



Exposition and Analysis of the Formation and Shaping of the Foundations of Jeremy Bentham's Utilitarianism (1748-1832)

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Abstract

Hedonism, with its various forms and types of pleasure, has been endorsed, criticized, and challenged by many moral philosophers throughout history. One of the most popular and influential ethical schools, particularly in Western culture, is utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is an advanced and progressive form of hedonism, surpassing the previous hedonistic schools of Aristipus and Epicurus. Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was the expositor and promoter of the utilitarian school and was able to take this school out of a purely theoretical state and put it into practice in society, as well as in current governmental and legislative systems. Despite its numerous supporters, this famous and influential theory has always been subject to criticism, flaws, and shortcomings. In books, theses, and various articles, influential and impressionable scholars and philosophers have discussed their views on utilitarianism in a scattered manner, but no independent research has addressed this issue. The purpose of this article is to collect and organize 25 of these personalities from various sources, and to explain, analyze, and somewhat critique the formation and shaping of the foundations of Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism.

Keywords: *Utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham; Hedonism; Asceticism; Greek and Western Philosophers; Classical Utilitarians; Modern Utilitarians*

Introduction

Bentham's utilitarianism has a significant impact on ethics and law. It can be said that Jeremy Bentham was a politician who based his policies on ethical principles, the fundamental basis of which is pleasure-derived profit. Although Bentham cannot be credited for the innovation of utilitarianism and hedonism, he presented these two schools of thought in a logical and systematic manner (Seyedeh-Nargess Emranian, *Pleasure and the Meaning of Life: A Comparative Study of Aristotle, Ibn Sina, and Bentham*, pp. 110-11). Utilitarianism has always had its opponents. Karl Marx mockingly referred to Bentham as a "genius in bourgeois stupidity," while Friedrich Nietzsche, along with Christianity, derided utilitarianism as the "morality of slaves" for cowards, the timid, and the mediocre. Among writers, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, and Aldous Huxley have all included their opposition to utilitarianism in their stories (Katarzyna de Lazari-Radek and Peter Singer, *Utilitarianism: A Very Short Introduction*, book text). The existence of such opponents from different countries demonstrates the

influence of utilitarianism, to the extent that the main idea of utilitarianism has become part of some cultures and customs. Communism endorsed utilitarianism in theory, as it was advertised on massive posters larger than life, "the greatest happiness for everyone in the future." Fascism resorted to a limited form of racist utilitarianism: "pride in the superior race ruling the world." Liberal utilitarianism, as the fashion dictated, prevailed and spread in any society with the increase of freedom and the opening up of space, to the point where utilitarianism now holds the status of a constitutional principle in all Western democracies. No statesman can imagine opposing it. Even the recommendation to tighten seat belts is always expressed in the guise of universal benevolence, and pleasure and future happiness are intended from it (Paul Strathern, *An Introduction to John Stuart Mill*, pp. 38-39).

Therefore, Bentham's ideas can be found in other philosophers as well. He has mentioned several names among his Slavic and contemporary peers and explicitly referred to their role in shaping and directing his ideas. Below, some of the thinkers who have influenced or been influenced by Bentham's utilitarian foundations are explained and analyzed.

Influential Figures

1. Diogenes (412-320 BC)

The roots of the systematic virtues of asceticism and self-reliance can be found in the works of Plato and Aristotle, and detailed discussions on these topics can be found in Plato's "Charmides" and "Phaedrus" and Aristotle's "Nicomachean Ethics". The beginning of cynicism can be traced back to Heraclitus (around 480-540 BC), but it is usually considered a later Greek or Roman philosophy, with its most famous followers including Diogenes of Sinope (320 BC), Panties Rhodius (around 110-185 BC), Posidonius of Apamea (around 51-135 BC), Seneca (4-65 BC), Epictetus (around 138-50 AD), and Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121-180 AD) (Shirzad Peikharfeh, *Origin of the first history and critique of utilitarianism in Anglo-Saxon and American ethics philosophy*, p.25). Some of the important schools of thought in this area include Cynicism, Scythianism, and the Kalbi philosophical school.

- a) Stoicism: is a philosophy with its origins in ancient Greece, and later found many important adherents among the Romans.
- b) Malamatiyya: They are a group of Sufis who believe that in order to humble the self as much as possible, one must humiliate oneself as much as possible in front of others. The name of the group "Khaksar" (meaning earthworm in Persian), which is now found among Sufis and mystics, comes from this belief.
- c) The philosophical school of Cynicism: is associated with the prominent figure Diogenes, who was a member of this school of thought. The Cynics were a sect of Greek philosophers who were founded by Antisthenes, one of Socrates' disciples. Bentham, just as he was influenced by pleasure-seeking, self-centered, and other-centered schools of thought and thinkers, has also been influenced by self-denial and world-renouncing tendencies. Bentham considers asceticism to be in conflict with the principle of utility (hedonism) and opposes it. In his most important and famous book, "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation," without mentioning the schools of world-renunciation and their thinkers, he denies asceticism: "An axiom may be different from the principle of utility in two ways: by constantly opposing it, and this is about a principle that can be called the principle of asceticism, or by opposing it in some cases and agreeing in other cases, such as in the principles of sympathy and antipathy. What I mean by the principle of asceticism is a principle that, like the principle of utility, approves or rejects any action based on the role it appears to play in increasing or decreasing the happiness of the party whose benefit is under discussion. But in reverse, that is, approving actions to the extent that it reduces the happiness of human beings and rejecting actions based on the effect they have on increasing happiness... Two categories of people with very different dispositions and characteristics exist who, for varying reasons, have accepted the principle of asceticism. They are:

the Ethicists, who appear to be driven by the motivator of hope... and the Religionists, who appear to be driven out of fear, that is, a pain display; a fear arising from a superstitious delusion, a fear of the future punishment at the hands of an angry and vengeful God. Regarding the Religionists, I emphasize fear because for the sake of the invisible future, fear is much stronger than hope. These are specific details of the two groups among the supporters of the principle of asceticism. The two sides and their reasons are different, but the principle is the same."

2. Aristippus (435-366 BCE)

He was a proponent of a school of ethical hedonism, which can be traced back to his philosophy. (Manuchehr Sana'i Darabi, *Philosophy of Ethics and Foundations of Behavior*, p.106) He was a contemporary of Plato (428-347 BCE) in terms of age. Aristippus was born in Cyrene, North Africa and received his education in Athens from Socrates. Frederick Copleston believed that Protagoras' sophistry had a profound influence on Aristippus.

Aristippus argued that pleasure is the highest good and all values should be measured by the standard of pleasure. Pleasure is the voice of nature, and nothing, such as shame and shyness, should prevent us from enjoying it. There is no room for any shame or shyness in ethics, and what has found roots in the confines and boundaries of ethics has its roots in customary agreements (Mohsen Gharavian, *Philosophy of Ethics*, p. 129).

3. Epicurus (341-270 BC) is also mentioned in philosophical texts under the names of Epicurus and Abiquor. After him, individuals such as Hermarchus, Polyaeus, Polystratus, Metrodorus, and others were famous philosophers in this school of thought. Epicurean philosophy is a moderated version of Aristippus's theory. Epicurus was also opposed to Plato, who said that a good life has nothing to do with pleasure, and also to Aristotle, who believed that although pleasure is somehow one of the components of a good life, a good life is not based on pleasure. Epicurus represented a kind of philosophy that still has many supporters today. His view was "the only thing that is good is pleasure." Even today, the term Epicurean is used in English to refer to someone who enjoys the finer things in life. At the same time, Epicurus suffered from stomach discomfort for years because he ate little and simple food and sometimes only drank water and generally lived a life of abstinence and constipation. His letters contained sentences like "I tremble when I live with physical pleasure like water and bread, and I hate the beautiful delicacies, not in themselves, but because of the discomfort they cause" (Mohsen Gharavian, *Islamic Ethics Philosophy*, p. 47).

Bentham, the founder of the school of utilitarianism in the nineteenth century, is a follower of the school of experientialism in the eighteenth century, which also originated from Epicurean philosophy and is essentially a modified form of Epicureanism. This school seeks to address the shortcomings of Epicurean philosophy and has identified the main shortcomings as Epicurus's lack of attention to society (Sayyed Ali Reza Seyyed Kabari, *Philosophy of Pleasure in the Field of Sociology*, p. 14). The utilitarian school regards happiness as pleasure and collective benefit as the criterion for ethics; that is, what benefits the most people in society while providing them with the greatest pleasure is good. In fact, utilitarianism receives its dough from hedonism and is its fully formed version and guides it toward the masses (a tool for social reform) (Paul Edwards, *Philosophy of Ethics*, p. 117; Azam Irajiniya, *Quarterly Journal of Kalam Philosophical Research*, "Studying the Position of Pleasure Based on the Wisdom of Sadr and Bentham's Utilitarianism," p. 122).

4. John Locke (29 August 1632 – 28 October 1704) The origins of the first utilitarianism can be traced back to the Enlightenment thinkers of eighteenth-century Scotland who were responsible for introducing consequentialist thought into utilitarianism, and the English god-fearing philosophers of ethics (Shirzad Peikharfe, *The Origins of the First History and Critique of Classic and Modern Utilitarianism in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American Ethics Philosophy*, p. 40). One of the most famous philosophers of seventeenth-century England was John Locke, who is widely recognized as the father of

classical liberalism. Locke, Hume, and the French encyclopedists are credited with founding the school of utilitarianism in modern philosophy (Paul Edwards, *Philosophy of Ethics*, p. 117). Most philosophers recognize John Locke as the founder of modern utilitarianism. He considers pleasure, benefit, and natural rights as ethical standards. In some ways, Bentham's theories continue and complement his beliefs.

5. Francis Hutcheson (1694–1749) Hutcheson was a Scottish-Irish philosopher and is known as one of the founding fathers of the Scottish Enlightenment. He drew his ideas from John Locke. He had a significant influence on several important Enlightenment thinkers, including David Hume and Adam Smith. He introduced moral conscience and utilitarianism in ethics (Hasan Maleki, *Philosophy of Ethics (International Translation and Publication Center of Mustafa)*, p. 42). The discussion of universal welfare and moral conscience in Hutcheson's theory has made him a proponent of moral sense theory and a pioneer of utilitarianism in the history of ethical theories (Hasan Maleki, *Foundations of Ethics in Western and Islamic Philosophy*, p. 68). Bentham and Mill have used the phrase "the principle of the greatest happiness" to refer to the fundamental principle of utilitarianism, which states that right actions are those that produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people. Francis Hutcheson used this formulation in his book "An Inquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue" in 1725 and was known for advocating it. His use of this principle is somewhat different from that of utilitarians, and his overall ethical theory is imbued with aesthetic elements that are foreign to classical utilitarianism (Jonathan A. Jacobs, *Dictionary of Ethical Terms in Philosophy*, pp. 54-55).

6. Abraham Tucker (September 2, 1705 – November 20, 1774) Tucker was a British philosopher. Hedonism is not a new theory because it was defended by Epicurus in ancient Greece and by Helvétius in eighteenth-century France and Hartley and Abraham Tucker in England. Bentham's work provided a lasting interpretation of this theory (Hasan Maleki, *Foundations of Ethics in Western and Islamic Philosophy*, p. 95).

7. David Hume (7 May 1711 – 25 August 1776) was a Scottish philosopher, historian, economist, librarian, and essayist of the Enlightenment era. Although less attention has been paid to his moral philosophy, he is one of the founders of utilitarianism and hedonism. However, he has some reservations about the application and exclusivity of morality based on utility. He speaks clearly about the ultimate goal of human actions that can never be justified by reason alone, but rather it is entirely dependent on human emotions and passions that appear intense and desirable, without regard to rationality and understanding. Hume argues that if you ask a man why he exercises, he will answer because he wants to stay healthy. And if you ask him why he wants to stay healthy, he will immediately say because illness is painful. If you continue to follow up your questions and ask why he hates pain, it is impossible for him to provide a reason. This is one of the fundamental goals and ultimate objectives that never refer to anything else. Perhaps to your second question of why he wants to stay healthy, he will also give the answer that health is a necessary condition for doing things. Now, if you ask why he cares about his job, he will answer because he wants to make money. If you ask why, he will say that money is a means of pleasure. "Beyond this, there is no reason to desire pointless work. It is impossible to progress indefinitely, so that there is always something found to be desirable for the sake of something else. You must arrive at something that is desirable in its own right, and insofar as it is consistent with human emotions and feelings." This saying is an empirical English one, and despite its simplicity, it is strong and the basis of utilitarianism. The problem is that many believe, like Kant, that this morality cannot be correct. Ethics must be based on independent foundations (John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p.179. [Note by Morteza Mardiyaha]).

In his works, Hume introduces a modified version of Shaftesbury's view that the wise person is involved in increasing the good for all. This point is very important in understanding the process of designing and expanding utilitarianism. When Hume talks about conventional virtues, he knows virtue as something that increases the welfare of the entire community. Utilitarianism is influenced by Hume's interpretation of social benefits from artificial virtues, while his interpretation of how emotions affect

moral judgment and adherence to moral standards is influential in Mill's thoughts on internal moral inhibitions (Sherzad Pikhrafteh, *The Origin of the First History of Classic and Modern Varieties of Utilitarianism in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American Moral Philosophy*, p.37).

Jeremy Bentham benefits from Hume's works, but his approach was quite different from Hume's in many cases. Hume emphasized the evaluation of personality in his ethical system. He considered the act of the agent to be important, but believed that this importance was to testify and show his personality. Nevertheless, Bentham emphasized his own action evaluation rather than his character (Sherzad Pikhrafteh, *The Origin of the First History of Classic and Modern Varieties of Utilitarianism in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American Moral Philosophy*, p.67). Bentham borrowed the concept of social utility from Hume. In the first chapter of his book "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation," he explicitly states that it owes much to Hume and seeing that Hume has invalidated the social contract myth and shown that virtue is based on utility, his mind has been cleared: I remember well, when I read the part of the "Inquiry into Human Nature" that deals with this subject, I felt as if a veil had been lifted from before my eyes. Then, for the first time, I learned that the issue of the people is a matter of virtue... Here, regardless of a few exceptional cases, it has been convincingly proven that the foundation of every virtue is utility (Nicholas Capaldi, *Bentham, Mill and the School of Utility*, p.21). Hume's utilitarian element continued through Bentham and the father and son Mills (Hassan Malekmi, *Foundations of Ethics in Western and Islamic Philosophy*, p.72).

8. Jean Claude Adrien Helvétius (January 26, 1715 – December 26, 1771) was a French philosopher and writer. In the 18th century, Helvétius in France and Hartley in England were leaders of the School of Utility and its application to social reform. Helvétius had a deep influence on Bentham's thought. Therefore, Bentham did not invent the principle of "utility"; he simply adopted a explicit approach and aligned it with the fundamental bases of ethics and legislation (Seyed Ali Reza Seyed Kabari, *Philosophy of Pleasure in Sociology*, p.15). Helvétius, who was friends with Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Diderot, had a very famous and influential essay titled "On the Mind" (1758), which was reprinted twenty times in six months, and according to Will Durant, shook the world. It also greatly influenced Bentham. Interestingly, some researchers believe that one of the vulnerable points of Bentham's theories, and one of the factors that has reduced his importance as a great philosopher, is this shallow and materialistic psychology, which he borrowed from Helvétius and Hartley. James Mill referred to Bentham as Helvétius' follower (Nicholas Capaldi, *Bentham, Mill, and the School of Utility*, p.20).

9. Joseph Priestley (March 13, 1733 – February 6, 1804) was a chemist, philosopher, theologian, linguist, and English political theorist in the 18th century who opposed the Church of England and advocated for the separation of religion and politics. If we say that Bentham took his ideas directly from Priestley and put them into a new philosophical framework regarding social reforms, it is not far from the truth (Nicholas Capaldi, *Bentham, Mill, and the School of Utility*, p.20). In 1768, Bentham received an essay by Priestley titled "An Essay on Government" (1768), in which he found the phrase "the greatest happiness for the greatest number." According to Priestley, the happiness of the majority of members of a government's subjects is the criterion upon which all government affairs should be measured. Bentham gave this concept a new name and introduced it as the "principle of the greatest happiness," which he used for all human issues thereafter (Nicholas Capaldi, *Bentham, Mill, and the School of Utility*, p.21).

10. Cesare Beccaria (March 15, 1738 – November 20, 1794) was a legal theorist, philosopher, politician, and advocate from Italy. Beccaria's theories focused mostly on criminal law and societal reactions to crime. He is also considered by historians of philosophy to have had a significant influence on Bentham. In the preface to his famous and influential essay "On Crimes and Punishments," Beccaria spoke of the greatest happiness or joy that is divided among the largest possible number of people. In this essay, he takes happiness as the criterion that laws and judicial administration must conform to. His own phrase, "the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people," is one of the ideas that Bentham adopted from him. Beccaria believed that because punishment is inherently painful and bitter, it should

remain at the minimum level that can still have an effect, according to its inherent definition (Mojtaba Golastani, Sections of the book Introduction to Ethics and Legislation, pp.8-10).

11. William Paley or Pali (July 1743 - May 25, 1805) was a British Christian philosopher. He is mainly known for his explanation of the argument from design using the analogy of a watchmaker in his book "Natural Theology". Along with Abraham Tucker, he is one of those who presented a utilitarian interpretation of Christian and divine ethics (Mojtaba Golestani, excerpts from the book "An Introduction to the Principles of Ethics and Legislation", p.11).

2. The Adherents

In this section, we introduce the adherents of utilitarianism from the perspective of Jeremy Bentham. However, some of the adherents of utilitarianism have also had criticisms. Some of the important criticisms are reflected below. According to Morteza Moradiha, the translator of the book on utilitarianism, the issues have not diminished the importance of utilitarianism:

"But it seems that utilitarianism is an idea that, despite the many criticisms that have been made of it, is indispensable. One reason for this is that, unlike many ethical schools, utilitarianism is more of a life theory. Since ethics are usually known for their degrees of selflessness and curbing tendencies, ethical schools have generally offered guidelines whose common outlet has been to overcome desires. Consequently, a significant portion of the content of these schools is recommendations and prohibitions that the recipient is rational; a reason that is supposed to block selfishness and self-gratification and guide the individual to self-preservation and altruism."

2.1 Scholars

12. James Mill (April 6, 1773 – June 23, 1836) was a historian, economist, political theorist, and Scottish philosopher. He established classical economics alongside David Ricardo. John Stuart Mill was James Mill's eldest son. James' father, who had defended democratic institutions in his famous work "Essay on Government," was a spokesperson for a group of English intellectuals known as the "Radical Philosophers." Due to his outstanding abilities from an early age, he caught the attention of Sir John Stuart, a resident of Fortkone and one of the barons of the Oxcheker district in Scotland, and was sent to the University of Edinburgh at the expense of a fund established by Lady Jean Stuart (wife of Sir John Stuart) and several other women for the education and training of young people to serve in the Scottish church. Based on the above text, it is likely that James Mill named his oldest son "John Stuart" in appreciation of the help he received from Sir John Stuart for his education. One of the best sources for understanding James Mill is the autobiography he wrote between 1853 and 1870, as recorded by John Stuart Mill. Examples are cited in the text.

- a) "His ethical standard was Epicurean because this school was based on utilitarianism and considered the tendency to create pleasure or pain as the only correct and incorrect test." (John Stuart Mill, Autobiography, p.66)
- b) "My father's position in literary history and even in the political history of his country is a high one... His thought has to some extent been overshadowed by the fame of Bentham, which is justly his due; but he was something more than a mere follower or disciple of Bentham. He was himself one of the most original thinkers of his time... His mind and that of Bentham were built on foundations fundamentally different from each other. My father had not all Bentham's virtues, but Bentham had not all his. The notion that he was like Bentham in rendering splendid services to mankind, and ought to be exalted as high, is ludicrous. He originated no great movement of thought in any direction, nor did he found any new school... By the estimate of his achievements in a field where Bentham had done nothing, the analytical psychology, his place in the estimation of future generations will be one of the greatest names in that most important branch of

knowledge and reflection on which all ethical and political science ultimately rests." (John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 194-195)

- c) "My father believed that preaching the Benthamite creed or utilitarianism was a distinguishing characteristic. These beliefs were disseminated individually and scattered in many directions." (John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, p.111) d) "My father was the oldest prominent Englishman who fully understood the general theories of Bentham about ethics and government by law, and accepted most of them." (John Stuart Mill, *Autobiography*, pp. 71-72) e) James Mill does not deny that people use general ethical rules in ordinary life; but he denies that they should be allowed to turn these rules into a kind of secondary nature and transcend the duty of calculating consequences. When a person is faced with a conflict between a general rule and a path that leads to the greatest happiness, he must follow the latter path. (William Thomas, *John Stuart Mill*, p.34)

13. John Stuart Mill (1808-1873)

John Stuart Mill, like Bentham, is one of the great figures of utilitarianism, and this school is named after these two personalities. He is the first child of James Mill and Harriet Barrow Mill (Susan Leigh Anderson, *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill*, p. 5). John is an English philosopher and political theorist. His intellectual innovations in several important areas of philosophy and political thought, as well as economics and ethics, are an important part of the literature of classical political theory today.

The ethical theory of utilitarianism, or the doctrine of the originality of utility, has many advocates among American and British philosophers. Francis Hutcheson was one of the first representatives of this school. David Hume's ethical theory is also considered a form of utilitarianism, but the most famous advocates of this school are Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill. Mill, along with Bentham and Say, is one of the classic utilitarians and the first. In the circle of Bentham, no one has learned and understood his teachings and views as thoroughly and completely as Mill (William Thomas, *John Stuart Mill*, p. 157). This idea that says utility should be at the center of describing social behavior has been discussed for a long time by thinkers such as David Hume (1711-1776), Adam Smith (1723-1790), and John Stuart Mill. According to these analyses, there are economic interests and various types of benefits. Interests may be in conflict with each other, and a type of interest (such as economic interest) can prevent other types of interests or reinforce them (Richard Swedberg, *Utilitarianism and Social Structure (Issues in Economic Sociology)*, p. 11).

2.2. Critics and Commentators

14. George Edward Moore (November 4, 1873 - October 24, 1958)

Famous as G.E. Moore, he was a prominent and influential English philosopher. Along with Ludwig Wittgenstein, Gottlob Frege, and Bertrand Russell, he is considered one of the founders of analytical philosophy. Moore not only founded modern ethical philosophy in its current sense but even today, perhaps he is the most famous critic of utilitarianism and hedonism (John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p.165. (Note by Morteza Mardiyeha)). According to him, we should examine what may have had the greatest fame among moral systems and gained the most trust and confidence; that is, this principle that nothing is good except good pleasure (George Edward Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p.201). Moore has criticized utilitarianism from a philosophical analysis perspective. Of course, Moore himself is ultimately a consequentialist or at least a teleologist, and his criticism of utilitarianism is not from the perspective of opposition to the foundations of this school, but from the perspective of fallacies and mistakes that, in his view, Mill, Bentham, and others have made in processing this idea (John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p.26. (Introduction by Morteza Mardiyeha)).

In some ethical theories, "benefit" is a term for what should be the goal of moral decision and action. Various theories divide benefits into different ways. Although most of the discussion of

utilitarianism relates to the nature-loving hedonistic thinkers like Bentham and Mill, there are also types of utilitarian theories that do not require a hedonistic interpretation of good and are not even naturalistic. G.E. Moore's ethical theory is an ideal form of utilitarianism. His understanding of good is non-natural and non-hedonistic, but it is very important for his ethical theory that we act to maximize benefit (Jonathan A. Jacobs, *Jacob's Dictionary of Philosophy of Ethics*, pp. 181-182).

Moore's proposed values were not entirely novel: the view that art is inherently valuable has its roots in the Romantic movement as a whole, and MacTaggart also argued for the value of elevating love for some time, a value that was somehow evident in Plato's writings and in Christianity. Moore's peculiar work was the inclusion of these ideals within the framework of a utilitarian ethics that was usually thought to be opposed to these ideals. Although G.E. Moore's qualitative ranking of pleasures can be considered an attempt in this direction (George Edward Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p.38).

15. Henry Sidgwick (May 31, 1838-August 28, 1900)

He was an English economist and utilitarian philosopher. Following Bentham and Mill, Sidgwick attempted to provide a more intuitive form of utilitarianism that addressed the weaknesses of the theory. This form of utilitarianism was not considered complete or exhaustive on its own (Hasan Malekmi, *Philosophy of Ethics*, p. 145). In fact, Sidgwick's views were derived from those of Bentham and Mill, and were a response to their ideas.

Sidgwick's "Methods of Ethics" is one of the most famous works in utilitarian philosophy, and rightly so. The book reflects Sidgwick's affinity for Benthamite and Millian utilitarianism (Shirzad Peikharfeh, *Origins of the First History and Critique of Classic and Modern Forms of Utilitarianism in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American Ethics*, pp. 47-48).

Sidgwick accepted and criticized the theory of egoistic utilitarianism from various aspects, and added emotions and tradition to the principle of utility, considering some moral principles self-evident (Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: From Bentham to Russell*, Vol. 8, pp. 113-116). Sidgwick can be called a genuine intuitionist or an intuitionist who follows the principle of utility (Hasan Malekmi, *Foundations of Ethics in Western and Islamic Philosophy*, p. 106).

There are three fundamental approaches: (1) intuitionism; (2) eudaemonism; (3) universalistic eudaemonism (utilitarianism). Intuitionists believe that some moral judgments are inherently self-evident and are considered correct without being based on any other considerations, such as the consequences of actions. For example, the statement "it is morally wrong to insult someone who has helped us and supported us" may be considered self-evident intuitively. Eudaemonism is a self-centered perspective that says that each person should maximize his or her own happiness, meaning experiences or states of awareness that are enjoyable. Universalistic eudaemonism is a perspective that expresses what a person should do ethically is to increase overall happiness without any particular concern for one's own happiness. Sidgwick provided a very detailed and precise description of these approaches, their relationship to moral judgments resulting from customary understanding, and why they are the most fundamental approaches. In his view, he addressed topics such as love of nature, virtue ethics, justice, and various duties. He concluded that the reasons for eudaemonism are stronger than the reasons for intuitionism, but the reasons for eudaemonism, whether self-centered or universalistic, ultimately depend on an intuitive judgment that "happiness is inherently good." Therefore, complete independence from intuition is not possible. However, the issue of which specific ethical rules and judgments are correct depends on a eudaemonic approach because they depend on the degree of happiness that will result. Of course, Sidgwick could not definitively and systematically identify whether self-centered eudaemonism or universalistic eudaemonism should dominate. He believed that happiness is clearly good, but it is unclear whether a person should always act to maximize his or her own profit, or to maximize overall profit. Indeed, egoists may coherently ask, "Is there really such a thing as overall profit?" And it is quite understandable that a person's concern for his or her own welfare is different from his or her concern for

the welfare of others. However, it is also clear that if something called overall profit exists, then a person must strive to maximize it, because his or her own profit is only a small part of it (Jonathan A. Jacobs, *The Terminology of Ethical Philosophy*, pp. 103-104).

The idealistic and pleasureless profiteer Mor is one who says that we should always act in a way that has the best possible results, which are not necessarily the results that maximize pleasure. Sidgwick's extension of this view was that the interpretation of duty should be completed through an idealistic interpretation of the goals of action based on direct understanding (George Edward Moore, *Principia Ethica*, p.17).

16. Thomas Carlyle (December 4, 1795 - February 5, 1881) was a Scottish linguist, historian, translator, mathematician, philosopher, essayist, and writer. His most notable work is "The French Revolution: A History," which he wrote in 1837. He was one of the most prominent critics of the utilitarian school of thought. Carlyle criticized the measurement of pleasure alongside happiness and individuality (Nicholas Capaldi, *Bentham, Mill and Utilitarianism*, pp. 15 and 79). One of the oldest criticisms of the theory of pleasure measurement is that there are qualitative differences in pleasures. Like many contemporary thinkers of Bentham and Mill, Carlyle considered utilitarianism to be highly materialistic and based on an animalistic interpretation of humanity, which he found repugnant (John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, p. 23). Carlyle called Bentham's theory "the philosophy of swine" and dismissed it because such a life is suitable only for pigs, not humans. John Stuart Mill tried to defend this theory by creating a distinction between the qualitative and quantitative aspects of pleasures (Nicholas Capaldi, *Bentham, Mill and Utilitarianism*, p. 48). In addition to the aforementioned issue, the most interesting criticism Carlyle has made of Bentham is his emphasis on the fact that utilitarianism, with its particular focus on a uniform standard for pleasures, leads to democratic uniformity.

17. Alexander Bain (11 June 1818 – 18 September 1903) was a Scottish philosopher and educator in the British Empiricist school and a prominent and innovative figure in the fields of psychology, linguistics, logic, moral philosophy, and educational reform. It should not be confused with his contemporary (October 12, 1810-January 2, 1877), also a Scottish engineer who invented and registered the electric clock for the first time. Bain, like Sidgwick and Alexander, was a critic of the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill. That is, they accepted some aspects of it but also made criticisms of it.

18. Francis Herbert Bradley (1846-1924) was an English philosopher who advocated absolute idealism. In the field of ethics, Bradley strongly criticized John Stuart Mill's utilitarianism. Bradley rejected the theory of the authenticity of pleasure, which is based on the idea that the sensation of good pleasure is genuine. Authenticity of pleasure has only one criterion to distinguish between good and bad, which is a quantitative criterion. Therefore, according to this, an ethical action is one that provides the greatest amount of pleasure to the agent, and Mill, who tried to find a qualitative criterion for pleasure, actually set aside the authenticity of pleasure. Because the acceptance of a qualitative criterion is incompatible with the authenticity of pleasure, and authenticity of benefit is actually an effort for self-realization of humanity and denial of authenticity of pleasure. Reconciliation between the authenticity of benefit and pleasure is impossible (Hasan Malekmi, *Foundations of Ethics in Western and Islamic Philosophy*, p. 113).

Bradley's main opposition to utilitarianism was to show that this theory requires a false concept of the moral actor as a separate individual who ultimately seeks only pleasure (Jonathan A. Jacobs, *The Terminology of Ethical Philosophy*, p. 48).

19. Bertrand Russell (May 18, 1872 - February 2, 1970) is considered one of the prominent philosophers of the twentieth century and led the movement against idealism in the early twentieth century. Russell's ethical theory has similarities with utilitarianism. According to Russell, the measure of an ethical act is intelligence and foresight coupled with self-interest (Mohsen Ghorrooyan, *Philosophy of Ethics*, p.26). In his critique of Russell's ethical views, Murtaza Mutahhari says, "Russell's words are

actually a denial of ethics as a value because he has reduced ethics to material gain... The ethics Russell proposes is devoid of supreme value and sanctity. [Because in his view] ethics is nothing more than self-interest and not something beyond it... [whereas] ethics is equal to value and sanctity and something beyond interests and animality. Ethics means humanity and humanity means a value above animality and material interests" (Murtaza Mutahhari, *Philosophy of Ethics*, p.155 and 157).

20. Sir Bernard Arthur Owen Williams (1929-2003) was a British philosopher and professor at Cambridge University and the University of California. Williams is famous for his works in moral philosophy and also his writings on the history of philosophy (works on Plato, Descartes, Wittgenstein, and others). One of the most important criticisms of utilitarianism is Bernard Williams' critique in the book "Utilitarianism: For and Against" and his critique of John Rawls. Williams' critique, which was presented in 1973, is known for its critique of the uniformity assumption. According to Williams, utilitarianism conflicts with individual integrity and autonomy. According to Williams, utilitarianism considers negative causality as having a moral burden, not just cognitive knowledge, and for this reason, it holds individuals responsible not only for what they do but also for what they do not do. This way of looking at things creates doubts about individual integrity and autonomy (Shirzad Pikhrafteh, *The Origin of the First History and Critique of Classic and Modern Forms of Utilitarianism in Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-American Ethics*, p.13 and 120-121). Williams' critique can be summarized as follows:

- In utilitarianism, individuals are even responsible for the consequences of their inaction, as this will be the cause of negative causality.
- If we hold individuals responsible for the consequences of their inaction, we disturb their integrity and autonomy; because in this case, we may consider them morally obliged to perform actions that are clearly contradictory to their identity values.
- Therefore, the amount of demand of this principle from individuals to perform ethical acts and determine the scope of mandatory ethical acts is extremely extreme and unreasonable, and this principle distorts the uniformity and autonomy of individuals by recognizing the necessity of adhering to negative causality and considering individuals responsible for the consequences of their inaction.

Williams ended his lengthy and detailed attack on utilitarianism with the following statement: "The day when nothing is heard about utilitarianism cannot be far away." More than forty years have passed since Williams spoke these words, but we still hear a lot about utilitarianism (Catherine de Lazaris and Radka and Peter Singer, *Utilitarianism: A Very Short Introduction*, book volume text).

21. John Rawls (1921-2002) was an American liberal philosopher who is well known for formulating the theory of justice. He is considered one of the most prominent figures in political and moral philosophy in the 20th century. One of the most famous critiques of utilitarianism is Rawls' critique, which he presents in his book "A Theory of Justice." This critique focuses on utilitarianism and the principle of maximizing good, which is one of the most discussed topics in recent ethical philosophy.

Rawls believes that respect for individuals' basic rights and freedoms is a characteristic of a just society, even if it comes at the cost of reducing the general welfare of the community. Therefore, in a just society, fundamental freedoms are considered obvious and inviolable, and rights based on justice are not subject to political compromise or calculations based on social interests.

Rawls considers utilitarianism so dangerous for individual rights and freedoms that his most important book, "A Theory of Justice," is devoted to presenting an alternative theory of justice that can be a substitute for utilitarian thinking in general and all its forms.

22. Alasdair MacIntyre (born January 12, 1929) is a contemporary neo-Aristotelian philosopher who is classified as a communitarian. Some philosophers, such as MacIntyre, have more fundamental objections to utilitarianism and consider it a specific ethics of liberalism with its attractiveness derived

from the popularity of liberal ideas at the time. From his perspective, utilitarianism seeks to eliminate the concept of goodness and morality from ethical thinking.

MacIntyre regards utilitarianism as a school similar to positivism, which, despite its rapid success, has fallen out of favor and no longer has the power to defend itself against criticism. Politically and socially oppositional movements, both left and right, tend to view utilitarianism as a conspiracy aimed at draining the energy of anti-Western and anti-capitalist struggles. Despite his criticisms of utilitarianism, MacIntyre has this to say about Bentham: "Bentham represented the future, not the past, and if anyone moves beyond the clichés and superficialities of the new Western world and dives into the depths of this world, they will find themselves in a world that Bentham was a sign of." (Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, p. 462)

23. Robert Nozick (November 16, 1938-January 23, 2002) was an American political philosopher who gained significant fame in the 1970s and 1980s. His most famous book in political philosophy, "Anarchy, State, and Utopia," was published in 1974. This book was a libertarian response to John Rawls' book "A Theory of Justice."

In addition to Robert Nozick, other modern utilitarians have accepted the foundations of Bentham's utilitarianism and have provided explanations, revisions, or criticisms of it for greater effectiveness:

24. 25. Michael Slote (1941), Peter Singer (1946), Michael Smith (1954), Shelley Kagan (1955), Eleanor Mason, Francis Howard Snyder, Julia Driver (1961).

A group of moral philosophers do not consider theories that are based solely on the principle of maximizing good as ethical theories because they ignore the distinction between individuals. According to these philosophers, the ceiling of theoretical development in the field of ethics must be built on practical reason, which requires specific assumptions about human agency that are incompatible with the principle of maximizing good. Christine Korsgaard is one of these American philosophers. She believes that consequentialism is fundamentally at odds with personal identity and human agency. John Cottingham also holds the belief that consequentialism cannot be considered a true ethical theory because of the agent's reluctance to focus on his loved ones and those around him. Cottingham is a British philosopher and a distinguished retired professor at the University of Reading.

Analysis and Evaluation

One of the prominent, famous, and late schools of hedonism, and perhaps its most important type, is utilitarianism which is based on the fundamental principle of maximizing utility (happiness). Based on the principle of utility, the only right and necessary action and rule is one that maximizes the highest amount of happiness and well-being for the greatest number of people in society. In fact, utilitarianism is one of the consequentialist and pleasure-oriented theories in normative ethics which, in this regard, is considered a rival to deontological and virtue ethics. According to many Western thinkers, the philosophy of utilitarianism, despite the criticisms it has always faced, is still one of the most popular moral philosophies and one of the most acceptable foundations upon which ethics, law, politics, and economics can be built. The founder and articulator of utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham, was an influential English philosopher, jurist, and reformer. He was action-oriented, pleasure-oriented, and holistic, and his philosophical foundation, which is based on the nature of human beings as pleasure-pursuing pain-avoiding creatures, is still valid.

By collecting and processing the ideas of ethicists and philosophers, certain points can be derived, some of which are mentioned below:

1. Important discussions about hedonism can be found in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Aristippus and Epicurus, among the ancient Greek philosophers, as well as contemporary philosophers such as John Locke, Hobbes, Hume, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Sidgwick, George Edward Moore, Broad, Brentano, Rail, and Brandt. Of course, this does not mean that all these philosophers have defended or endorsed the origin of ethical value from a hedonistic perspective. Some of them have even criticized it and presented alternative theories; but the relevance of these philosophers and great thinkers to the discussion of hedonism speaks to the importance of this theory.
2. Two general attitudes towards pleasure have emerged. Some schools recommend abstaining from pleasures and self-restraint (asceticism and refraining from pleasures), while others have made attraction and pursuit of pleasure their main goal. Each of these two attitudes has had followers throughout history. Some of the schools that advocate abstinence from and renunciation of pleasure include Rawāfīd, Kullābiyya, and Malāmatiyya.
3. Prior to utilitarianism, individuals and schools have paid attention to pleasure and made it the basis of their way of life and ethics. The most famous examples are Aristippus (contemporary of Plato) and Epicurus (contemporary of Aristotle). Undoubtedly, Jeremy Bentham and other philosophers who have addressed the concept of pleasure and its intrinsic value have been influenced by Aristippus and Epicurus. Aristippus' hedonism was very simple and straightforward, while Epicurus presented a more complex, advanced, and eschatological model.
4. Aristippus only believed in the quantity of pleasure, and Epicurus introduced the concept of quality in addition to quantity. Like Aristippus, Jeremy Bentham only focused on the quantity of pleasure, and for this reason, his contemporaries criticized and found fault with him, naming his philosophy "the philosophy of swine." John Stuart Mill, who was an indirect disciple of Bentham, introduced the element of quality in measuring pleasure to avoid such criticisms raised by people such as Thomas Carlyle.
5. It seems that two groups have gone to extremes regarding utilitarianism: A) A group that considered the demand for utilitarianism to be extremely irrational and more problematic than Kant's absolute rule; such as Williams in *Critique of Utilitarianism*. B) A group that degraded utilitarianism to the level of Aristippus' school and labeled it as the philosophy of swine; such as Thomas Carlyle.
6. Self-restraint and limitation in indulging in pleasures are fundamental practical principles of all divine religions, such as monasticism in Christianity and the doctrine of asceticism in Islam. Just as monotheism, prophethood, and resurrection are their theological principles. Not satisfying all pleasures is emphasized in the customs and traditions of various cultures, and the common ethical sense (conscience) attests to it.
7. In Islam, a moderate and balanced approach has been accepted; meaning that pleasures are not generally abandoned and at the same time not all pleasures are permissible, such as the pleasure obtained from committing a forbidden act (haram).
8. Jeremy Bentham, in his famous book "Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation," rejected and criticized the achievements of divine religions and the cultural norms and traditions shaped by them, as well as the principle of self-restraint (asceticism) and the principle of compassion and aversion (moral sense). Later, his student John Stuart Mill accepted these two principles to some extent by recognizing some of the moral rules to avoid the criticisms raised by utilitarianism's opponents. Alexander Bain, the Scottish philosopher, considers the violation of moral sense as one of the flaws of utilitarianism. He believed that utilitarianism has an advantage over moral sense theory in that it provides an objective criterion for ethics and replaces unmeasured feelings or emotions with attention to the consequences of an action. On the other hand, utilitarianism reconciles egoism and altruism and never considers pure egoism as the basis of morality. However, he believes that utilitarianism cannot encompass all the truths related to ethics because the ethical rules prevalent in most societies rely to some extent on feelings rather than solely on usefulness. Therefore, feelings and tradition (such as attention to individual

differences) should be added to the principle of usefulness (Hasan Malekmi, *Foundations of Ethics in Western and Islamic Philosophy*, p. 104).

9. The advantage and superiority of the utilitarian moral system over previous pleasure-oriented systems is that it does not only focus on the individual dimension of persons but also considers society, laws, and foremost, governments and legislatures. In the Epicurean school, "selfishness" and "self-centeredness" are the center of ethics, and ethics is summarized in personal pleasure that does not cause pain. However, some parts of ethics relate to others, such as actions that bring pleasure and happiness to others.
10. Before Bentham, Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) introduced utilitarianism in the body of government and the state, and Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794) extended utilitarianism to laws and punishments.
11. Bentham was influenced by Epicurus in designing the pleasure-measuring machine (hedonimeter) and designed a more advanced model.
12. Pleasures and the consequences of the afterlife have been overlooked in utilitarianism, which has reduced its acceptance among the pious and believers.

Conclusion: In this article, information about the influencers and affected parties regarding Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism has been collected and processed. Certainly, the related information is more than what is presented in this text, but this amount is sufficient to inform later scholars about the formation of utilitarianism foundations and its quality of influence. In gathering the material, two points were taken into consideration: first, mentioning important and influential figures; second, addressing the interpretations and flaws raised in moral philosophy, such as John Rawls' critique of utilitarianism in his famous book "A Theory of Justice."

By examining the opinions of early, contemporary, and later thinkers of Bentham, it can be understood that the idea of utilitarianism and its connection to rights (punishment) and its extension to government and state, was not an innovation of Bentham himself, but was clearly stated or implied in the works of previous thinkers, even in the fundamental principle of utilitarianism (the greatest happiness and well-being for the greatest number of people). Bentham expressed utilitarianism in a coherent and logical manner and implemented it in society and some private and governmental institutions, such as the Panopticon structure. After Bentham, fundamental criticisms and flaws were raised regarding some of the foundations of Bentham's utilitarianism. Responses to these criticisms and attempts to reform utilitarianism by scholars such as John Stuart Mill and George Edward Moore, and Henry Sidgwick, led to its evolution and division into various branches, such as rule-based and act-based utilitarianism.

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