

Development Economy after Neoliberal Order Fail – Asian Perspective

Summary

Utilitarianism had a great impact on cementing the assumptions of economic thought - especially in shaping its axiomatic basis: the image of the nature of man - politically and economically free, rational and egoistic individualist. A product of European philosophy and history: enlightenment, positivism, utilitarianism, the French Revolution or British empiricism and liberalism. The adoption of the concept of "homo economicus" has become the starting point for reflection on economics for a classical, neoclassical school and to this day still shapes understanding of economic phenomena. Classical creators of utilitarianism: Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), Francis Edgeworth (1845-1962) were recognized economists.

The aforementioned assumptions, typical of the Western civilization, formed the basis for forming postulates of political economy. The scope of interference of the assumptions of utilitarianism in shaping economics as a science gave direction to its development, being at the same time a methodological and conceptual instrument explaining the nature and mechanics of economic phenomena.

Utilitarian doctrine brought the concept of happiness to economics, defined in this science as usefulness - a contribution to the marginalist revolution; is considered a source of welfare economics and division theory; directly shaped the concepts of state and law in economics, developed the theory of international trade, and its consequentialism gives economic activities a direct reference to the principles of morality.

All this makes utilitarian economics a very useful instrument of understanding and translating economic phenomena, especially in the cultural area that gave birth to it and in which it developed. It allows for a more complete reading of international reality in the areas of trade, finance or production factor flows.

Keywords:

utilitarianism, J.S. Mill, utility, history of economic thought, political economy

Contemporary perception and understanding of economics - especially in Western countries, is firmly rooted in the traditions of classical economics, grounded in European visions of a liberal society with the dominant role of individualism and the individual's full independence. This independence includes not only authorities, but also society, both in political and economic terms. The British doctrine of utilitarianism cemented the classical assumptions of economics with socio-political achievements of the nineteenth century, creating a picture of a free man - individualist, "homo economicus", egoist whose only goal is to increase happiness, and thus achieve individual benefit.

The image of man - a rational egoist, acquired the character of an axiom. On its basis rests the entire neoclassical economy and the doctrine of neoliberalism related to it objectified in the document Washington Consensus. This is a vision characteristic of the West, so while utilitarianism will be a useful instrument for explaining economic phenomena in the area of Western civilization, it will be more difficult to use it in cultures of different values (common good, hierarchy, collectivism).

As noted by the famous Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950), John Stuart Mill and his father - James Mill and Jeremim Bentham became patrons and perpetrators of a peculiar alliance between economics and utilitarianism (as a moral doctrine - ed. L.G.), which was accepted and continued by successors and affirmants of thought like William S. Jevons (1835-1882) or Francis Edgerworth (1845 - 1926). Joseph A. Schumpeter believes that it was the application of utilitarianism to economics that made the role he played in the history of economics. Greater even than in the field of philosophy. Richard A. Posner (born 1939), lecturer at the University of Chicago, even legitimately asked the question whether utilitarianism is the same as economics.

The concept and development of utilitarianism

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Utilitarianism in economics

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already been presented by the French economist Jean Babtiste Say (1767-1832). He decided that utility is a source of wealth (not work, gold, agricultural production or commodity). "So, not the production of things but utility is what I call the production of wealth [...]. Production is not the production of things, but utility. The product cannot be evaluated on the basis of its length, volume or weight, but on the utility it contains. " It is usability that is traded, not a commodity. This thesis, which contradicts the claims of A. Smith, also caused that traders, teachers, lawyers and doctors, despite the fact that they do not produce goods, also contribute to the nation's wealth. Say defines utility itself as "the ability to meet human needs." The issue of utilitarian identity with economic utility remains a separate topic. The fact is that while in classical school the concept of value was the dominant subject of research, the issue of utility was the source of the marginal revolution.

Utilitarian-hedonistic post-classical thought was an inspiration to change the point of view on the essence of value theory, which plays a significant role in shaping economic policy. She rejected the labor-based value theory, replacing it with a subjective value-based theory of utility. "According to this concept, value is not a materialization of social work, but a reflection of the importance we attach to satisfying needs." Subjectivity is that each individual builds its own utility system. Therefore, economic activity consists in calculating pleasure and unpleasantness, and the goal is to maximize pleasure and avoid unpleasantness.

One of the more important justifications for the emerging classical system came from outside the mainstream of economics. It was utilitarianism, initiated by Bentham. It was about him that Alfred Marshall wrote that "he is the most influential of the direct successors of Adam Smith." Although Bentham himself did not write much about economics, he set the tone for the emerging English school of economics at the beginning of the 19th century. Marshall considered him an uncompromising logic, an opponent of all restrictions and regulations that do not arise from the needs of the circumstances of the time. The reason, as a great neoclassical professor, thanks to which England has gained its unique position in the world is the ability to quickly adapt to new economic conditions. As was mentioned, the determinism of circumstances as a criterion for assessing the fairness of conduct is one of the main features of Bentham's philosophy and a valuable clue when formulating the principles of political economy.

Utilitarian political economy has an extremely eclectic dimension. Its shape was influenced by: Bentham's ethics and utilitarianism; economics of classics; intellectual achievements of liberalism, empiricism, positivism and Enlightenment; James Mill's philosophical work, and even scientific "flirtation" with socialist thought. Studies of world history and England were

not without significance. In the proposal of J.S. Mill is also noticeable social sensitivity - arose - if you believe Mill himself - as a result of acquaintance with Mrs. Harriet Taylor. Mill's utilitarianism, as Karl Marx wrote, and some contradictions resulted from the fact that he built political economy on the tenets of the old economy, but was susceptible to modern trends. Utilitarianism, in a way, tries to be everything involving an ethical theory that usurps the right to answer every possible moral doubt.

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The sources of utilitarian doctrine should be sought in the philosophical legacy of Greece. Protagoras of Abderos is considered its creator. Philosopher - a sophist who, with his philosophical spell "man is the measure of all things," established a new metaphysical order. The order that set a place for man and science. He defined the relationship not only between the people themselves, but also with the surrounding world and the Absolutes. To take his eyes off the heavens and to direct him to the earth and man, especially in ancient Greece, was not so much a new philosophical doctrine as a new way of thinking and reasoning. It did not just create another, fertile, philosophical plot for disputes and reflections of the wise men. It was a successful attempt to give a new meaning to the existence of man, his perception of the world or formulation of values.

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Sofists W. Tatarkiewicz even calls utilitarians. The conviction about the impossibility of learning the nature of the Gods, sensuality, subjectivism, practicalism, conventionalism, interest in man (and not the cosmos) defined the philosophical space that turned out to be the birthplace of utilitarianism. It is the space that man fills and what is created by him.

Its borders were also specified by ancient hedonists: Aristypus with cyrenaics and Epikura with his students. Classical utilitarianism has even taken on an evolutionary, advanced form of sophistic tradition and ancient hedonism. Subjected to the laws of science and philosophy, he became a mature, fairly coherent doctrine that claimed the right to be an "all-principle" - an algorithm through which we get answers to the most important questions: what is right, what is good, how to act, what is happiness, how enlarge them and strive for it.

Utilitarianism, due to the formula proposed by Protagoras, escaped ontology and related inquiries. It's a real love of experimenting and experiencing. Science is reduced by sophists to a service role in relation to practice and benefit. Thanks to the English school, empiricists' postulates were inscribed in its nature. Thus, extreme relativism also proved to be appropriate for cognitive proposals.

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