

SYNOPSIS

This thesis examines the ceramics assemblage of the Bendigo Chinese brick kiln and market garden dumpsite (H7724-0600). It compares the resultant consumption and discard patterns with those of other mid-1800s to early 1900s Chinese sites in Victoria and New South Wales, to understand what these artefacts reveal about the access by the nearby historic Ironbark Chinese camp to international trade networks.

To analyse the ceramic assemblage, the artefact collection was documented and sorted into broad categories, based on fabric, form, and function, and each entry given both a total sherd and minimum number of vessels count. From an understanding of typical Chinese and European vessel types, data was extracted and compared with that from the Port Albert Chinese fish curing establishment and Butcher's Gully miners' huts in Victoria, and various Chinese settlements in the Braidwood, Tumut, and Kiandra regions of New South Wales.

Despite intersite differences in artefact type, patterns emerged across these overseas Chinese sites. These communities were able to access both Chinese and British storagewares, kitchenwares, and tablewares, although levels of each differed across colonies. The consumption patterns, as revealed through artefact analysis, show the extent to which each site was able to access the transpacific trading network connecting each settlement to China. Furthermore, intersite comparisons provided a unique view into Chinese-Bendigonian trade networks.

The results of this thesis reveal how discard patterns at the H7724-0600 communal tip can identify the local community's trade networks in relation to the overseas Chinese-Australian cultural landscape.