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 Thomas Becket HPMS7006
 Assessment 3 – Essay
 9 January 2022

Essay Question 5: Why throughout Thomas's exile did Thomas and Henry fail to reconcile their differences? Why did they do so at Fréteval?

Anne Duggan labels her chapter 9 of *Thomas Becket* as 'A hollow peace: Fréteval and after'.¹

This paper argues no true peace was negotiated at Fréteval and differences were never reconciled between the Archbishop and the King. The dispute between Thomas Becket and Henry II may be one of the best documented historical clashes. Historians have sought explanations for Henry's and Thomas's behavior based on existing conflicts between secular power and Church power, the formation of canon law, the internal change of Thomas upon consecration, and the assertion of Church legal jurisdiction. In addition, the personalities and relationship between Thomas and Henry played a role in how both approached strategy in the dispute and made it difficult, if not impossible, to reach resolution. The power dynamics between Henry and Thomas prevent a compromised solution in that neither moves from their positions throughout, resulting in a zero-sum scenario. In that case, if a third-party mediator cannot find common ground, the only resolution is the removal of one or the other actors.

The discipline of Political Science is based on a simplified vision of human nature as rational and self-interested. This is thought not necessarily to account for all human behavior, rather the assumption of rationality and self-interest is more consistent and reliable in explaining most behavior. These assumptions form the basis of the theoretical framework of Realism or realpolitik, where we assume that 'actors', either individuals or states, will pursue their self-

¹ Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket* (London: Arnold, 2004), 179-200, p. 179.

interest or power.² Machiavelli is often thought of as the ‘father of Realism’ in his famous advice in *The Prince*, where he claims that human nature is a constant and that all politics are based on power.³ Because of these assumptions, those who examine power politics claim that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior. Machiavelli advises that a prince should strip away personal morality from political decision-making. Political Science has fleshed out means of examining power politics by breaking down the arenas in which it is played out. Kenneth Waltz famously presented in *Man, State, and War* the three levels of analysis used: individual, state, and international system. All three levels are based on the assumption of the actors, whether individual or states, being rational and self-interested. Thus, decision-making will always be based on what an actor believes is in its self-interest.

Power, in the most general sense, is the ability of Actor A to make Actor B do something it does not want to do. Power is an elusive concept; however, it is useful to approach the exercise of power as on a continuum. The continuum stretches from persuasion to force. Persuasion is the least costly and fosters cooperation, particularly if interests between or among the actors are aligned. Force is the costliest and can lead to deadlock, escalation, and conflict. In addition, power is relational between and/or among actors. Typically, actors seek a non-zero-sum relationship; that is, a gain in power by one actor is not a loss of power for another. Gains or losses do not affect the power relationship. However, when interests conflict, this relationship can shift to a zero-sum dynamic, where an increase in power in one is a direct loss to another. Or, a loss in power of one is, at a minimum, perceived as a gain for another. However, conflict resolution tends to rest on negotiation strategies, also based on rationality and self-interest, that

² For a full discussion of Realism in the Modern period see Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994)

³ Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (New York: W.W, Norton & Company, 1977)

can produce cooperation. Moreover, changes in strategy, over time, can produce cooperation and no shifting of strategy can lead to escalation of dispute and negative consequences. The challenge is to change a zero-sum to a positive-sum situation, where both sides gain.⁴ In other words, common ground must be found. By viewing the dispute through the lens of power, the zero-sum, winner take all, strategy by both sides prevents a peace agreement. This analysis uses the dispute between Thomas and Henry as a case study in power and strategy to explain why no resolution was reached throughout the dispute. The major events and primary actors are examined.

By the time Thomas Becket had fled Northampton and landed in France in November of 1164, the dispute between himself and Henry II was well under way. From the beginning of the dispute, when Thomas had resigned his chancellorship in 1160, to his exile following the trial at Northampton, we see that power politics was being played out at both the individual and the state (national) levels. At the individual level, Thomas has been described as ‘fundamentally a proud, self-centered man’.⁵ Henry was well known for his Angevin fiery temper, ruthlessness, and duplicity. In fact, Arnulf of Lisieux writes to Thomas regarding Henry as ‘you are dealing with a man whose cunning frightens distant people, whose power overawes his neighbors, whose sternness terrifies his subjects...whatever does not yield to him, he considers unlawful.’⁶ Both of these personality types are not amenable to compromise. And, in fact, by their actions we see that both tended to use the extreme of the power continuum, force. The dispute can be seen as a battle of wills with each attempting to bend each other to his will. At the individual level there is

⁴ Mark J.C. Crescenzi, *Economic Interdependence and Conflict in World Politics* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2005)

⁵ Warren, *Henry II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 451.

⁶ John Guy, *Thomas Becket: Warrior, Priest, Rebel, Victim* (London: Penguin Books, 2012), p. 217.

also a personal dimension. They had shared a deep friendship and conflict was personally wounding and marked by feelings of betrayal, particularly for Henry. This did not bode well for compromise and reconciliation. At the national level, the dispute took on a conflict between secular power and the power of the Church. Thomas knew when he was appointed Archbishop that his power was no longer derived from the King. Duggan notes that as Chancellor Thomas ‘he was the king’s servant; and he was utterly dependent on the king’s continued good will’.⁷ Rather, he had his own separate power base that the King could not remove from him and ‘by resigning even the nominal office of chancellor he proclaimed his independence’.⁸ Prior to this, Thomas’s power came from Henry and the power relationship was asymmetrical. This shift to relative power parity and the willingness of Thomas to exercise his power as Archbishop was unexpected and ill received by Henry. Henry’s introduction of the Constitutions of Clarendon to the dispute moved the conflict to the international level. Henry was well aware that Pope Alexander III would not accept all of the articles of the Constitutions. However, this consideration was overridden by his desire to punish and humiliate Thomas, as he, himself felt he had been humiliated.

Once Thomas had fled England, a number of other international actors enter the conflict that introduce different sets of interests. Some of these actors are more important than others in their attempts to mediate or to exacerbate the dispute. However, what we see is that the additional primary and tertiary actors have no effect on either Thomas’s or Henry’s strategy of zero-sum power relations. Of the additional actors, the primary actors in the international context are: 1) the King of France Louis VII, 2) Emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa), and 3) Pope

⁷ Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, p. 22.

⁸ Warren, *Henry II*, p. 457.

Alexander III.⁹ The tertiary actors include the Henry faction of Bishops, particularly Gilbert Foliot, Roger of York, John of Oxford, Richard of Ilchester, Arnulf of Lisieux, and archdeacon Geoffrey Ridel as well as Thomas's faction in exile, specifically John of Salisbury, Herbert Bosham and members of the Curia. These tertiary actors attempt to influence the primary actors or are used as conduits for expressing the interests of the primary actors. The interests of the primary actors are important in terms of context and ability to shift the dispute. Louis VII had long term contrary personal and political interests to Henry. Louis had lost the vast territories of Aquitaine to Henry when his marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine was annulled and Eleanor subsequently married Henry. In addition, Louis had on going territorial disputes in the Vexin territories bordering Normandy. Louis and Henry had long been rivals and the presence of Thomas in France was a slight to Henry, although not likely enough to go to war over. Louis, too, had taken in Pope Alexander III when he fled Italy. Louis was solidly in Alexander's camp in opposition to Frederick and the ongoing schism. Louis, too, was acquainted with Thomas having met him on a number of occasions such as the Council of Tours in 1162.

Frederick Barbarossa's interests lied with the schism that had begun after the death of Pope Adrian IV in 1159. Frederick supported first antipope Victor IV, who died in the Spring of 1164, then the subsequent antipope Paschal III. Frederick's his desire was to restore Italy has a fief to the Holy Roman Emperor.¹⁰ By 1164, Frederick's troops had run Alexander III out of Italy to safe haven in France. Thus, Frederick's attentions were not directly related to the dispute between Thomas and Henry. Rather, he sought to bring Henry to his side in support of the

⁹ David Knowles, *Thomas Becket* (London, Adam & Charles Black, 1970), pp. 101-104.

¹⁰ Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, pp. 103-104.

antipope. In addition, we see that Henry attempted to leverage relations with Frederick to influence decisions and actions of Alexander III.

Alexander III, canon lawyer and theologian, emerges as the primary mediator in the dispute. However, Alexander, himself, had a set of interests in which he had to strike a balance. As Pope, Alexander was the representative of Christendom and the interests of the Church. Alexander could not have Henry implement the Constitutions of Clarendon that were directly opposed Church authority. Alexander's interests, for himself, lied in keeping both Louis and Henry in his camp in opposition to Frederick. Alexander as a canon lawyer was quite familiar with the power struggle between those who favored pre-Gregorian Church power (Frederick) and those who had accepted the 11th century reform movement and the development of canon law. Since Louis was hosting the papacy at this time, Alexander did not concern himself with losing his support. However, Henry, although supporting Alexander, was less reliable in continued support for Alexander and more likely to break from him.¹¹

The events of the six-year exile begin immediately. When Thomas left England, the pivotal issue at hand was if Alexander III would depose him as Archbishop of Canterbury. Immediately, the factions and tertiary actors made way to the Pope to plead their cases. Henry's faction, led by Gilbert Foliot and Hilary of Chichester arrived first at Soissons to make their case against Thomas. Alexander rebukes Gilbert and the consistory laughs at Chichester's Latin.¹² They asked for, on behalf of Henry, a disposition of Thomas or, at a minimum, judgment by legates with no appeal. This is rejected. Herbert Bosham, heading up the Thomas faction, requests permission for exile first from Louis and makes his way to Alexander. Bosham,

¹¹ Ibid., p. 104.

¹² Guy, *Thomas Becket*, p. 218.

immediately followed by Thomas, arrive almost simultaneously as Henry's envoy are departing. Bosham had given the Pope his account of the events at Northampton. Thomas reads aloud the Constitutions of Clarendon and Alexander condemns them. Interestingly, Thomas confesses his weaknesses in verbally agreeing to the Constitutions and attempts to resign his Archbishopric. Rather than accepting the resignation, Alexander confirms Thomas as Archbishop, releases Thomas of any oath binding from Clarendon and recognizes the primacy of Canterbury.¹³ This is a loss for Henry and a gain for Thomas. However, the dispute could have ended here if Thomas's resignation had been accepted. A compromise (and a step down for Thomas) could have been that he is reassigned to a Bishopric in French territory and Alexander could have been left to deal with Henry over the Constitutions.

Following this failed attempt at Thomas's disposition, in early 1165, Henry attempts to leverage Alexander by flirting with Frederick under the guise of setting up a marriage contracts for his daughters with the son of Frederick and the Duke of Saxony. Henry enters into negotiations with Rainald of Dassel, Archbishop of Cologne, who supports the ongoing schism. John and Oxford and Richard of Ilchester accompany Rainald back to Würzburg, where a Germany assembly concluded with support of the antipope Paschal III. It is cited that both John and Richard took an oath to support Paschal.¹⁴ Although Warren claims that 'reports that the English envoys at Würzburg had taken an oath to Paschal were strenuously denied'.¹⁵ Henry's machinations do not bend Alexander to take action against Thomas. In fact, this exacerbates the

¹³ Archbishop Roger of York had an opposing interest in the recognition of Canterbury. He wanted his see to be on parallel to Canterbury's see. This side dispute with Thomas comes from a long-standing animosity between the two and a means for Roger to gain Church authority in England. It would mean that York did not come under the obedience of Canterbury.

¹⁴ David Knowles *Thomas Becket*, p. 110.

¹⁵ Warren *Henry II*, p. 493.

situation by putting John of Oxford and Richard of Ilchester in schism with Paschal III, which would cause Alexander and Thomas to reject any later ecclesiastical appointments of the two and open them up to excommunication.

With Thomas now in exile and residing at the Cistercian Abbey of Pontigny, Henry retaliates on Thomas by sending all of Thomas's relations and clerks into exile with only the clothes on their backs. He dispossesses these people based not on guilt of offense rather on this sheer power to do so. This was no small number of victims, estimated to be about 400 individuals.¹⁶ In addition, Henry removes the properties and estates from Canterbury and gives them to the management of the de Broc family. Thus, Canterbury was now deprived of its income unjustly. Henry has the exiles present themselves first to Thomas at Pontigny so that Thomas is well aware of the damage that is being inflicted on others. Thomas was relying on the good will of Louis and the monks at Pontigny for his material support. In one fell swoop, Thomas had lost not only the properties and any income generated by them but also, he was now responsible for the expulsion of hundreds of people. This move is clearly a power move on Henry's part. The loss for Thomas is a gain for Henry. This also put strain on Louis to provide for the exiles and Thomas could rightly fear that Louis's enthusiasm for Thomas's exile could wane over time. These are the first moves in exile of the tit for tat zero-sum power struggle which defines the period.

There are a series of appeals for mediation. Thomas appeals to the King's mother, the Empress Matilda, to intervene with the King. Matilda, who was not going to put herself into the conflict, responds that the Constitutions of Clarendon should not have been written down in the

¹⁶ Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, p. 97.

first place.¹⁷ This answer is more for Henry's benefit in that the lack of a written document would have made the 'customs' more flexible. In early 1165, Alexander writes to Gilbert Foliot requesting intervention with the King. It is noteworthy that he chose Foliot as Alexander would have been aware of his bad relations with Thomas and that he was firmly in the King's camp. However, Alexander also knew that Foliot would obey the papacy. These communications come to naught and the status quo remains. Alexander restrains Thomas from excommunicating or placing an interdict on Henry's territories. This restraint was limited from June 1165 to Spring 1166.

A shift in the international landscape occurs when Alexander leaves France and returns to Italy in the autumn of 1165. Pressure for Alexander in balancing his own situation with the interests of the Church are somewhat alleviated. The schism was ongoing, but the reclaiming of Italian territory and push back against Imperial forces gives greater power to Alexander.

In early 1166, Thomas writes three personal letters to Henry stipulating that he will return to England if the liberty of the Church is ensured and the estates of Canterbury returned. However, these letters assert the superiority of the spiritual sword over the secular sword.¹⁸ This was unlikely to woo Henry to reconciliation. And, in fact, they have no effect, except to likely enrage Henry further. Knowles claims that Thomas, at this point, once again thought of resigning his position.¹⁹ However, Alexander then relaxes his restraint on Thomas in regards to censures and boosts his position by appointing him papal legate. This is a clear gain in power for Thomas. He is now free to strike back at Henry and impose his power to excommunicate. Alexander also gives Thomas the green light to move against those who had taken over the

¹⁷ Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, p. 109.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 112.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 112.

Canterbury properties. Henry, fearing excommunication, calls a conference at Chinon for all his bishops. He wants them to appeal to Alexander against any future action of Thomas. The tit for tat power struggle resumes.

In the meanwhile, Thomas embarked on a pilgrimage to Soissons and then onto Vézelay with the intention of excommunicating Henry on Whit Sunday.²⁰ However, just days before Whit Sunday, Thomas hears news that Henry is ill and he rethinks the excommunication of the King. Thomas stops just short of excommunication and, instead, threatens Henry. But he proceeds with the excommunication of those who ventured to Frederick's court at Würzburg, John of Oxford and Richard of Ilchester, as well as those in control of the Canterbury estates, particularly Randolph de Broc. Excommunicating Henry would have escalated the conflict and placed Henry outside of the Church. It was the strongest weapon in Thomas's arsenal.

Regardless, the dispute has escalated and Thomas has retained his use of potential excommunication and/or interdict on Henry. This move prompts a fury of appeals, letters, and envoys. Thomas demands that the English bishops uphold his censures and, in fact, writes to Gilbert Foliot with instructions. It is now that Gilbert responds with his searing criticism of Thomas in his famous *Multiplicem nobis*. Both Henry and Thomas send envoys to Alexander. However, Henry makes a point of sending his through imperial territory, signaling once again to Alexander that Henry can easily switch sides to Frederick. Alexander, now in Italy, must wait for communications and each side to present its case. This is a win for Thomas in terms of power play; however, the status quo is maintained and no one is closer to peace.

While the appeals are ongoing, in early September 1166, Henry threatens the Cistercians, whom have been giving Thomas residence in Pontigny and harboring his enemy. Henry gives

²⁰ Guy, *Thomas Becket*, p. 238.

the monks the ultimatum that he will seize the Cistercian English properties if they continue to provide material support to Thomas. Thomas, wanting to avoid harm to his hosts, leaves Pontigny in November 1166. Fortunately for Thomas, Louis continued his support and offers any abbey in France for Thomas; Thomas chooses St. Colomba in Sens. Again, tit for tat in the ongoing power struggle.

By December 1166, Alexander is considering the appeals and decides that he will send legates to England in an attempt to broker a peace. Alexander instructs and retracts Thomas from using excommunication and he also allows those excommunicated to be absolved. This provokes sharp criticism from John of Salisbury and the Thomas faction. However, Alexander's actions are meant to be a de-escalation of the conflict. Alexander's position as mediator, at this point, requires some means of calming both sides and coming up with a resolution that both parties can accept. Alexander's interests are no longer just the balancing of the Church and his own situation with the schism. He has a direct interest in achieving peace between the parties and breaking what has become a deadlock between the two sides. In May 1167, Alexander orders the legates to not enter England until peace has been established.

In mid-November 1167, there is the first in a series of attempts at a peace settlement. All of these attempts will ultimately fail to bring a settlement and their failures hinge on the use of conditional words. For Thomas, the conditional phrases are: 'for the honor of God' and 'saving his order.' For Henry, the conditional phrase is 'saving the dignity of his realm'. In addition, we see that Henry refuses to give the kiss of peace, claiming it was due to an oath he had taken. The conditions on both sides signal that neither side is willing to yield and wants capitulation of the other.

On 18 November 1167 at Gisors and Trie, papal legates attempt to sway Thomas, who proceeds to cite the Constitutions of Clarendon and ends with 'saving the honor of God'. The legates, on 27 November, meet with Henry. Henry requests that cardinal legates free him of Thomas, since the papacy has the ability to remove Thomas from his position. However, the legates have no notion of freeing Henry of Thomas, rather they restrain him again from further excommunications. The stalemate and deadlock continue.

Alexander, at this point, is being beleaguered by both sides. Alexander wants to force a peace agreement. In May 1168, Alexander warns Henry of dire consequences if the King does not come to terms with Thomas. This warning is that Alexander would resort to interdict of Henry's territories if a peace settlement could not be reached. The second attempt at establishing an agreement is at Montmirail on 6 January 1169. Thomas is persuaded by his faction to humble himself to the King and beg for peace and mercy. Thomas does this; however, he adds 'for the honor of God'. Thomas claims he will keep the customs 'saving his order'. This indicates there has been no change in Thomas's position or strategy. This was not well received not only by Henry but also by Louis who was in attendance. A subsequent meeting at Saint-Leger-en-Ivelines on 7 February yields the same results. Henry wants an unconditional capitulation on the part of Thomas. Alexander carefully chooses two new legates for further negotiations.

Thomas responds in dramatic fashion on Easter 13 April 1169. Thomas excommunicates Gilbert Foliot, Jocelin of Salisbury, and Randolph de Broc. The bishops of London and Salisbury were Thomas's sworn enemies and Henry's prime advocates. De Broc continued to be in control of the Canterbury estates. The letters of excommunication do not reach England until May and on Ascension Day 29 May, Thomas's envoy delivers the letter to Foliot while mass is being celebrated in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. Although Foliot is one of Thomas's biggest

critics, he also respects the Church hierarchical structure and will not disobey the excommunications. Henry, however, would like Foliot to ignore it. Alexander responds to the excommunications by criticizing Thomas and asking him to lift them. Alexander wants Thomas to suspend the sentences and wait on the envoys to do their work toward peace. Alexander gives Thomas a compromise solution that the excommunications can be reinstated at a later date. Henry is now again enraged. In September 1169, Henry takes action by issuing a number of decrees. These decrees are additional restrictions placed on the English bishops above and beyond the Constitutions of Clarendon.²¹ Henry, rather than move toward peace, is using the secular sword against Thomas's actions. However, the decrees have the opposite effect on the English bishops and they begin to defect from Henry because of the restrictions placed on them. Once again, the dispute has escalated. Thomas has used excommunication his most forceful tool and Henry has responded with a more severe set of restrictions beyond the original customs.

This leads to yet another attempt at brokering peace at Montmartre on 18 November 1169, where Louis is also in attendance. These negotiations fall through by the wiliness of Henry and his refusal to give a kiss of peace. The convention of a kiss of peace was no small matter in the 12th century. It indicated that a conflict was resolved and favor restored. The lack of a kiss of peace meant that no agreement was sealed and the status quo remained.

1170 saw a further deterioration of relations with the announcement that the Young Henry would be coronated. Coronation of Kings and Queens were the purview of Canterbury as the Primacy of the English Church. Henry had wanted Young Henry coronated to secure the

²¹ Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, p. 124 tells us some of the decrees included: 1) anyone who brought into the country an interdict from the pope or archbishop was to be treated as a traitor; 2) anyone who observed an interdict was to be exiled with relations and no possessions; 3) no one was to write or appeal to the pope or the archbishop; and 4) no one was to leave England without permission.

succession to the throne. However, this practice of coronating while the King was still alive and in power had French precedence not English. And, as demonstrated by later events, it did not serve Henry well to crown his son but not to delegate power. This is a calculated insult to Thomas as well as an undermining of the see of Canterbury. Henry sets the coronation for 14 June 1170. However, young Henry's wife, Princess Margaret of France, and Henry's wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine are left in Caen for the coronation. This is another calculated insult aimed at Louis. Alexander had dispensed papal letters forbidding the coronation and despite Henry's increased restrictions on communication, they reach England. Roger, Archbishop of York, coronated the young Henry. The coronation causes general outrage for Thomas, Louis, and Alexander. Henry now faces interdict on his continental territories or he makes peace with Thomas. As Thomas had repeatedly assumed, Henry was not willing to make peace unless under serious distress.

The 'hollow peace of Fréteval' took place on 22 July 1170 and is, at the individual level, a strange event. This is the first time since 1164 that Henry and Thomas spoke privately to one another.²² Thomas, himself, provides a report written for Alexander and he states 'he turned aside and, to the amazement of everyone, led us apart and spoke for a long time with such familiarity that it seemed there had never been any discord between us'.²³ The two adversaries met with great affection for one another and relived their old relationship as boon companions. They were able to discuss the recent coronation of young Henry and the rights of Canterbury. Henry promised restoration of the Canterbury estates and Thomas promised affection, honor, and service. However, no discussion of the Constitutions of Clarendon took place. Duggan claims

²² Duggan, *Thomas Becket*, p. 184.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

that ‘there was no discussion of the substantive issues.’²⁴ They spoke privately for hours and it appeared as if all would be put behind them. This meeting played on Thomas’s emotions and perhaps blinded him to the danger of Henry not holding up his end of the bargain. Henry did not give the kiss of peace nor did Thomas press him for it. However, as Duggan write ‘the absence of the kiss of peace was ominous.’²⁵ Furthermore, Guy asserts that ‘in his [Henry’s] eyes, he had been forced to make a tactical retreat under pressure from the pope - that was all. He would live to fight another day and had no intention of allowing the “ancestral customs” to be sidelined or rescinded.’²⁶ The lack of the kiss of peace should have signaled to Thomas that Henry had no intention of following through with any agreement. Henry had come to the table under duress with the threat of interdict hanging over his head. The strangeness of the meeting is the personal amicability between Henry and Thomas. Perhaps Henry wanted to revisit the friendship and so did Thomas. Since they had not met for a number of years, the emotion of what had been lost and what perhaps could be regained led Henry and Thomas to enjoy each other’s company. This friendly meeting, however, does not discount the power dynamics at work. Thomas underestimated this. Interests remained and status quo persisted. Thomas would find this out before he returned to Canterbury; subsequent signals were sent by Henry. Henry delayed the restoration of the Canterbury estates and upon meeting Thomas at Tours, Henry gave an icy reception. At Tours, Henry ordered a *Requiem* mass to avoid the kiss of peace. And, rather than travel with Thomas back to England, Henry sent John of Oxford in his place.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid, p. 184.

²⁵ Ibid, p. 186.

²⁶ John Guy, *Thomas Becket*, p. 295.

²⁷ Knowles, *Thomas Becket*, pp.132-133.

This essay utilized the framework of *realpolitik* to explain why peace was not achieved throughout Thomas's exile. The peace of Fréteval was no peace given that the positions of Thomas and Henry remained unchanged. Despite repeated mediation, neither party chose to change their strategy. Although both Thomas and Henry are complex persons, a macro *realpolitik* view of the situation has explanatory power. Historians have detailed the underlying issues of the dispute as well as the actions of all actors. However, when analyzed through the perspective of power and strategy, we see that the likelihood of compromise and resolution was low. If one or the other had changed his approach or had been different people, a solution may have been found. If the circumstances of the dispute had been different, for example if the papacy had not been in schism, perhaps the actors would have made different decisions. Further research can include an analysis of Thomas as chancellor and his relationship to Henry, the beginning of the dispute, a more nuanced and fuller examination of the tertiary actors and their interests during exile, and the ultimate settlement following Thomas's murder.

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