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Happiness industry becomes new economic growth point

The happiness industry, represented by tourism, culture, sports, senior care and other industries, has developed vigorously over recent years. It not only enhances people's sense of happiness, but also stimulates consumption growth, promotes economic transformation and upgrading, and fosters new development momentum. Now, it is emerging as a highlight of China's economic development with statistics showing that from 2016 to 2018, the average annual growth rates of the revenue of enterprises above designated size (enterprises with annual revenue above 20 million yuan) in the health services and elderly care industries reached 13.3% and 28.1% respectively.

The happiness industry is not a simple development of the traditional industry model but an emerging industry characterized by aspects such as health and green practices. It owes its emergence to the development of human society, especially the progress of science and technology that continuously improves people's purchasing power and free time. In terms of China's

development, the rapid development of the happiness industry owes to the fact that socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and the people's need for a better life is growing day by day. At the same time, China is advancing from a medium-and-high-income country to a high-income country, and the driving force of economic development is shifting from an investment-oriented one to a consumption-driven one, which has provided a foundation and driving force for the development of the happiness industry.

After people's basic living conditions have been improved, the happiness industry can better meet people's demands and yearning for a high-quality life. Furthermore, it can enhance people's sense of gain, happiness and security. The ultimate goal of economic and social development is to achieve the all-around development of human beings. Some products and services referring to tourism, culture, sports and elderly care are closely related to the all-around development of human beings, and their continuous

growth meets the needs of residents' consumption transition from material consumption to service consumption.

Developing the happiness industry contributes to improving the quality of the service industry. In recent years, China has witnessed the continuous growth of its service industry, which has accounted for half of the national economy, having a contributing rate of 59.7% to economic growth in 2018. The optimization of the economic structure and the improvement of development quality will bring greater development opportunities to the service industry. As an important part of the service industry, the happiness industry has a great impact on its development quality. In the new era, the development of the happiness industry should not be judged solely by quantity, but also by quality, because products and services produced in an extensive manner may fail to meet people's needs. For instance, with the increase of the elderly population year by year in China, the development level of geriatric nursing services will no longer be judged simply by the number of senior care institu-

tions, but rather by whether they can provide comprehensive life and emotional care. Institutions that pay more attention to the quality of care will gain the recognition of more people and will have access to better development opportunities.

Owing to its low-energy, low-consumption, healthy and environment-friendly production mode, the happiness industry can provide its products and services to people while reducing its negative impact on the ecological environment. So it completely deserves to be called a green industry.

The happiness industry also has the potential to create more opportunities for entrepreneurship and employment, since most of the happiness industry is not capital-intensive. Given the fact that production factors in the happiness industry are mainly human capital, many people will have more opportunities to join the entrepreneurship team of the happiness industry to provide abundant and diverse products and services.

At the same time, the happiness industry tends to continuously create new job opportunities due to people's increasing demand for a better life and for personalized products and services. This is why we believe that the vigorous development of the happiness industry is conducive to increasing employment opportunities and people realizing more happiness in their work.

Considering the reality that the happiness industry has emerged as a new economic growth point and a sign of the improvement of the social development level, we must uphold the new concept of development to deepen the supply-side structural reform and vigorously improve the quality of products and services by bringing in advanced science and technology. That is how we can promote the sound development of the happiness industry.

This article was edited and translated from People's Daily. Peng Kaiping is dean of the School of Social Sciences at Tsinghua University.

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The Chinese animated film: Traditional yet innovative

On its journey exploring new paths for development in recent years, the Chinese animated-film industry has been producing films that can perform well at the box office and enjoy good public reputation. *Nezha*, in particular, has steamrolled the competition, with its total box office reaching more than 3.4 billion yuan on the 17th day of screening. To fuel the development of the animated-film industry, we analyzed several popular animated films and identified the reasons behind their success. Below are some commonalities observed among animated films of recent years.

The first common feature is "old tales retold." These animated films narrate modern stories by drawing inspiration from ancient Chinese mythology. Some people cast doubt on the development of myth-based films and say this shows a lack of creativity. But this belief is false, as cultural innovation has to be based on traditional culture, and retelling old tales is thus a good strategy of making films. Myths that embody the Chinese culture and virtues are deeply embedded in Chinese peoples' hearts and souls, and they are therefore an ideal breeding ground for literary and artistic work, regardless of the times. Films such as *Monkey King: Hero Is Back* and *Nezha* feature traditional Chinese values that resonate with the Chinese people, hence the huge



Nezha has become China's most successful animated film so far. Photo: FILE

success.

Although the elements of traditional culture are what win people's hearts, the modernized plot and the artistic style are what capture their attention. *Nezha*, for example, is a creative adaptation of the original mythology. In the new *Nezha*, the protagonist Nezha goes through a journey of discovering his true self and his fair share of ups and downs. The plot resonates with many Chinese people, as it reminds them of their own journeys of entering adulthood, wanting to love and be loved, and seeking to realize their full potential.

Nezha has a unique artistic style with great visual and sound effects. The film is in bright and contrasting colors, similar to the tone of

an oil painting. *Nezha's* image is a bold and innovative rendition of the traditional figure. The sound track and sound effects are just enough to build up tension and contribute to the emotional effect of the film. All these factors make watching *Nezha* an enjoyable experience for the audience.

The second common feature of these films is the pursuit of innovative development while maintaining the unique cultural features of the productions. In fact, Chinese filmmakers have been doing this since the 1940s. The 1941 animated film *Princess Iron Fan*, for example, was based on an episode of the novel *Journey to the West*. However, by narrating the courageous adventure of Tang Sanzang

and his disciples, in which they put out the fires of volcanic mountains and fight against the Bull Demon King, the film also reflected the Chinese people's determination at the time to fight the Second World War. *Princess Iron Fan*, created by the Wan brothers, was therefore a huge success and even inspired Osamu Tezuka, who later became one of the greatest manga artists in Japan.

Filmmakers like the Wan brothers have been essential for the success of *Princess Iron Fan* and Chinese animated films thereafter, as these individuals knew the traditional Chinese culture well and were always striving for a polished production. But when these filmmakers grew old and animated

films from America and Japan entered the domestic market, Chinese animated films began to face serious challenges.

We have learned two things from the experience of developing the animated-film industry. First, while developing films based on ancient stories, we need to look for creative modes of expression. Film production should move beyond the era of hand-drawn animation and adopt modern techniques such as 3D animation. When looking for symbols to represent the traditional Chinese culture, filmmakers should also look beyond such common ones as dragons, ink paintings and traditional *sizhu* music.

Second, adopting advanced film-making techniques does not necessarily make the film a good Chinese production. To maintain its identity, a good Chinese animated film should tell an intriguing yet plausible story and feature well-rounded characters, and within the story there should be a particular moral or ethic. The Chinese audience love it when a film effectively adapts traditional stories to modern life and tells the story with advanced animation techniques. To produce a film with Chinese characteristics, style and spirit, we need to look deeper into the traditional Chinese culture while remaining innovative.

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