

Welcome ACCORD!

Post by “accord” of May 20, 2019 at 11:49 AM

Yes, I have read Wright. And yes, that is one connection.

For example, from *The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*, Clarendon Press, *Principles of Legislation*, 1996

p lxxv.: 'At numerous points in *Utilitarianism* Mill employed the language and concepts of Bentham's theory of action. But he also sought to link utilitarianism with a larger philosophical tradition which included Epicurus, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. He seems to have adopted the idea that happiness and utility were equivalent terms for a *summum bonum* in ethics, and one which was rooted in ancient thought. This idea and the account of virtue developed in association with it gave an Aristotelian tone to his discussion of the principle of utility, and perhaps may be responsible for some of the difficulties involved in its exposition.'

See Geraint Williams, 'J. S. Mill's Happiness: Utility or Eudaimonia? or "The dandelions always win"', *Fourth ISUS Conference Proceedings*, pp. 454-68. See also Geoffrey Scarre, 'Epicurus as a Forerunner of Utilitarianism', *Utilitas*, vi (1994), 219-31.

Mill was one of the key movers and shakers in the development of the colonies, per previous post.

But Bentham and his followers were also operating out of a tradition that had grown up with reference to Lucretius. One of Bentham's followers, Molesworth, was an expert on Hobbes, and Hobbes was influenced by Gassendi, etc.

Darrin McMahon's 'History of Happiness' is useful in tracing the lines of development of thought, though, as I recall, I don't think he has much to say about Bentham and Mill.