THE CULTURE OF FREEDOM AS A PRAXEOLOGICAL COUNTERWEIGHT TO CANCEL CULTURE: THE AUSTRIAN SCHOOL'S LEGACY

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Introduction. In today's world, the crisis of democratic institutions, the spread of the state of general interventionism, and the intensification of "cancel culture" practices directed against the ideas of classical liberalism and the Austrian School of Economics render urgent the question of the social and cultural immunity of an open society. It is appropriate to designate such immunity by the concept of "culture of freedom" — a set of value orientations, habits of thought, and institutional practices that make possible voluntary exchange, personal responsibility, and respect for private property. This problem takes on particular urgency amid Russia's war against Ukraine, when, alongside physical resistance to aggression, a battle of ideas over the model of national development and postwar reconstruction is simultaneously underway. In this context, the question of whether a society is able to sustain a culture of freedom as an independent institution acquires not only theoretical but also practical significance.

The aim of the study is to substantiate a praxeological approach to understanding the culture of freedom as a socio-philosophical category that resists the tools of ideological cancellation of alternative views, drawing on

the scholarly legacy of the Austrian School of Economics and related traditions of classical liberalism. To achieve this aim, the following tasks are set: to define the content of the concept "culture of freedom" in the works of representatives of the Austrian School of Economics and related research traditions; to identify the mechanisms by which the instruments of "cancel culture" undermine the institutional and value-based immunity of society; to outline the praxeological foundations for restoring the culture of freedom in Ukrainian public and educational discourse.

Results and discussion. F. Hayek regarded freedom not as the simple absence of external coercion but as a state of society grounded in a spontaneous order produced by the long evolution of customs, traditions, and law [1]. In this understanding, the culture of freedom is no less important an institution than formal legal norms: it sets the horizon of mutual expectations within which individuals trust one another and trust the market mechanism of "profit and loss" as a fair arbiter of economic activity. L. von Mises, developing the tradition of classical liberalism, emphasized that social concord is possible only through recognition of private property and the division of labor as fundamental conditions of civilization, and that any systematic denial of these foundations leads to the disintegration of social cooperation [2]. Notably, for Mises liberalism was not a set of economic techniques but above all a worldview, a cultural stance — a way of thinking about the human being as an active, responsible agent.

An important complement to the praxeological tradition is the economic-historical analysis of D. McCloskey, who showed that the decisive factor in the West's "Great Enrichment" was not the mere accumulation of capital or changes in formal institutions, but a shift in the rhetoric and moral evaluation of entrepreneurship — the recognition of bourgeois virtues' dignity in mass consciousness [3]. This

conclusion supports the thesis of the primacy of the culture of freedom in relation to economic well-being: without the legitimation of entrepreneurial initiative at the level of everyday meanings, market institutions remain vulnerable to populist revision even where formally market-oriented legislation exists.

M. Novak, in his analysis of democratic capitalism, proposed viewing a free society as a tripartite system — economic, political, and moral-cultural — which must exist in dynamic equilibrium [4]. It is precisely the moral-cultural system, in his view, that produces the meanings that justify the market and limited government in the eyes of citizens; its weakening as a result of the ideological expansion of collectivist narratives automatically undermines the stability of the other two systems — both economic and political. This provides grounds for regarding "cancel culture" not as a marginal publicistic phenomenon but as a systemic threat to the institutional architecture of a free society.

In praxeological terms, "cancel culture" operates not by refuting an opponent's arguments but by excluding them from the space of acceptable discourse — labeling the ideas of the Austrian School as "outdated," "unethical," or "marginal." This constitutes an attempt to destroy not market exchange itself but the precondition for its existence — free communication of value judgments, without which the coordination of human action becomes impossible. This mechanism corresponds to the conclusions of D. North, J. Wallis, and B. Weingast concerning "limited access orders," in which dominant coalitions maintain control through the distribution of rents and the artificial restriction of open competition among ideas and organizations [5]. The replacement of an open access order with a limited one is, in essence, the same mechanism employed by the contemporary state of general interventionism, whereby "VIP managers of other people's

property" shield themselves from full market competition and accountability for their own decisions.

For Ukraine, the culture of freedom is not an abstract academic category but a practical resource of wartime and postwar resilience. Personal responsibility, the protection of private property, and trust in voluntary exchange are the very virtues that simultaneously ensure economic efficiency and civic mobilization under conditions of hybrid war. Restoring the culture of freedom in Ukrainian public discourse requires systematic work within the humanities, capable of resisting the renaissance of collectivist narratives through the legacy of six generations of the Austrian School of Economics, as well as the development of its own, historically grounded narrative rather than a borrowed imitation of Western models.

A separate point concerns the institutional dimension of reproducing the culture of freedom. If cancel culture operates predominantly in the sphere of symbolic production — academia, media, education — then resistance to it must likewise be built primarily within humanities education. Six generations of the Austrian School's legacy — from C. Menger through E. von Böhm-Bawerk, L. von Mises, and F. Hayek to contemporary praxeology scholars — demonstrate that methodological individualism and the subjective theory of value are able to withstand repeated waves of ideological cancellation precisely because they rest not on political circumstance but on the logical structure of human action. This provides grounds for regarding praxeology as a methodological alternative to the Keynesian paradigm not only in economic theory but in a broader socio-philosophical sense — as an alternative model for explaining why some societies retain the capacity for voluntary cooperation while others slide into redistributive and clientelist practices.

The renaissance of Marxism in its contemporary modifications, observable in the twenty-first century amid the accumulation of crisis phenomena, should be regarded not as an accidental intellectual trend but as a logical consequence of the weakening of the culture of freedom within the system of humanities education after World War II, when economic science developed to a considerable extent under the influence of welfare-state theory. Restoring the balance requires not merely counterargument at the level of individual theses but systematic work to reproduce the culture itself — habits of public discussion, respect for a disagreeing opponent, and readiness to acknowledge mistakes on the basis of the "profit and loss" mechanism rather than political authority.

Conclusions. The culture of freedom emerges as a socio-philosophical category that integrates the idea of spontaneous order (F. Hayek), the recognition of private property as the foundation of civilization (L. von Mises), the rhetorical legitimation of entrepreneurship (D. McCloskey), the moral-cultural system of democratic capitalism (M. Novak), and the concept of the open access order (D. North, J. Wallis, B. Weingast). "Cancel culture" poses a threat not to particular theses or authors but to the very precondition of the free exchange of ideas; resistance to it must therefore be praxeological and systemic in character, not merely publicistic. The restoration and purposeful cultivation of the culture of freedom in Ukraine is a necessary condition both for the state's wartime resilience and for a qualitative postwar reconstruction grounded in the principles of the Austrian School of Economics.

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