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The Research on Bei Jia Zi of Tujia Minority and its Influence on Modern Product Design

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Abstract	The artifact, which embodies the culture of the Tujia minority group at the Yangtze River basin, is the directest manifestation of Tujia people's idea of creating and designing tools. Bei Jia Zi is the very typical one of those artifacts. This article investigates the influence of traditional artifacts culture on the sustainable design of modern products, and concludes the crucial design elements affecting modern products from the developmental trend of current ergonomics, based on the analysis of the emerging background, function and structure of Bei Jia Zi.
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The Research on Bei Jia Zi of Tujia Minority and Its Influence on Modern Product Design

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Abstract. The artifact, which embodies the culture of the *Tujia* minority group at the Yangtze River basin, is the directest manifestation of *Tujia* people's idea of creating and designing tools. *Bei Jia Zi* is the very typical one of those artifacts. This article investigates the influence of traditional artifacts culture on the sustainable design of modern products, and concludes the crucial design elements affecting modern products from the developmental trend of current ergonomics, based on the analysis of the emerging background, function and structure of *Bei Jia Zi*.

Introduction

During the past several years, with the development of technology, people gradually realize that the traditional analysis model of ergonomics, though quite valuable, has a certain limitation. The traditional analysis model only attaches great importance to human's physical needs and products' function, whereas neglects the emotional needs and social cultural needs of people. Nowadays, the focus of design has been moving on from the initially cared products' performance and comfort to the goal of Sustainable Development, which lays emphasis on people's cognition and apprehension, social cultural background, as well as emotional needs. We discover the chance and challenge of product design in the future through analyzing social cultural background.

We shall seek for the methods of developing some new products by means of studying the case of *Bei Jia Zi* of *Tujia* people:

The Investigation on Background of *Tujia* Ethnic Minority

Tujia Minority is an important ethnic group in China's 56 ethnic groups. They are mainly distributed in the mountainous areas in the boundary region of the four provinces of Hunan, Hubei, Sichuan and Guizhou. In its lengthy process of development, *Tujia* minority has got its unique culture gradually. Among their traditional using tools are those with perfect and pure functions, as well as beautiful forms. Driven by the isolated and adverse living condition, these traditional tools have undergone the multi-generation improvement of *Tujia* people and have become quite excellent living designs, which contain the design wisdom worth our concern and study.

As we know, artifact is the materializational manifestation of mankind's creation. Human's all sorts of imagination, creativity, humanity can be perceived from it. The artifacts made and used by *Tujia* people contain abundant connotation of ethnic culture, embodying their design wisdom. Owing to that the habitation of *Tujia* people in southwest Hubei and west Hunan are remote mountainous region, the characteristics of mountain paths determine the best way of man-powered transportation is carrying goods on *back*.

In order to transport commodities by back in the steep and harsh mountain paths, *Tujia* people invented a series of tools for carrying goods on the back, such as packbasket, barrel on the back etc. As shown in Fig. 1, *Bei Jia Zi* is a typical artifact necessary to each family.

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