

# Thoughts on Henan Satellite TV's "Out of the Circle"-Taking the Chinese Solar Terms Series as an Example

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**Abstract:** *Following the success of the Henan Spring Festival Gala, several series of programs launched by Henan Satellite TV have continued to exert their strength. The main reason is that Henan Satellite TV adheres to its original intention and explores the profound traditional culture and gives it a contemporary character. This article reviews the progress of several revisions of Henan Satellite TV and interprets Henan Satellite TV's artistic method of "out of the circle", from the revision of the structure to the selection of the theme and the competition mechanism of the main creative team, which has brought us inspiration and thinking, and formed a learnable technology and culture, and the contemporaneity, being the practice of strength spirit of the audience.*

**Keywords:** *Traditional culture; out of the circle; Henan Satellite TAs*

## 1. Introduction

Because Henan is located in the Central Plains which was the land of Yuzhou in ancient times, thus it is abbreviated as Yu. As it is located in the central of nine ancient Zhou, it is also called Zhongzhou, and that is why it called the Central Plains. There were more than 20 dynasties established their capitals or moved their capitals to Henan in the course of history, and Henan has four of China's eight ancient capitals, being known as a historical and cultural province and the birthplace of Chinese civilization. It is precisely because of this profound cultural heritage that Henan TV has been associated with the Central Plains culture since its inception. "Liyuanchun" can be said to have witnessed the growth and development history of Henan TV, and it is still one of the longest-lived TV programs in China.

### **1.1. Stick to the original intention: the traditional program "Big Cut" has been cultivated for 30 years**

"Liyuanchun" was launched in 1994 and has a history of 28 years. The program's founder, Zhou Dijun, founded the program based on Henan's long-standing Henan Opera culture because he worked as an opera editor. This show adheres to the traditional opera culture and is reflected in the interpretation of the logo. The logo has a deep traditional cultural meaning. The logo is a symmetrical shape composed of six Chinese character one, which is taken from the Kun trigram of eight trigram in the "Book of Change"; Kun is soil, and soil is the foundation for all things to grow. This famous brand program which not only won many domestic honors, but also carried out tours in many diplomatic activities, shouldering the responsibility of promoting China's excellent culture. It has also won unanimous praise from professionals and audiences. "Liyuanchun" has persisted for more than 20 years and formed a brand. At the moment when Chinese opera is gradually declining, it is "Liyuanchun" that continues the life of opera.

It is not difficult to see that Henan Satellite TV has been deeply cultivating in the field of traditional programs. After all, in the 5,000-year history of civilization of the Chinese nation, Henan has been a political and cultural center for 3,000 years. It can be said that when Henan reaches out and touches it, it is Spring and Autumn Culture, Qin bricks and Han tiles.

Although Henan Satellite TV has two nationally well-known programs, "Liyuanchun" and "Wulin Style", they are firmly in the traditional cultural throne of opera and martial arts, they have been in the second camp in the competition pattern of provincial satellite TV for many years<sup>[1]</sup>. Henan Satellite TV has made a name for itself in the national program market by relying on traditional culture. However, as the variety show market is in a state of excitement, the changes in the form of programs have

accelerated, the types of programs have increased, and the outside world has focused on data and idols, making Henan Satellite TV's advantages reverse. It has become a disadvantage, and with the solidification of the two major programs and the formation of an aging audience, Henan Satellite TV has been passive in the competition of provincial satellite TV since 2005. Audience dominated by Low education, low income and older age, which is completely opposite to the fast-growing enterprise group and target group, which has led to the gradual weakening of Henan Satellite TV's advertising competitiveness.

### ***1.2. Several revisions - make culture fashionable***

The Henan Satellite TV revision process can be roughly divided into three stages. First, in 2003, the Henan Satellite TV revision plan was officially launched. Two audience survey activities were held for this purpose, two delegations were sent to seven provincial TV stations to study and invite experts to hold special lectures. The result of this reform is to achieve a breakthrough in concepts from two aspects. The first is to clarify the functional positioning of Henan Satellite TV "based on the Central Plains, facing the whole country, and promoting Henan positively"; secondly, it has expanded the scope of program positioning. , established the channel "news + entertainment" framework. There are two programs "The Gate of Huayu" and "Wulin Style", which opened the second glorious period of Henan Satellite TV. However, problems have gradually emerged. The audience of the show is aging and fixed, making it difficult for Henan Satellite TV to expand its audience.

The second revision was in 2011. Henan Satellite TV made changes to the logo in terms of graphics and richness, which indicated that Henan Satellite TV realized that the visual system of the TV station determines the brand image, and then determines the brand positioning. The slogan of this revision is "Culture Satellite TV Brings education into Fun", which has something in common with the first revision based on the Central Plains, and it is all in the same line of the core of "culture". In 2013, when other satellite TVs followed the fashion trend to create competitive programs, Henan Satellite TV launched the amateur cultural program "Heroes of Chinese Characters", which won high ratings and good social evaluation. Strike while the iron is hot, followed by the launch of literary competition programs such as "Idiom Hero" and "Literary Hero", but these columns have not been able to develop sustainably.

## **2. Henan Satellite TV's Chinese solar terms series: "Small incision" + innovative development**

The long-term development of Henan Satellite TV in the field of traditional programs is one of the basic factors for today's explosion of "out of the circle". Henan Satellite TV has proved with actions that respecting the audience's integrity and making content with heart is the way of longevity, then Henan Satellite TV has grasped it. The following two aspects are the key to the success of the program.

### ***2.1. The choice of subject matter, see the big from the small***

After the new changes of Henan Satellite TV, it seems that the purpose of the program based on traditional cultural development has not changed compared with 20 years ago, but it is very different. It can be seen from the "Chinese Solar Terms" series of programs that it is not to show a certain kind of culture from big incision, but from the small incision theme that is close to people's life, and presents it in a dramatic style. The series "Chinese Solar Terms" is presented in a smaller, more beautiful, and more interesting style of skits, and in the arrangement of about 15 minutes video content , it explains the story of Liu An, the prince of Huainan in the Western Han Dynasty, who first wrote the twenty-four solar terms, and traveled to the present. It is not only interesting but also lets everyone understand the source of the 24 solar terms. The first episode of "The Spring Equinox Adventure" is based on the "Huainanzi" written by Liu An, which first recorded and explained the twenty-four solar terms and compiled the book "Huainan Wanbishu" describing the experiment of "Ai fire makes the chicken fly" as the background, it tells a story full of dreams and hopes with children as the main line, using the ancient and modern dialogue to witness the scientific connotation of the changes of the four seasons, reflecting the common emotional resonance between tradition and modernity. Then in the episode of "The Grain Rain Adventure", seeing the big from small is represented vividly. As a director, the male protagonist encountered many pressures on the shooting site. He was impetuous and lost confidence and hope in his career future. When he meet the female protagonist, patiently learns to make tea, and the male protagonist's mood changes from restless to quiet. This transformation is like the transformation of tea from ordinary tea to fragrant tea. It requires a process of patient baking and solid

precipitation to remove the astringency, and condensed fresh aroma. Grain Rain is the season for baking tea. Although it is short-lived, it is more cherished because of this. This episode also implies that cherishing is not eager to own and retain, but to feel the internalization and sublimation of oneself. Through "The Adventures of Grain Rain", the audience can feel such positive energy and deeply touched, which is the great energy brought by the theme of small cuts.

## ***2.2. Structural reform and reorganization + content technology empowerment***

The innovative development of the "Chinese Solar Terms" series is reflected in the cross-border and technical empowerment of the platform, which is inseparable from the self-reform of Henan TV. As early as 2014, in order to meet the needs of media integration and development, Henan Radio and Television reformed and reorganized its units and media companies, and formed Henan Daxiang Fusion Media Group Co., Ltd., forming an all-media production and dissemination chain<sup>[2]</sup>.

Secondly, after the reform and reorganization of Henan Radio and Television, open competition has become a normal mode. At present, Henan Radio and Television has merged the three program production units of the Literature and Art Department, Documentary Studio and Radio Drama Creation Department in the station with the market-oriented Henan Daxiang Fusion Media Technology Co., Ltd., 18 studios have been established internally, and the assessment and elimination mechanism has been introduced, which can fundamentally stimulate the vitality of creative production, so that outstanding talents and ideas can stand out, because talents are the guarantee of high-quality programs.

Then, after the reform and reorganization, the popular programs created by Henan Satellite TV are inseparable from the empowerment of technology, which can be said to be one of the main reasons for the success of the "Chinese Solar Terms" and "Chinese Festivals" series. Media integration is the necessary process of innovation and development of traditional media in recent years. Henan Satellite TV has actively connected with the network new media platform to build a "big screen + small screen" topic three-dimensional communication system and a "live + on-demand" multimedia content playback channel.

The series of "Chinese Solar Terms" jointly created by Henan Satellite TV and Bilibili has formed the form of "web drama". The overall picture presents a cinematic texture, and uses a combination of virtual and real to satisfy the audience's visual and auditory experience. In the episode of "The Grain Rain Adventures", AI, VR and other technologies are used to construct a fairy tale, "Illusory Realm", which looks at the stories of the human world from the perspective of a god with a magical atmosphere, is different from the traditional culture displayed in a single field in the past. Due to the integration of traditional cultural themes and technology, tradition has also become fashionable. The figurative production of virtual space creates an immersive visual enjoyment for the audience on the one hand, and breaks the stereotype of conventional performance forms on the other hand. This technical empowerment enables culture to be presented in a new form, and "The series of Chinese Festivals" are set with time-travel elements and scientific inventions, which are more attractive to young people and children to understand traditional culture, so that the spirit of positive energy can also be spread to young audiences.

## **3. Reflections on Henan Satellite TV's Chinese solar terms series**

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, cultural self-confidence has been mentioned by President Xi Jinping many times. In the collective study of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee in 2014, Xi Jinping proposed that "the essence of enhancing cultural consciousness and cultural self-confidence is to build on the foundation of more than 5,000 years of civilization inheritance.", when everyone mentions the word cultural self-confidence, Henan Satellite TV comes to mind unconsciously. This is inseparable from Henan Satellite TV's continuous subversion of its own confidence based on the inheritance of civilization.

### ***3.1. Rooted in traditional culture - providing strength to the times***

In today's big environment, first of all, the world is changing in reality. The younger generation generally has a state of confusion and helplessness. The awakening of personal consciousness and the realization of personal ideal values tend to push most of the young and middle-aged people away from home for their dreams. It is said that the young people of this generation is rootless, but Chinese philosophy may be a valuable resource for us to rediscover our roots and settle down in our lives.

Chinese philosophy, especially Confucian literature, will bring inspiration to people. Secondly, the media technology environment is constantly changing, and more and more subject teachers about traditional Chinese culture are discovered and welcomed by everyone. The essence behind this is the pursuit of spiritual homeland by contemporary people. This is the embodiment of the audience's initiative. The Birmingham School, led by Stuart Hall, has developed the Active Audience Theory, which summarizes the audience's wisdom and initiative. Although technology and technological empowerment will bring about a trendy culture, the audience does not all take it as it should.

Moreover, the audience environment of today's programs is different from the past. The popularity of education and the level of knowledge of the audience are getting higher and higher. More and more people have an understanding of traditional culture. The awareness of traditional culture will make the audience have a deeper understanding of traditional culture. If the program simply expresses traditional culture, it will not win high ratings and high data, then there is the next problem. Mastering the data password is not difficult for all province TV and media groups. How to guide the data password with high quality, this is in The responsibility of culturally confident contemporary TV people.

In "Chinese Solar Terms", Xu Na, one of the chief directors, said: One of the sources of inspiration is carbon emissions and other topics discussed in the current international environment, which shows that the concept of our harmonious coexistence with nature is to affect everyone's life. The core connotation of the fourteen solar terms can show the present and the future from a historical perspective, and also popularize the stories of the solar terms to the audience, conveying the concept of paying attention to the flowers and plants around them and the laws of nature. This series of programs has not only provided the audience with simple entertainment and appreciation, but also has the nature of further knowledge popularization, which is expressed in the form of straightforward storytelling. Carry forward the role of positive energy infection, provide strength for the times, and lead the spirit of the times.

### ***3.2. Deeply cultivate traditional culture - give full play to the contemporaneity of tradition***

Several popular programs launched by Henan Satellite TV correspond to four traditional festivals and traditional solar terms, which make the Spring, Lantern Festival, Qingming Festival and Dragon Boat Festival "bundled" with Henan Satellite TV's programs. When we talk about new programs, we will naturally think of Henan Satellite TV, just like when we mention news, we will think of CCTV. Then every traditional festival and TV station will hold party ceremonies and other activities, but one of the main reasons for the success of Henan Satellite TV is to deeply explore the connotation of traditional culture. Take the "Chinese Solar Terms" series as an example, the two seemingly unrelated subjects are subtly integrated into the solar term. Grain Rain is a solar term that we all know, but most people can't tell the meaning of this solar term. A story of growth is narrated in the form of a 15-minute skit, which fits the connotation of the Grain Rain solar term. And this story is consistent with the story on page 429 of the second volume of "Su Shi's Collective Works".

The emperor saw Ye Jia looking around and said to the ministers, "It looks like Ye Jia looks like iron on the outside, and he has a strong temperament and is difficult to use urgently. It must be beaten and smashed with a hammer." So he frightened Ye Jia and said, "The chopping block and the axe are in front of you. Guo Ding is behind you and wants to smash and cook you, what do you think?" Ye Jia suddenly became excited, and he took a deep breath and said, "I am a despicable person who lives in the mountains and forests, and I am fortunate to be picked here by Your Majesty. , As long as I can save all sentient beings, even if my body is shattered, I will never be greedy for life and fear of death."

At the end of the story, the emperor named Ye Jia a marquis. The hero at the end of the story in "Grain Rain Adventures" also experienced the patience and tempering of fried tea, used it in his own work, slowed down and felt it with his heart, and finally achieved good results.

This is based on the Henan Satellite TV series, the audience can deeply see the allegorical nature of the stories written by ancient Chinese writers. Then the story in "The Grain Rain Adventures" relies on the records in "Su Shi's Collected Works", which entrusts the literary fables of thousands of years ago to the modern age, so that our traditional texts can achieve contemporaneity with the contemporary age, not a simple adaptation. It is based on a story more than 2,000 years ago, but the meaning contained in the story is spread in the contemporary era, and it also provides a strong confirmation of our cultural self-confidence.

Henan Satellite TV's "Chinese Solar Terms" series is based on the correct understanding and interpretation of traditional culture, and the program creation is a process of transforming classics into

contemporary culture.

#### **4. Conclusions**

In this era of integrated media communication, various types of programs seem to explode for a short time due to certain factors, but Henan Satellite TV's traditional cultural programs frequently go out of the circle, not only won praise from all walks of life, but also attract other TV stations to learn. It tells us that although the media has its own fast speed, great changes of dissemination laws, but mastering the laws and making "high-quality products" with heart can truly have advantages, give full play to the advantages, inject strength into the times, and take a sustainable path that can be learned but not replicated.

#### **References**

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