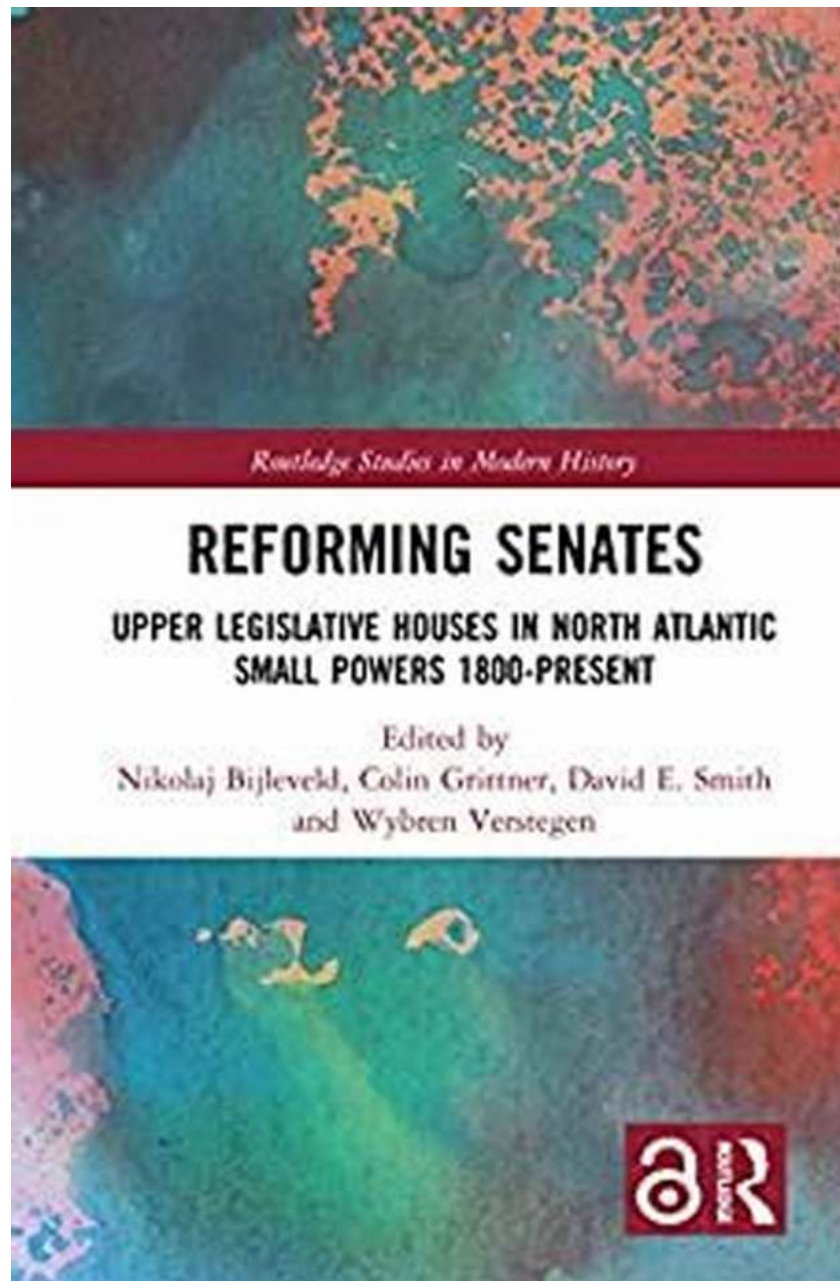


# From Islanders to Influencers: A Fascinating Exploration of Upper Legislative Houses in North Atlantic Small Powers since 1800

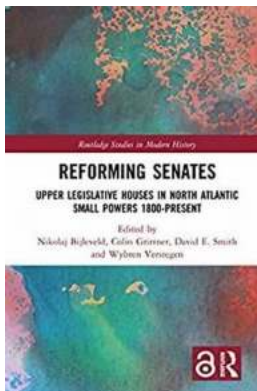


The Importance of Upper Legislative Houses

When it comes to governance, the structure and functioning of legislative bodies play a crucial role in shaping a nation's democratic processes. In the case of North Atlantic Small Powers (NASP), the upper legislative houses hold a special significance. These bodies, also known as second chambers or senates, often act as a balance of power against the lower house or parliament, providing checks and balances and ensuring more thorough consideration of legislation.

## The Historical Landscape of North Atlantic Small Powers

North Atlantic Small Powers refer to a group of countries located in the North Atlantic region, including Iceland, Malta, Luxembourg, and others. These nations may have relatively smaller populations, but their contributions to governance, diplomacy, and regional stability are immense.



### Reforming Senates: Upper Legislative Houses in North Atlantic Small Powers 1800-present (Routledge Studies in Modern History)

by Bryan Stevenson (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

- Language : English
- File size : 2858 KB
- Text-to-Speech : Enabled
- Screen Reader : Supported
- Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
- Word Wise : Enabled
- Print length : 286 pages



The period from 1800 to the present has witnessed significant changes in the structure and role of upper legislative houses in NASP. By studying this evolution,

we can gain valuable insights into the political journey of these small powers and understand the factors that have influenced their governance systems.

## **1800-1900: The Emergence of Upper Legislative Houses**

During the 19th century, several NASP began to establish upper legislative houses as a means of achieving more balanced decision-making processes. These houses were typically composed of appointed members, ranging from aristocrats to esteemed professionals, and played an advisory role to the monarch or the executive branch.

For instance, Iceland, having gained a quasi-autonomous status under the Kingdom of Denmark, established the Alþingi, or the High Council, in 1843. This institution acted as a consultative assembly, providing recommendations to the Danish king's representative in Iceland.

In Malta, the Legislative Council, consisting of appointed members, was introduced in 1835 to address concerns and shape policies related to the island's British governance. This marked an important step towards a more participatory system.

## **1900-1950: Democratization and Increased Influence**

As the world moved towards greater democracy, NASP also witnessed changes in their upper legislative houses. The appointed members started to shift towards elected representatives, thereby ensuring a more representative system.

In Luxembourg, the Chamber of Deputies, established in 1848, saw an expansion of its powers and influence during this period. Elected by universal suffrage, the members of the Chamber played a key role in legislative decision-making and held the government accountable.

Iceland's Alþingi experienced a similar transformation during the early 20th century. The of direct elections in 1904 considerably enhanced the voice of the Icelandic people in shaping their legislative processes.

## **1950-Present: Modernization and Adaptation**

In the post-World War II era, NASP experienced further modernization and adaptation of their upper legislative houses. Reforms aimed at strengthening the accountability and effectiveness of these institutions became a priority.

In Malta, the Legislative Council was replaced by the Senate in 1949, consisting of both elected and appointed members. This move represented a continuation of the democratic process and enabled broader representation within the legislative process.

The Icelandic Alþingi underwent significant changes in the late 20th century. The adoption of a new constitution in 1944, followed by major reforms in 1991 and 2013, reshaped the dynamics of the upper legislative house, expanding its legislative powers and making it more independent from the executive branch.

## **The Role of Upper Legislative Houses Today**

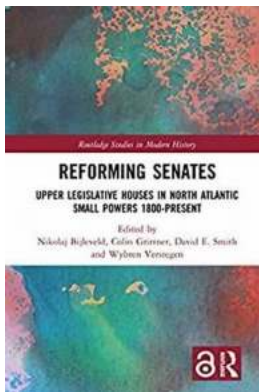
The upper legislative houses in NASP continue to play a crucial role in shaping legislation, conducting inquiries, and representing the interests of various societal groups. They provide a platform for in-depth discussion and debate, ensuring that decisions are not rushed and that different viewpoints are considered.

Furthermore, these institutions serve as a mechanism to safeguard against potential abuses of power, providing a system of checks and balances that helps maintain the democratic fabric of these small powers.

The evolution of upper legislative houses in North Atlantic Small Powers from 1800 to the present demonstrates the adaptability and resilience of these nations in shaping their governance systems. Through the establishment of these second chambers, NASP ensures a more comprehensive decision-making process and strives towards a more inclusive and accountable democracy.

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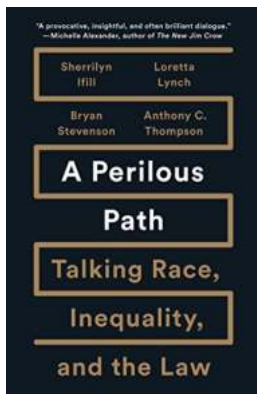


This new study of senates in small powers across the North Atlantic shows that the establishment and the reform of these upper legislative houses have followed remarkably parallel trajectories. Senate reforms emerged in the wake of deep political crises within the North Atlantic world and were influenced by the comparatively weak positions of small powers. Reformers responded to crises

and constantly looked beyond borders and oceans for inspiration to keep their senates relevant.

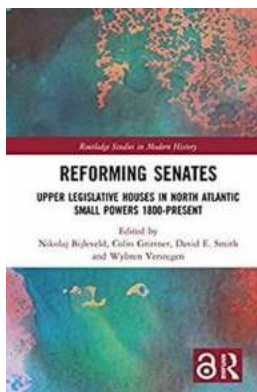
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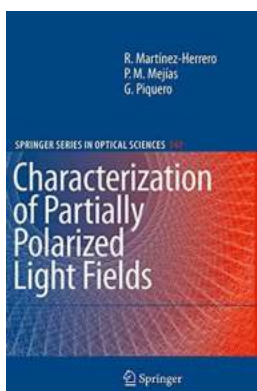
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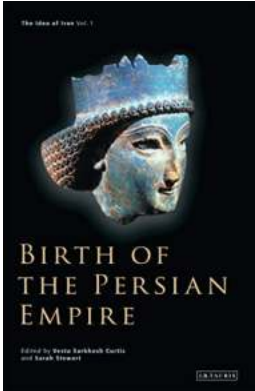
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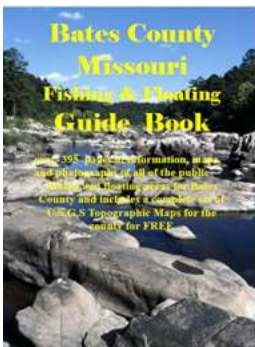
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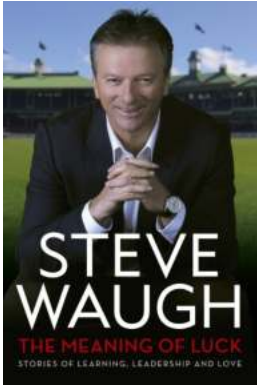
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