

A Study of the Chinese Translation of the Concept “Well-Being” in *On Liberty* from Conceptual History Perspective

Na Li, Jinyu Liu*

Foreign Language College, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China

Email: *jinyuli2008@163.com

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Abstract

The Victorian political philosophy classic *On Liberty* (1859) has been recognized as a masterpiece that influenced an era. The earliest Chinese translations were published in 1903, 30 years after the pass away of its writer, John Stuart Mill, and were translated into China by the famous educator Ma Junwu and the famous thinker Yan Fu in the Late Qing Dynasty. This paper is a descriptive and interpretative study of these two Chinese translations. Based on conceptual history and with the corpus tool to investigate the Chinese translation of the important concept “well-being” in *On Liberty*. The analysis of the Chinese translation of the concept “well-being” in *On Liberty* is investigated from its origin, evolution, and the establishment of its final translation establish.

Keywords

Qunji Quanjie Lun, *Zi You Yuan Li*, Conceptual History, “Well-Being”, “福祉”

1. Introduction

In 1859, John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* was published. It is a seminal political philosophy work of the Victorian era in England, and it has been described as a masterpiece of thought that influenced an era. The earliest Chinese translation of *On Liberty* was published in January 1903, 30 years after Mill’s pass away, and was first translated and published in China by Ma Junwu, a famous educator in the Late Qing Dynasty, named as *Zi You Yuan Li* (《自由原理》), followed in September of the same year, *Qunji Quanjie Lun* (《群己权界论》), Yan Fu’s translated text was published. In 1929, He Ziheng, who was an international commentator for the newspaper *Shen Bao* (《申报》) translated the second

*Corresponding author.

chapter of *On Liberty* for the first time into vernacular and published in *Modern Academic* (《现代学术》). Xu Baokui published a full translation of the text in vernacular in 1959 (originally signed by Cheng Chonghua, but reprinted in 2005 and signed by Xu Baokui, which is in fact the same translation). Since the first Chinese translation of *On Liberty* was published in 1903, *On Liberty* has been repeatedly translated in China over the past century, with a total of 29 translations. Its century-long history of Chinese translation implies a century-long collision and fusion of Chinese and Western ideas. Moreover, the study of Chinese translations of *On Liberty* is of great significance to the study of the evolution of Chinese translations of important concepts in it.

This paper will not only analyse Yan Fu's translation of this important concept of "well-being" in *On Liberty*, but will also compare it with the translation of the same concept in another earlier translation by Ma Junwu, and will trace the translation of this concept in Ma Junwu's translation back to the Japanese translation by Masanao Nakamura. And in this paper, it also makes use of two other corpora, the Dingxiu Chinese Ancient Text Corpus and the Modern English-Chinese Dictionary Database, for its research. The aim is to explore the evolution of Chinese translation of the important concept "well-being" in *On Liberty*.

2. Literature Review

John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* is a seminal work in philosophy and has been widely studied and analyzed by researchers all the time. Published in 1859, *On Liberty* was written during a time of significant social, political, and economic change in Europe. Mill was responding to the repression that existed in Victorian England, where individual freedom was often curtailed in terms of morality and social order.

One of the most well-researched of Mill's original text in China is accomplished by Li Hongtu. He is a professor of history at Fudan University. He conducted a meticulous study of Mill's *On Liberty* with begins by describing Mill's personal experience and educational background (2009). In the afterword to his book, Professor Li (2009: p. 230) already mentioned the introduction of conceptual history into an analysis of this text.

The other research aspect is the key term's translation research at *On Liberty*. Jin Rui (2021) explores the similarities and differences between Yan Fu's and Mill's ideas on liberalism by analysis of the commonalities and differences between the political terms in the source text and the target text, and the examples of the translation of political terms are given to demonstrate Yan Fu's liberal thought. Quan Danchen (2018) analyzes the meanings, roots and affixes of "Zi You" ("自由"), "Ping Deng" ("平等"), "Min Zhu" ("民主") and some other terms, and compares them with the corresponding expressions in ancient and the modern Chinese, in order to explore the different translation strategies and characteristics of Chinese and western translators in the Late Qing Dynasty. Cheng Guiming (2014) compares Mill's original text with Yan Fu's translation. His analysis focuses on the use of the term "Ming Jiao" ("名教") in Yan's translation.

He explores the translation intentions and cultural elements that Yan Fu intended to convey in his additional translations of the term “Ming Jiao” (“名教”). Yuan Hao (2014) presents the cultural and social backgrounds considered in Yan Fu’s translation of the term “Liberty”. He also discusses the syntactic features of Yan Fu’s translation of *Qunji Quanjie Lun*. This is followed by two examples of Yan Fu’s translation of classical concepts from traditional Chinese Confucianism. In this study he clarified that Yan Fu combines classical Chinese culture with modern western political and philosophical thought in his translations.

In conclusion, it is clear from all the above studies that the discussion about translation of the term of Mill’s *On Liberty* has been of interest to the academia. And some scholars have paid attention to the use of conceptual history as a research method to study the text. Some other scholars have used other research methods to analyze the concepts and terms in *On Liberty*. However, to date, no studies have combined several different Chinese translations of *On Liberty* and analyzed the important concept of “well-being” through a conceptual history approach.

3. A Theoretical Framework, Research Goals and Research Methods

Conceptual history (Begrifsgeschichte) was proposed by Hegel in *Philosophy of History*, meaning “the history of concepts” (Sun, 2012: p. 7). It is a new research framework that emerged in Germany in the 1950s to 1960s and later spread into other European countries. And it was first introduced in China in the mid-1990s.

From the 1950s to the 1960s, conceptual history has been adopted by historians due to its temporal and multiplicity in the historical research feasibility. The main content of conceptual history is to reveal how concepts become the core of social and political areas by studying their origin, development, acceptance, transfer, and diffusion in time and places. And also focus on the elements that concept formation, the meaning of concepts and their changes, and how new concepts replace old ones. In short, the focus point is to study how the definition of concepts has changed over different periods.

What is widely accepted is Fang’s (2009: p. 14) three directions of conceptual history: Germans are known for their “conceptual history” (conceptual history); Cambridge School advocates “history of thought”; French historians are famous for their “discourse analysis”. The conceptual history research method used in this paper is a German historical research paradigm with social and political concepts as the main research object. The research content includes two parts: the historical dimension of semantic evolution and the comparative dimension of concept application. The Cambridge School of British conceptual history, represented by Skinner, advocates the “history of ideas” model, returns to the original writing context of the text, mainly studies the relationship between concepts and rhetoric, places the text interpretation under the historical context (Wu, 2022: p. 89). Liu (2019) analyzes the Chinese translation of “economy”, an important concept in Yan Fu’s translation of *The Wealth of Nations*, from the

perspective of conceptual history and compares it with ancient Chinese economic terms.

Given the high compatibility between the study of political concepts and the study of conceptual history, the translation of political terms can also draw inspiration from this interdisciplinary research paradigm that combines linguistics and history. This article will draw inspiration from the research on the concept of “conceptual history” and provide a more comprehensive and detailed description and in-depth analysis of the ontology, cross-lingual dissemination, acceptance, and evolution of the concept of “well-being”. The application of social and political scenarios related to these concepts is the starting point for the study of conceptual history (Richter, 2008: p. 41). The historical dimension of semantic evolution and the comparative dimension of conceptual application is the main content.

This paper aims to take the process of the introduction, development, evolution, and gradual localization of the Western concept of “well-being” as the research path. Starting from the perspective of “conceptual history”, the diverse translations of “well-being” in Yan Fu’s translations and Ma Junwu’s translations are presented. And then based on sorting out its traditional Chinese context, the focus is on exploring the concept of “well-being” and its historical origins. Attempt to reveal the characteristics of the generation and evolution of this concept, as well as the historical interpretation and reconstruction of this foreign concept acknowledge nowadays.

For the research methodology, this paper mainly uses the method of documentary research, and comparative analysis, in addition to corpus tools, close reading method, and induction and summary research method.

4. The Analysis of the Chinese Translation of the Concept “Well-Being” from the Conceptual History Perspective

The study of the terms and concepts is by no means just the realm of traditional lexical-historical research. According to Shen (2010: p. 5), these terms serve as the carrier of concepts, and recent neologisms serve as the guarantors of the spread and the establishment of many recent concepts. The expression of new concepts also relied on new terms. The outlining of these modern terms and the historical process of their introduction, establishment, lexicalization, generalization, transformation, and their final formation serves as an extremely important project to research. This section will investigate the term “well-being” in *On Liberty*, by using conceptual history approach.

This approach enables a deeper and more comprehensive exploration of the translation of the concept of Fu Zhi (“福祉”) from the chronological evolution and co-temporal comparison. The main objective is to investigate the history of the Chinese translation of the term “well-being”, including “well-being” in the western context and “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) in the Chinese context, the early Chinese translation of “well-being”, translation of “well-being” in the translations of *On Liberty*, and the localized translation of the term “well-being”.

First of all. The Oxford English Dictionary traces the term “well-being” to a 16th-century calque of the Italian concept “benessere”. Calque means an expression introduced into one language by translating it from another language. The Italian concept “benessere” represents a healthy, reassuring, and fulfilling state of a person. So that the term “well-being” in the beginning also represents the positive state of a person who is happy, healthy, and wellness. Around the 17th-century, the human well-being instances of personal well-being were exercised. And it extends personal well-being to a large range of well-being from individual into society.

Secondly, in the first Chinese translation of *On Liberty* by Ma Junwu, he translate “well-being” in the title of the third chapter of Mill’s *On Liberty* into “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”). After that, almost all Chinese translations of *On Liberty* have translated “well-being” into “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”), except for Yan Fu’s translation. So the origin of the term “Fu Zhi”(“福祉”) needs to be traced. The term “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) in fact is a traditional Chinese term. It has a long usage history in China. This Chinese term “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) is not created by Ma Junwu when his was translating. It is in fact a traditional Chinese term with a long history in China. It can be traced back to as early as the Zhou dynasty in the *Huangjing Jizhu* (《皇经集注》).

念此经灵章运化，凶曜呈祥，凡所被照临恶星，不惟不见咎祸，返默锡福祉降念此吉祥。

Search through *Dingxiu Full-Text Database of Chinese Ancient texts* (<http://www.ding-xiu.com>) (access: 10 Jan. 2023), it can be seen that the term “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) has been widely used in traditional Chinese classic texts. **Figure 1** below presents the search page of the website.



Figure 1. Dingxiu full-text database of Chinese ancient texts.

According to the result of searching, the following is **Table 1** listing the use of the term “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) in ancient Chinese text before the Qing dynasty, in order to make it easier to see what it meant in traditional Chinese culture.

In **Table 1**, it can be seen that before the Qing dynasty, the term “Fu Zhi” (“福

祉”) was not used in the sense in which we now use it. In traditional Chinese culture, the connotation of “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) was more akin to the meaning of “a felicitous omen” or “blessing”.

Table 1. The application of the term “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) in ancient China.

Classic Text	Dynasty	Author	Content	Page
《皇经集注》	Zhou 周	周玄贞	念此经灵章运化，凶曜呈祥，凡所被照临恶星，不惟不见咎祸，返默锡 <u>福祉</u> 降念此吉祥。	Volume 7 Page 187
《韩诗外传》	Han 汉	韩婴	父母畏之如神明，是以德泽洋溢乎海内， <u>福祉</u> 归乎王公。	Volume 3 Page 44
《易林》	Han 汉	焦延寿	生直地乳，上皇大喜，赐我 <u>福祉</u> ，受命无极。	Volume 3 Page 35
《祭独孤中丞文》	Tang 唐	李翱	丰盈角犀，气茂神全，当臻上寿， <u>福祉</u> 昌延。	Volume 1 Page 153
《沁园春(寿游侍郎)》	Song 宋	陈若水	帝眷耆英，神绥 <u>福祉</u> 。	/

As mentioned in the previous part, in traditional Chinese classics, the meaning of “福祉” is a felicitous omen, so why is this concept used as a translation for “well-being”? This next research step starts by searching for how the term “well-being” was translated in early English-Chinese dictionaries in the Late Qing Dynasty. As shown in **Table 2**, the English-Chinese dictionary compiled by the Englishman Walter Henry Medhurst (1796-1857) in 1847 included the term “well-being” for the first time, but translated it as “好处” and “福气”. The first dictionary to translate “well-being” as “福祉” was the *Yan Huiqing English-Chinese Dictionary* (《颜惠庆英华大辞典》), published in 1908.

Table 2. A list of the term “well-being” in English-Chinese Dictionaries (1847-1916).

Year	Dictionary	Entry	Page
1847-48	麦都思英华字典	好处、福气	1401
1866-69	罗存德英华字典	Welfare 好处、平安、福、福气	1967
1884	井上哲次郎订增英华字典	Welfare 好处、平安、福、福气	1181
1899	邝其照华英字典集成	好处、福气	440
1908	颜惠庆英华大辞典	Welfare 康健、平安、安宁、福祉；prosperity 福利、昌盛、繁昌、顺利、兴盛	2634
1913	商务书馆英华新字典	平安、幸福、吉祥、安宁	549
1916	赫美玲官话	善生(部定)、康宁、福分	1623

From **Table 2**, it can be found that the term “well-being” was not translated as “福祉” in the Late Qing Dynasty. In the *Medhurst English-Chinese dictionary* (《麦都思英华字典》), it was translated as “好处” and “福气”. The semantics

changed from the more personally oriented term to the more socially oriented meaning of “福祉” and “繁昌”. Search through *The English-Chinese Dictionary Database* (<https://mhdb.mh.sinica.edu.tw/dictionary/index.php>) (access: 11th Jan. 2023). But what were the origins of this change? And what effect did the intellectuals of the Late Qing Dynasty have on the change in meaning of these terms when they translated them from this western social science book? These questions will be explored in the next step. In the following parts, the origin of the term “福祉” and whether the meaning of the term has changed since it was used as a translation of “well-being” will be further analyzed.

In Mill’s original text, Chapter 3 is entitled “Of Individuality, as one of the elements of well-being”. However, it is difficult to find an equivalent translation for the term “well-being” in Yan Fu’s translation. In Ma Junwu’s translation, “well-being” is translated as “福祉” and “福祚”. In this part, it will be analyzed whether Yan Fu was aware of the term “well-being”, and the reasons why Yan Fu did not translate it. The translation “福祉” will also be investigated tracing its origins.

Firstly, the term “well-being” appears ten times in Mill’s original text. After searching through Paraconc software to find how Yan Fu translated these sentences containing the term “well-being”. However, the result showed that no corresponding translation of the term “well-being” could be found in *Qunji Quanjie Lun*. In a search of Ma Junwu’s translations, seven equivalent translations were found. Ma Junwu’s translations of the term “well-being” are two, the first is “福祉” and the second is “福祚”. According to the preface to Ma’s translation (Ma, 1903/2011: p. 26), he read the Japanese translation by Nakamura Masanao (1872: p. 29) before beginning his translation. So in **Table 3** the corresponding translations of Nakamura Masanao’s translation are listed too. In total, seven of the nine examples of Nakamura Masanao’s corresponding translations were found. Nakamura’s translation translates “well-being” into three terms: “福祚”, “福祉”, and “福祥”.

In order to further investigate the reasons why Yan Fu did not translate the term “well-being”, a comparative analysis of the four translations of *On Liberty* be conducted. ST refers to the original text of *On Liberty* while TT1 refers to Yan Fu’s translated text, TT2 as Ma Junwu’s translated text, TT3 as Xu Baokui’s translated text, and TT4 as Bao Rong’s translated text.

Example 1:

ST: Chapter 3 Of Individuality, as one of the Elements of **Well-being** (Mill, 1859: p. 100)

TT 1: 第三章 释行己自繇明特操为**民德**之本(Yan, 1903/2014: p. 302)

TT 2: 第三章 论个人为世间**福祚**之一原质(Ma, 1903/2011: p. 55)

TT 3: 第三章 论个性为人类**福祉**的因素之一(Xu, 1959/2009: p. 65)

TT 4: 第三章 论个性——作为**幸福**的一大要素(Bao, 2016: p. 61)

The title of Chapter 3 of the original text was originally intended to express that individuality serves as one of the elements of personal happiness. However, Yan Fu’s translation emphasizes the importance of individuality for the moral improvement of the people in society. The other three translations translate

Table 3. Translation of “well-being” in the translations of *On Liberty*.

	Mill's Original Text	Yan Fu's Translation	Ma Junwu's Translation	Nakamura Masanao's Translation
1	Chapter 3 Of Individuality, as one of the Elements of well-being	篇三 释行己自繇明特操为 民德 之本	第三章 论个人为世间 福祉 之一原质	人民二獨自一箇ナルモノ、アルハ、 福祉安寧 ノ原質ナルヲ論ズ。
2	There are, it is alleged, certain beliefs so useful, not to say indispensable, to well-being that it is as much the duty of governments to uphold those beliefs, as to protect any other of the interests of society.	彼谓旧说为民所信奉日久，关于人心风俗者，至深而不可离，故国家之职，在保持其说，而禁其攻者，且以其事之不容己，而责任之所存也。	为一事而必能增人之 福祉 ，虽不可必信，而保护社会之一切利益，固政府之天职也。	/
3	As mankind improve, the number of doctrines which are no longer disputed or doubted will be constantly on the increase: and the well-being of mankind may almost be measured by the number and gravity of the truths which have reached the point of being uncontested.	夫人道以进化为期，其既进也，公理定论，固日益多，是故化理之隆污，若与公理定论轻重多少为比例也。天下之所争，以民智之日开，固一一渐归于论定。	欲知人类之 福祉 何如？视其现存道理派数之多寡而可知也。派多则 福祉 增，派少则 福祉 亡，此一定之例，不可驳也。派别既多，争竞既甚，固必有止息之一日，争息而真理胜，则为入类之福；伪理胜，则为入类之祸。	蓋シ人民ノ開化が進ミ。位價ガ善クナルトキハ。モハヤ疑ヲ容ズ争論ヲ為サル教派ガ。日ニ益數添ルナリ。而ソ人生 福祉 ノ多少ハ。真確ト認ル理ノ多少ニ視ラフ。真理ノ數増トキハ。 福祉 ノ氣増ヲ知ルヘシ。ソノ真理ハ既ニ争論ナキモノナリ。抑モ關係アル争論。
4	That is the opinion which, for the time being, represents the neglected interests, the side of human well-being which is in danger of obtaining less than its share	盖所以为少数之所持者，必其说为当时之所忽，而两端有畸重轻之患者也。	/	/
5	We have now recognised the necessity to the mental well-being of mankind (on which all their other well-being depends) of freedom of opinion, and freedom of the expression of opinion, on four distinct grounds; which we will now briefly recapitulate.	不佞所为思想言论自繇言者止此，庶几闻者知求诚意正心之实，必先除意念之因拘，与夫言辞之羁勒。使于此而不自繇，则诚正之谈，将皆出于饰伪而已。不佞前所窃据以为说者，有四义焉：	思想自由，及发抒此思想之自由，为人生一切 福祉 之源，既于此章详论之矣。此章之旨，大略可分为四段，兹略复单简言之：	我既ニ四種ノ縁故ヲ推シテ。意見ノ自由及ビ意見ヲ言ヒ顯ハスノ自由ハ。人生ノ 福祉 ヲ増ガ為ニ。必要ニシテ欠ベカラザルヲ論ゼリ。
6	If it were felt that the free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of well-being ; that it is not only a co-ordinate element with all that is designated by the terms civilization, instruction, education, culture, but is itself a necessary part and condition of all those things; there would be no danger that liberty should be undervalued, and the adjustment of the boundaries between it and social control would present no extraordinary difficulty.	使知其繇，自从吾术，彼不知，人道 民德 之最隆，在人人各修其特操，在循异撰而各臻乎其极。又不悟，治功学业，教化文物，此数者皆必待民特操异撰，相经纬组织而后成。使其知此，则必纵言行之自繇，而不为其天鳳 即小己之发舒，与国群之约束，亦必有其相剂之道，而无虑于牴牾。	世间之 福祉 ，必以个人之自由发达其品行行为之原，此人等之所易知也。若开化，若教育，若修养，亦同为不可少之要分。诸分皆全，自由乃个人及社会管辖者之界限，乃整齐而无偏过。	ハノ人自己ヨリ出ル品行アラズシテ。特ニ他人ノ傳説及ビ他人ノ風習ヲ以テ。吾ガ行狀ノ規則トスルトコロニテハ。人生 福祉 ノ基本トナル原質ハ欠レ有ヌナリ。即チ人民各箇ノ造就上進及ビ邦國一體ノ造就上進ノ原質ハ欠テ有ヌナリ。
7	It would be a great misunderstanding of this doctrine to suppose that it is one of selfish indifference, which pretends that human beings have no business with each other's conduct in life, and that they should not concern themselves about the well-doing or well-being of one another, unless their own interest is involved. Instead of any diminution, there is need of a great increase of disinterested exertion to promote the good of others.	世有自营之子，其于同类，若痛痒不关也者，尝谓一人之身，于他人行事，本不相涉，是故他人行事之是非，立身之善恶，无敢一己为皇皇也，惟其事有涉于吾私，庶几可过问耳。彼为术如此者，不得吾自繇之说，为藏身之固也。	自由之理，与自私不同，不可不明辨也。误会自由之理者，以为是与自私无异，遂谓人类不当干涉他人生活之事，遂于一切有利于他人者，举无所为，惟知自利而已，是非自由也。自由者，利己而亦利他，甚至忘己而专利他人，以真实之仁心，崇人生之 福祉 。	決シテ然ラズ。コレ自ラ私シスルニシテ。自由ニハ非ズ蓋シ世ヲ善クシ民ヲ利セント欲スル人。即チ自己ヲ总レテ他人ノ利益ヲ謀ル仁心アルノ人多ク世ニ出ルニ非レバ。人生ノ 福祉 ヲ崇スルハ得ラルベカデズ風俗ノ善良ニ進ムハ私心ナ人ノカニ頼ル。

Continued

<p>He is the person most interested in his own well-being; the interest which any other person, except in cases of strong personal attachment, can have in it, is trifling, compared with that which he himself has; the interest which society has in him individually (except as to his conduct to others) is fractional, and altogether indirect; while with respect to his own feelings and circumstances, the most ordinary man or woman has means of knowledge immeasurably surpassing those that can be possessed by any one else.</p>	<p>此沮者无论其出于一人，或出于一国，而以自繇公理衡之，皆不合也。且彼之为是，将曰吾与其人独亲云耳，顾言亲至于自谋而极。夫人之生也，莫重于所以安生立命者，他人之为亲，舍其一二最膾炙者，则不及其所自为者皆甚远也。何则？无直接之相系也。性情之攸殊，事境之所处，虽中材之男女，彼用其所自知，以审处其最宜者，必非旁人所能及也。</p>	<p>相互ニ他人ニ關係スベカラズト。又曰ク人各自己ノ利益ト相干カラザレバ。タトヒ他人ノ善行ノ為他人ノ福祥ノ為ニ利益トナルベキアレ。各互ニ關係セザルベシト言モノ、アランニハ如何コレヲ自由ノ教道ニ合ヘリトイフベシヤ。</p>
<p>To determine the point at which evils, so formidable to human freedom and advancement, begin, or rather at which they begin to predominate over the benefits attending the collective application of the force of society, under its recognised chiefs, for the removal of the obstacles which stand in the way of its well-being; to secure as much of the advantages of centralised power and intelligence as can be had without turning into governmental channels too great a proportion of the general activity—is one of the most difficult and complicated questions in the art of government.</p>	<p>夫治国必有政府，是非得一国之贤者以为之不可也。得一国之贤者而尽之，令一切之政，皆出于政府，则其势不独将以夺其民之自繇，而政府亦以莫之反对而腐败，是愈不可也。是故斟酌于是二者之间，而善为之中制，可此言治道者所最难也。此其事常存于节目，而必自其细者而谨之，欲粗举纲要，立大法以从事，不可得矣。</p>	<p>國政ノ學ニ於テ。最モ難ク。最モ紛糾セル問題ハ。人類ノ自由及ビ日進ヲ妨グル弊惡ノ源ヲ看出シ總體人民種々ノオ智ヲシテ。政府同一ノ塗轍ニ帰セシメザル隄防ノ法ヲ講ズルナリ。コノ弊惡ノ源ハ。政府ノ權勢中央ニ湊合シ。所有利益ノ事ヲ總括スルニ。造端セリ。ソノ隄防ノ法ハ。別ニ云々ト定マレル規則アルニ非ズ。タタコノ難事ニフキ議論ノ紛糾セルモノヲ解クベキ道理ヲ。常ニ目存シテ失ハザレバ。ソノ道理ノ中ヨリ。隄防ノ法。見出ザルベシ。コノ卓高ノ道理ハ。教言ヲ以テ道達セラルベシ。</p>

“well-being” as “福祉” or “幸福”. TT2 is the translation by Ma Junwu, published in the same year as Yan Fu’s translation, is mentioned in his translator’s preface (Ma, 1903/2011: p. 26) as having read Japanese translation by Nakamura. In Nakamura’s version, Nakamura translates “well-being” as “福祉”. It can be seen that Ma Junwu basically follows Nakamura’s translation in translating this term. In Yan’s translation, the original meaning of “well-being” was replaced by the meaning of improving the moral quality of the people. And this is not just the only example in the text. Here is another instance.

Example 2:

ST: If it were felt that the free development of individuality is one of the leading essentials of **well-being**; that it is not only a co-ordinate element with all that is designated by the terms civilization, instruction, education, culture, but is itself a necessary part and condition of all those things; there would be no danger that liberty should be undervalued, and the adjustment of the boundaries between it and social control would present no extraordinary difficulty. (Mill, 1859: p. 102)

TT1: 使知其鹄，自从吾术，彼不知，人道**民德**之最隆，在人人各修其特操，在循异撰而各臻乎其极。又不悟，治功学业，教化文物，此数者皆必待民特操异撰，相经纬组织而后成。使其知此，则必纵言之自繇，而不为其天鳳即小己之发舒，与国群之约束，亦必有其相剂之道，而无虑于牴牾。(Yan,

1903/2014: p. 303)

TT2: 世间之**福祉**，必以个人之自由发达其品行之原，此人之所易知也。若开化，若教育，若修养，亦同为不可少之要分。诸分皆全，自由乃完，个人及社会管辖者之界域，乃整齐而无偏过。(Ma, 1903/2011: p. 55)

TT3: 假若大家都已感到个性的自由发展乃是**福祉**的首要要素之一；假若大家都已感到这不正是和所称文明、教化、教育、文化等一切东西并列的一个因素，而且自身又是所有那些东西的一个必要部分和必要条件；那么，自由就不会有被低估的危险，而要调整个人自由与社会控制二者之间的界限也就不会呈现特别的困难，但是为患之处就在，一般的想法却很少见到个人自动性这个东西具有什么内在价值，值得为其自身之故而予以注意。(Xu, 1959/2009: p. 67)

TT4: 如果人们能够认识到个人的自由发展是**幸福**的要素，认识到个人的自由发展不仅是文化、文明、教育、教化这些话题中所谈及的一个方面，且其本身也是这些话题的必要条件和内容，那么自由就不会面临被忽视的危险，自由与社会管制之间的界限也不至于如此难以调和。(Bao, 2016: p. 62)

The reason for Yan omitting the term “well-being” from the original text and adding the concept of “民德” to the meaning of the sentence can be found in his letters to his close friend Xiong Chunru. In Yan Fu’s opinion, “Well-being is dependent on the moral standard and education of the people.”¹ (Wang, 1986: p. 680)

Example 3:

ST: There are, it is alleged, certain beliefs so useful, not to say indispensable, to **well-being** that it is as much the duty of governments to uphold those beliefs, as to protect any other of the interests of society. (Mill, 1859: p. 42)

TT 1: 彼谓旧说为民所信奉日久，**关于人心风俗者**，至深而不可离，故国家之职，在保持其说，而禁其攻者，且以其事之不容已，而责任之所存也。(Yan, 1903/2014: p. 273)

TT 2: 为一事而必能增人之**福祉**，虽不可必信，而保护社会之一切利益，固政府之天职也。(Ma, 1903/2011: p. 39)

TT 3: 人们申说，有某些信条对于社会**福祉**是这样有用——且不说是不可少——所以政府有义务支持它们，正和有义务保护任何其他社会利益一样。(Xu, 1959/2009: p. 26)

TT 4: 人们宣称，某些学说对于社会**福祉**而言就算不是不可或缺的，也是十分有益的，因而政府有责任支持它们，正如政府有责任保护其他的社会利益。(Bao, 2016: p. 23)

The original text has expressed the importance elements for personal happiness. It can be found that in TT2, TT3, and TT4, the translators have translated the original meaning of the original text. These three translators translate “well-being” as “福祉”. But Yan Fu only emphasizes that these doctrines are about social customs, so once again he omits the term “well-being”.

Example 4:

ST: We have now recognised the necessity to the mental **well-being** of man-

¹始知世间一切法，举皆有弊，而福利多寡，仍以民德民智高下为归。

kind (on which all their other **well-being** depends) of freedom of opinion, and freedom of the expression of opinion, on four distinct grounds; which we will now briefly recapitulate. (Mill, 1859: p. 94)

TT 1: 不佞所为思想言论自繇言者止此，庶几闻者知求诚意正心之实，必先除意念之囚拘，与夫言辞之羈勒。使于此而不自繇，则诚正之谈，将皆出于饰伪而已。不佞前所窃据以为说者，有四义焉。(Yan, 1903/2014: p. 299)

TT 2: 思想自由，及发抒此思想之自由，为人生一切**福祉**之源，既于此章详论之矣。此章之旨，大略可分为四段，兹略复单简言之。(Ma, 1903/2011: p. 154)

TT 3: 讲到这里，我们已经从很清楚的四点根据上认识到意见自由和发表意见自由对于人类精神**福祉**的必要性了(人类一切其他**福祉**是有赖于精神福祉的); 现在再把那四点根据简单扼要地重述一下。(Xu, 1959/2009: p. 61)

TT 4: 如今，我们已然认识到人类精神**富足**的必要条件之所在，即观念的自由(人类其他方面**福祉**的基础) 和表达观点的自由，这又分为四个不同的层面，下面我们简短地概括一下。(Bao, 2016: p. 56)

Yan Fu's translation makes the term "well-being" invisible, reflecting the purpose of Yan Fu's translation. Wang Xiaobing (2007) emphasises that Yan Fu had the purpose of meeting the need of introduction of Western science and thoughts to awake the Chinese people. He also mentioned about Yan Fu intended to express his different opinion from the author of the original because of his realization of the situation in China. According to Schwartz (1964/1983: p. 97), Yan Fu's central preoccupation with the power of the state creeping into his paraphrase of passages. If the liberty of the individuals is often treated in Mill as a purpose of the text, in Yan Fu it becomes a means to the advancement of "the people's virtue and intellect".

Yan Fu had his own understanding of "well-being". However, the translation of "well-being" as "福祉" has become a fixed translation in all later translations of *On Liberty*. With regard to the origin of the term "福祉", it could be found from Table 3 that the title of Chapter 3 of Ma Junwu's translation uses the same Chinese character for the term "福祉" as Nakamura Masanao's translation. The term "福祉" was not translated as so in the English-Chinese dictionaries of the time. Liao (2017: p. 28) mentions that after the Meiji Restoration, the Japanese looked for relevant words from ancient Chinese texts to translate Western ideas, creating translation terms. The Chinese could understand these kinds of terms immediately. The term "福祉" in Nakamura Masanao's translation was taken from ancient Chinese texts and used to translate the term "well-being". This translation was duplicated by Ma Junwu (Cao, 2019: p. 36), and this fixed translation gradually became widespread. It also changed the meaning of "福祉" in traditional Chinese culture. Therefore, the translation of "well-being" as "福祉" is derived from the Japanese term "福祉", thus changing the meaning of the traditional Chinese term "福祉".

Nowadays, the term "well-being" is been translated as "Min Sheng Fu Zhi" ("民生福祉"), "Fu Li" ("福利"), "Xing Fu" ("幸福"), "Kuai Le" ("快乐"), "An

Kang” (“安康”), “Kang Le” (“康乐”) and “Xiao Kang” (“小康”).

Up to now, well-being has had different meanings in different areas. According to Japanese scholar Kimio Yoshimura (2009: p. 79), in the medical field, well-being refers more specifically to physical health, for example the “health and well-being”, “social well-being” in sociology, or “the well-being of children”. Sometimes different types of well-being are distinguished, such as “mental well-being”, “physical well-being”, “economic well-being” or “emotional well-being”. So in China, the concept of “well-being” can be translated into so many different Chinese terms.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the important concept “well-being” in *On Liberty* is currently translated as “福祉”. However, “福祉” is a traditional term in China. It was represented as “a felicitous omen” or “blessing”. In Ma Junwu’s translation, however, the term “福祉” is borrowed from the Japanese translation by Nakamura Masanao. This changes the meaning of the term “福祉” in traditional Chinese culture. Yan Fu did not translate the concept of “well-being” in *On Liberty*, but replaced it with the concept of “Min De” (“民德”). This translation reflects that Yan Fu advocated the cultivation of the moral quality of the people as his translation purpose. In Ma Junwu’s translation, reference the Japanese translation of the concept of “well-being” by Nakamura Masanao. This translation process has changed the meaning of “Fu Zhi” (“福祉”) in traditional Chinese culture. And the influence of this semantic meaning remains even nowadays. Although the paper has analysed the history of Chinese translations of “well-being”, further research is suggested to take into account the translations of “well-being” in Yan Fu’s other translations as well as the context of Yan Fu’s era in order to understand Yan Fu’s understanding of this concept in the West.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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