesized profile for restaurants in historical overseas Chinese communities. Parallels

drawn to the restaurant profile were indicative of an association between Features 14 and 14.5 and a restaurant facility.

While most ceramics of the analyzed assemblage had already been catalogued, I re-examined them all again in order to confirm the accuracy of previous cataloging and to complete a more detailed, specific analysis of the assemblage that considered its consistency with the hypothesized restaurant profile. To get a sense of the predominance of food-related activity in Features 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5, I calculated the percentage of total catalog entries for both features related to food practices, as well as the percentage of catalog entries that represented tableware and the percentage of entries representing storage jars. I compared these frequencies to the comparable values calculated by Liz Clevenger for the control assemblage, the 85-31:20 collection.

MNV values for stoneware and tableware recovered from 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 were calculated using MSCAP protocol, which dictates that artifacts—individually or in groups—be assigned single catalog numbers and MNI numbers when they were stored by ARS. Consequently, catalog MNI quantities can be inflated; artifacts stored separately might actually be fragments of the same vessel, but MSCAP protocol prescribes an MNI of at least one for each. In order to check and correct for any inflation in MNV counts based on catalog entries, I recalculated MNVs for different classes of artifacts across the assemblage, analyzing the collection holistically. Basing my calculations on completeness of artifacts and diagnostic sherds, such as rim and base percentages, I considered whether or not artifacts stored separately could potentially represent the same, individual artifact, and alternately, if multiple artifacts were stored and catalogued as one, which ended up being the case more often.

I sorted the hollowwares into classes based on size and type, such as “spouted jar” or “large stoneware storage vessel,” and evaluated the MNI for each based on size, completeness, decoration, and diagnostic sherds such as spouts or rims. These MNV’s were then recorded into a table, from which I calculated the frequency of each class relative to the total MNI of the assemblage (N=52). For Feature 85-31:20, I evaluated frequencies for the same classes of storage vessels using Clevenger’s MNV values, calculated according to methodology similar to that which I followed; I then used these frequencies as a point of comparison with the stoneware frequencies from the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage and calculated a factor of difference based on frequencies in Feature 20 (Table 3). All "Factor of Difference" computations in this study were completed by dividing the frequencies from 85-31:14/14.5 by corresponding frequencies from 85-31:20; when values of zeros were involved, the computation was deemed invalid and omitted from the analysis.

With ceramics, I calculated MNV quantities for different waretypes (i.e.: Celadon, Four Seasons), as well as calculating another set of MNV values by vessel class (i.e.: large bowl, tiny cup). These calculations were based on completeness, size, decorative style, and diagnostic fragments, such as bases or rims. The values of the minimum number of vessels for each distinctive waretype appearing in the assemblage were entered into a table and relative frequencies tabulated; these numbers were then compared with relative frequencies of waretypes in the Feature 20 assemblage, based on Clevenger’s MNI quantities (Table 5A). The values for the minimum number of individuals in each vessel class were also calculated, recorded into a table, and their frequencies with respect to the total MNI value for the entire assemblage computed; these frequencies were compared with corresponding frequencies calculated from 85-31:20 MNV’s (Table 4). In addition, all discrete tableware vessels were assigned to one of the

two categories of “valuable” and “less valuable” based on waretype, and the MNI values in each category for tableware from Feature 14/14.5 and from 85-31:20 were compiled into a third table illustrating relative frequencies of waretype value, and the differences in these relative frequencies between the two assemblages were related through computing factors of difference (Table 5B). This data allowed me to evaluate whether the artifact profile of my collection was compatible with what would be expected if it were associated to a restaurant facility. I could also compare my collection and the tableware and hollowware from the 85-31:20 assemblage with each other and assess whether my group of artifacts were more consistent with the control assemblage or with what might be expected from a restaurant assemblage.

**The Data:**

Nearly all the catalog entries for Features 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 were classified as associated with food practices (a category which includes ceramics, glass bottles accommodating foods and beverages, and other artifacts utilized in food preparation, service, or consumption), while food-related artifacts recovered from Features 85-31:20 comprised only 48% of the entire assemblage by number of catalog entries and 52% by weight. Feature 20 also encompassed several different categories of artifacts absent from 85-31:14 and 14.5: housewares, such as basketry fragments, health and hygiene items, such as medicine bottles, clothing, such as buttons, and objects related to leisure and entertainment, such as gaming pieces, figurines, writing implements, and opium pipe bowls. In fact, there was an MNI of 9 health-related artifacts, comprising 3.5% of the total MNI for the control assemblage, as opposed to only 1.92% of the MNI for the Feature 14 and 14.5 assemblage. There were only two cataloged artifacts recovered from 85-31:14 and 14.5 that could be expressly classified as unrelated to food practices, a part of a bone toothbrush and a glass ink bottle; the rest of the items represented in the ARS catalog

consisted of food-related ceramics and glass, indeterminate glass sherds, and a knife-sharpening block. For a listing of the MNI values of all 52 discrete artifacts identified in 85-31:14 and 14.5, refer to Table 1.

Based on number of catalog entries, stoneware storage vessels made up 28.57% of the 85-31:14 and 14.5 collection. Food storage jars accounted for remains from the MNV of 17 Asian stoneware vessels excavated from 85-31:14 and 14.5. 3.85% of the total MNI of the assemblage was classified as large barrel jars: potentially extending beyond 20 cm in width, they bore a dark brown glaze on the outside but were unglazed inside. The assemblage included a minimum number of 4 wide-mouthed or shouldered jars, which typically extended to around 6 inches in width at their widest point and were glazed both on surface and inside, accounting for 7.69% of the discrete artifacts from Features 14 and 14.5. Spouted pots, with rims measuring approximately 4-5 cm in diameter and bodies up to 12.5 cm in diameter, and marked by a narrow opening, characteristic spout appendage, and bodies resembling those of wide-mouthed jars, represented 7.69% of the MNI of Features 14 and 14.5 artifacts as well. In addition, at least 5.77% of the collection was represented by extra large storage jars (See Figure 2) that could have been over a hundred centimeters in height. The Asian stoneware vessels of Feature 85-31:20, on the other hand, by catalog entries represented only 12.24% of all feature artifacts. By MNV count, 1.56% of the “non-restaurant” assemblage was categorized as spouted jars, 1.17% of the artifacts were attributed to the category of wide-mouthed jar and lids, and no large or extra large containers were identified. Two robust sherds from one large barrel jar lid were recovered, but no evidence of the body of this vessel was found.

Tableware constituted 37.26% of the entire Feature 14 and Feature 14.5 catalog entries, and 16.41% of all artifacts catalogued from 85-31:20 was classified as tableware. The MNI of

seven cups in the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage constituted 13.46% of the MNI for the entire assemblage, 3.85% of which were characterized as tiny cups, measuring around 4 cm in diameter (see Figure 3). Tea-drinking vessels accounted for 7.69% of the collection, and an improved whiteware Euroamerican cup accounted for 1.92%. A minimum of six bowls were identified from 85-31:14 and 14.5, all but one of which were standard-sized individual rice-soup bowls (see Figure 5) that represented 9.62% of the assemblage. The sixth was a potential extra large earthenware serving bowl representing 1.92%. According to MNV's, the frequency of plates in the 85-31:14 assemblage was 3.85%, and Feature 14/14.5 also consisted of a nearly intact plate measuring only 5.27 cm in diameter, a possible condiment dish (1.92% of the assemblage by MNV, see Figure 6). In addition, the artifact collection from 85-31:14 and 14.5 also included the stoneware footing of an extra large serving dish glazed on both sides, and a tableware sherd representing a segment of the blue scalloped edge of a whiteware vessel, both which each comprised 1.92% of the entire artifact assemblage based on MNI counts.

Based on minimum number of vessels quantities, the tableware of the 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 assemblage could be broken down into the following distribution by waretypes: 38.89% Four Seasons, 22.22% Celadon, 11.11% Bamboo, 11.11% Euroamerican Whiteware, 16.67% Other. Based on MNI's, all tea drinking vessels in the collection were Celadon, and all tiny cups bore the Four Seasons pattern. All bowls were medium-sized individual bowls, and by MNV 60% were of the Four Seasons decorative style, while Bamboo accounted for 40% of the Feature 14 and Feature 14.5 bowls. It is likely that all plates recovered from Features 14 and 14.5 were of the Four Seasons design.

According to catalog entries, tableware accounted for 16.41% of the 85-31:20 assemblage. Medium sized bowls appeared the most frequently as 4.67% of the collection by

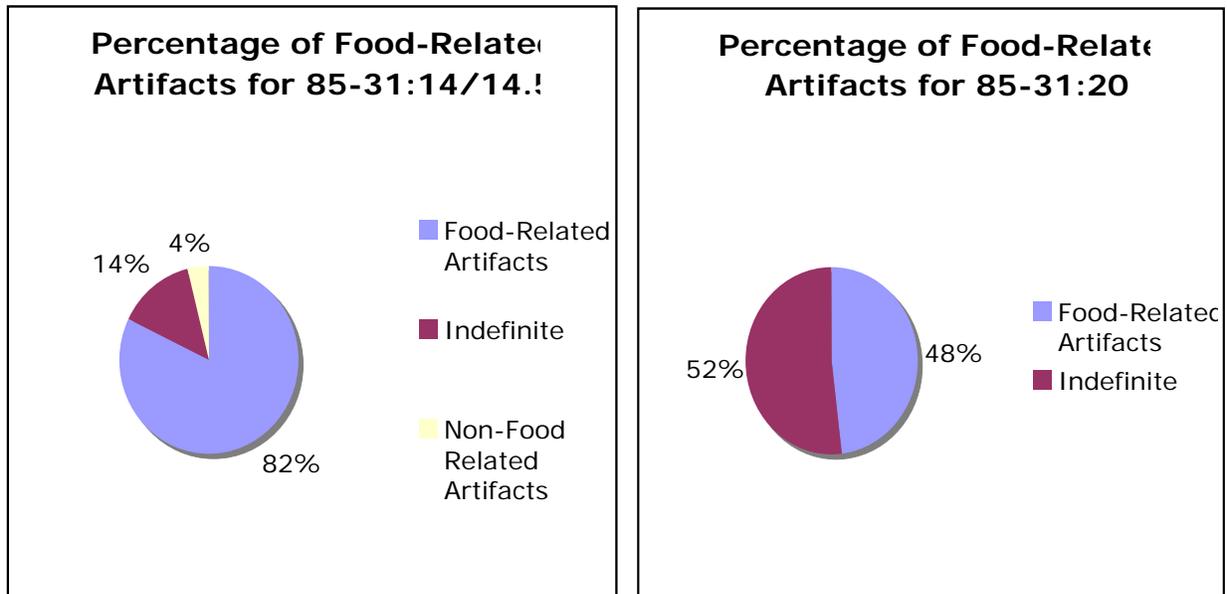
MNV counts, while small bowls and large bowls numbered 1.95% each. The “non-restaurant” control assemblage also included two distinct, indeterminate bowls and one small, octagonal bowl whose decorative style could not be classified, respectively comprising 0.77% and 0.39% of the discrete artifacts in Feature 20 by MNI values. Plates and tiny cups both comprised 1.17% of the assemblage. No tea cups, condiment dishes, or serving platters were recovered. Among waretypes, 30% of the control collection tableware was decorated in the Four Seasons design, 14% was in the Celadon style, 13% of the vessels bore the Bamboo pattern, nearly 20% of the tableware were identified as Euro-American in origin, and 23% fell into the category of Other. 58% of the total MNV of medium-sized bowls were painted with Bamboo, 33.33% were Celadon, and 8.33% represented Four Seasons, according to MNI calculations.

**Interpretations:**

**Frequencies of Food-Related vs. Non-Food Related Artifacts**

While only 48% of the remains from 85-31:20 were associated to food preparation and consumption, an overwhelming 81.63% of the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage was related to food practices. Features 14 and 14.5 did not display the same array and notable numbers of personal affects, household items, and other non-food related materials recovered from Feature 20. Suggesting possible finds in a domestic or ceremonial context, or from the commercial setting of a merchant establishment, these artifacts imply a distinctive context for the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage with their notable absence from this collection. On the other hand, all but two of the items in the Features 14 and 14.5 assemblage could be related to food practices, implicating it was associated to an institution primarily concerned with the preparation and consumption of food, and not much else. My constructed restaurant profile hypothesized that food-related artifacts would predominate among a restaurant assemblage. Thus, the artifact profile of the

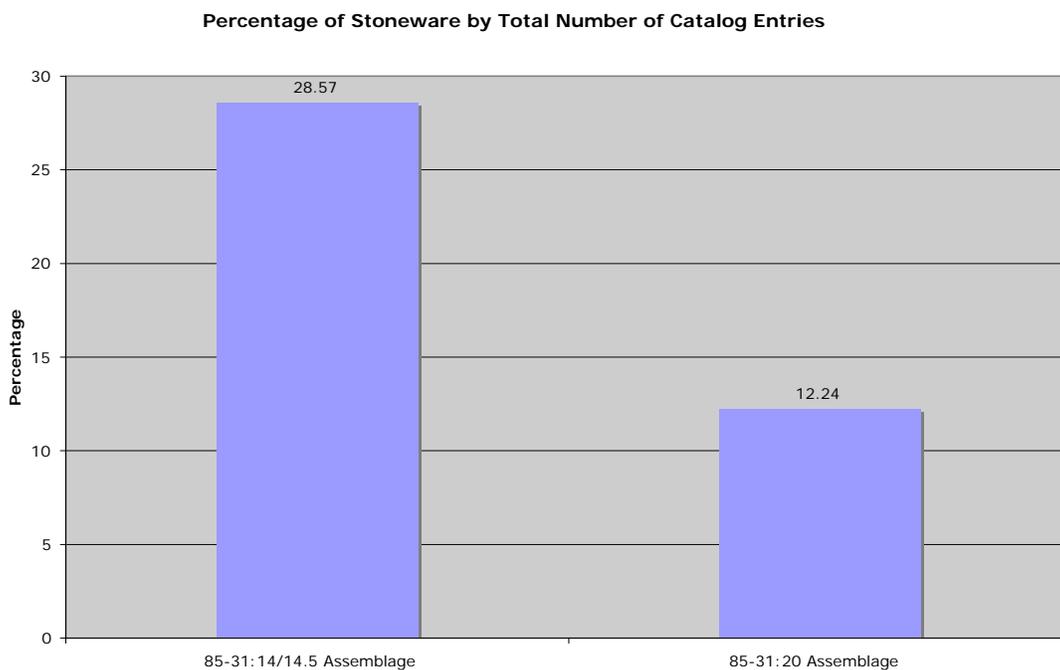
features of interest resembles the tentative profile more closely than it does the control collection from Feature 20.



According to the ARS catalog, Feature 14.5 yielded a particularly notable find: a knife-sharpening block, an artifact which was not identified in any other feature, and which is indicative of the large-scale commercial food preparation practiced in restaurants. However, due to several limitations, this artifact could not be located for analysis in this research project. The two items in the assemblage of interest that could conclusively be identified as unrelated to restaurant activity were a toothbrush and an ink brush. While these health and hygiene and leisure-related items do not seem completely consistent with a restaurant profile, excavations of other restaurants have typically yielded other seemingly anomalous finds on occasions. While they might not be directly related to food practices, it is possible that might have been employed in other restaurant activities, such as bookkeeping, or simply associated with individuals working or spending a lot of their time in the restaurant.

### Stoneware

The high MNV count of hollowware storage vessels—all likely to have been associated with foodstuffs in some way—in the Feature 14 and 14.5 assemblage exceeded the 85-31:20 collection MNV of 10 by 7; as the number of artifacts in the Feature 20 assemblage was quite a bit larger than in the 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 assemblage, based on catalog entries, the percentage of the Feature 14 and 14.5 assemblage represented by hollowware (28.57%) exceeded the 12.24% percentage in Feature 20 by more than double. As the tentative profile for a historical overseas Chinese restaurant prescribes high frequencies of stoneware vessels, the quantity of discrete stoneware artifacts recovered from Feature 14 and 14.5 distinguishes these features from the onsite “non-restaurant” assemblage and shows a stronger connection to the tentative restaurant tentative profile than to the collection representing domestic and other commercial and communal activity.

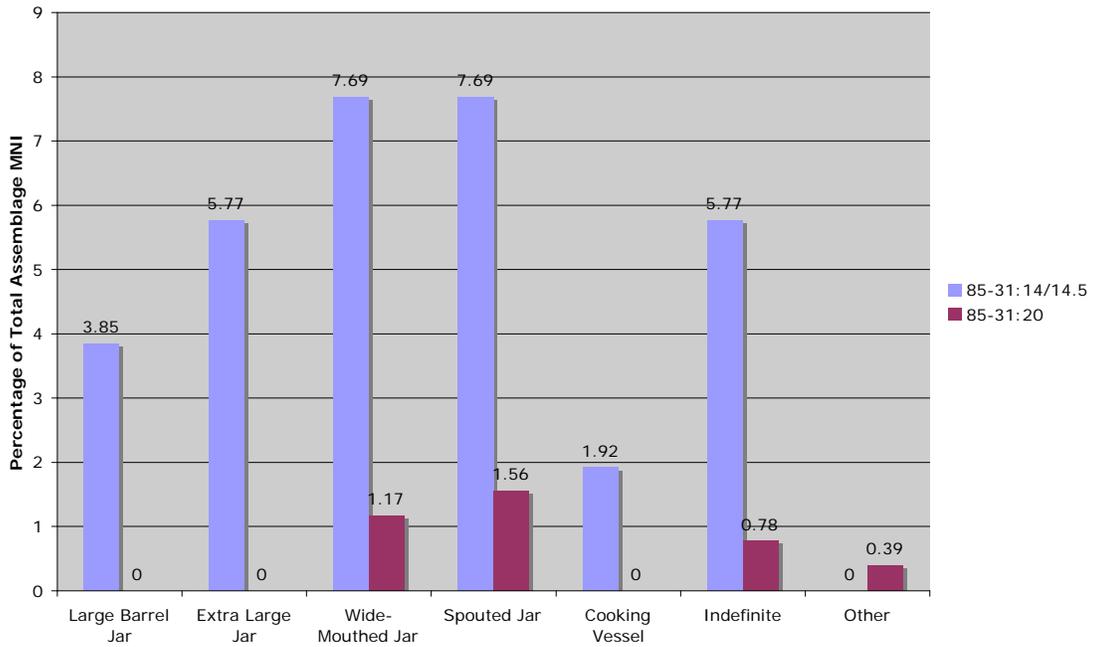


The frequencies based on MNV counts of classes of stoneware diagnostic of the large-scale food preparation and consumption of restaurants in the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage were

much higher than in the control assemblage. Extra large jars were rarely found in other regions of the site, and remains from Feature 20 did not include any jars of such size, nor did it include any large barrel jars. Wide-mouthed jars accounted for 7.69% of the MNI of distinct artifacts in the Feature 14 and 14.5 assemblage, which is 6.57 times greater than the percentage of these containers in the Feature 20 collection. The markedly lower frequency of all these vessels in the collection unaffiliated with restaurant practices suggests a distinct difference from the Features 14 and 14.5 assemblage. The frequencies of stoneware classes in the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage are more closely akin to the profile, which prescribes high frequencies of wide-mouthed vessels and extra large and large-sized storage containers.

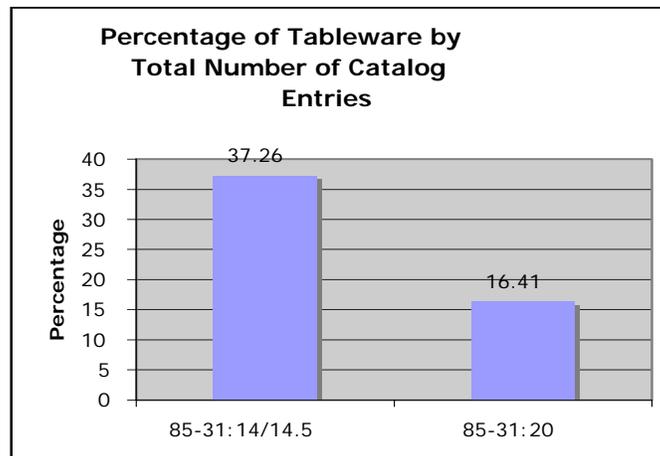
Spouted pots also comprised 7.69% of the entire 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 assemblage by MNI numbers, representing a frequency nearly five times larger than the frequency of spouted jars in the control assemblage. As Feature 20 was associated with tenement housing and stores, where the large-scale table service of restaurants to multiple tables was not a constant development, the frequency of these spouted vessels in the assemblage was fairly low, probably representing jars from individual households or shops. The assemblage from 14 and 14.5, on the other hand, is more consistent with the artifact profile of a restaurant, due to its considerable frequency of spouted receptacles, which is designated as one of the characteristics of the theorized profile. In addition, the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage also consisted of evidence of a large-sized stoneware cooking vessel measuring over 25 cm in diameter (see Figures 7A, 7B, 7C) that was burnt, indicating use in cooking. Its extensive size indicates preparation of sizeable dishes for large numbers of people, and there was no evidence of a pot of similar size and shape in the control assemblage.

**Frequencies of Hollowware Classes**



**Tableware Classes**

By catalog entries, tableware comprised 37.26% of the Features 14 and 14.5 assemblage, which was about 2.3 times greater than the percentage of catalog entries identified as tableware in Feature 20; this is in line with the hypothesized restaurant profile, which suggests restaurant-related assemblages might consist of more tableware than domestic or other assemblages like the control.



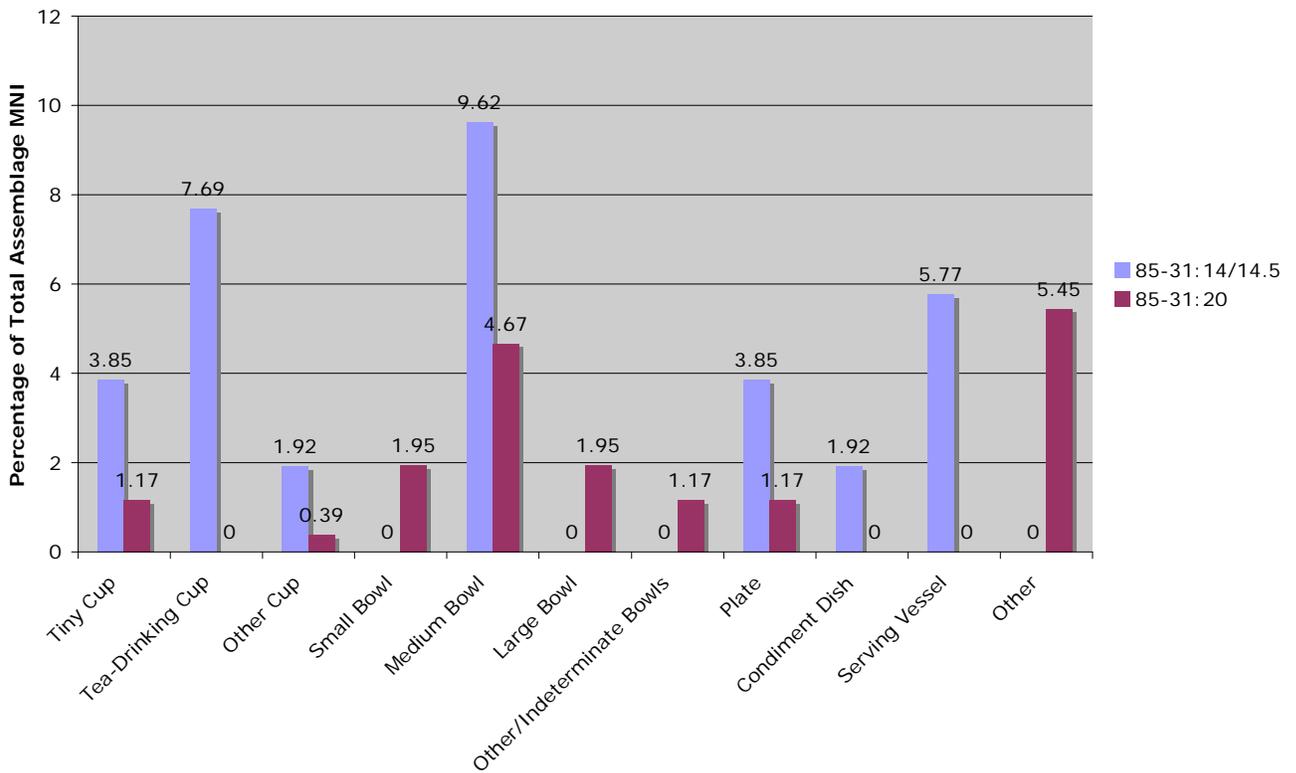
The proportion of the MNI for discrete artifacts in the Features 14 and 14.5 collection that was classified as medium bowls—the primary vessel for individual consumption—was more than twice as large as in the non-restaurant-associated 85-31:20. This suggests more people might have been served and indicates a sort of communal dining facility, thus correlating the 85-31:14 and 14.5 collection to the tentative profile’s indication that a restaurant assemblage might consist of large quantities of these specific vessels. The recovery of the nearly intact condiment dish in the collection is also consistent with a restaurant profile, as assemblages related to other forms of food preparation and consumption did not always have such vessels. Utilized in more established dining experiences, none were found in Feature 20, distinguishing the control assemblage from both the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage and the hypothesized profile.

The scalloped rim fragment recovered from Feature 14.5 appears to have fragmented from a plate characterized as improved British Whiteware, decorated with a blue-shelled edge, and it could have been used as a serving dish. Such flatware was rarely found in overseas Chinese communities; the Market Street Chinatown site was no exception, and although the 85-31:20 assemblage was much more extensive than the 85-31:14 and 14.5 collection, it did not contain any pieces of Whiteware decorated in such a way. This attests to the uniqueness of the Feature 14 and 14.5 tableware and denotes its compatibility with the hypothesized profile for a 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinese restaurant, as this profile proposes that a restaurant assemblage might encompass distinctive tableware and serving vessels.

The footring of an extra large stoneware serving dish, painted with dark glaze on both sides indicates use of a large serving vessel. This dish probably accommodated more sizeable, communal dishes serving crowds more numerous than a single family. Similarly, an earthenware sherd recovered from Feature 14.5 could represent an extra large bowl for serving larger meals.

These sizeable serving vessels are indicative of communal food preparation and consumption, but they do not seem to emerge in all communal dining assemblages, as the remains of the control assemblage from Feature 20 did not yield any such platters or bowls. The only potential serving dish recovered from this feature was represented by two fragments from the lid of a large barrel jar. These sherds appear to have been deposited far apart from the corresponding jar body, and there is no indication that they were ever burnt—and thus, the lid used for cooking. It is likely this lid was utilized as a makeshift serving platter during communal dining events that may have taken place in stores or in the temple. Thus, vessels that seem to have the sole purpose of serving large communal dishes distinguish the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage and reinforce its consistency with the restaurant profile, which predicts the occurrence of such artifacts among archaeological remains associated to restaurant activity.

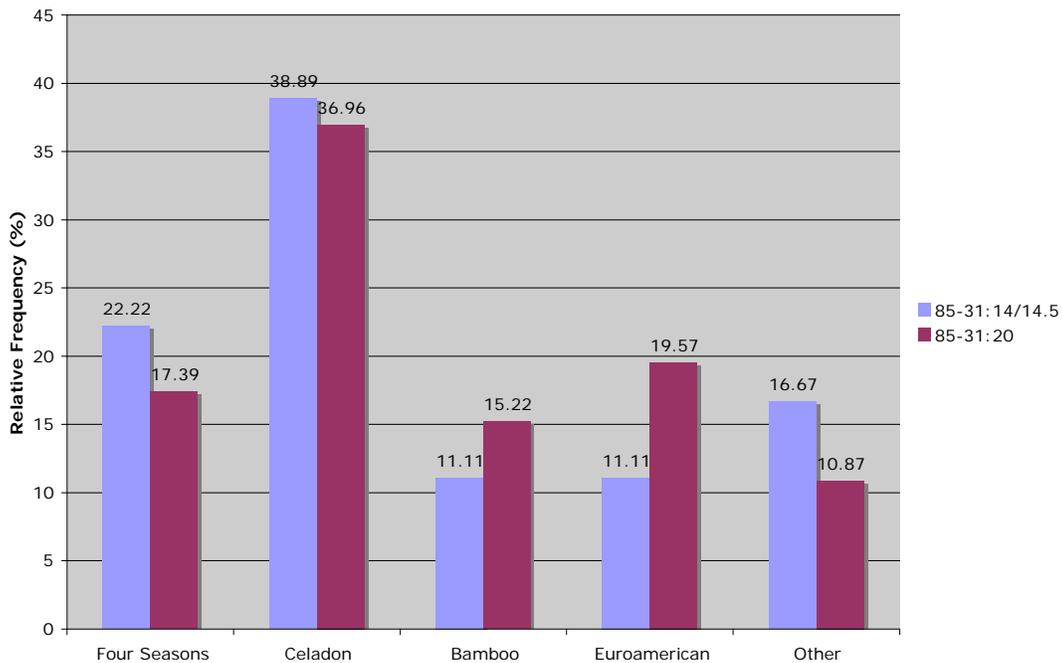
**Frequencies of Tableware Classes**



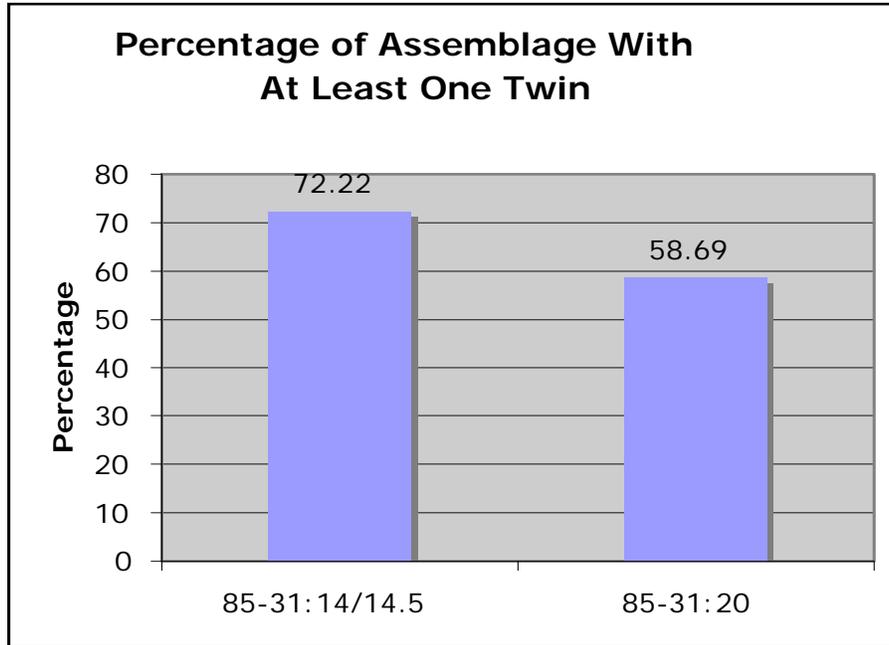
### **Tableware Standardization:**

The tablewares in the 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 collection represented a range of decorative patterns: by MNV counts, 38.89% of the vessels were of the Four Seasons style, 22.22% of Celadon, 11.11% Bamboo, 11.11% Euroamerican Whiteware, and 16.67% Other. At first glance, such a distribution of tableware design seemed more consistent with the 30% Four Seasons, 14% Celadon, 13% Bamboo, 20% Euro-American, 23% Other distribution of stylistic ratios in the “non-restaurant” control assemblage. The hypothesized restaurant profile prescribes that assemblages related to restaurants are distinguished by high degrees of standardization in tableware, meaning a predominance of one particular decorative style. Yet an analysis of both waretype and ceramic class revealed that the tableware recovered from Feature 14 and 14.5 actually did display substantial regularity within classes. All the tea drinking vessels were Celadon; uniformity in size, shape, and design among these cups suggests they were pieces of the same set (see Figure 8). The quantity of homogenous drinking vessels recovered from such a small assemblage is considerable, and it is indicative of uniformity in tableware. Two matching tiny cups, probably used for drinking liquor, were both painted with the same Four Seasons pattern; this means that 85.71% of all drinking vessels in the assemblage had at least one match in waretype. The two tiny cups corresponded to three Four Seasons bowls of large size and a plate sherd bearing the Four Seasons design, and another plate fragment that was too small to identify conclusively, but potentially represents a second Four Seasons plate. 80% of all bowls were individual rice soup bowls of the same standard size, while the Feature 20 assemblage consisted of bowls of a wide array of shapes, sizes, and waretypes.

Relative Frequencies of Tableware Decorative Style



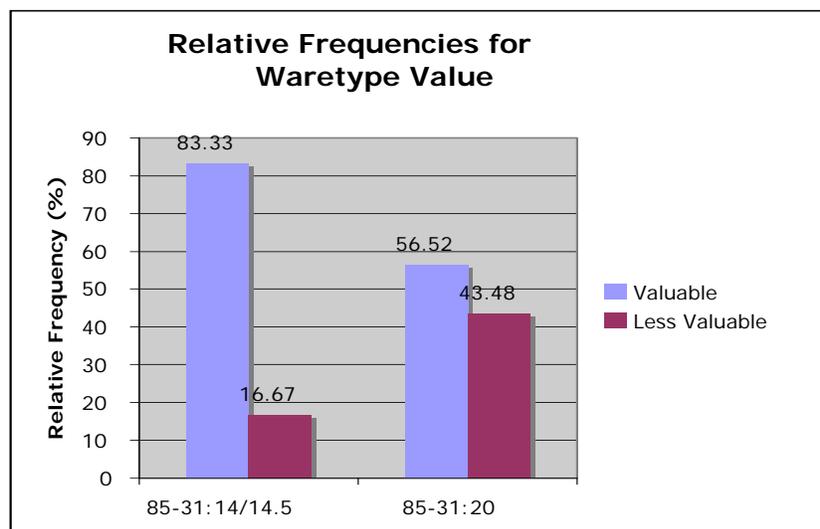
Overall, 72.22% of all tableware in the 85-31: 14 and 85-31:14.5 assemblage had at least one “twin,” an identical match in waretype, size, and form, a higher percentage than 58.69% in the Feature 20 control assemblage. Such statistical data is especially striking, given the much larger number of distinct artifacts in the 85-31:20 assemblage (N=257) in comparison to the MNI of artifacts in the Features 14 and 14.5 collection (N=52). By nature, larger assemblages are more conducive to occurrences of twinning, as they consist of more discrete artifacts, so it is rather noteworthy that there was a lower rate of twinning within the assemblage that was nearly five times larger. Thus, it appears that the tableware of 85-31: 14 and 14.5 does represent a certain degree of standardization, especially in comparison to Feature 20. Such consistency in tableware patterns is indicative of an association to a restaurant facility, even though it is not comprehensive.



For the most part, patterns in food-related tableware in restaurant assemblages at other sites have displayed some variation within their regularity; wares from the Bamboo Gardens Restaurant were completely homogenous, but the institution’s later time frame of operation probably allowed for a more established status and greater access to standardization in ceramics—restaurant wares were not even manufactured prior to 1890 (Pratzellis 1997). Perhaps Features 14 and 14.5 were related to a restaurant, which, like other Chinatown restaurants of its time, attempted to standardize its table service as much as possible in a more formal, commercial atmosphere, but lacked resources for comprehensive standardization. Food service related to Feature 20, on the other hand, was probably not commercial and occurred within the home or at communal meals in stores or the temple where individuals brought their own tableware; thus, artifacts represented personal rather than commercial tableware. Consequently, the fairly heterogeneous array of waretypes in this assemblage is probably representative of tableware from different households, either from the tenement houses or brought to communal meals in the temple or stores for personal use.

## Tableware Decorative Styles and Values

The prevalence of porcelain with more valued decorative styles is also suggestive of Feature 14 and 14.5's affiliation to a restaurant. 83.33% of the MNI of all porcelains in the collection were conclusively identified as bearing one of the two more expensive patterns, as opposed to only 56.52% in Feature 20; the factor of difference is nearly 1.5. Analysis of the artifact collection of the Los Angeles Chinatown yielded a similar discrepancy between frequency of the Four Seasons pattern within remains affiliated with a commercial dining institution and remains across the entire site. Furthermore, by total MNV counts 60% of all medium-sized bowls recovered from 85-31:14 and 14.5 were in the Four Seasons design, which approximates the percentage of personal food bowls decorated in Bamboo in the 85-31:20 "non-restaurant" assemblage. There seemed to be a tendency in restaurants toward service using more expensive bowls, as a notable 59.38% of the individual soup-rice bowls in feature 29 were Four Seasons, compared to only 8.9% throughout the rest of the site. Overall, the relative frequencies of the valuable vs. less valued waretypes in the Feature 14 and 14.5 assemblage are more aligned to the restaurant profile than to the relative waretype value frequencies of the control assemblage.



### Conclusion:

My research does indeed indicate that Features 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 are fairly consistent with a theorized artifact profile for a feature associated with a historical overseas Chinese restaurant. When considering the remains excavated from Feature 85-31:20, the greatest consistency exists between the 85-31:14 and 14.5 assemblage and the hypothesized profile, rather than between the Feature 20 assemblage and the profile, or between the “non-restaurant” control assemblage from Feature 20 assemblage and the Feature 14 and 14.5 assemblage. Doubtless, any element of surprise in such a discovery is extinguished by the fact that my research design had initially prescribed that I select for analysis an assemblage that *appeared* associated with restaurant practices. Among the 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5 assemblage, the proportion of food-related artifact, frequencies of stoneware, frequencies of discrete stoneware classes, frequencies of tableware, distribution of expensive and non-expensive wares, and degree of standardization all resembled the restaurant profile; this was suggestive of restaurant activity. Provenience reinforces the conjecture that Features 14 and 14.5 were related to such a commercial institution. Nevertheless, great caution must be taken not to make any conclusive statements on this assemblage. The limited resources that the hypothetical profile was based on severely restricts its validity and applicability, especially since there has been so little archaeological data collected on restaurant-related features; in the end, construction of this profile entailed much extrapolation and conjecture. Even if this profile could serve as an authoritative source, data from Features 14 and 14.5 did yield some inconsistencies. In addition, the relatively small sample size of ceramic artifacts in the assemblage contributes to the uncertainty of my results. A tally of only 17 distinct stoneware vessels and 18 pieces of tableware might not be a significant enough number of discrete artifacts for a conclusive

quantitative analysis; the considerable disparity in assemblage size between the Feature 14 and 14.5 collection and the control assemblage is also an issue of concern.

At best, I can only decisively assert that I could not prove that Features 14 and 14.5 were *not* associated to restaurant activity. Since an association was not disproven, the assemblage from these features may provide some indications of the distribution of materials that might be found in a collection related to a restaurant facility. If this assemblage could be conclusively identified as belonging to a historical Chinese restaurant, it would augment the validity of my theorized restaurant profile; establishment of such a resolution necessitates further research. Study of any faunal and floral remains from these features, in addition to residue analysis from ceramic and stoneware vessels, would generate a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of food preparation, service, and consumption associated with the features. This would likely allow for further inference into the assemblage and any affiliation with restaurant activity. In addition, a broader comparison—perhaps a site-wide comparison—of Features 14 and 14.5 to other features of the Market Street Chinatown might also yield more conclusive results.

Establishment of an authoritative archaeological profile for historical Chinatown restaurants would be conducive to further analysis yielding data on the nature of these restaurants and their operation: the organization of these businesses, the characteristics of their clientele, how meals were being prepared and served, and by whom. Information such as this would generate fuller insight into the lifeways and the experience of early Chinese-Americans. Ethnoarchaeology represents another possible avenue for research; a systematic study of contemporary restaurants in United States Chinatowns would likely be conducive to understanding their early predecessors. By conducting my research project, I gained a deeper understanding of the archaeological characteristics of early overseas Chinese restaurants.

Through documentary and material analyses, I was able to generate a tentative set of expectations for the attributes of a historical Chinese restaurant assemblage, and I opened the door for (much-needed) further studies on the topic, many of which I hope to pursue myself.

**Tables**

Table 1: Artifact Inventory for 85-31:14 and 85-31:14.5

Artifact Category	Artifact Description	MNI
Hollowware	Large Barrel Jar	2
Hollowware	Extra Large Jar	3
Hollowware	Wide-Mouthed Jar	4
Hollowware	Spouted Jar	4
Hollowware	Cooking Vessel	1
Hollowware	Indefinite	3
Tableware	Tiny Cup	2
Tableware	Tea-Drinking Cup	4
Tableware	Other Cup	1
Tableware	Medium Bowl	5
Tableware	Plate	2
Tableware	Condiment Dish	1
Tableware	Serving Vessel	3
Glass	Food/Beverage Bottle	6
Glass	Ink Bottle	1
Glass	Indefinite	6
Other	Toothbrush	1
Other	Knife-Sharpening Block	1
Other	Indefinite	1
Other	Jade Spoon	1
Total		52

Table 2: Percentages of Food-Related Artifacts by Number of Catalog Entries

	85-31:14/14.5 Assemblage	85-31:20 Assemblage
Percentage of Food-Related Artifacts	82.35	48
Percentage of Indefinite and Non-Food Related Artifacts	17.65	52

Table 3: Hollowware Vessel Classes

Artifact Description	85-31:14/14.5 Assemblage		85-31:20 Assemblage		Factor of Difference
	MNV	Frequency of MNI for Total Assemblage (%)	MNV	Frequency of MNI for Total Assemblage (%)	
Large Barrel Jar	2	3.85	0	0	X
Extra Large Jar	3	5.77	0	0	X
Wide-Mouthed Jar	4	7.69	3	1.17	6.57
Spouted Jar	4	7.69	4	1.56	4.93
Cooking Vessel	1	1.92	0	0	X
Indefinite	3	5.77	2	0.78	7.4
Other	0	0	1	0.39	X
Total	17		10		

Table 4: Tableware Vessel Classes

Artifact Description	85-31:14/14.5 Assemblage		85-31:20 Assemblage		Factor of Difference
	MNV	Frequency of MNI for Total Assemblage (%)	MNV	Frequency of MNI for Total Assemblage (%)	
Tiny Cup	2	3.85	3	1.17	3.29
Tea-Drinking Cup	4	7.69	0	0	X
Other Cup	1	1.92	1	0.39	4.92
Small Bowl	0	0	5	1.95	X
Medium Bowl	5	9.62	12	4.67	2.06
Large Bowl	0	0	5	1.95	X
Other/Indeterminate Bowls	0	0	3	1.17	X
Plate	2	3.85	3	1.17	3.29
Condiment Dish	1	1.92	0	0	X
Serving Vessel	3	5.77	0	0	X
Other	0	0	14	5.45	X
Total	18		46		

Table 5A: Relative Frequencies of Waretypes

Waretype	85-31:14/14.5 Assemblage		85-31:20 Assemblage		Factor of Difference
	MNV	Relative Frequency (%)	MNV	Relative Frequency (%)	
Four Seasons	4	22.22	8	17.39	1.28
Celadon	7	38.89	17	36.96	1.05
Bamboo	2	11.11	7	15.22	0.73
Euroamerican	2	11.11	9	19.57	0.57
Other	3	16.67	5	10.87	1.53
Total	18	100	46	100	

Table 5B: Relative Frequencies of Waretype Values

	85-31:14/14.5 Assemblage		85-31:20 Assemblage		Factor of Difference
	MNV	Relative Frequency (%)	MNV	Relative Frequency (%)	
Valuable	15	83.33	26	56.52	1.47
Less Valuable	3	16.67	20	43.48	0.38
Total	18	100	46	100	

Figures



Figure 3: A Four Seasons decorated tiny cup from 85-31:14/14.5



Figure 4: A Celadon tea cup, representative of one of the more expensive waretypes found in 85-31:14/14.5



Figure 5: Fragment of a Four Seasons painted Medium Bowl from 85-31:14/14.5



Figure 6: A nearly intact condiment dish from 85-31:14/14.5



Figure 7A, 7B, and 7C: views of a larged-sized stoneware vessel, measuring > 25 cm diameter.



Figure 8: “Twins”—Two of four matching Celadon tea cups from 85-31:14/14.5



Figure 9: The dining room of an early Chinese restaurant in the San Francisco Chinatown