

MANIFESTO OF THE REVOLTING CARDINALS, AUGUST 5, 1378

At the death of Gregory XI in 1378, the cardinals elected Bartholomew, the archbishop of Bari, pope. Taking the title Urban VI, he soon announced that he would not remove his court to Avignon, as many the cardinals wished him to do, but would remain in Rome. For various reasons the cardinals of the French party became more and more displeased with Urban and soon rebelled against him and deposed him. After publishing a manifesto in which they defended their action, they elected Robert of Geneva, who called himself Clement VII.

After the apostolic seat was made vacant by the death of our lord pope Gregory XI, who died in March, we assembled in conclave for the election of a pope, as is the law and custom, in the papal palace, in which Gregory had died. . . . Officials of the city with a great multitude the people, for the most part armed and called together for this purpose by the ringing of bells, surrounded the palace in a threatening manner and even entered it and almost filled it. To the terror caused by their presence they added threats that unless we should at once elect a Roman or an Italian they would kill us. They gave us no time to deliberate but compelled us unwillingly, through violence and fear, to elect an Italian without delay. In order to escape danger which threatened us from such a mob, we elected Bartholomew, archbishop of Bari, thinking that he would have enough conscience not to accept the election, since every one knew that it was made under such wicked threats. But he was unmindful of his own salvation and burning with ambition, and so, to the great scandal of the clergy and of the Christian people, and contrary to the laws of the church, he accepted this election which was offered him, although not all cardinals were present at the election, and it was extorted from us by the threats and demands of the officials and people of the city. And although such an election is null and void, and the danger from the people still threatened us, he was enthroned and crowned, and called himself pope and apostolic. But according to the holy fathers and to the law of the church, he should be called apostate, anathema, Antichrist, and the mocker and destroyer of Christianity.

Oliver J. Thatcher and Edgar Holmes McNeal, eds., *A Source Book for Medieval History* (New York: Scribners, 1905), pp. 325–26.