

ON UTILITARIANISM AND PRAGMATISM**Ferdi SELİM**

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<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2576-4499>**Abstract**

Intellectual history includes peerless and unique thoughts as well as pieces of thoughts forming a tradition. In fact, thoughts, our first assumption, bear the traces of various thoughts that are products of an earlier time before the thoughts reach their brightness coming from early ages. These genuine views are not traditional anymore and have become unique as dissolving wealth of the ancient times in their own thoughts. Pragmatism also has characteristic and unique features in terms of being a product of the American world of thought. This philosophy, without a very old history, has created a tradition in a little while and could present original opinions. But, in this fast maturation period, the contribution of philosophic opinions which can be seen our common heritage is noteworthy. English's sensualism and specifically utilitarianism can be indicated as the source of the most important influence in this direction. The aim of this study is to examine the extent of this effect, to point out historical transitions and to demonstrate that Pragmatism maintains its existence as a unique and different philosophy despite this effect.

Key words: Utilitarianism, Pragmatism, Benefit, Mill, James

INTRODUCTION

Utilitarianism is associated with the English philosophers Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). However, the historical roots of this discipline reflecting general spirit of the Enlightenment period can be traced back to Antiquity in the context of its relationship with pleasure. Pragmatism is a philosophy suitable for the general structure of the American people and culture. It is a philosophical tradition that has been influenced by many philosophical doctrines in terms of determining its general principles and methodology, has gained an eclectic appearance due to the fact that it uses these views sometimes as they are and sometimes by changing them. Utilitarianism is the view that influences pragmatism and gives it its most striking aspect within this eclectic structure. However, this effect has been taken so far by some thinkers that sometimes these two philosophical trends were used interchangeably and sometimes it was thought that positive or often negative comments made for one of them was also valid for the other. Eventually, thinkers with such an opinion often reached wrong conclusions or evaluations. To be honest, although these two concepts come from different meaning roots, they are defined almost identically with a wrong assessment. Especially in our country, they are even used reciprocally. Contrary to popular beliefs, this easy-inclined attitude, based on quick and superficial decision, is seen not only in ordinary reader but also in academia. In addition, rather than their contributions or constructive effects, destructive aspects of both disciplines have been focused on and it has caused these disciplines to stuck in a narrow meaning are such as "people do what serves their purposes and is compatible with their interests". But, on the basis of these determinations, it should be noted that it is also wrong to reach the end that both Utilitarianism and Pragmatism have no direction that can be criticized and this negative aspect is only due to the incorrect evaluation of the reviewers.

In this study, reasons and results of this aforesaid attitude have been evaluated together. This evaluation will also be an efficient method in terms of determining in which subjects these two philosophical understandings differ from each other or in which subjects they intersect.

The most prominent connection point between Utilitarianism and Pragmatism is the similarities in the philosophies of the utilitarian John Stuart Mill and the pragmatist William James, and especially the explanations of William James. Tracing and examining one of the historical transitions of this philosophical tradition, claimed to have reached from ancient hedonism to Utilitarianism and finally to Pragmatism, will allow us to discuss whether the conclusions to be drawn here are valid for pragmatism in general or not. For this reason, one of the important aims of our study is to evaluate determinations made in attempts to establish a historical link through these two philosophers. This aim is also considered important in terms of the history of philosophy.

Conceptual Evaluations and Historical Representatives

To show the distinct aspects or differences of Utilitarianism and Pragmatism, it seems as a correct method to start from the meanings of the basic concepts of both views. When it comes to Utilitarianism, concepts of "utility" and "hedone" should be clear and when pragmatism is the subject of research, the concept of "pragma" should be clear.¹ If it can be shown that these concepts, which have given their names to these two disciplines, have separate meanings and even distant and very different meanings, the way to overcome the misperception that both conceptions are one and the same and that Pragmatism is only a continuation of Utilitarianism will also be opened. When we trace back the historical traces of the first of these concepts, we come across with the thought of Antiquity.² Although Pragmatism, product of a later period historically, has a new and contemporary appearance, it has taken the basic concept of "pragma" from Antiquity. To put it another way, "Pragma" did not stand out as a basic concept that could constitute a doctrine or view until the nineteenth century and it has not gone beyond being often used to indicate the operational or professional aspect of a theoretical activity. Therefore, we can say that the concept of pragma is new as an opinion and any thought that seeks a historical relationship will lead to a wrong interpretation. On the contrary, while the concept of "hedone" has a bad reputation, it has attracted the attention of philosophers since Democritus. The word and the world of meaning formed by this word have been expanded through human nature and have finally reached a theoretical unity to the level that it becomes a distinct ethical view. While this view, which could not avoid being criticized throughout history, was still in its infancy, it was subjected to the negative judgments of both Plato and Aristotle and the society. In spite of all this, it has become a concept gathered by philosophers around it and it has even become an effective concept to be a school philosophy. Hedonist philosophy is a product of Cyrenaics and its founder Aristippos and product of a time when it had a more technical and theoretical ground. It is known for its Epicurism and finally it is the important intellectual ground of Utilitarianism. Because of these reasons it should not be read in a single theme. When entered into details, each discipline aforesaid is different and this

¹ The list of concepts, valuable for both Utilitarianism and Pragmatism, can easily be increased. Concepts such as pleasure, pain, human nature, experience, practicalism, experience, instrumentalism and research can be easily added to these concepts. But since the purpose of this study is not merely to explain these doctrines, we will be content with a few more basic concepts.

² For the doctrine of Utilitarianism, we have to go back to Antiquity in the context of the concept of "hedone". Although the philosophers of this period also mention about the utility or benefits of individuals, it should be noted that the concept of utility is Latin.

discipline has been designed only as emotional mechanisms of moral judgement in the context of the concept of human nature in the Utilitarianism, which has many aspects such as politics, law and economy.

Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism has such a rich and wide content that it cannot be reduced to the concepts of pleasure and pain or to the Hedonism doctrine derived from these concepts. But the most prominent among the basic concepts of this doctrine are the concepts of pleasure and pain (Blackburn, 2016: 364-365). Therefore, in order to understand this trend in general terms, we must first examine these two concepts. Although various equivalents are given in dictionaries for both terms, it has been observed that "things preventing our will are called pain or grief, and the things we want and reach are called as pleasure" (Audi, 1999: 64; Cevizci, 1999: 8). More specifically, when we examine the meaning of the concept of pleasure alone, we can see that its meaning world has expanded and it has meanings such as "The feeling created by something pleasant. The sweet and delightful sensation that comes from having something that we like and that attracts us as a psychological phenomenon against pain. An emotion that is result of the satisfaction of a desire or a need. A sense of contentment resulting from the realization of a voluntary choice." (Cevizci, 1999: 400). To explain the word "utility" which is the other important concept of this doctrine, it is seen that the concept is met with equivalents such as utility, benefit, ability to meet a specific need or usefulness but in philosophy dictionaries, it is often seen that this concept often gains a meaning around the definitions made by philosophers. In this context, "Utilitarianism", which was introduced to Turkish as "Faydacılık", is defined as a philosophical doctrine that came to the fore in the eighteenth century, has a hedonist source and has been founded on the principle of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" (Audi, 1999: 942-944). According to Bentham³, considered as the founder of utilitarianism, "the principle of utility refers to the principle that approves or does not approve all actions, regardless of their kind. Principle that approves or disapproves all actions regardless of their type is meant by the utility principle. This approval or disapproval is made by looking at the tendency to increase or decrease the happiness of the people affected by the action, in other words, tendency to bring about happiness, or conversely, pain. The principle of utility is the measure of not only individuals' actions but also managements' actions." (Bentham, 2005: 1; Bentham, 2017: 17). Also Mill explains Utilitarian thinking as follows: The doctrine, which accepts the Principle of Benefit or the "principle of the greatest

³ We know that Bentham used this term in his Fragment on Government, published in 1776, and we know that he referred to this cleric as "utilitarian" in a letter he wrote to George Wilson in 1781. But Mill asserts that he saw this term for the first time in John Galt's The Annals of the Parish, published in 1821, but it was his success to create a doctrine under this term. But Mill argues that he saw this term for the first time in John Galt's The Annals of the Parish, published in 1821, but it was his success to create a doctrine under this term. Mill is ahead of Bentham as a philosophical ability, but we think that Bentham is the name that called this idea as Utilitarianism and managed to unite this view under a school. In addition, Bentham is ahead of Mill in terms of classifying pleasures, developing a pleasure scale called "felisific calculus" and bringing these thoughts to a consistent system. Bentham also made this term suitable for legal practice during his lifetime and involved in codification/legalization studies and more importantly, it caused the formation of a large literature in terms of legal philosophy.

happiness" as the basis of morality, accepts actions as correct in proportion to their tendency to bring out happiness, and wrong in proportion to their tendency to reveal opposite of the happiness. Presence of the pleasure or absence of the pain is meant by happiness, presence of the pain or absence of the pleasure is meant by unhappiness." (Mill, 1969: 10; Mill, 2017: 28). Even if it is our priority to make evaluations about concepts and theory based on the equivalents given in dictionaries, the meaning content of these concepts varies according to the philosophers involved in this doctrine and therefore it is necessary to deduce the meaning of many words, including the basic concepts of the doctrine, from daily life itself. This aforesaid attitude is in concordance with the advice of the philosophers considered as utilitarian. For example, when we look at the views of Bentham who has this attitude, we can easily say that he uses pleasure in a wide range of meanings and sees pleasure as equivalent to good, benefit and happiness (Bentham, 2017: 18). In this sense, Benthamian Utilitarianism can be expressed as a view asserting that final and eventual measure to be applied in the actions of the human/individual is "trying to reach pleasure by avoiding pain" and as a view that finds pleasure in the meaning of a good life and happiness and the method of reaching it (Audi, 1999: 942-943; Güçlü, vd. 2008: 647). In this direction, he argued to look at how the concept is used in daily life to find its exact meaning and put forward that this practical aspect largely determines content of the concept. A similar way of thinking is also seen in Mill's Utilitarianism. But when his evaluation and classification of pleasure or his role in moral and political life are taken into account, it should be noted that he is far from Bentham or has a different location. By expressing the concept of utility in a social context, he wanted to increase his ability and disperse the negative judgments coming with historical accumulation. It is possible to see this effort in his book titled Utilitarianism, whose volume is small but has a big impact. For example, Mill forms the following sentences that we find similar expressions in this work: "The sanction of the utilitarian principle is the same as that of other moral systems. It comes from feelings of human conscience." (Mill, 1965: 43; Öztürk, 2016: 81). It is clear that these sentences are said to clear the atmosphere over the concept.

Although utilitarianism was systematized by Bentham and Mill in the Enlightenment period, as we have stated, the basic doctrines of this teaching were not mentioned by these names for the first time. The thoughts that we call hedonistic happiness and constitute the historical basis of the utilitarian moral theory can be traced back to Democritus. In Democritus' philosophy, we encounter wisdom of life beyond the general view of existence and unlike the pre-Socratic philosophers. He stated human beings follow their pleasures like other living things, but as a creature capable of intelligence, he advised people to choose among various pleasures suitable for them, that is, their mental faculties. We can see a mature form of this doctrine in Aristippos' thoughts. On one hand, Aristippos, founder of the Cyrenaics considered among Socratic schools, adopted the idea of happiness under the influence of Socrates, on the other hand, with the influence of Sophists he has come to the conclusion that pleasure is an influential affection that must be followed for man. In the Hellenistic period, Epicurus systematically put forward these views and at the same time he reached ideas that would form the basis of many views that would become the main theses of Utilitarian doctrine in the future. Therefore, it can be easily claimed that Epicurus's views can be one of the starting points of Utilitarianism. Even though the utilitarian thought was about to forgotten due to the influence of the philosophy which wrapped itself up in a religious mode in the Middle Ages, this thought

has emerged again in the New age with “egoist hedonism” by Hobbes and hedonist understanding based on philanthropy/benevolence by Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Locke and Hume (Taşkın, 2007). These names expressed many views of Utilitarian theory before Bentham. It was Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746), one of the leading thinkers of British moral philosophy, who formulated the concept of utility as "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" (Hutcheson, 2004: 3; Copleston, 1998: 189; MacIntyre, 2001: 186) David Hume (1711-1776) first described this moral principle comprehensively and brought the word utility to the moral and legal sphere. Hume also based the necessity of obedience to state authority on the idea of utility (Hume, 2010: 15,25). Briefly, the most important concepts of this understanding, "pleasure" and "pain", "human nature" to which these feelings owe their existence, and "the greatest happiness of the greatest number", which is the most prominent phrase of Utilitarianism, have been theorized before.

Even if there is an opinion that this philosophy, whose history mentioned above quickly, progresses in one direction, a multi-faceted evaluation indicates the existence of a contrary situation. A comprehensive research will make a great contribution to identifying the findings of how these views diverge and evolve in different directions. For example, even if we call these three philosophers who lived close to each other and whose thoughts were briefly quoted as "hedonists", when we go into detail we can see that their doctrines differ greatly from each other. For example, Aristippos evaluates pleasures quantitatively and does not distinguish between somatic-mental/spiritual pleasures. Additionally, Aristippos evaluated pleasures in the context of their productivity, in proportion to their dynamic nature and increase in pleasure, appetite and emotions. Epicurus differs from Aristippos in both respects. Epicurus' understanding of pleasure is not vulgar hedonism that excludes qualitative evaluation like Aristippos' hedonism, and pleasures are not considered as dynamic in this view. According to Epicurus, pleasure is a momentary lack of pain. These external and superficial evaluations ignoring these important differences make similar criticisms for both names. We encounter this attitude during the evaluation of not only the ancient philosophers but also many thinkers associated with this doctrine. But this attitude would be baselessly accusing all these philosophers. And in our point of view, this attitude is unfair for both Utilitarian doctrine and these individual philosophers.

Pragmatism

Pragmatism is a philosophical movement that has an active place in American philosophy and expresses the dominant spirit of American culture. Pragmatism is a theory of inquiry, meaning, ethics, truth, and politics. In other words, it is a theory of both good and truth. Pragmatism is a philosophical theory imagined with concepts such as application, utility, action in philosophy. It has an important place in economy, science, arts and education as well as politics (Shook, 2003: 7). This thought can be seen as an activity trying to establish a bond between opposing views. It gained popularity with William James (1842-1910), and important thinkers such as the founders Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) and John Dewey (1859-1952) are also at the basis of this formation. Pragmatism is one of the most discussed concepts in Western philosophy and in our country. Although there is no complete consensus on the concept of pragmatism, the concept is generally explained as follows: “Pragmatism is a philosophy that emphasizes the relation of theory to practice and accepts the continuity of

nature and experience through the result of oriented action (behaviour) as the starting point of thinking. Life (experience) is an on-going process of the organism and nature. For example, all subjects and objects occur in process. Since the reality of objects is not known before experience, reality (truth) claims are confirmed only by completed conditions determined in experience. The result of this study can be an example for this." (Audi, 1999: 730).

Since the Turkish equivalent of the concept could not be found, the concept has been generally used as "Pragmatism" without a change and sometimes, its meaning has been tried to be given with the concepts of "benefit" or "utility". It is stated that pragmatism is a philosophical term derived from the word "pragma" which means "to make", "to do", "to perform" in Ancient Greek. It is defined as a philosophy advocates that accuracy, meaning, and knowledge criteria lie not in actions, but in the practical effects and results of their applications, the important thing is to help people solve their problems and action, in principle, has priority and superiority to both knowledge and thought. (Uzun, vd. 2008: 1180). Cevizci, on the other hand, referred to Pragmatism as a school of philosophy, which was founded in the late nineteenth century, but had a particularly intense influence on American thought in the first quarter of the century. As a view characterizing this philosophical school, he deemed specific combination of knowledge and action. He also argued that this approach was a philosophical view that evaluates beliefs, views, theses and theories in terms of their results and usefulness (Cevizci, 2003: 332). Considering that Pragma is used in Greek for thing, fact, act and situation and has a wide range of meanings, it would not be wrong to say that many Greek philosophers, including great philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, frequently used this concept. When we think about main lines of the pragmatism, it is possible to say that the concept is clear, but when considered with the example of philosophers, the meaning becomes ambiguous when entered into the details and philosophical evaluations. (Öztürk, 2016: 120).

With American Pragmatism, it was aimed to develop a system on the basis of universities such as Chicago to keep up with the changing social life both in Europe and in the world. Economic wealth caused the means of production or capital to be gradually concentrated into the hands of a small number of people; on the other hand, it forced many people to changing place both demographically and culturally. These changes, experienced in many fields from culture to economy, from arts to education, were felt more in the USA with the faster developing industry and technology. As a result, it was necessary to make changes on a new system or philosophy in morality, politics and law in order to regulate society. American people quickly adopted the Pragmatism defined as "achievement" in the economic sense, "utilitarian" in the moral sense, allowed a "liberal" thought as a political mechanism and more freedom. While pragmatism forming this order, it was a fact that this idea was affected by the political, economic and legal structures of Europe and it was based on the historical elements of America's own cultural dynamics. Pragmatism has been effective from the first day it came up and even this effect has been felt not only on philosophy, but has extended to almost all areas where human life takes place.

Peirce, to whom James honoured for the first use of the concept of Pragmatism and for having an important position in determining its content and method, defines Pragmatism as "a method to investigate the meaning of any concept, statement, word or other sign" (Peirce, 2004: 52). It should be noted that Peirce did not equate Pragmatism with practicalism at all and thus used the term in a Kantian sense. According to him, Pragmatism is just a method of making

concepts clear and distinct, clarifying thoughts and approaching the truth with a scientific attitude. For James, one of the founding names, Pragmatism, firstly a method, secondly a genetic theory on the meaning of truth, is also the "mediator way of thinking" needed in that age and with this philosophical understanding he aimed to eliminate the necessity of rejecting science for religion or religion for science. Smith comments on the philosophical position of Peirce and James as follows: While James took Peirce's maxim more broadly, he changed the emphasis. James has reduced what is right for us to the required and needed behaviour; but discussing the equivalent conflict with Peirce's idea that a meaning or an intellectual sense is given in habits that cannot be described in a certain way. This conflict is extremely important. James saw the pragmatic principle as a principle applicable to philosophical discussions, in particular, as a way of avoiding the misunderstandings that caused philosophical systems to conflict with each other. Although Peirce was not indifferent to these discussions, his main purpose was to develop a general theory of conceptual meanings that would permanently unify the perspective rejecting any nominalism by emphasizing the reality of the general with the claim that there was a fundamental relationship between practicability or meaning and behaviour pattern. In this context, James narrowed down Peirce's principle rather than developing it. James' point of view limited Peirce's understanding and application of his pragmatic principle and confined his attempt to explain entire range of meanings, philosophical and scientific, to applying them only in philosophical discussions (Öztürk, 2016: 130). Dewey, the last name of the classical Pragmatists, has shaped Pragmatism as a new philosophy of science, society, politics and morals by reinforcing it with "naturalistic experience", "instrumentalism" and Darwinism (Öztürk, 2016: 121). With Dewey's views, Pragmatism has turned into a philosophy focusing on biology and psychology, extending to cultural and social fields such as politics and education. In Peirce's eyes, drawing a certain frame to this concept and restraining it within this narrow space, this philosophical attitude also exceeded its purpose; it was used except for its context of various basic concepts and connotations and expanded as an unacceptable theory. For this reason, Deweyian Pragmatism, or "instrumentalism" or "radical empiricism," as Dewey often calls it, proceeded more closely with James' views (Dewey, 1929: Dewey, 1948). Since then, Pragmatism has been divided into two different views as Peirce and others and the successors of both sides have increased this division over time. But it must be said that, contrary to dominant belief, Dewey was not trying to reconcile Peirce's philosophy with James's philosophy. If it is necessary to put Dewey in one of two sides, it would be a more appropriate assessment to have him on the Jamesian side. However, for him and his philosophy it is completely unfair to confine Dewey to these borders and not to mention about the original and new elements in this philosophy (Thayer, 1968: 165).

In summary, given the nature of Pragmatism, its historical development, it is a historical fact that Peirce, James and Dewey are the names that outline this doctrine. It should be noted that these three important names of pragmatism differentiate according to the role/task they assigned to doctrine, what they understood from philosophy, for what purpose they acted, and their personal interests. For this reason, it has been accepted from the very beginning that there are at least two different types or two main movements of Pragmatism (Baldwin, 1920). There have been different and sometimes exaggerated comments on this subject. For example, while Schiller mentioned that number of Pragmatist philosophers was equivalent to number of Pragmatism, Lovejoy argued that at least thirteen different forms of Pragmatism could be

mentioned (Lovejoy, 1963). It must be admitted that Pragmatism went further in the direction of James' doctrine. It was even stated that Peirce became a leader without successors or followers. The reason for the diversity seen in pragmatism and the resulting uncertainties is also due to the differences seen at the beginning. Although, in Pragmatism there is a division between left Pragmatism emphasizing scientific method and logic in line with Peirce's views and right Pragmatism with a pluralistic, anti-metaphysical and social philosophy content of James and Dewey and there are violent conflicts, this early period, which we call Classical Pragmatism and where the founders took part, gained a lot of support (Haack, 2006). But with the increasing interest in analytical philosophy in American universities, Pragmatism went through a great depression, it was about to be forgotten. Rorty's writings were effective in breaking this phenomenon. It can be easily said that his book, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, was a precursor of *New Pragmatism* "which was almost completely different from the old compared to the Classical Pragmatism, had a new content and appeared to be a more popular view because it made its impact felt on other disciplines". Rorty brought Pragmatism back to the agenda of both the academic community and the ordinary reader with a new look and stronger elements and in fact, this great influence of Rorty was felt more outside of philosophy.

Pragmatism - Utilitarianism Relationship

Pragmatism is mentioned with 19th century American philosophy and its philosophical bases have been traced back to Antiquity due to the concept of utility/benefit. Although the general opinion is in this direction, there are also those who claim that such a link cannot be established between Pragmatism and Utilitarianism. Beyond this, there is no positive tendency towards this idea, except for a few analyses and studies on Pragmatism, especially in our country. In the occurrence of this situation, reasons to be mentioned are that the attitude towards pragmatism was biased, Pragmatism suggested what works is right or good and it was associated with self-interest or opportunism in political or economic life. Moreover, even in academia, Pragmatism has a position where it is thought to be familiar but false perceptions are guiding in the transfer of its basic foundations. Further to that, in our country, there are serious mistakes sometimes seen in academic writings about American thought called Pragmatism and English Utilitarianism called Utilitarianism⁴. Basically introducing both movements as utilitarianism⁵ and the confusion of pragmatism with the utilitarianism of

⁴ We must state here that Utilitarianism also has types. In the work of Frankena, praising Utilitarianism for attaching importance to people and the good, as well as for eliminating a possible conflict between moral principles. Ethics, Utilitarianism is studied under the headings of action, rule and general utilitarianism around the theory of obligation. While, one person who adopts action utilitarianism ask following question himself with more individualistic manner, "How does my doing this kind of action affect the proportion of the good compared to the bad in general?", general utilitarian wants to set a course of action for everyone in a similar situation around his question of "What would happen if everyone were in this situation like this?" Rule utilitarianism, on the other hand, emphasizes that we have to make decisions by using the rule like a deontic theory, unlike deontological, he argues that we should determine by thinking which rule will provide *the greatest general good*: see (Frankena, 2007: 71-80).

⁵ Here are a few examples that will show the extent of the confusion: or example, "Pragmatism", the most important work of William James, and Utilitarianism, which is also the main work of John Stuart Mill, were

Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill are some of the reasons that can be counted in occurrence of this mistake.

The similarity and association between Pragmatism and Utilitarianism has often gone beyond the differences and caused confusion and incomplete understanding or misunderstanding of both movements. The concept at the centre of this confusion is the concept of 'utility/benefit' according to us. The concept of utility creates a negative value judgment in people as a first impression. This is due to its relationship with the concept of "interest". "In daily use of Turkish, the word "benefit" usually has a negative meaning. Since the first definition given in the dictionaries is confused with the "interest", which is "secretly hidden or indirectly obtained benefit, gain", the philosophical view called "utilitarianism" in our language is attributed to negative meanings by doing some injustice." (Turan, 2003: 153). Many utilitarian thinkers⁶, aware of such judgments observed since antiquity, made explanations about how the concept of utility should be understood and tried to break the prejudices against this concept.

The principle of utility is based on the belief that the act that creates the greatest happiness is moral and good action. As we have stated before, although the historical roots of the concept of utility date back to Antiquity, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) was the first to explicitly explain the principle of utility and argue that all abstract moral concepts should be evaluated on the basis of utility. According to him, benefit is mainly related to the concepts of pleasure and happiness (Bentham, 2011). Acting in accordance with the principle of utility is the action providing the greatest pleasure or happiness. Bentham stated that he realized at a younger age that everything was based on utility but until he reached to clearer information on this subject, "that is, until he realized that utility was the measure of all virtues", he felt intellectually unsatisfied (Bentham, 2011: 27). According to Bentham, other utilitarian theories missed out that benefit must be a rational endeavour and they revealed benefit as a coincidental product of personal interests. However, conscious efforts are needed in order to obtain maximum benefit (Güçlü, vd. 2008: 21,27).

Second name to be mentioned in British utilitarianism after Bentham is John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), whom William James, the prominent name of American Pragmatism, refers to as the person who "made me adopt the idea of Utilitarianism of Mind and sprinkled the core of the Utilitarianism doctrine"⁷ (Mill, 1965: 8). Mill was influenced by Comte's positivism,

translated as "Faydacılık" in our language. Similar error continues even in the books published by National Education and pragmatists are described under the title of "Utilitarianism". For the mentioned book, see (Secondary Education Philosophy Coursebook, 2013: 66).

⁶ There are important and influential names such as Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill and William James among these philosophers. For example; John Stuart Mill, in his short and influential work, *Utilitarianism*, first ended to the bad image of the concept in minds, afterwards, he preferred to include articles explaining the meaning he attributed to the concept. See: (Mill, 1965: 13). In addition to this, especially the philosophers involved in Pragmatism wanted to give original meaning to the words mentioned with the concern occurred by the direct meaning of the word "pragma/pragmatism". Indeed, against this risk, Dewey defined his thought as "instrumentalism", while Ferdinand C. S. Schiller defined it as "humanism" or "personalism" (Suckiel, 2003: 10).

⁷ In the publication of the mentioned work in 1907, the original version of James' statements on Mill is as follows: "To the memory of John Stuart Mill from whom I first learned the pragmatic openness of mind and whom my fancy likes to picture as our leader were he alive to-day". See: (James, 1907: v). In the translation of this work of William James by Tahir Karakaş, this issue is explained as follows with a different interpretation: "*In memory*

German Romantic philosophy, and finally Tocqueville's pluralistic philosophy. These effects caused him to prefer other measures of value. In his book titled *Utilitarianism*, Mill thinks that the principle of utility alone cannot provide solutions to all kinds of moral and legal problems. If it is claimed that utilitarianism always measures the morality of movements with the utilitarian principle, sees it with a very narrow and monopoly perspective and does not give importance to some other criteria, he says that these judgments can be accepted only on the condition of staying in this field (Mill, 1965: 31). In order to overcome the utilitarian theory that he had already found with its rooted problems, Mill basically criticized Benthamian quantitative theory in many aspects, particularly "the method of calculating/evaluating pleasure/felicific calculus". Also according to him, even if the difficulty or sometimes impossibility of objectively classifying and measuring pleasures is overcome, Bentham's only quantitative separation of pain and pleasure is a point that should also be discussed. According to Bentham, there is no need to appeal to Plato or any other philosopher while discussing what pleasure is. This concept is used in the sense awakening firstly in everyone's mind. In addition, pleasures must be measured and understood only in terms of their perceivable physical dimensions and effects. Although he was subjected to harsh criticism, after this view, Bentham said "If the pleasure taken from a coffeehouse game is the same as taken from a poem; there can be no difference between these two pleasures" and wanted to reach a measurable ethics (Bentham, 2011: 27, 38). Contrary to this, Mill thinks that estimating pleasures only quantitatively will cause people to make big mistakes. According to him, a distinction, as high-down, somatic-psychical, should be made between pleasures. The basis of these choices of Mill is the idea that pleasures or pains can be separated qualitatively. In his opinion, spiritual pleasures are more valuable than bodily pleasures. Mill clarifies the principles of this distinction in his writings in which he tries to prove the injustice of the fundamental criticisms against the principle of utility and Epicurus. He explains the importance of qualitative distinction⁸ in the following words: "If pleasure sources were the same for humans and pigs, the rule of life that is good for one would be good for the other." (Mill, 1965: 12). It can also be said that a comparison of pleasures will be made according to the existing situation. This situation causes both the objectivity of morality and the law to be damaged and the spiritual side of the human being to be underestimated, and this is a certainly wrong assessment. Among the pleasures, man should choose what is worthy/suitable for him. For this reason, a pleasure with only quantitatively high score should not be more eligible than a pleasure gained by a more virtuous action. In his book *Utilitarianism*, Mill expresses this situation with the following sentence identified with his philosophy: "*It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied.*" (Mill, 1965: 15).

It is obvious that these statements by Mill on moral hedonism were directed directly at Bentham and his quantitative evaluations, and many interpretivists explain this situation in the same way. After these brief considerations, it will be noticed that there are irreconcilable

of John Stuart Mill, whose pragmatic open-mindedness I first learned from today is that I enjoy thinking that if he were alive he would be our leader." (James, 2015: 1).

⁸ Mill explains the importance of the qualitative distinction of pleasures in another text: "It would be absurd to look at quantity alone when determining the value of pleasures, although quality as well as quantity is taken into account when examining the value of all other things." (Mill, 1965: 13).

differences between the two important representatives of Utilitarianism. While talking about a fundamental separation between these two philosophers shown as the founders of Utilitarianism and not being able to speak of a single utilitarianism, considering Utilitarianism and Pragmatism as identical would be a superficial assessment. Except this, taking into account Pragmatism's "Everything fits" attitude of Feyerabend⁹, the claim that pragmatism is "an old and rooted understanding used without being named" and the reasons for similar inferences together, a relationship can be established between Pragmatism and many philosophical understandings. However, the relationship between Utilitarianism and Pragmatism has been established on a more rooted ground and both doctrines are closer to each other in terms of meaning, method and functioning than other theories. The wrong comment made on this respect is that Pragmatism is reduced to Utilitarianism. Identifying approaches claiming these two doctrines are exactly the same will cause confusion.

Utilitarianism has gained respect in modern times due to its emphasis on the demands of individuals, societies and political administrations, progress, freedom, equality, rule of law, which are the values of the age, and opposition to oppression (especially religious oppression), totalitarianism, and stability. Pragmatism, which can be considered as almost official doctrine of the USA, affected by the scientific, economic, political etc. events and developments and it is a philosophical tradition that does not hesitate to criticize the modern subject with its rational attitude and various other aspects without severing its connection with practice. It is obvious these two doctrines act differently even when determining the individual, his/her abilities and actions. But these differing aspects of both Utilitarianism and Pragmatism have been left aside, the nature of this relationship has been evaluated only in terms of its connections with capitalism and these led to both doctrines being seen as philosophies serving a similar purpose. This is not just because of the misperceptions of the interpretivists. When both theories considered separately, it should be said that the founding or pioneer names themselves had explanations that could mean this. In fact, coming to this interpretation is not entirely wrong. However, this view seems to be an incomplete evaluation, as it still has a reductionist attitude. Therefore, after this analysis or partnership, it would be false reasoning to portray these two doctrines as having a single history or theme and further to gather them under a single theory. It should be reminded here that both movements are also related to other spheres of philosophy besides this area under discussion.

Pragmatism is of English origin and has been heavily influenced by British sensualism. For example, while James expressing his belief that the "pragmatic movement" will dominate the world of philosophy, he also states that he welcomes that the habit of interpreting the meanings of concepts through the concrete differences they cause in life has been brought in philosophy by the Anglo-Saxon philosophers (James, 2011: 64). The following expressions that Peirce used when explaining his Pragmatism also provide important clues to understand the roots of this philosophy: "Pragmatist philosophers generally preferred to take European philosophy and especially British sensualism as a starting point for their philosophy. This is included in James and Dewey. Unlike these names, I found it appropriate to enter philosophy

⁹ While defining Pragmatism, James says "in regard to particulars, if nominalism (utilitarianism in emphasizing practical dimensions), verbal solutions, useless questions and metaphysical abstractions are rejected, it means agreement with positivism." See: (James, 2015: 81).

through the German philosopher Kant's door, but even my ideas were beginning to gain a British accent." (Peirce, 2004: 57). Dewey's following words will give us a clue to better understand the intimacy of both cultural and philosophical relationship between Europe and the USA: "After this quick examination of history of the Pragmatism, it is clear that American thought continues European thought. We imported our language, laws, morals, religion from Europe and adapted them to the conditions of our life. The same is true for our ideas. For many years our philosophical thought was a repetition of European thought... Because there are repeated adjustments, they consider these systems in terms of distinct features of American life. However, as mentioned before, these systems are not limited to making new productions that are outdated and imperfect in this environment. They do not aim to glorify the desire of action and energy which are exaggerated by the new conditions of American life..." (Dewey, 2004: 41-42). From these evaluations, it can easily be concluded that the relationship between these two doctrines is deeper and rooted. It is absolutely essential to use Utilitarianism and its philosophical dynamics to understand pragmatism but contenting with only this will result in incomplete and wrong assessments.

The second wrong argument of identifying Pragmatism with Utilitarianism, which will be referred as the second and which is as important as the first, is the direct relationship between James and Mill. This relationship or bond is based on James' putting Mill in a position that can be the leader of the understanding he is also included in the preface of James' work titled Pragmatism. But this bond indicates not a relation between Utilitarianism and Pragmatism, but a bond that can be established between Mill's thoughts and Pragmatism, or more specifically James. Moreover, it is obvious the origin of this perception is one-sided and stemmed from James' aforementioned expressions. The second of our assumptions, that is, any inference as to whether Mill will accept such a relationship will not go beyond speculation. But the analysis to be made on our first assumptions can only contribute to our assessment of the attitude in generalizing this bond to be established between two philosophers in favour of Utilitarianism and Pragmatism. When we first look at the relationship between Mill and Utilitarianism, the consistency of Mill's Utilitarianism or his adherence to utilitarian doctrine is debatable rather than Mill's tendency to compromise¹⁰ with Bentham. On the other hand, while it is always possible to find Utilitarianism in Bentham for quite concrete reasons, it is not possible to feel the existence of the utilitarian principle in Mill evenly. Mill digressed Utilitarianism in some of his thoughts, he sometimes accepted it with certain corrections, and sometimes wrote as if he had never heard of Utilitarianism¹¹ (Öztürk, 2016: 108). Even if this comment is found extreme, at least as Frankena stated, Mill wanted to add different criteria that could be used to identify pleasures and determine individual or social benefit, but could not stabilize them

¹⁰ In our opinion, although it is thought that Mill was raised on the side of utilitarianism by his father James Mill and his father's close friend Jeremy Bentham, Mill broke with the theses of both names, or at least reassessed the problems that both theorists tried to solve and he tried to overcome them. Such an effort led him to compromise utilitarianism and adopt other, albeit implicit, criteria. For a similar evaluation, see: (MacIntyre, 2001: 266, 268).

¹¹ In this regard, Mulgan's statement that "Mill wonders if he would be utilitarian if Mill were not raised as a utilitarian" will give us an important clue about the situation between Utilitarianism and Mill. See: (Mulgan, 2007: 20).

(Frankena, 2007: 72). However, even this determination is sufficient to cause questioning of the adherence of this great philosopher of Utilitarianism to the classical form of view.

While this is the relationship between Utilitarianism, Bentham and Mill, relationship between Pragmatism, Peirce and James is similar and very complex. He called his pragmatism 'Pragmatism' to separate his doctrine from the pragmatists who were Peirce's successors, and this will explain the extent of the difference between Pragmatists. Therefore, more similarities can be found between William James and Mill, but because of these deep divisions among philosophers, this view cannot be extended in favour of the doctrines. In addition, minor similarities found should not overshadow the differences. It should not be interpreted that these two doctrines, products of separate thought worlds, say the same thing. Beyond these, Utilitarianism has found a place for itself with Enlightenment thought; it is an inference prioritizing the establishment of rational and legal foundations around the principle of utility and the general well-being of the society. It is an understanding that believes in the rationalism and absolutism of enlightenment and that human beings have a certain nature. Conversely, justification for the emergence of pragmatism is a radical rejection of the Enlightenment and its claims.

In conclusion, when both understandings - especially moral views - are considered, it is a fact that they have sometimes put forward theories that are close to each other. But it is another fact that these two main movements are separate and autonomic theories. Additionally, both schools of thought have such a wide and rich content that they cannot be reduced to common concepts or topics mentioned frequently. However, as we pointed out in our study, the negative comments and criticisms made since ancient times caused the philosophical content to be ignored, and both doctrines to be evaluated with self-interest, practicalness and various words that mean this. Each new similar characterization added to this world of meaning has brought new materials to the design of this idea in a field can be called as general memory of humanity and so keeps it vivid all the time. As in this study, a limited number of studies have not been able to break a trend in this direction and have not been able to dissipate the mass of ideas created by these interpretations that survive until today. Yet, as indicated in these limited studies, both ideas have been more permanent in spheres such as economics, law, and politics and also they have resulted in important regulations and improvements in all these areas, including philosophy.

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