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В рамках конференции работали секции «Философия и современность», «Этика и моральная ответственность в современном мире» и «Казахская философия в контексте современных реалий: проблемы и перспективы».

Адресовано всем интересующимся актуальными проблемами современной философии и творчеством академика НАН РК Жабайхана Мубараковича Абдильдина.

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величины? Как обмельчал современный человек? Разве мыслитель не предупреждал нас? Его призыв – «человек есть то, что должно превозмочь», «человек есть канат, натянутый между обезьяной и сверхчеловеком». Если отвлечься от некоторых категоричных суждений, то в творческом наследии Ницше можно найти ответы в поисках понимания человека как решающего фактора преодоления всеобщего кризиса. Можно победить мстительную зависть слабых, начав с самих себя. Быть человеком означает быть полным, многомерным, всесторонним, лучшим человеком, насколько возможно. Полагаю, что самая важная задача и цель современного человека – это преодоление тотального эгоизма. Каждый из нас, на индивидуальном уровне, должен четко и ясно осознать, что наступило время двигаться от вопроса: "что я могу взять от мира?" к вопросу: "что я могу дать миру?" Двигаться от конкуренции, борьбы, состязательности, конфликта к сотрудничеству, сотворчеству, интеграции и созиданию.

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PETER SINGER'S NEW ETHICS **ПИТЕР СИНГЕРДІҢ ЖАҢА ЭТИКАСЫ**

***Annotation.** This article attempts to present the philosophical views of our contemporary, Peter Singer (b. 1946), professor at Princeton and Melbourne Universities, author of many scientific and popular books. Singer has been called one of the twelve leading philosophers of our time, and without studying his works it would be impossible to imagine the overall picture of practical philosophy in the XXI century. Through Singer's concepts, we can see how one of the main philosophical paradigms - anthropocentrism, is being redefined, to be replaced by a new system in which humans are not the "measure of all things," but occupy an equal and equitable position with representatives of all life on Earth. The new theoretical framework leads to a rethinking of previous doctrines and the creation of new directions in science. This is the focus of Peter Singer, whose interests are focused on developing the principles of the new ethics and creating the appropriate terminological apparatus. This article mentions his work on topics ranging from the treatment of animals to euthanasia. His views have had a mixed reception in society, being applauded by some and condemned angrily by others. But leaving aside the passionate and partisan discussions of his theory, it is undeniable that Peter Singer is making a significant contribution to the human community in building a new social system.*

***Key words:** new ethics, practical philosophy, utilitarianism, altruism, bioethics, eco-ethics*

For thousands of years philosophers have been searching for truth, at each epoch advancing new concepts. Modern researchers have focused on the study of human practical activity, reducing the metaphysical part of the search and enclosing their research in an appropriate philosophical

framework. What, then, is the goal of modern practical philosophy? The answer is to govern oneself and others: the sphere of its interests encompasses not only people, but the world as a whole. The idea is not new, and was first spoken of by Plato, who placed at the head of the ideal state philosophers with knowledge of nature, the social system, and man, and capable of governing society. Plato appoints philosophers as managers capable of influencing their hearers: «Until philosophers reign in the states, until then the states will not be rid of evils» [Plato, 2007]. «The purpose of practical philosophy is to induce by means of thought to right, good actions and to discourage erroneous, bad actions», – this is how the Russian scientist L.E. Balashev [Balashev L. E., 2001] defined the main task of the new philosophical current. Modern philosophers consider their primary duty to pass on to society knowledge about the topology of reality, becoming a kind of "road map" for mankind, a tool capable of providing a wide range of people with the opportunity to change the context around them. In fact, such activity must first and foremost be realised in the construction of a new ethical system. This is what is happening in contemporary society, where in recent decades a concept called the "new ethics" has become increasingly prevalent.

The philosophers' entry «into the world» has also led to a new philosophical practice: many of the scientists have left their offices and are actively engaged in publicity, writing columns in popular periodicals, speaking in the media, and giving public lectures in universities around the world. The result of such activities is to reach a very varied public, and to engage in philosophical debate a large part of society, since the new doctrine compels people to deal with ethical issues, especially those who have leadership qualities and choose to work in the public arena. Consequently, the philosophical system needs to be algorithmised, i.e., a kind of comprehensible pedagogical scheme that will help to educate people, teach them how to think, generate new ideas and unite them around solutions to urgent problems. The philosophical system of Peter Singer. Peter Albert David Singer, an Australian philosopher and professor at Princeton and Melbourne universities, should be singled out among contemporary philosophers of this field. «It is likely that Peter Singer is the most influential philosopher alive today. We commend him for his rational revision of many beliefs and convictions», – writes Laurie Gruen, professor of philosophy and feminism, gender studies and sexuality at Wesley University, about him. «Although the outrage produced by Singer, she continues, – never went to the extremes that drove Socrates to prison and execution, he was often the subject of very fierce attacks» [Grün L., 2014].

In 2005 Time magazine included Peter Singer in its list of the world's 100 most influential philosophers and in 2013 the Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute named him the third 'most influential thinker of our time'. In addition, the Encyclopedia Britannica has named him one of the world's most recognised intellectuals, and the article on ethics for the modern edition of Britannica was written by him. Singer's beliefs were shaped by utilitarian ethical theory, according to which the criterion for moral evaluation is solely the consequence of behaviour, not its conformity with any rules or obligations. The right action in any field, be it law, politics or any human activity, will be regarded as such if it leads to the best possible consequences. The same interests, irrespective of who represents them, must be treated equally.

Already Singer's first book, «Democracy and Disobedience» (1973), based on his dissertation, challenged society's traditional ideas about morality, above all by criticising religious dogma and the anthropocentric world order. Singer's next book «Animal Liberation» (1975) also demonstrated that the former basic paradigm of philosophy – humanism – was being redefined, to be replaced by a new system in which humans were not the "measure of all things" but occupied an equal and equitable position with members of all life on Earth. This publication was the beginning of the modern Animal Rights Movement. Its central claim that animals deserve ethical treatment has attracted thousands of followers. The revolutionary aspect of this doctrine was that the previous sentimental patronage of animals, which existed until the mid-20th century, condemned only human cruelty, but for the new public activity Singer proposed a different, legal side to the relationship between humans and other living creatures. The change in attitudes towards animals in recent decades, which has found an ardent advocate in Peter Singer, has to do with the philosophical turn and the revision of well-established notions generally accepted in human

society. "The flowering of human rights movements, which advocate the inclusion of new agency into the political, ethical, social and other fields, suggests that the animal should be seen as a universal example of otherness, capable not just of coexisting alongside man, but of being an integral part of his self-perception", writes M. Kozyreva [Kozyreva, 2021] in the article «A shift in philosophical perspectives: «turning to animals» in new anthropology».

In the preface to «Animal Liberation», Singer explains that he defends animals not because he loves them, but because they have rights too, and he is obliged to respect those rights; all our actions towards animals must be ethically binding regardless of our feelings or sympathies. Like the founder of utilitarianism, Jeremiah Bentham, Singer argues that ethical treatment of animals does not involve a discussion of whether they are thinking and speaking beings, but poses the central question: can they suffer? It is the ability to experience suffering that places humans and animals in the same legal field. For those who ignore this fact, Singer coined the term speciesism, meaning the superiority of one kind of living being over another, more precisely, the superiority of humans over non-humans. «Usually, the disregard for the interests of animals is justified by the notion that they have no interests whatsoever. According to this view, animals have no interests because they are incapable of suffering. This stems from the belief that they are not capable of the kind of suffering those humans are for example, a calf is not capable of suffering because it knows that it will be killed in six months. Such a belief is undoubtedly true, but it does not purge humans of the contagion of speciesism, because it does not acknowledge that animals can suffer differently, such as from electric shocks or from being in a small – cramped stall» [Singer P., 2009].

Significantly, Singer draws public attention not to the problems of domestic animals, but to the appalling conditions in which farm animals are kept, live and die, which constitute a large part of industrial livestock production. The third chapter of his book is entitled: «What happened to your dinner while it still was an animal». The philosopher believes that one aspect of the Animal Rights Movement should be a call for humanity to change their food choices and switch to vegetarianism (Singer himself became a vegetarian back in 1971). Having taken this step, it is worth introducing a total ban on the killing of living creatures whose only purpose for existence is to become our food. It is worth noting that Singer has described the suffering of these animals quite eloquently and in detail, and his testimony encourages the reader to consider vegetarianism. However, there are other areas of human endeavour besides animal husbandry where captive animals suffer. These include medical and cosmetic research, using animals in the development of new products – from laboratory mice to monkeys. Here is what Singer wrote in his work «Practical Ethics», first published in 1979, after which it became the classic introduction to applied ethics for many decades: «Experimenters show a commitment to their species every time they conduct experiments on animals, arguing that the goals of these experiments cannot be approved when conducted on humans, who have similar or lower levels of self-awareness, emotionality, etc. If it were possible to get rid of such biases, the number of experiments performed on animals would be greatly reduced» [Singer P. 2011].

Singer believes that in each case it is necessary to clarify the feasibility of such experiments and to be guided by the principle of ethical utilitarianism. Singer's work is bearing to pay off: recently there has been a growing trend in medicine and public health to develop alternative research methods that will increase the proportion of positive outcomes and reduce the proportion of suffering. In the process of defending the rights of animals, the members of the Animal Liberation Movement often commit acts in breach of the law, resorting to so-called ecoterrorism. Singer believes that breaking the law is morally justified when democratic processes do not function well, and the public does not know what goes on in farms and laboratories. The philosopher argues that illegal actions then may be the only proper way to help animals by making people aware of the real facts. Singer's work has been especially recognised: in 2000, his name was honoured in the US Animal Rights Hall of Fame, created by the National Conference on Animal Rights, held annually by the FARM human rights movement.

The scope of Singer's interests and philosophical reflections are not limited to the subject of a new ethical attitude towards animals but relates to different aspects of life. For example, he is one

of the founders of the movement of effective altruism. His main claim is that many people can help the needy without suffering material losses. The philosopher proposes that a minimum ethical standard of donation be established, namely that all wealthy people in developed countries whose income provides for all basic needs should be required to make a regular donation of at least 10% of their income to charities. An ethical person, according to the rules of the new ethics, is one who helps others and strives to save lives; this is the postulate Singer is trying to convey to humanity. The scientist himself donates 20% of his earnings to OXFAM and UNICEF. He also wonders how to encourage those involved in philanthropy to make decisions based on utilitarian theory. The answer can be found in the work of *The Life You Can Save*, an organisation he founded, which conducts peer reviews of charities and disseminates ideas on how and why to help people living in extreme poverty. These are also the issues in Singer's book «*The Life You Can Save*» which was published in 2009. In it, the author discusses the concept of effective altruism, which can change perceptions of ethical living and give donors the motivation to follow new principles of charity [Singer P., 2018]. He considers psychological, social barriers, as well as the evolutionary history of humanity, which together or separately prevent doing charity «right»; he answers current issues: why should we come to the rescue and why can't the government itself deal with the problems of the poor? Wouldn't it be the case that with constant help, the poor would stop trying to improve their situation on their own? Singer names reasons that prevent effective altruism: parochialism (people focus on solving small parts of the problem) and identifiable victimism (people offer help when a specific, identifiable person is in difficulty). Thus, the identified victim effect provokes people to offer more help if an identifiable person (the victim) is in difficulty, while less activity is observed in relation to unknown people, despite having similar needs. Singer explains the mechanism of ethical thinking, which is based on the ability to put oneself in other people's shoes. In a situation of choice between «helping» and «passing over», ethical thinking tells us to choose the former option. When it comes to helping unknown «people from poor countries», however, this mechanism does not work for most people: in this case the «sacrifice» seems indefinite, and a small donation, by all accounts, will not change the global problem. Singer has little interest in cultural or artistic philanthropy: when the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York buys paintings for millions of dollars, he is thereby denying us the opportunity to cure thousands of people from developing countries. The selfish values inherent in Western society, the cult of luxury and wealth, prevent us from recognising the debt that prosperous countries owe to nations with dysfunctional economies. Singer proposes his own progressive formula by which, based on the size of his income, an organisation can determine the amount of a just donation: the higher the income, the larger the amount should be.

In 2016, a collection of essays titled «*Ethics in the real world*» was published [Singer P., 2019], which collected essays published by the scholar in various periodicals over the years. The topics of the essays are extremely varied, ranging from an assessment of religious doctrines to a discussion of whether chimpanzees can be considered human. The book resembles a catechism, with each essay following the principle of posing a question, stating the problem and then following the discussion and summary. In due time, the Christian church made extensive use of this structure, rightly believing that a statement of basic principles in a simple visual form would facilitate the reading, clearly define the subjects of discussion and provide «correct» answers to all questions, thereby closing off attempts at free reasoning on religious topics. These days Singer has used this form creatively, reinterpreting it and, as usual, infusing it with new content. Singer's answers to the burning questions of the day cannot be described as anything other than provocative. For example, questioning the divine essence, Singer writes: «The idea that our mind is nothing compared with the divine is based on precisely the thesis we argue about the omnipotence, all-goodness and infinite wisdom of God. What we see with our own eyes testifies rather to the assumption that no God created this world. If the world was created by a creator, then that creator is clearly not all-powerful or all-good. Either he is inhumanly cruel, or he is incapable of anything good» [Singer P., 2019]. Asked whether it is ethical to prolong life in old age when the patient is hooked up to life support systems, Singer replies that «apparently the erroneous belief in this case

that any human's life is sacred plays a role in the decision to prolong life beyond the point beyond which it no longer provides anything for the patient. In a situation where relatives insist on continuing what professionals consider useless treatment, it cannot be demanded that costly long-term care be paid for by the treasury, taxpayers have no obligation to pay for the religious beliefs of their fellow compatriots to this extent» [Singer P., 2019]. In the preface to the publication, Singer writes that people make ethical choices far more often than they realise. As a result of the rapidly changing world around us – globalisation, the digital revolution, the rapid development of science - people often find themselves unable to make moral choices. «Our intuition, developed in an evolutionary way, – Singer reasoned, – does not guarantee us right or logical solutions to moral dilemmas. What was good for our ancestors may not be so good today. But navigating a changing moral landscape, where issues such as animal rights, abortion, euthanasia and aid to developing countries come to the fore, requires not religion but a careful study of human nature and what we call a life well lived. Therefore, we need to be aware of a universal set of intuitive moral principles that we are entitled to ponder and, having planned, to act contrary to them. This would not be blasphemy, for the source of our morality is not God but our own nature"[Singer P., 2019].

One of the central questions of the book: is morality possible without religion? Singer suggests that human beings cannot be seen as «a pile of meat and bones», since everyone feels happiness or pain, has desires or needs. All humans have subjective experiences through which moral issues arise during natural processes. Apparently, no extra-material entities like spirit or soul are required for experience, Singer believes, experience alone is the basis of moral values. If a being is incapable of experiencing sensory experience, then morality does not exist for him. Such an entity – he calls it the moral patient – cannot do right or wrong, values do not exist for it. Singer explains the existence of the well-known notion that without religion there can be no morality for three reasons: 1) only God or some other supernatural entity can be the source of morality as a phenomenon or idea; 2) even if morality can exist without God, without his guidance we cannot understand what is right and wrong; 3) without the supernatural threat of punishment and encouragement people cannot behave morally. Singer objects to the common view that without belief in God morality would become incomplete, in fact morality may not have recourse to religion. If one argues that morality is contained in God's commandments, then people will often have to deal with unsolvable problems: it is not uncommon for God to arbitrarily decide what is right and wrong, and if God called for terrorism, then it would be OK, since God said so. Singer laments, unfortunately, some religious people do just that. However, there are, in a sense, objective moral criteria common to all humanity, according to which helping those in trouble is better than killing and maiming them by detonating bombs in public places. There is no reason to believe that people need God to conceive of what is right and wrong, because the idea of morality is undoubtedly superior to God. Without God, humanity itself is thought to be incapable of understanding which actions are good and which are bad. But Singer suggests that we should find out what morality believers hold: «They themselves usually say that God has revealed to them in holy writings a revelation of what is good and what is bad. In practice, religious people follow God's instructions very selectively. The Old Testament contains many injunctions, some of them ridiculous, others awful, like instructions to stone those who work on Saturdays» [Singer P., 2019].

Singer goes on to give another example from the Book of Numbers (chapter 31) in which God orders Moses to send an army to kill all the Midianite men and take the women and children captive, and notes that this is considered as genocide nowadays. But Singer observes that Christians are unlikely to have heard anything about this, as they are not told about it in churches,

Singer concludes that, in practice, the belief in hell's punishments proves not to be a very effective means of controlling behaviour. The philosopher also debunks the notion that believers are more likely to do charity than non-believers. He again turns to statistical data. US statistics ostensibly show in favour of these words. However, one must pay attention to the kind of charity that believers donate to. It turns out that they donate to the needs of the church, and this explains the high level of philanthropy. However, the most famous donators are non-believers: Bill Gates, Warren Buffett and Andrew Carnegie, with Protestant John Rockefeller in fourth place. They give

their money to the fight against poverty, the development of medicines against malaria (its hotbeds are in the poorest parts of the world), etc. If we compare the wealthy countries in terms of numbers, we find that far more people in Europe give to charity than in the US. Obviously, people can find motivation to do good deeds without religion. The strongest motivation for philanthropists is to do whatever they can to make suffering and pain in the world a lot less.

Conclusion. And so, we can see that there is virtually no theme of the new ethics that Peter Singer has not given due attention to at various times. However, his work has gained both supporters and ardent opponents. The latter are irritated by his utilitarian approach to ethical issues. The Guardian ran an article in November 1999 by Kevin Toolis, «The World's Most Dangerous Man», in which the journalist describes Singer as a Nazi, the reincarnation of Martin Bormann, a child killer and an enemy of civilization: «Singer's philosophy seems to offer a simple calculation for right and wrong. But up close its inhumanity, equating our own moral status with that of other beings and denying the special intimate relationship we have with other concrete people, cannot accompany us on our journey through human life. Peter Singer, the new-fangled prophet, authoritative vegan, philosophical sage and adherent of utilitarianism, is trapped in the same moral muddle as the rest of us» [Toolis K., 1999]. However, not all philosophers hold a similar view. To quote Laurie Green in her previously mentioned article on Peter Singer: «If we think carefully and impartially about what we are doing to improve the world, we realise that most of us could be doing far more to end human misery and more. No one has to agree completely with utilitarian philosophy to see that there are many pressing issues in the world beyond what ethics requires of us. Philosophers have long challenged common sense, and often such challenges have served to improve our collective lives. The questions posed by Peter Singer may seem to us to be too pointed, too demanding of sacrifices, and indeed unworkable. But if we take up his challenge, we can contribute to the creation of a world with less pain and suffering and more happiness. We will indeed make our world a better place to live in, and we will make life itself more meaningful» [Grün L., 2014].

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