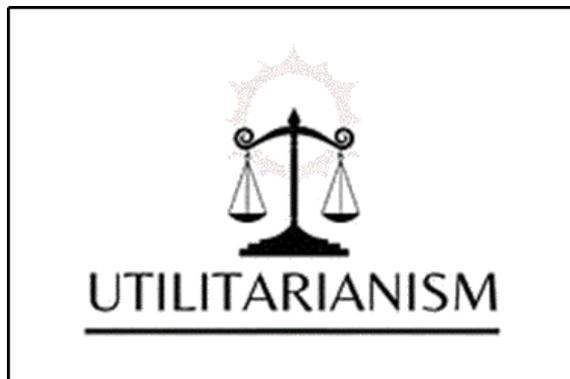


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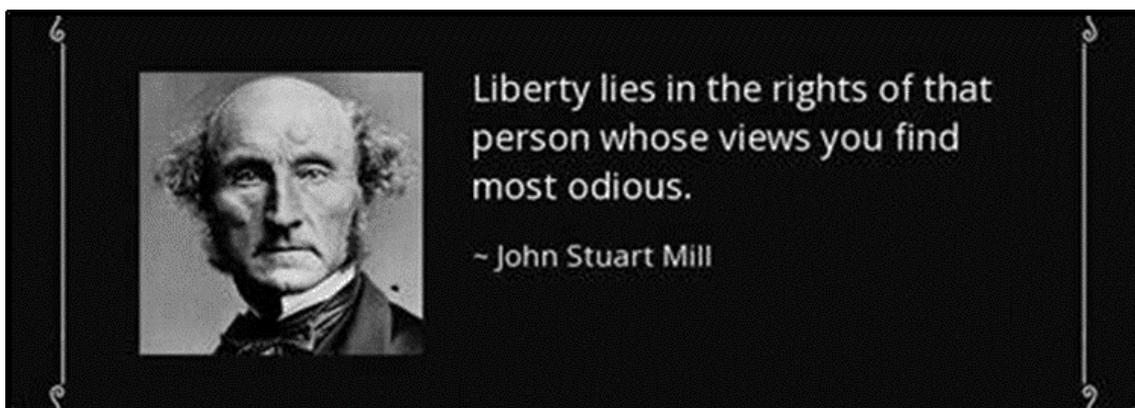
J. S. Mill (1806 – 1873) : Utilitarian Tradition (Part-2) -His Ideas for Competitive Exams (2021)

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J. S. Mill (1806 - 1873) : Utilitarian Tradition (Part-2) - His Ideas (Political Science)



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His Ideas

- Champion of individualism and liberty
- His greatest contribution to Benthamite school of thought was the changed concept of liberty to suit to his times.
- In his approach to problem he is close to Socrates.
- He felt liberty was the most valuable to society.

Mill on Legislature

- Bentham pleaded for more powers to Parliament which in practice produced dangerous effects.
- Doyle has compared Mill and Bentham when he says – “ **liberty of action and thought , the corollary of egoism and a necessity for development into self-conscious was at stake** ” .
- Mill gradually began to think that the society and legislature were the organs which tried to impose their opinion on individual and hence require checking.

Mill on Liberty

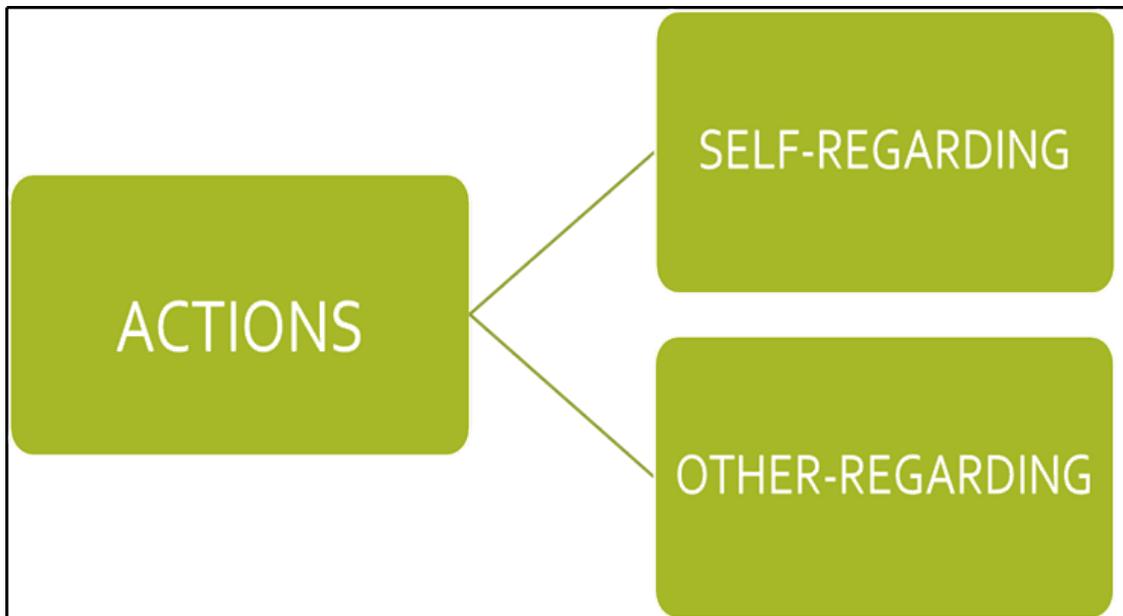
- Under these circumstances Mill came out as champion of individual liberty.
- To save individual from tyranny of both legislature and so called public opinion.
- He basically differed from Bentham and James Mill.
- As both believed liberty is essential for utility a thus simply means to an end and not an end in itself.
- Mill believed that liberty is essential for moral development of mankind and thus an end in itself.
- “That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection ... He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil, in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.”
- Putting in simple terms – Mill was of the opinion that in so far as individuals actions concerning his own self were concerned and which did not prejudice his actions about others , to that extent he was free and there were no limitations on hi.
- But when his actions influence others, he was bound by certain limitations. in his own words-
 - “The liberty of the individual must be thus far limited; he must not make himself a nuisance to other people.”
- He put restrictions on enjoyment of liberty. Only those who were mature could enjoy it.
- He, however , had no care for social customs and conventions nor he had anything to say about age-old institutions.
- He believed that in the interest of the individual liberty it was essential that state should deny liberty and freedom in cases where it felt that individual was not acting in his self – interest.
- For example – even today suicide attempt is a punishable offence.

Mill on Expression

- Mill was of the opinion that democracy, public opinion and collectivism were dangerous to individual liberty .
- Therefore it should be kept in different sphere of activity.
- It was bad on part of society to impose its opinion on individual.
- He says- “the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development and, if possible, prevent the formation of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence; and to find that

limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs as protection against political despotism” .

- He strongly rejects suppression of opinion of others.
- Not even a single dissent opinion should be suppressed.
- As it was disgracing to human existence.
- Such a denial could possibly result in exchanging error for truth.
- It is therefore essential that everyone should be given essential basic liberties for expression of self .
- He stressed the need and necessity for variety of opinions.
- He believed liberty and self-government should go hand in hand.
- Mill laid stress on individual liberty which is the very basis for development of human personality.
- Without which one could neither develop nor progress and becomes stagnant.
- Mill did not discuss social evil doer who had scant regard for democratic institutions and the method by which they should be treated.
- He was of the view that individual should be left along in so for actions regarding self are concerned.
- He divided individual actions into-



As far as other
regarding actions
concerns community
as whole, the state had
right to interfere in it.

He argues due
recognition should be
given to impulse while
judging actions of
people.

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Mill on Representative Government

- Favored idea of representative govt.
- He was fully aware of the dangers of democracy and the in which it could become tyranny .
- So he put forwarded the idea of proportional representation system to be adopted for electing representatives.
- And those are the only who had capacity to vote and possessed a degree of intelligence should be given right to vote.
- He even pleaded plurality of vote: extra vote to be given to those possess exceptional qualifications.
- As against secret ballot he favored open ballot system.
- The people should have right to remove their elected representatives.
- And it is the responsibility of the elected representatives to educate the masses about the laws enacted .
- He favored women's right to vote.
- And pleaded that once women were given social and political freedom , the external differences between men and women would disappear.

Mcqs

Qs 1. Mill favors-

- a) Quantitative pleasure
- b) Qualitative pleasure
- c) Both
- d) None

Ans- b

Explanation: Mill stood for qualitative pleasure. By giving qualitative conception he has raised the idea of utilitarianism.

Qs 2. Mill believes in

- a) Nationalization
- b) Collectivism
- c) Socialism
- d) None

Ans. c

Explanation: Mill believes in the idea of socialization of means of production. as he says that nationalization was only one way of the means of bringing socialism. Thus it was not an end in itself but only means to an end.

Qs 3. Plurality of votes finds place in whose thought?

1. James Mill
2. John Stuart Mill
3. Bentham
4. None

Ans. B

Explanation: John Stuart mill pleaded for the idea of plurality of votes to higher educated citizens. He even went to the extent of dividing the community according to classes and functions stating extent of plurality of votes.

Qs 4. According to Mill, what are dangers for liberty?

1. Democracy
2. Public opinion
3. Collectivism
4. All

Ans. d

Explanation: According to him all are dangers to individual liberty and must be kept separately in their sphere of activity.

Qs. 5. who said – “Mill’s fear of oppressive and intolerant public opinion was in part a realization that the individualism of early liberal theory was inadequate” ?

1. Barker
2. Burke
3. Maxey
4. Sabine

Ans. D

The mentioned statement is by Sabine.

✉ Mayank

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