

broad-minded policy, and prevented Ragusa from expanding into a first-class maritime State, as it had more than one opportunity of doing. At the same time, had it become really powerful, and acquired a hegemony over a large part of the Adriatic littoral and of the Slave lands, it would have run greater risks at the hands of the Turks. Venice, who felt the need of a swift and silent executive, instituted the Council of Ten, to which the Ragusan constitution offers no parallel. The Ragusan Senate was too numerous a body to act in the same way, and in it those who hesitated and doubted usually carried the day.

We realise the character of the Ragusan constitution from the fact that so few individuals have left their mark on the town's history. We read of the various noble families whose names appear again and again in the public records, but hardly any single citizen emerges high above the others. The few names which are remembered are those of scholars, men of letters, or scientists. Even the ambassadors were always sent in pairs, although in the Middle Ages this was not peculiar to Ragusa.

Another aspect was that the three Councils who had to transact all the weightiest matters of the Republic were also overwhelmed with the petty details of municipal administration. This of course was difficult to avoid in the case of a small city-republic, but it constituted the radical failing of that type of state, for its Government was a parliament, a court of justice, and a town council all in one. The same body might be called upon to decide on an alliance with Hungary and on the seaworthiness of a carrack in the same sitting.

In diplomatic affairs, however, the Ragusans were