

for some time non-nobles had occupied seats on the council, so the Statutes were simply ratifying an existing practice. Vacancies in both classes were filled by cooptation, emphasizing the council's oligarchic nature. Members were almost always chosen from the same narrow circle of leading families, generation after generation; entry for new men was difficult, though by no means impossible.

The formal separation of the council's membership into two classes reflected the division within the ruling elite, between the score or so of noble lineages that had long dominated the city, and a group of newer families that had risen more recently to wealth and influence. The power of the old noble lineages was grounded primarily in their landed wealth, and in their activities as moneylenders; the newer families, by contrast, had grown rich primarily from manufacturing, trade, or the professions, although they would also have invested in land, both for its economic value and for the social status that landownership conferred. Turin's elite was becoming more complex and diverse. The ranks of the old noble clans had thinned somewhat with the passage of time: the exiled Zucca and Sili faded away after their failed coup in 1334, while other lineages died out. The demise of the formerly powerful Zucca and Sili marked the final defeat of the noble faction that had fought against Savoyard rule since the mid-thirteenth century, and the victory of the opposing faction, led by the BORGESIO, BECCUTI, DELLA ROVERE and GORZANO. But the oligarchy of old noble families remained extremely influential, despite the turnover in its membership, the rise of non-noble families demanding a share of power, and the imposition of princely rule by the House of Savoy. Amadeus VI's Statutes of 1360 deliberately recognized the existence of the class of non-noble council members as a counterweight to the old elite, in order to strengthen Savoyard rule.

The princes of Savoy-Achaëa also made use of popular resentment against the city's elite to bolster their political ascendancy. A clear indication of social tension was the constant friction between the workers in the textile trades and their employers over wages. At one point the linen weavers addressed a petition to the city council demanding that it force their employers to pay a living wage; in 1395 the weavers of woolen cloth refused to work for the Turinese merchants who employed them, and threatened to work for the merchants of Moncalieri, who paid better wages. The workers were in a relatively weak position, however, because they were not organized in guilds. Another indication of social tension was a conspiracy led by a dissident member of the BORGESIO family in 1383, in which he tried to mobilize the common people against the city council. The plot failed, but after BORGESIO was arrested