PARLIAMENTS AND LEGISLATURES SERIES

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The aims of this series are to enhance knowledge about the well-established legislative assemblies of North America and Western Europe and to publish studies of parliamentary assemblies worldwide—from Russia and the former Soviet bloc nations to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The series is open to a wide variety of theoretical applications, historical dimensions, data collections, and methodologies.

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Longtime friend, scholar extraordinaire
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The Parliaments and Legislatures Series is the publishing home for studies of parliaments or legislatures, the institutional heartbeat of democratic governments. We refer to parliaments and legislatures in the same breath to denote their kinship. Representative assemblies are best known to Europeans as parliaments and best known to Americans as legislatures. The names may be used interchangeably, although there are those who insist on a distinction—that parliaments’ members are expected only to talk, whereas members of legislatures really make laws. Of course, the plain truth is that both parliaments and legislatures, as they may be known, are variously entangled in lawmaking and they exercise a variety of distinctive powers.

By the same token, the authors in Senates: Bicameralism in the Contemporary World have given the generic term senates to the upper houses of the world’s parliaments, and indeed most upper houses are given that name. Senates, putatively bodies of the wise and notable of the realm, arose in ancient Greek and Roman times. The Roman Senate held sway during the second century B.C. Although rooted in the parliamentary developments of antiquity, modern parliaments date their origins to medieval times, when bicameral institutions first emerged. The development of European parliaments that included “second chambers” or “upper houses” indicated the preeminence and survival of aristocracy. But senates have long outlived their original purposes and justification. They have, in one way or another, been transformed into modern, viable parliamentary institutions.

The contemporary design of these institutions—how their members are chosen, how they are organized, what powers they exercise, how their processes work, and what impact they have on legislation—provides an important realm of inquiry about parliamentary government. These fundamentals of institutional design, when they are well understood, supply the basis for more extensive comparative analysis. In this book, the authors dissect the upper houses in their own political systems, capturing their development over time and characterizing their relations with the lower house, the government of the day, extraparliamentary political
parties, and so forth. From these foundations, future comparative study can press ahead with inquiry into complex questions about parliamentary representation, institutionalization, bicameral linkages, parliamentary responsibility and accountability, and relations between legislature and executive.

These authors take note of the fact that there is very little in the English-language literature about parliaments that focuses on upper houses. Even the U.S. Senate, putatively the most powerful of these bodies, was largely neglected by political scientists until the 1970s. The post–World War II British House of Lords attracted little scholarly attention until the 1990s. Other upper houses have been virtually unknown to the scholarly world. In this sense, this pioneering book brings knowledgeable, penetrating accounts of senate institutions to the forefront, providing baseline analyses of these bodies that will help build a compelling foundation for future research.

Samuel C. Patterson
Democratic government in political units of any size requires a parliament where citizens may be represented and where public policies may be debated and determined. The institutional design for such a parliament varies in many particulars. A fundamental design issue is the number of houses that the parliament, or legislature, should have: one, two, three, more? In today's world, legislative bodies generally are composed of either one house or two; they are unicameral or bicameral. The U.S. Congress is bicameral, consisting of a House of Representatives and a Senate. The Ohio legislature is similarly designed, as are the legislatures in all the other American states except Nebraska, which has a unicameral legislature. About a third of the world's national parliaments are also bicameral.

Bicameral parliaments consist of a lower house and an upper house. These upper houses, which carry different names in different places, but which we have dubbed "senates," are important political institutions, but they have been neglected. Although Americans give their Senate plenty of attention, most of the world's consideration of parliamentary life is accorded to the lower houses—frequently the popularly elected and more powerful assembly. We have long been curious about the senates of the world and interested in learning more about how they are established, how they are organized, and how they work. Fortunately, we were able to find scholars in nine countries who were willing to analyze and write about their country's upper house and thus compose this book. We owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to these nine scholars, our authors, for their involvement in this project.

We would like to acknowledge the inspiration, guidance, and encouragement we have received over the years from our mentors: Ralph K. Huitt, Leon D. Epstein, John C. Wahlke, and Gerhard Loewenberg. We dedicate this book to Charles O. Jones, intrepid scholar of parliamentary government and close personal friend. From him, much has been learned about the U.S. Congress and about the institutional matrix in which that steadfast parliamentary institution is embedded. More immediately, we
have appreciated the opportunity to work on this book with Charlotte Dihoff, Ohio State University Press, who provided us help and encouragement in making this book a reality. Finally, we thank Suzanne and Karen, who nurtured and tolerated us while this project was under way.