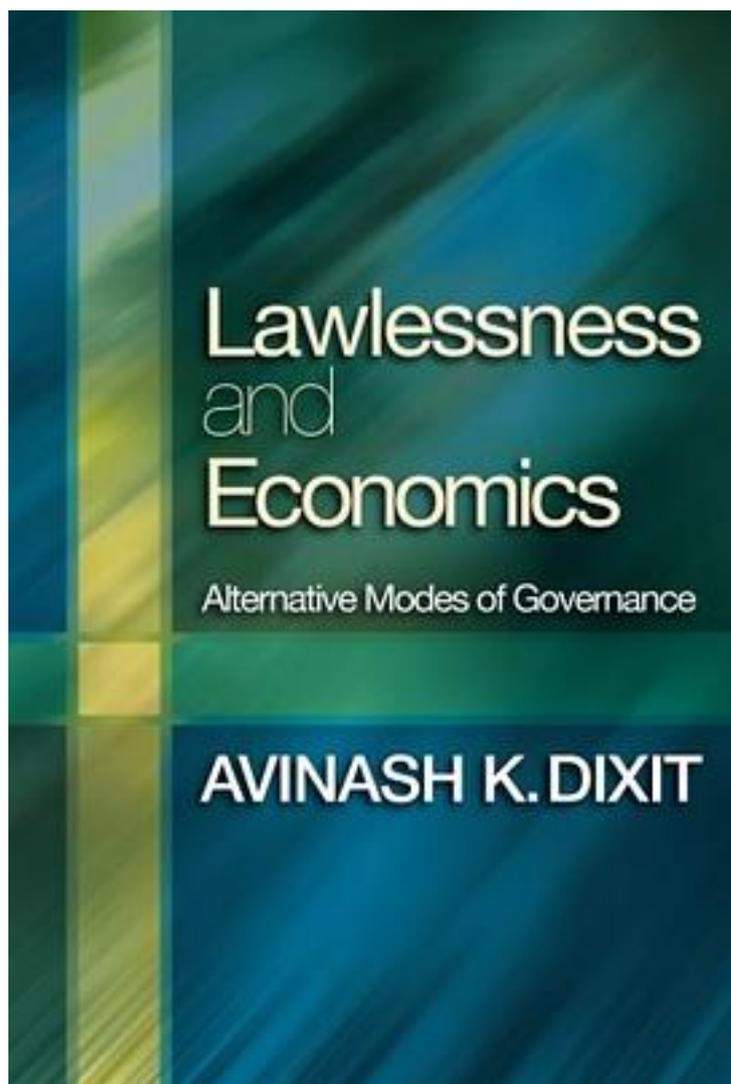


Lawlessness and Economics



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著者:Avinash K. Dixit

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How can property rights be protected and contracts be enforced in countries where the rule of law is ineffective or absent? How can firms from advanced market economies do business in such circumstances? In *Lawlessness and Economics*, Avinash Dixit examines the theory of private institutions that transcend or supplement weak economic governance from the state. In much of the world and through much of history, private mechanisms--such as long-term relationships, arbitration, social networks to disseminate information and norms to impose sanctions, and for-profit enforcement services--have grown up in place of formal, state-governed institutions. Even in countries with strong legal systems, many of these mechanisms continue under the shadow of the law. Numerous case studies and empirical investigations have demonstrated the variety, importance, and merits, and drawbacks of such institutions. This book builds on these studies and constructs a toolkit of theoretical models to analyze them. The models shed new conceptual light on the different modes of governance, and deepen our understanding of the interaction of the alternative institutions with each other and with the government's law. For example, one model explains the limit on the size of social networks and illuminates problems in the transition to more formal legal systems as economies grow beyond this limit. Other models explain why for-profit enforcement is inefficient. The models also help us understand why state law dovetails with some non-state institutions and collides with others. This can help less-developed countries and transition economies devise better processes for the introduction or reform of their formal legal systems.

作者介绍:

Avinash Kamalakar Dixit (born 1944) is an Indian-American economist originally of Indian nationality.

Dixit received a B.Sc. from Bombay University in 1963 in Mathematics and Physics, a B.A. from Cambridge University in 1965 in Mathematics (Corpus Christi College, First Class), and a Ph.D. in 1968 from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Economics.

As of 2011, Dixit is the John J. F. Sherrerd '52 University Professor of Economics at Princeton University, and has been since July 1989. He was previously a professor of Economics and International Affairs. He previously taught at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, at the University of California, Berkeley, at Balliol College at Oxford University as the Lord Thomson of Fleet Fellow and Lecturer in Economics, and at the University of Warwick.

Avinash Dixit has also held visiting scholar positions at MIT as well as the International Monetary Fund and the Russell Sage Foundation.

He was President of the Econometric Society in 2001, and was Vice-President (2002) and President (2008) of the American Economic Association. He was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1992 and the National Academy of Sciences in 2005.

目录: Preface vii

1. Economics With and Without the Law 1
- 1.1 The Need for Economic Governance 1
- 1.2 Economics Taking the Law for Granted 2
- 1.3 "Lawlessness and Economics "in Context 5

1.4	Law and Economics	9
1.5	Economics in the Shadow of the Law	10
1.6	Other Institutions of Economic Governance	12
1.7	Some Basic Analytical Apparatus	14
1.8	Approach of the Book	21
2.	Private Ordering in the Shadow of the Law	25
2.1	Issues and Empirical Research	25
2.2	Bargaining When the Law is a Backstop	29
2.3	Relational and Formal Contracts	32
2.4	Arbitration and Information	40
2.5	Assessment and Prospects	48
2.6	Mathematical Appendix	50
3.	Relation-Based Contract Enforcement	59
3.1	Issues and Empirical Research	59
3.2	Relation-Based and Rule-Based Governance	65
3.3	Limits of Relation-Based Governance	67
3.4	Related Theoretical Models	76
3.5	Assessment and Prospects	78
3.6	Mathematical Appendix	86
4.	Profit-Motivated Contract Enforcement	97
4.1	Issues and Empirical Research	97
4.2	The Structure of the Model	101
4.3	Information Intermediaries	103
4.4	Enforcement Intermediaries	107
4.5	Assessment and Prospects	110
4.6	Mathematical Appendix	111
5.	Private Protection of Property Rights	125
5.1	Issues and Empirical Research	125
5.2	Production and Protection under Anarchy	131
5.3	For-Profit Private Protection	133
5.4	A Predatory State and Its Citizens	138
5.5	Assessment and Prospects	143
5.6	Mathematical Appendix	144
6.	Conclusion	149
6.1	Implications for Institutions and Policies	149
6.2	Implications for Future Research	153
	References	155
	Index	163
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评论

数理经济模型较多，不能读透，无法评论好坏。大致观点是当代制度经济学、法律经济学和增长研究等经济领域，皆假设有一定政府公权力与法律保障。提出“无法无天经济学”（巧译？）的概念，考察在崩坏/完全不存在高于经济行为体的政府公权力和法律约束的情况下，单靠关系为基础的关系社会和私人约束可否存续，提出了制度起源的研究议程。大致结论是在较原初较简单（博弈者少、经济活动少、交易物品不多、信息对经济活动作用不太大）的环境中，以非法律非仲裁为基础的关系社会尚能维持一定的效用，在复杂制度下私人创新也有一定活力，但当规模经济未够正当化公权力的创立，而交易、信息、博弈结构却又超出关系社会能维持的范围，则经济可能停滞不前，此时若过分强调自上而下照搬西方产权制度也可能过快地消解关系社会而又建不成较好制度。

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