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SHANZHAII — A DESIGN PARADIGM IN CHINA

Background:

- **Shanzhai** is a widespread phenomenon in the last ten years in China.
- **Definition** — Shanzhai is a secondary innovation based on imitation.
- **Character of Shanzhai products design** —
  - Cheap Price
  - Low Quality
  - Exaggerated Design
  - Creative Elements
- **Users** — The so-called grass root- the ordinary people
- **Share of the Market** — e.g. Shanzhai mobile phones
  - 2007, 150 million were sold and 10% of the global sales.
  - 2011, 20% of the global sales.
- **Related design cultures and movements** —
  - Anti-Brand
  - No-Brand
  - Mass Customisation
  - Design for Diversity
- **Shanzhai product design** in last ten years illustrates the shift from a constructed idea of a purely imitation and plagiarism to an increasingly innovation and creation.
- **The questions** —
  - Is Shanzhai a unique phenomenon in China?
  - Will the Shanzhai products become brands in the future?
  - Why is the scale of Shanzhai phenomenon in China greater than in other countries?

Aim:

This study aims to explore Shanzhai phenomenon by investigating the Shanzhai product design in the early 21 century, a period of rapid industrialization, consumer revolution and urbanization in China.

Methodology:

This research investigates Shanzhai from different perspectives or paradigms to gain a holistic perspective. It combines both qualitative and quantitative research methods to contribute to the understanding of Chinese design culture. Questionnaires, interviews, case studies will be undertaken.

Summary:

This research investigates the nature of Shanzhai, the driving forces behind Shanzhai phenomenon, together with its relationship with other design culture movements, thereby providing a deeper understanding of contemporary Chinese design culture.