

Antipope. In principle, an antipope is a person who calls himself pope and exercises the office without being entitled to do so. This can come about for various reasons: doctrinal divisions, a papal vacancy caused by the deposition and exile of a pope following on the intervention of the secular authority (usually the emperor); changes in the choosing for picking the pope (the rules were not fixed before the eleventh and twelfth century (1059 and 1179); a double election decided by the secular power, followed probably by the emergence of a third candidate; transformation of the political balance of power in Rome (especially in the tenth and eleventh century), etc. In practice, it is not always easy to distinguish the antipopes from the popes. The Holy See itself, in the official list published every year in the *Annuario Pontificio* (a list compiled by Monsignor Angelo Mercati, and reproduced since 1947) shows in some cases its reluctance to decide, and brings out inconsistencies in the numbering of popes of the same name. Indeed it has changed its view in the course of the centuries, as the case of the two popes elected at the Council of Pisa, Alexander V (1409-1410) and John XXIII (1410-1415), both numbered today among the antipopes. The first was considered legitimate in the 15th century, given that Rodrigo Borgia, elected in 1492, took the name Alexander VI. By contrast, Angelo Guiseppe Roncalli, by taking the name John XXIII, definitively confined his distant predecessor to the ranks of the antipopes. Historians, for their part, have given evidence of doubts about legitimacy. Hence the divergence that can be noted between the most accessible lists: that of the *Annuario pontificio*, which contains 36 names, that of the *Dizionario di diritto canonico* (1935), which lists 34, and that of the *Dizionario storico del papato* (1994), the work of Olivier Guyot Jeannin, which lists 47 certain or probably antipopes. We may observe that the first antipope, Hippolytus (217-235), is regarded as a saint, and that it is in the eleventh and twelfth century that we find the largest number of antipopes, 8 in the eleventh and 11 in the twelfth. In 1130, Innocent II, hastily and irregularly elected, owed his victory after a schism that lasted eight years over his rival Anacletus II, chosen by a majority of the sacred college, to the support of the king of France and St Bernard of Clairvaux. The last antipope was Felix V, elected at the Council of Basel in 1439. He abdicated in 1449 and died in 1451.

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