

# Concepts of axiom and dogma

[Economics](#)



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The principal impact of the Axioms and Dogma is on the social and moral structure of human society. That is therefore the main focus of these Essays. However, that is not the sole effect of the Axioms and Dogma, a point made, if only obliquely, in the Discourse to the first founding book of the Society of HumanKind. Practical as well as philosophical and spiritual repercussions must follow from so fundamental a change in the definition of the meaning and purpose of human existence.

The Axioms and Dogma have an impact on our practical activities as profound as those felt elsewhere in our lives. Among the more significant of those practical activities are our economic pursuits and in particular, how we provide for our material needs. The process by which we produce our food, shelter, clothing, tools and all the material goods which sustain us and make the wider cultural and philosophic aspects of our lives possible is of particular importance to the Society. For where would learning be without labor?

The Society will be unable to devote time and energy to the infinite survival of humanity and the growth of human knowledge if it does not recognize, acknowledge and encourage the work of those who toil to produce the goods and services on which its continued existence depends. Yet how disdainful in the past have intellectuals been of those whose hard lives and corded muscles are the foundation on which scholarship and intellectual progress are built. The value of those efforts to meet the material needs of others, on which both the Aim of the Society and the peace and progress of humankind rely, is recognized here.

It is, of course, the Second and Third Axioms and the consequent choice of the Dogma that has the greatest and most direct effect on our economic activities. So profound and wide-spread are the necessary changes to our society that it is perhaps easier to begin by setting out what is not changed in our economy by an adoption of the Dogma. In the first place, choice of the Dogma does not alter the physical condition of our environment. It adds nothing to the resources available to us and subtracts an equal amount from our material needs.

The fundamental premise that our economic resources are limited is therefore unaltered, as is our consequent need to devise and implement systems by which those inadequate resources can be properly divided between the competing demands we make upon them. What is changed however, is the horizon to our lives and with it the perspective of our economic plans. The Conditions of the Dogma propose that the human species should survive into the infinite future. That is a prospect beyond the range of any existing economic thought.

Current economic principles are based upon ideas of growth, development and expansion in both our output and our consumption. Our present economic plans are concerned primarily with maximizing the efficiency with which we discover and exploit the resources that are available to us on our planet. Only then do they address the problem of dividing that product of our economic effort between fiercely competing existing, projected and created demands. The overriding objective of present economic planning and policy is growth; now, tomorrow and always.

But if our present resources are finite, as they must be if they are measured against an infinite time scale, then growth in economic production and consumption must end sometime and somehow. That being the case, perpetual growth cannot be the base for our economic planning in the era of the Society of HumanKind. A radical reappraisal of our approach to these problems will be needed in the Axiomatic age. The Society of HumanKind will return to first principles in its search for a solution to these problems.

It will conclude that the prime purpose of economic activity in the age of the Axioms is to generate a supply of material goods and facilities sufficient to provide a secure base for the maintenance of both Conditions of the Dogma. The priority of those Conditions has been established in the Treatises of the first founding book, and is mentioned elsewhere in these Essays. That priority makes the first requirement of economic planning in the era of the Society to be to provide for the infinite survival of our species.

When that primary objective has been safeguarded our economic plans should then aim at the creation of a sufficient surplus of material goods over our essential needs to enable us to support continuous growth and development in our abilities, skills and knowledge. From those basic principles The Society of HumanKind will conclude that its Duty to its infinite posterity requires it to measure the success or otherwise of our economic activity by whether or not our productive effort has the effect of increasing the total store of economic resources available to the human species.

That is a necessary prerequisite for passing on better conditions for the discharge of the Responsibility of the Society from generation to generation.

The reader will surely now recognize that to rebuild the science of economics on the basis of the Axioms is to bring about a fundamental transformation of that activity. Economics in the era of the Society becomes a discipline primarily concerned with the development of means to onshore and increase our resources rather than to enhance the efficiency with which we exploit them.

The Society will seek to make the production of our material needs a cumulative rather than an exploitative process. Herein lies the greatest contrast between economics as understood by the Society or HumanKind and as it is practiced by its predecessors. Economic activity and the theories which have shaped it have hitherto been concerned with the exploitation of our resources, and with concepts of growth in our material possessions and increases in our consumption.

Followers of the Dogma however, and especially adherents of the Society of HumanKind, will return economics to its true meaning. It will become the science of minimizing our consumption in order to conserve our resources and our environment, and an attempt to reduce our needs rather than a constant search for ways to expand them. In a very real sense the new economics will shift from the exploitative (of our world, of each other) to the conservative, and from a focus on wants and desires to a concern with the identification and satisfaction to needs.

Its key message will therefore be that we must learn to be frugal in everything we do. In that process the definition of the term 'economic growth' will undergo a transformation. It will, for instance, no longer refer to

the productive capacity of the economy. The Society will only be able to conclude that our economy has undergone 'growth' if it can be shown that the total resources available to humanity have increased as a result of our productive activity.

That revolution in our thinking can be illustrated most graphically by pointing out that the economists of the Society of HumanKind are likely to consider industrialization a period of rapid and destructive decline in the world economy. From the perspective of the Axioms and Dogma modern industrial processes too often turn useful, productive and irreplaceable resources into waste, unnecessary consumption and pollution. There will be much for the new economic scientists to do therefore. To begin with they must establish exactly the minimum material needs of humanity.

Precisely how much food, shelter, clothing etc. Do we reasonably need in order to survive and prosper in good health and order, and reproduce ourselves, while allowing a sufficient surplus to support our intellectual progress? If they are to abide by the Principle 2. In these matters, and support its requirement that each and every individual should be enabled to reach their full potential, the economists of the Society of HumanKind must then devise ways of ensuring that that minimum is made readily available to each and every member of our species.

Any remaining excess after that provision will need to be minimized and then truly applied in ways that will first, better guarantee our infinite survival, and then encourage the growth of our abilities, skills and knowledge. In addition, new principles of economic co-operation will have to be devised that not only

minimize consumption but also provide us with methods by which we may prevent or penalties any waste or extravagance.

Finally, the new economists will have to develop static rather than dynamic economic models, that is, models for our economy which provide us with mechanisms to limit or preclude increases in our levels of consumption, matched by productive processes which increase rather than diminish the total resources available to us. In sum, in the Axiomatic age the science of economics will take the Objective of the Dogma as its end, and the maintenance of its necessary Conditions as its purpose.

As his Essay shows, that must mean an attempt to design and construct frugal economic systems and structures to minimize the time and effort spent by humanity in the production of its material needs. That will be achieved both by a reversal of our present effort to expand the range and quantity of material goods consumed by our species, and by an increase in the efficiency and effectiveness of our productive processes. That exercise will be coupled with a determination that we should henceforward abandon our existing tendency to focus on activities whose effect is to reduce the total amount to economic resources available tort our use.

It will be replaced by an attempt to maximize the amount of time and energy we are able to devote to the growth of our knowledge, and to our intellectual and creative activities. That is a change in approach to our economic activity truly Justifying its description as a transformation. The reader may have thought, on occasion, that the founding books of the Society exaggerate the effect of the introduction of the Axioms and Dogma into our lives when

describing it as a revolution, especially when so many of the old tried and true rules of morality re-emerge in these writings.

But when the effect on our daily lives of the change in the meaning and purpose of our existence brought about by the Society is considered; when its impact on our systems of social and economic co- operation appears, as it must do when the Society of HumanKind is fully established, then the reality of the revolution will become apparent. Nowhere will that be more evident than in the vital area of our economic activity. Here, at the heart of our society, as this Essay demonstrates, not only our thinking, but our practice, and with it the relative importance of wealth and learning, will be rapidly reversed.