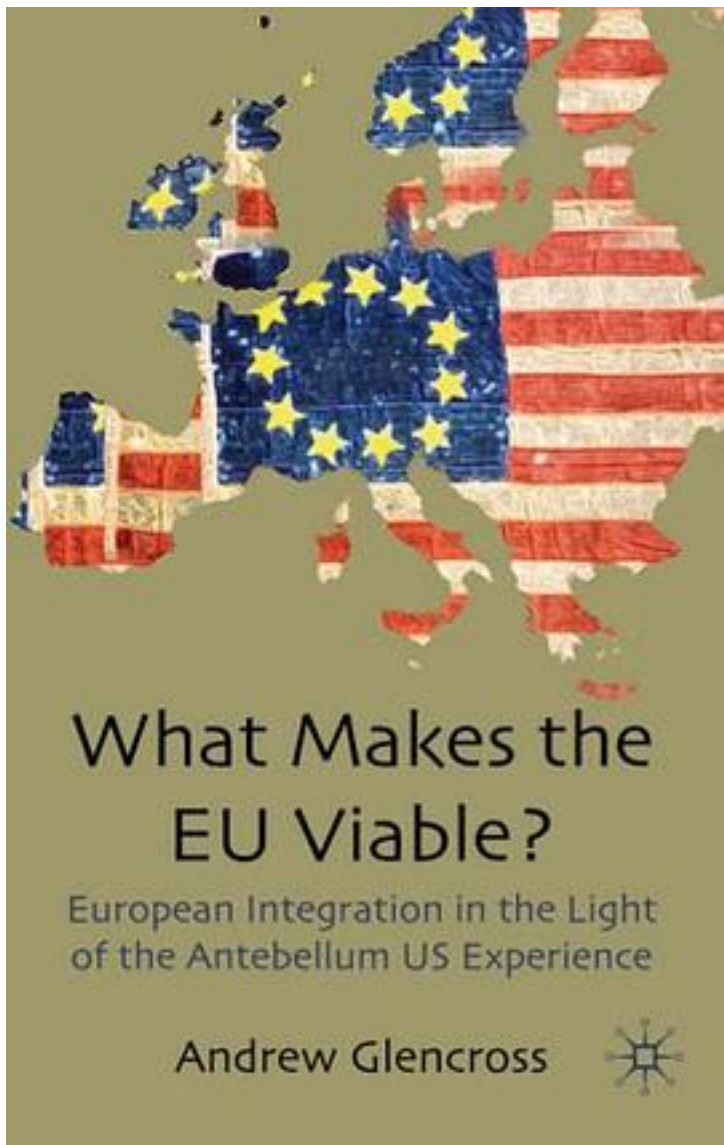


What Makes the EU Viable?



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This book is distinguished by its use of the antebellum US experience as a foil to address the under-explored question of what makes the EU viable. The nature of political conflict in both cases is defined in terms of four contested rules of the game: state sovereignty, federal competences, political representation and decision-making procedures. Hence, viability is conceptualized as the ability to find an agreement over these four elements. The analysis shows that, to remain viable, the antebellum USA resorted to an ultimately untenable voluntary centralization of these rules of the game. Conversely, the EU has maintained a dynamic equilibrium, although this is not a self-reinforcing process. The transatlantic contrast is then used to examine proposals for reforming the EU, especially its system of political representation. The comparison reveals that, despite high expectations, changing the system of representation is no shortcut solution for the EU's constitutional woes.

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