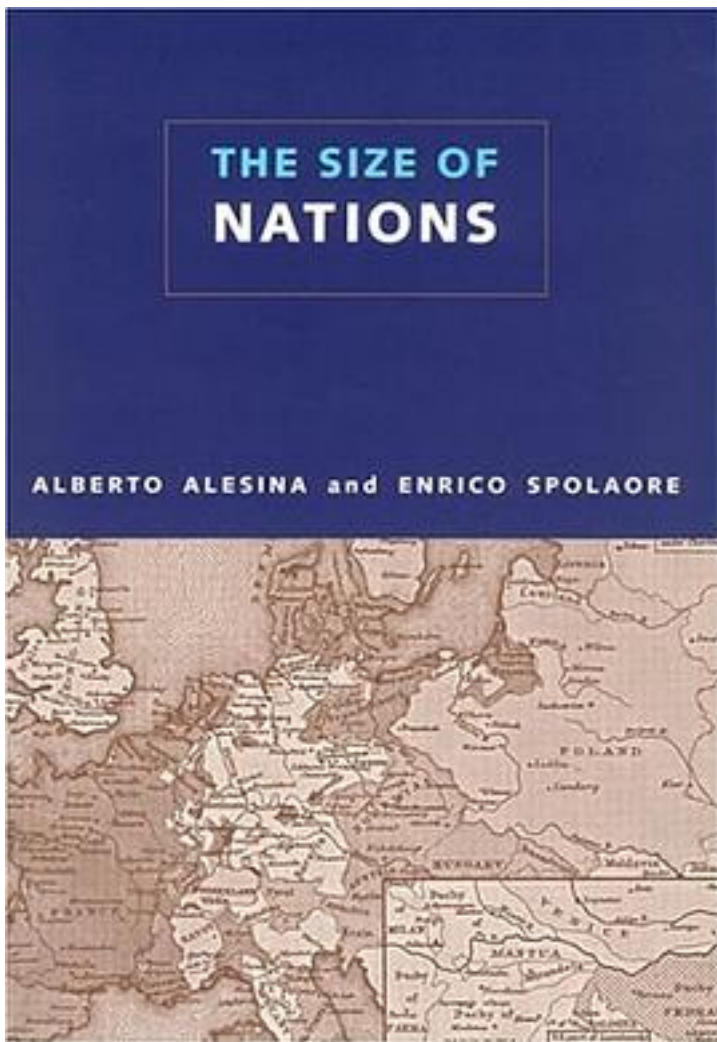


The Size of Nations



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著者:Alberto Alesina

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The authors of this timely and provocative book use the tools of economic analysis to examine the formation and change of political borders. They argue that while these issues have always been at the core of historical analysis, international economists have tended to regard the size of a country as "exogenous," or no more subject to explanation than the location of a mountain range or the course of a river. Alesina and Spolaore consider a country's borders to be subject to the same analysis as any other man-made institution. In *The Size of Nations*, they argue that the optimal size of a country is determined by a cost-benefit trade-off between the benefits of size and the costs of heterogeneity. In a large country, per capita costs may be low, but the heterogeneous preferences of a large population make it hard to deliver services and formulate policy. Smaller countries may find it easier to respond to citizen preferences in a democratic way.

Alesina and Spolaore substantiate their analysis with simple analytical models that show how the patterns of globalization, international conflict, and democratization of the last two hundred years can explain patterns of state formation. Their aim is not only "normative" but also "positive" -- that is, not only to compute the optimal size of a state in theory but also to explain the phenomenon of country size in reality. They argue that the complexity of real world conditions does not preclude a systematic analysis, and that such an analysis, synthesizing economics, political science, and history, can help us understand real world events.

作者介绍:

目录:

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标签

政治经济学

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economics

评论

The trade-offs between the benefits of size and the costs of heterogeneity.

创意十足，今年四月读的

Alesina的早期有趣著作，模型的insight讲得深入浅出，对欧盟的几个讨论简直是今天各种玩脱欧的神预测。。Country size emerges from a trade-off between the economies of scale in supplying public goods in large countries, and the costs of cultural and ethnic heterogeneity, which may be increasing in the size of countries. 书中还cover了几篇实证论文的推论：国家大小与政府规模、贸易开放负相关；小国贸易开放的边际收益更高。结合论文食用风味更佳。 2016.12.12

作者不是把国家的边界看作外生给定或是由地理等自然因素决定，而是看成人造的制度，同样要用政治经济学的工具去研究，作者甚至不去较真民族这个概念，而是把国家的大小视为一个约束下最优的问题，要去取舍大国的公共品供给上的规模经济和人们对于不同的公共政策的偏好，意志性所导致的冲突。

经济越自由，解体越畅快。解体论满赛。

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书评

- The size of a country emerges from a trade-off between the benefits of scale (in the

provisions of public goods, policies and the size of the market) and the costs of heterogeneity of preferences in the population (which may be increasing in the size ...

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