The issue of violence and, more precisely, of civil violence stands prominently in the history of the Great Western Schism. As will be seen in what follows, it is pivotal in the initiation of the crisis. In January 1377, the last Avignonese pope, Gregory XI, returned the court to Rome after some 70 years spent in the capital of the Comtat Venaissin, a papal state surrounded by French territory. Gregory died a few months after his return, on 27 March 1378. Following canon law, on the night of

*I would like to thank Agostino Paravicini-Bagliani, editor of the Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia, for his support and encouragement and for allowing me to publish first in his review my findings on papal electoral violence. The early part of this chapter reproduces a few paragraphs of my book Raiding Saint Peter: Empty Sees, Violence, and the Initiation of the Great Western Schism, 1378 (Leiden, 2008), especially found in Chapter 4, pp. 173–92. I am dedicating this chapter to my mentor, Richard C. Trexler, who passed away on 8 March 2007.


2 That is, Gregory X’s 1274 Ubi Periculum, a bull that created the conclave during the second council of Lyon. Gregory X wanted to ensure that the college of papal electors would be strictly enclosed during the conclave “cum clave” to facilitate their deliberations and lessen interferences. The text reads: “[...] With the approval of the sacred council, we decree that if the pope dies in a city where he was residing with his curia, the cardinals present in that city are obliged to await the absent cardinals, but for ten days only. When these days have passed, whether those absent have arrived or not, all are to assemble in the palace where the pope lived. Each is to be content with one servant only, clerical or lay, at choice. We allow however those in evident need to have two, with the same choice. In this palace all are to live in common in one room, with no partition or curtain. Apart from free entry to a private room, the conclave is to be completely locked, so that no one can enter or leave. No one may have access to the cardinals or permission to talk secretly with them, nor are they themselves to admit anyone to their presence, except those who, by consent of all the cardinals present, might be summoned only for the business of the imminent election. It is not lawful for anyone to send a messenger or a written message to the cardinals or to any one of them. Whoever acts otherwise, sending a messenger or a written message, or speaking secretly to one of the cardinals, is to incur automatic excommunication. In the
7 April 1378, the 16 cardinals present in Rome (11 French, 4 Italian, and 1 Spanish)\(^3\) entered into conclave and, despite internal divisions between Limousins and northern French, elevated Bartolomeo

\(\text{conclave some suitable window is to be left open through which the necessary food may be served conveniently to the cardinals, but no entry for anyone is to be possible through this way [...]}\); *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. Norman P. Tanner, 2 vols. (London, 1990), 1:314–15. *Ubi Periculum* required a ten-day wait between the papal death and the opening of the conclave to allow absent cardinals to join the court. Again, to hasten the process and prevent long peregrinations, Gregory ordered that the conclave would take place in the palace where the defunct pontiff resided. *Ubi Periculum* also added a few dietary restrictions. If the election lasted more than three days, on the following five the cardinals ate a single dish at each meal; if it lasted more than eight days, the cardinals dieted on a bread, water, and wine regimen. In addition as long as the conclave lasted, the cardinals received no revenues from the Apostolic Chamber’s treasury, another break from normalcy aimed at accelerating the cardinals’ resolve for a speedy electoral process. A few more regulations clarified contingencies: what to do if a cardinal left, if the pope died outside his place of residence, and who safeguarded the conclave. Gregory noted wisely that even though the council was making rules, it was still to be seen how well they would be enforced. The authorities of the city where the election would be held were in charge of enforcing the regulations and ensuring their observance. Tanner, in his masterful edition, introduces the text and appends a complete bibliography. I can only refer interested readers to it. He reminds his readers that in 1298 the text was incorporated into canon law with Boniface VIII’s *Liber Sextus: Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 1:303–08.

\(^3\) This somewhat simplistic national division masks a fragmentation of allegiances between the cardinals that went deeper than a somewhat anachronistic geography. Parties or lobbies formed vertically and horizontally around kinship, family, and clients principally and, to a lesser degree, around regional solidarity. In general, the *familia* and cardinals’ “party” (in the political sense) were an aggregation of kin and regional solidarities. In April 1378, the cardinal electorate was divided into three “lobbies.” The first was the Limousins party composed of five limousins and two “outsiders”: Jean de Cros, cardinal of Limoges; Guillaume d’Aigrefeuille; Pierre de Vergne; Guy de Malesset, cardinal of Poitiers; and Géraud du Puy, cardinal of Marmoutier; then the caorsin (Cahors) Pierre de Sertonac, cardinal of Viviers, and probably Guillaume Noëllet, cardinal of Sant’Angelo, from Angoulême. The second lobby was composed of three “northern” French: Bertrand Latgier, cardinal of Glandève; Hugues de Montalais, cardinal of Brittany; and Pierre Flandrin, cardinal of Saint-Eustache, who were joined by Robert de Genève and Pedro de Luna. The last faction was represented by the four Italians: Piero Corsini, cardinal of Florence; Francesco Tebaldeschi, cardinal of St. Peter; Simone Borsano, cardinal of Milan; and Jacopo Orsini. This multiplicity disappeared into a *ultramontain/Italian* cleavage with the growing discontent against Urban VI, the choice of compromise between his Italian origin (favored by the Roman crowd) and his long acquaintance with the Avignonese court to which he belonged as head of the Chancelry. On the cardinals’ “parties,” see Noël Valois, “L’élection d’Urbain VI et les origines du grand schisme d’Occident,” *Revue des questions historiques* 48 (1890), 371–72; Bernard Guillemain, “Cardinaux et société curiale aux origines de la double élection de 1378,” in *Genèse et débuts du grand schisme d’Occident: Colloque international tenu à Avignon, 25–28 septembre 1978* (Paris, 1980), pp. 19–30; and Henri Bresc, “La genèse du schisme: Les partis cardinalices et leurs ambitions dynastiques: Sur Pierre Ameilh,” in *Genèse et débuts*, pp. 45–57.