

Exploring the Role and Value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in the Construction of Modern Ecological Civilization: The Case of the Food Preparation in Li Ziqi's short videos

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Abstract: The Twenty-four Solar Terms, a fundamental aspect of traditional Chinese culture, embody ecological wisdom and cultural values that have been passed down for centuries. While their practical function in guiding agricultural activities has diminished due to modern technological advancements and regional diversity, their symbolic significance remains highly relevant. This paper explores the role of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in the construction of modern ecological civilization through an analysis of Li Ziqi's videos. By showcasing traditional food preparation, farming practices, and seasonal customs, Li Ziqi revitalizes these ancient traditions, making them accessible and appealing to modern audiences. Her videos not only promote Chinese cultural heritage to international viewers but also inspire younger generations to reconnect with traditional wisdom. Furthermore, her depiction of sustainable agricultural methods and resource-efficient lifestyles aligns with the core principles of ecological civilization, emphasizing harmony between humans and nature. This study argues that the value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms lies beyond their direct agricultural applications; they serve as a cultural framework for fostering ecological awareness and sustainable living. Through Li Ziqi's modern reinterpretation, these solar terms continue to influence contemporary society by bridging tradition with modernity, reinforcing cultural confidence, and promoting a more environmentally conscious lifestyle.

Keywords: the Twenty-four Solar Terms; Modern Ecological Civilization; Li Ziqi; Cultural Revitalization; Sustainability

1. Introduction

The Twenty-four Solar Terms, a significant symbol of traditional Chinese culture, encapsulate profound ecological wisdom and cultural values. Initially designed to guide agricultural activities, they have evolved to hold symbolic meaning in the construction of modern ecological civilization. With the rapid development of technology, the practical role of these solar terms in agriculture has diminished, yet their cultural and ecological significance remains substantial.

In recent years, the popularity of Li Ziqi's videos has revitalized the public's perception of these solar terms. Through her depiction of seasonal activities such as planting, harvesting, and traditional food preparation, Li Ziqi not only showcases the charm of traditional Chinese culture but also subtly promotes a harmonious relationship between humans and nature. Her works serve as a bridge, introducing international audiences to China's cultural heritage while inspiring younger generations to reconnect with traditional wisdom.

This paper aims to explore the role and value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in the context of modern ecological civilization by analyzing Li Ziqi's videos. It will examine how these solar terms can still contribute to sustainable

development and cultural revitalization, despite the challenges posed by regional differences and modern agricultural practices. By integrating traditional cultural symbols with contemporary ecological needs, this study seeks to provide new perspectives on the significance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in promoting a sustainable and culturally rich society.

2. Literature Review

The construction of ecological civilization has been a key component of sustainable development in China, emphasizing harmony between humans and nature. The Twenty-four Solar Terms, as an essential part of traditional Chinese culture, embody this harmony by reflecting natural cycles and guiding agricultural practices. However, with advancements in modern agricultural technology, the direct practical role of these solar terms has been challenged. Regional differences in climate and the adoption of industrial agriculture have further limited their applicability, making it necessary to explore their symbolic and cultural significance in modern society.

2.1 Ecological Civilization and the Solar Terms

President Xi Jinping has highlighted the importance of ecological civilization as part of China's development strategy (Arthur H., 2019). The integration of traditional cultural wisdom, such as the Twenty-four Solar Terms, into modern environmental management is seen as a way to promote sustainable development. Scholars have argued that these solar terms serve as a cultural and ecological marker, encouraging practices that align with natural rhythms and resource conservation (Wang et al., 2023).

And the influence of anthropocentric values on China's environmental protection efforts is also noted, indicating the need for a shift towards more ecologically conscious practices (Wang et. al., 2015). Geall and Ely (2018) have noted that narratives surrounding sustainable development and innovation in China provide insight into the pathways towards an ecological civilization. However, the reliance on them for guiding agricultural activities has decreased due to the influence of modern technology and regional climatic differences. This paper addresses this issue by examining how the symbolic meaning of the solar terms can still contribute to the construction of ecological civilization.

2.2 The Role of Li Ziqi in Revitalizing Traditional Culture

Li Ziqi's videos have gained widespread popularity both in China and globally, providing a unique platform for promoting traditional Chinese culture. A research conducted by Zhang & Zhou (2023) shows that viewers derive a range of gratifications from Li Ziqi's videos, including learning, participation, connection, relaxation, and appreciation for her personal charm and lifestyle. Moreover, the perspectives of international and local viewers are fundamentally similar, with the only difference being in the way they describe their experiences, though the underlying meanings are largely the same. It is noteworthy that English comments outnumber Chinese ones, yet both convey similar ideas.

By incorporating elements of the Twenty-four Solar Terms, her videos not only depict traditional agricultural practices but also resonate with modern audiences seeking a slower, nature-oriented lifestyle. Studies suggest that her influence extends beyond mere cultural transmission to a form of cultural revitalization, making traditional practices appealing and relevant to younger generations (Yang, 2021). For instance, Li Ziqi's videos frequently depict seasonal agricultural practices, including rice cultivation timed to coincide with the Grain Rain period and the fermentation of fruit wine during the Grain Buds and Grain in Ear phases. These depictions not only highlight the practical wisdom of the solar terms but also their aesthetic and cultural significance. Her videos have been viewed billions of times globally, effectively bridging the gap between traditional Chinese wisdom and contemporary lifestyles (Wang, 2020).

2.3 Challenges and Modern Relevance

While the cultural value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms is evident, their practical relevance in modern agriculture remains a subject of debate. The shift from small-scale traditional farming to large-scale industrial agriculture has reduced the reliance on these terms. Moreover, the diverse climatic conditions across China mean that certain solar terms may not be universally applicable (“Innovation, Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability in China,” 2018). This paper argues that the significance of the solar terms should be reconsidered in a modern context, focusing on their role in promoting ecological consciousness and sustainable living rather than as a direct guide for agricultural activities.

By analyzing Li Ziqi’s videos and existing literature, this study explores how the symbolic meaning of the Twenty-four Solar Terms can be integrated into the construction of ecological civilization, emphasizing cultural revitalization and environmental awareness.

3. The Cultural Significance and Ecological Wisdom

The Twenty-four Solar Terms originated in ancient China and can be traced back as far as the 5th century BC in the “Huainanzi” (Sui & Tang, 2022). It divides the year into 24 solar terms, each lasting about 15 days, which include Beginning of Spring, Rain Water, Awakening of Insects, Spring Equinox, Pure Brightness, Grain Rain, Beginning of Summer, Grain Buds, Grain in Ear, Summer Solstice, Minor Heat, Major Heat, Beginning of Autumn, End of Heat, White Dew, Autumn Equinox, Cold Dew, Frost’s Descent, Beginning of Winter, Minor Snow, Major Snow, Winter Solstice, Minor Cold and Major Cold.

The Twenty-four Solar Terms reflect a profound understanding of natural changes and have been utilized for over two millennia to guide agricultural activities. Through the meticulous observation and summarization of these terms, ancient farmers were able to optimize their agricultural planning and enhance productivity. These terms effectively regulated the rhythm of agricultural production, enabling farmers to rationally arrange planting and harvesting in accordance with climatic variations, thereby avoiding the wasteful use of resources (Zhang & Qi, 2024). For instance, the period around Grain Rain is considered the optimal time for planting, while the Autumn Equinox marks the peak season for harvesting.

However, beyond their practical application in agriculture, these solar terms embody a cultural philosophy that emphasizes harmony between human beings and nature. In the context of modern ecological civilization, their symbolic meaning becomes even more significant as society seeks sustainable ways of living.

3.1 The Symbolic Value and Cultural Revitalization

The Twenty-four Solar Terms are not merely a set of agricultural guidelines; they are a profound cultural symbol that encapsulates the traditional Chinese philosophy of living in harmony with nature. In her videos, Li Ziqi artfully integrates these solar terms into everyday life through the preparation of seasonal foods and agricultural activities. For instance, during the Grain Rain period, Li meticulously demonstrates the process of planting rice, thereby emphasizing the significance of adhering to natural rhythms. Around the Grain Buds and Grain in Ear periods, she showcases the fermentation of cherries into fruit wine and cherry jam, which symbolizes the wisdom of preserving seasonal flavors. Such depictions not only highlight the ecological wisdom embedded in the solar terms but also contribute to the revitalization of traditional culture by rendering these ancient practices relatable to modern audiences.

Moreover, Li Ziqi’s videos play a vital role in reviving traditional craftsmanship linked to the solar terms. For instance, the process of making soy sauce around Autumn Equinox, which is soya harvest season, involves natural maturity that aligns with traditional ecological knowledge. And the fermentation process of soy sauce is also based on the change in temperature of the solar terms. By presenting these practices visually, Li Ziqi bridges the gap between past and present, allowing younger generations and international audiences to appreciate the depth of

Chinese culture. Her influence extends beyond cultural transmission to a form of cultural revitalization, where traditional wisdom is not just preserved but reinterpreted to suit modern sensibilities.

3.2 Challenges Posed by Modern Agricultural Practices

While the symbolic value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms remains significant, their practical role in agriculture has been diminished by modern technology. The development of greenhouse cultivation, advanced irrigation systems, and chemical fertilizers has reduced the reliance on natural seasonal cycles (Grigorieva et al., 2023). Additionally, China's vast geographical diversity means that the timing of agricultural activities cannot be uniformly guided by the solar terms. For instance, the planting time for rice or wheat varies significantly between northern and southern regions, making it impractical to rely solely on traditional guidelines.

However, this paper argues that the relevance of the solar terms should not be measured merely by their direct applicability in modern agriculture but by their role in fostering ecological consciousness. The principles embodied by the solar terms, such as moderation, respecting natural limits, and seasonal adaptation, align closely with the goals of ecological civilization. By emphasizing these principles, the Twenty-four Solar Terms can serve as a cultural framework for promoting sustainable development and environmental protection.

3.3 A Bridge Between Tradition and Modernity

Li Ziqi's videos serve as an effective medium for integrating the wisdom of the Twenty-four Solar Terms into contemporary life. By combining traditional agricultural practices with modern aesthetics, her works resonate with audiences who yearn for a simpler, nature-oriented lifestyle. This fusion of tradition and modernity not only revitalizes cultural practices but also promotes a sustainable way of living that balances technological advancement with ecological mindfulness.

In conclusion, the cultural significance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms extends far beyond their agricultural utility. Through the lens of Li Ziqi's videos, these solar terms are reimagined as symbols of ecological wisdom and cultural heritage, offering valuable insights for the construction of modern ecological civilization.

4. The Twenty-four Solar Terms shown in Li Ziqi's videos

Li Ziqi is a Chinese food and country-life blogger and social media influencer with her videos that depict a serene and traditional rural lifestyle (Yamaguchi, 2019). She has garnered a massive following both domestically and internationally, with 27.89 million followers on Sina Weibo, 61.12 million on Douyin, and 10.26 million on bilibili.

Li Ziqi's short videos are not only popular in China, but has also received a lot of attention abroad. As of now (March 16, 2025), her YouTube channel has over 26 million subscribers, and her videos have been viewed billions of times globally. On February 2, 2021, the official Sina Weibo account of the Guinness World Records announced that Chinese vlogger Li Ziqi broke the world record for "Most subscribers for a Chinese language channel on YouTube" set by herself with 14.1 million subscribers on January 25, 2021.

In the more than three years since the break, Li's fans on his YouTube channel have increased rather than decreased, now reaching more than 26.1 million subscribers, making him the most subscribed Youtuber on a Chinese channel. And her first video update after her return (posted on November 12, 2024) has reached more than 22.55 million views. According to statistics, the average number of plays per short video on "李子柒 Liziqi" channel is 9.67 million, which is 10.5 times more than the average number of plays per short video on Bilibili, and the most popular video has reached more than 40 million plays. The popularity and influence of her videos on YouTube is evident.

Taking the data from Bilibili as an example, as of March 2025, Li Ziqi has posted 145 videos on the platform, of which more than 68 videos are related to the twenty-four solar terms, accounting for more than 49.9 percent of the total. And this percentage is expected to rise. Videos about the 24 solar terms are usually related to food preparation

and production processes. It can be seen that the culture of the 24 solar terms takes up nearly half of Li Ziqi's short videos, and is mainly shown through the process of food preparation.

As a native of Sichuan, she creates her vlogs in the rural areas of Sichuan Province, China, featuring various traditional Sichuan dishes such as bean jelly, dried and pickled peppers, and shredded pork with garlic sauce. Her content is carefully themed, often focusing on the cultivation of ingredients. In one series, she guides viewers through the process of growing essential items like the seasonal vegetables, fresh and dried fruits, meat, oil, salt, tea, wine, soy sauce, and vinegar. She then showcases the mouthwatering journey of transforming these ingredients into dishes using traditional handmade techniques (Whyke et. al., 2022).

Chinese culture contains excellent connotations and forms. In the pre-Qin period, the poem “July” appeared in the “Classic of Poetry”, which mainly describes the Zhou people's labour and daily life throughout the year (Cui, 2009). By integrating elements of the Twenty-four Solar Terms into her content, Li Ziqi not only preserves traditional agricultural practices but also revives cultural appreciation for these ancient customs in a modern context, showing the cultural connotations of them in real and detailed images.

4.1 Illustrating the Solar Terms through Food and Crafts

Li Ziqi's videos frequently center on food preparation and traditional crafts that are intricately connected to the solar terms. By adhering to the natural seasonal changes, she embodies the concept of living in harmony with nature through her seasonal making and eating practices. For example, during the Start of Spring, she showcases the process of crafting spring pancakes using fresh seasonal vegetables, which symbolizes the revival of life and the arrival of new beginnings. Similarly, in the Grain Rain period, she demonstrates rice planting, underscoring the necessity of aligning agricultural activities with natural rhythms. A particularly noteworthy example is her video on soy sauce fermentation, which she initiates around the Major Heat period to utilize the natural warmth essential for optimal fermentation. This practice not only highlights the wisdom of traditional timing but also subtly advocates the principles of ecological sustainability.

Moreover, during the Cold Dew and Frost's Descent periods, Li Ziqi is often seen preparing preserved foods such as salted duck and dried persimmons. These traditional methods of extending the shelf life of seasonal produce reflect the ancient ecological wisdom of resourcefulness and sustainability. Her depictions resonate with a wide audience by illustrating how these ancient practices remain relevant and practical in contemporary life, thereby bridging the gap between tradition and modernity.

4.2 Cultural Transmission and Revitalization

Li Ziqi's videos go beyond mere cultural transmission. They play a crucial role in revitalizing traditional culture. Her portrayal of the Twenty-four Solar Terms serves as a bridge between the past and the present, making traditional wisdom accessible and appealing to younger generations who may have distanced themselves from rural traditions. By presenting these customs in a visually appealing and narratively rich manner, she encourages her audience to reconnect with Chinese cultural heritage.

For international viewers, her videos act as an introduction to the philosophical and ecological values embedded in Chinese culture. By focusing on seasonal harmony, self-sufficiency, and a respectful relationship with nature, Li Ziqi's works subtly promote an understanding of the core principles of ecological civilization. This dual role of her videos—as a tool for both domestic cultural revitalization and international cultural diplomacy—highlights the broader significance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in the modern world.

Moreover, the role of traditional food as a cultural symbol in Li Ziqi's videos can be linked to Lotman's (1990) notion of the semiosphere—a semiotic space where all cultural and communicative activities take place. In this context, traditional Chinese cuisine functions as a cultural text that interweaves with other texts and symbols within her videos, forming a rich tapestry of meanings. The portrayal of food preparation and consumption as ritualistic

practices in her videos evokes viewers' cultural memories and shared heritage. This not only strengthens the collective identity of the Chinese community but also provides international audiences with an authentic and immersive cultural experience.

Li Ziqi's success stems from the high quality of her videos content and the effective use of cultural symbols. Through carefully crafted images and narratives, she presents cultural elements such as traditional Chinese village life, cuisine and handicrafts to a global audience, while taking advantage of the communication advantages of digital platforms to break through geographical and cultural limitations and achieve wide dissemination. In addition, her content focuses on mining the commonalities of cultural symbols and choosing easy-to-understand themes, such as food and handicrafts, to break down the barriers of cross-cultural communication. Her videos are full of love for life and reverence for nature, and this sincere expression of emotion makes it easier for viewers to resonate with her, resulting in a high level of global attention and influence (Lia & Kookiattikoon, 2024).

4.3 A Reflection of Ecological Wisdom

The ecological wisdom of the Twenty-four Solar Terms is evident in the way Li Ziqi manages natural resources and seasonal timing in her videos. Her use of organic farming methods, natural fermentation processes, and sustainable food preparation techniques reflects a lifestyle that aligns with the principles of ecological civilization. By incorporating traditional knowledge into modern life, she challenges the fast-paced, industrialized approach to food production and consumption, encouraging her audience to reflect on more sustainable alternatives.

Between the changes of solar terms, Li Ziqi can always discover cuisines in different seasons. This way of life not only reflects the ecological wisdom of Chinese culture, but also guides modern people to re-understand their relationship with nature. In the fast-paced modern life, the respect for nature is especially important. Her videos are not only a reproduction of traditional agriculture, but also an awakening of ecological awareness for modern people.

In conclusion, Li Ziqi's videos serve as an effective medium for showcasing the practical and symbolic significance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms. By blending traditional agricultural wisdom with modern storytelling, her works not only revive traditional culture but also promote a more ecologically conscious lifestyle. This integration of cultural heritage and ecological awareness underscores the enduring value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in contemporary society.

5. Application in the Construction of Ecological Civilization

The construction of ecological civilization in modern China emphasizes a harmonious relationship between humans and nature, sustainable development, and cultural preservation. The Twenty-four Solar Terms, as a reflection of traditional Chinese ecological wisdom, offer valuable insights for achieving these goals. In the current context of ecological civilization building, drawing on the wisdom of the Twenty-four Solar Terms is of great practical significance.

However, the role of these solar terms must be reinterpreted in the context of modern agricultural practices and regional diversity. By integrating these traditional symbols into her videos, Li Ziqi demonstrates how the principles embodied by the solar terms can still contribute to sustainable living and environmental management today.

5.1 Integrating Traditional Wisdom with Modern Needs

While the practical use of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in guiding agricultural activities has diminished due to technological advancements, their symbolic value remains significant. Li Ziqi's videos illustrate this by depicting traditional farming methods that emphasize natural cycles and sustainable resource management. For instance, her use of organic fertilizers and avoidance of chemical pesticides align with the principle of non-interference with natural rhythms—a core idea of the solar terms. By presenting these practices in an aesthetically pleasing and

accessible format, she advocates for a return to more ecologically friendly agricultural methods.

Moreover, during the Major Snow and Winter Solstice periods, Li Ziqi's videos often feature activities such as preserving meat and pickling vegetables—techniques that minimize waste and extend the use of seasonal produce. These practices highlight the potential for integrating traditional wisdom with modern techniques to enhance food security and resource efficiency in contemporary society.

5.2 Addressing Regional Differences and Modern Challenges

The Twenty-four Solar Terms emphasize the harmonious symbiotic relationship between man and nature, providing an important reference for ecological protection and environmental management. Through the division of the solar terms, people can better understand the changes in the natural environment and formulate corresponding ecological protection measures (Zhang et al., 2024). For example, in spring, it is appropriate to carry out tree planting activities, while in autumn and winter, soil and water conservation and ecological restoration can be carried out.

However, China's vast geographical diversity poses challenges to the uniform application of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in agriculture. For example, the timing of planting and harvesting varies significantly between northern and southern regions. Additionally, modern greenhouse technology and digital irrigation systems have reduced the reliance on natural climatic cycles (Abiri et al., 2023). In her videos, Li Ziqi subtly addresses these issues by showcasing locally adapted practices, such as planting different crops according to the microclimate of her region in Sichuan. This reflects a more flexible and localized interpretation of the solar terms, suggesting that their principles can still guide sustainable agricultural practices if adapted to modern contexts.

Sustainable agricultural development, ecological protection and environmental management all need to be integrated with the laws of nature. By making rational use of the knowledge of the solar terms, farmers can choose the appropriate time and way of planting crops, thus improving the sustainability of agricultural production. In implementing the rural revitalization strategy, local governments can develop special agriculture according to the climatic characteristics and resource endowments of different regions. Through good ecological management, productivity can be improved, promoting a win-win situation for both economy and ecology (Hu et al., 2019).

Furthermore, the ecological principles behind the solar terms—such as moderation, biodiversity, and waste reduction—are directly applicable to current environmental management strategies. By emphasizing these principles, Li Ziqi's works present the solar terms as a cultural framework for promoting sustainable development rather than a strict agricultural guideline. This reinterpretation allows for the preservation of traditional culture while adapting it to contemporary needs.

5.3 Cultural Influence and Ecological Awareness

Li Ziqi's videos not only showcase the practical applications of the solar terms but also play a significant role in raising ecological awareness. Her depiction of seasonal harmony and respect for nature resonates with modern audiences who are increasingly concerned about environmental degradation. The international popularity of her videos further amplifies this message, introducing global audiences to the ecological values embedded in traditional Chinese culture. By framing the Twenty-four Solar Terms as symbols of ecological wisdom, she encourages her audience to adopt a lifestyle that balances modern convenience with environmental responsibility.

In addition, her portrayal of self-sufficient and low-waste living practices aligns with the goals of China's rural revitalization strategy, which emphasizes the development of sustainable agriculture and eco-friendly tourism. For example, her use of natural dyes, handmade tools, and minimal packaging reflects an environmentally conscious approach that can inspire similar practices in rural communities.

In the process of rural revitalization, the Twenty-four Solar Terms can be deeply integrated with rural tourism to enrich the cultural connotation of it. For example, in Quzhou City, Zhejiang Province, the local people hold a

complete set of rituals for Beginning of Spring like sticking pictures of a plough ox, accompanied by various entertainment activities. To create a cultural tourism experience of the Twenty-four Solar Terms and build a model area for the integrated development of rural tourism industry, it is important to highlight the regional characteristics and promote the development of the local economy. It is only by balancing ecological and economic benefits that we can promote the development of civilization (Wang et al., 2023).

In conclusion, the Twenty-four Solar Terms, as depicted in Li Ziqi's videos, offer a meaningful framework for the construction of ecological civilization. By blending traditional wisdom with modern needs, her works demonstrate how cultural heritage can play a vital role in promoting sustainability and ecological awareness. This reinterpretation not only preserves the symbolic value of the solar terms but also ensures their relevance in addressing contemporary environmental challenges.

6. Cultural Practices and Social Impacts

The Twenty-four Solar Terms, as symbols of traditional Chinese ecological wisdom, have found new life through Li Ziqi's videos. President Xi Jinping's notion of 'telling China's stories well' to the international community is central to China's soft power building (Schultz & Zhang, 2022). Li's narrative is a great example of 'telling China's stories well'. Her portrayal of these solar terms not only preserves cultural practices but also revitalizes them by making traditional wisdom accessible and appealing to modern audiences. By showcasing a lifestyle that emphasizes harmony with nature, seasonality, and self-sufficiency, Li Ziqi's works resonate with both domestic and international viewers, enhancing cultural confidence and ecological awareness.

Driven by Li Ziqi, the Twenty-four Solar Terms have come into the limelight in a new form in the Internet era. She fuses them with food, presenting a new type of modernised content filling the traditional culture. Her videos are not only an inheritance of traditional culture, but also an enhancement of cultural confidence (Yang, 2021). By showcasing the unique charm of traditional Chinese culture, she helps the younger generation understand and pass on the culture of the Twenty-four Solar Terms.

6.1 Revitalizing Traditional Culture for Modern Audiences

Li Ziqi's videos go beyond merely transmitting traditional culture; they play a crucial role in revitalizing it. By integrating the Twenty-four Solar Terms into visually captivating narratives, she presents ancient customs in a way that appeals to younger generations who have become distanced from traditional practices. The food in her videos is obtained and prepared according to the Twenty-four Solar Terms, following the laws of nature. Such content not only informs but inspires viewers to reconnect with their cultural roots and appreciate the depth of traditional wisdom.

In addition, Li Ziqi's emphasis on seasonality and natural cycles subtly challenges the fast-paced, consumption-driven lifestyle prevalent in modern society. Consider an episode from her signature series, "The Life of Wheat," as an illustration. The wheat cultivation process is condensed into several key moments aligned with specific solar terms. It begins with Li sowing wheat seeds on a blustery autumn day. The narrative then progresses to the emergence of green shoots around the time of "Minor Snow." Next, it depicts the ripening wheat field near the "Spring Equinox" the following year, with plump, verdant ears of wheat shimmering in the sunlight. The highlight of the wheat production segment is the harvesting season at "the Beginning of Summer," which showcases the intense yet rewarding nature of the labor involved (Liang, 2022).

Her slow-paced, mindful approach to daily life serves as a counter-narrative, encouraging younger audiences to embrace traditional values such as patience, moderation, and sustainability. By making these practices relevant and desirable, she revives traditional culture in a way that aligns with contemporary needs and values.

6.2 Promoting Chinese Culture to International Audiences

Li Ziqi's videos have garnered an extensive international following, with subtitles available in multiple languages and view counts reaching into the billions. Through her meticulously crafted content, international viewers are afforded a profound glimpse into the ecological philosophy that is deeply embedded within Chinese culture. The Twenty-four Solar Terms, in particular, serve as a pivotal entry point for exploring the broader tapestry of Chinese cultural heritage, encompassing traditional festivals, agricultural practices, and the intricate interplay between human activities and natural rhythms.

For instance, her videos on making winter solstice dumplings masterfully introduces the concept of reunion and the cyclical nature of time—ideas that are inextricably linked to the solar terms and the broader Chinese cultural ethos. By presenting these traditions in a manner that is both universally accessible and aesthetically captivating, Li Ziqi effectively fosters cross-cultural appreciation and understanding. Her work transcends mere entertainment, functioning as a form of cultural diplomacy that promotes China's soft power on the global stage. Through her videos, she enhances China's international image as a nation that deeply values sustainability, harmony with nature, and the preservation of traditional wisdom.

6.3 Enhancing Ecological Awareness

The ecological wisdom of the Twenty-four Solar Terms is a recurring theme in Li Ziqi's videos, which emphasize practices such as waste reduction, natural resource management, and organic farming. By showcasing traditional methods of preserving seasonal produce, composting organic waste, and using natural materials for crafts, she highlights sustainable practices that resonate with modern environmental movements. Moreover, her portrayal of a self-sufficient lifestyle that minimizes reliance on industrial goods serves as a subtle critique of modern consumerism. By demonstrating the feasibility and beauty of such a lifestyle, she encourages her audience to reflect on their relationship with nature and consider more sustainable alternatives. This aspect of her work aligns closely with the goals of ecological civilization, which emphasizes not only environmental protection but also a cultural shift towards sustainability.

Starting from Li's short video, the value and role of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in the construction of an ecological civilization is worth exploring. The Twenty-Four Solar Terms, a traditional Chinese system for tracking seasonal changes, play a crucial role in fostering ecological civilization. This system, developed through centuries of agricultural observation, reflects the intimate relationship between human activities and natural rhythms. By providing precise guidelines on seasonal climate patterns, the solar terms help farmers determine the optimal times for planting, harvesting, and other agricultural tasks, thereby promoting sustainable farming practices. Unlike modern industrial agriculture, which often relies on artificial interventions such as excessive irrigation and chemical fertilizers, traditional farming methods aligned with the solar terms emphasize adaptation to natural conditions. This not only improves crop resilience but also reduces environmental degradation caused by soil depletion and water pollution. Additionally, the solar terms encourage biodiversity conservation by supporting diverse cropping patterns and traditional ecological knowledge, which are vital for maintaining ecological balance.

Beyond agriculture, the Twenty-Four Solar Terms influence various aspects of daily life, including dietary habits, health preservation, and cultural practices, all of which contribute to sustainability. Seasonal eating, guided by the solar terms, promotes a diet based on locally available foods, reducing the carbon footprint associated with long-distance transportation and excessive food storage. Traditional health practices linked to the solar terms emphasize holistic well-being, encouraging people to adjust their lifestyles according to seasonal changes, which fosters a deeper respect for natural cycles. Moreover, the cultural traditions and festivals associated with the solar terms, such as the Qingming Festival or the Winter Solstice, strengthen community bonds and reinforce ecological values by encouraging outdoor activities, tree planting, and respect for nature.

In the modern context, the wisdom of the solar terms remains highly relevant in addressing environmental

challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss. As global warming disrupts traditional weather patterns, understanding seasonal transitions becomes even more critical for adapting to ecological changes. Governments and environmental organizations can incorporate the principles of the solar terms into sustainability policies, urban planning, and environmental education, promoting a lifestyle that harmonizes with nature rather than exploits it. Schools can also integrate knowledge of the solar terms into their curricula to cultivate ecological awareness from an early age. Furthermore, technological advancements, such as precision agriculture and climate monitoring systems, can enhance the application of the solar terms in modern environmental management, bridging ancient wisdom with contemporary innovation.

Ultimately, the Twenty-Four Solar Terms serve as a bridge between traditional ecological knowledge and modern sustainability efforts, offering a time-tested framework for fostering harmony between humans and nature. By embracing their principles, societies can cultivate a deeper respect for natural cycles, promote sustainable resource use, and build a more resilient ecological civilization for future generations.

6.4 Building Cultural Confidence and Social Impact

Li Ziqi's portrayal of traditional practices linked to the solar terms has significantly contributed to building cultural confidence among Chinese audiences. By presenting traditional customs as both practical and beautiful, she challenges the perception that traditional culture is outdated or irrelevant. Her emphasis on craftsmanship, seasonality, and ecological harmony resonates with the national strategy of cultural revitalization, which seeks to strengthen cultural identity and pride.

An editorial in *China Daily*, the country's official English-language newspaper, aptly captured Li Ziqi's appeal, noting that her videos are technically impressive due to their high-quality cinematography. It also highlighted that what truly resonates with her audience is the universal language of love, inner peace, family care, and reverence for nature (Xu, 2019).

In December 2019, Li Ziqi was awarded the "Cultural Communication Personality of the Year" by *China Newsweek*. In January 2020, she was selected as one of the "Top Ten Women of the Year 2019" by *Women's Voice Newspaper*. In May 2020, the official website of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China announced that Li Ziqi had been appointed as one of the first ambassadors for the promotion of the Chinese Farmers' Harvest Festival (Wang, 2020). Li has not only received numerous awards, but her videos, including those related to the culture of the 24 solar terms, have also been reposted and praised by many mainstream media outlets, such as the official Weibo account of the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League.

On November 13, 2024, Xinhua News Agency released an exclusive interview video with Li Ziqi, introducing her as a cultural video creator who uses exquisitely produced videos as a medium to convey the charm of traditional Chinese culture and the idyllic rural life in China to audiences both at home and abroad. On the same day, the "Colorful Intangible Cultural Heritage: Coexistence and Sharing" 2024 Renewal of Intangible Cultural Heritage · Tianfu Night event, co-hosted by the Sichuan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, the Cyberspace Administration of Sichuan Province, and Weibo, was held in Chengdu. At the event, Li Ziqi made a surprise appearance as the ambassador for the promotion of Sichuan's intangible cultural heritage. On that day, the relevant person in charge of the Sichuan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism presented a plaque to Li Ziqi's Intangible Cultural Heritage Studio, appointing her as the "Ambassador for the Craftsmanship Protection of the Renewal of Intangible Cultural Heritage Plan."

On March 10, 2025, Li Ziqi once again graced the pages of the *People's Daily*, publishing an article titled "Constructing a Complete Chain from Experience to Consumption," in which she stated that "Only by integrating the excellent traditional Chinese culture with modern needs can we achieve 'living inheritance' and capture the hearts of the younger generation." On January 1 of this year, the *People's Daily* also published an article by Li Ziqi on its eighth page. As a short video creator, she shared her New Year's aspirations with other prominent figures such as

Wang Meng, Shang Changrong, Rong Xinjiang, and Yu Hwei. On the evening of January 28, 2025, the 2025 CCTV Spring Festival Gala officially commenced, with Li Ziqi making a stunning appearance in a magnificent costume crafted using 13 intangible cultural heritage techniques, becoming the first female shot in the first Spring Festival Gala following the successful application for intangible cultural heritage status.

Both official media and local governments place great emphasis on Li Ziqi. This high-level recognition is not only an acknowledgment of her personal influence but also a strategic incorporation of a folk cultural IP by the authorities. Today, Li Ziqi is far more than just a short - video creator. Her content has been endowed with deeper cultural significance, becoming an important bridge connecting tradition with modernity and China with the world.

Her influence extends beyond the screen, inspiring numerous content creators and social media users to explore and promote traditional Chinese culture. The viral success of her videos has also prompted discussions on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, leading to increased government and academic interest in safeguarding these traditions. In this way, Li Ziqi's works not only revive traditional practices but also create a ripple effect that fosters a broader cultural renaissance.

Li Ziqi's worldwide fame can be attributed to a variety of factors, with the primary driver being the widespread sharing of her videos by users on platforms like YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Sina Weibo, and other major digital media sites (Alberta Natasia Adji, 2024). In the 21st century, YouTube has emerged as one of the most popular transnational social media platforms that enable content customization. It has not only enhanced the brand image and recognition of content creators but also increased viewers' brand awareness. This is because many potential viewers or customers actively search for, select, examine, and explore vlog content based on its presentation, expertise, and activity (Febriyantoro, 2020). In addition to Li Ziqi, many other outstanding Mainland Chinese individuals have also broken through by leveraging their intelligence and diligence. They have utilized new media to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps, presenting content with "distinct Chinese characteristics that has amazed the world and achieved remarkable success on YouTube.

For instance, "办公室小野官方频道 Ms Yeah Official Channel" has garnered attention for her humorous and imaginative "office-style cooking video series", which features unconventional recipes such as "hot pot cooked in a water dispenser," "cotton candy made with a power drill," "popcorn in a cola can," "pancakes made in a computer case," "steamed buns with a clothes steamer," and "steak cooked on a tile."

"滇西小哥 Dianxi Xiaoge" focuses on the unique landscapes and culinary delights of Yunnan, showcasing local specialties like rose flower cakes, pomegranate blossoms, and pine tree flowers. Like Li Ziqi, this hardworking and unpretentious Yunnanese girl has become a highly influential phenomenon in the YouTube food domain through her original videos.

In July 2020, 63-year-old "阿木爷爷 Grandpa Amu" rose to fame on YouTube with his skilled craftsmanship. Without any modern machinery, he handcrafts exquisite wooden products such as arched bridges, Lu Ban stools, apple locks, and even a movable Peppa Pig. His YouTube channel has garnered over 200 million views and nearly 1.3 million subscribers.

In conclusion, Li Ziqi's videos serve as a powerful medium for revitalizing the cultural significance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms and promoting ecological awareness. By making traditional practices accessible and appealing to a global audience, she enhances cultural confidence and encourages a more sustainable lifestyle. Her ability to bridge the gap between ancient wisdom and modern life highlights the enduring relevance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in today's society.

7. Conclusion

The Twenty-four Solar Terms, as a profound symbol of traditional Chinese culture, hold significant value in the construction of modern ecological civilization. While their direct practical role in guiding agricultural activities has

diminished due to advancements in modern technology and regional climatic differences, their cultural and ecological significance remains indispensable. By reinterpreting these ancient customs through her videos, Li Ziqi not only preserves traditional practices but also revitalizes them for modern audiences, making the wisdom of the solar terms accessible and relevant in contemporary society.

7.1 Cultural Revitalization and Ecological Wisdom

Li Ziqi's portrayal of the Twenty-four Solar Terms goes beyond simple cultural transmission. It serves as a powerful tool for cultural revitalization. Her videos demonstrate how traditional practices, when presented in a visually appealing and relatable way. They can inspire younger generations to reconnect with their cultural roots. By emphasizing the seasonal harmony and ecological wisdom embodied by the solar terms, she subtly promotes a lifestyle that balances tradition with modernity.

This approach not only enhances cultural confidence but also aligns with the broader goals of ecological civilization, which advocate for sustainable development and a harmonious relationship between humans and nature. By integrating traditional agricultural wisdom with sustainable practices, her works offer a model for how cultural heritage can contribute to contemporary environmental management and ecological awareness.

7.2 Addressing Modern Challenges with Traditional Wisdom

The challenges posed by modern agricultural practices and regional diversity require a reinterpretation of the Twenty-four Solar Terms. While their role as direct agricultural guidelines has been limited, their symbolic meaning provides valuable insights for promoting ecological consciousness. Principles such as moderation, respect for natural limits, and seasonal adaptation can serve as a cultural framework for sustainable living in a rapidly industrializing world.

Li Ziqi's videos illustrate this reinterpretation by showcasing traditional practices that are both ecologically friendly and culturally meaningful. Her emphasis on organic farming, seasonal food preparation, and waste reduction reflects the ecological wisdom of the solar terms while addressing the environmental challenges of modern society. This balance of tradition and innovation suggests that the true value of the Twenty-four Solar Terms lies not in their direct applicability to agriculture but in their potential to inspire a more sustainable and culturally rich way of life.

7.3 The Global Impact and Future Prospects

The international popularity of Li Ziqi's videos demonstrates the universal appeal of the principles embodied by the Twenty-four Solar Terms. By presenting a lifestyle that emphasizes simplicity, ecological balance, and cultural depth, she introduces global audiences to the core values of Chinese ecological civilization. Her works serve as a form of cultural diplomacy, enhancing China's soft power by showcasing how traditional wisdom can address modern environmental challenges.

Looking forward, the integration of the Twenty-four Solar Terms into the construction of ecological civilization will require a balance between preserving cultural heritage and adapting to contemporary needs. This paper argues that the symbolic and ecological wisdom of these solar terms can continue to play a vital role in promoting sustainability, provided they are reinterpreted to suit modern contexts.

7.4 Final Thoughts

In conclusion, the Twenty-four Solar Terms, as reimagined through Li Ziqi's videos, offer a valuable cultural and ecological framework for addressing the challenges of modern environmental management. By blending traditional wisdom with modern aesthetics, Li Ziqi not only revitalizes cultural practices but also promotes a sustainable way of living that resonates with audiences worldwide. This synthesis of past and present highlights the enduring relevance of the Twenty-four Solar Terms in the construction of a sustainable and culturally vibrant society.

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