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Constructing Castles of Health:
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Constructing Castles of Health: Tudor Humanism and the Rise of Vernacular Medical Literature

Senior Honors Seminar

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Instruction in medicine is like the culture of the productions of the earth. For our natural disposition is, as it were, the soil; the tenets of our teacher are, as it were, the seed; instruction in youth is like the planting of the seed in the ground at the proper season; the place where the instruction is communicated is like the food imparted to vegetables by the atmosphere; diligent study is like the cultivation of the fields; and it is time which imparts strength to all things and brings them to maturity.
-Hippocrates, (460-375 BC)

In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, humanism began to take hold in the intellectual communities based in Oxford and Cambridge. As the ideals of the Erasmian humanists were disseminated, contemporary conceptions of science and medicine in Tudor England were greatly modified. As the academic culture in sixteenth-century England began the shift from Latin to the vernacular English, notions of medical scholarship were significantly affected. By the time of Sir Thomas Elyot's publication of the *Castel of Helth* in 1536, humanist attitudes towards medicine were taking a different form than they had in the previous decades. The primary philological aims of the medical humanists had been fulfilled by this time, and the Erasmian ideals of practical application and education began to manifest themselves in the works of a new generation of medical humanists. Erasmus, Linacre, and the other members of the Henrician humanist circle had produced the "new learning," and Elyot and his contemporaries would work to apply this new approach to medical knowledge through the use of vernacular literature.

I hope to demonstrate that the Erasmian drive for purposeful scholarship that dominated the humanist thought of the early Henrician period served as the methodological framework for the second wave of humanists who thrived in the

academic circles in the later Tudor era. In particular, the medical literature from this post-Erasmian period demonstrates a definite shift to the vernacular. The causes of this shift to the vernacular appear to be twofold; first of all, there was an increased emphasis on making medical works more available to the non-academic reading public for the purpose of practical application, and secondly, there was an overarching trend in England and all of continental Europe to de-emphasize Latin in favor of newly refined vernacular languages.

For our purposes I will use the definition of medical humanism used by historian Vivian Nutton. He writes: "Humanist medicine may be defined as that movement in medicine in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which sought to purify medicine of complex and unnecessary accretions by a return to the classical sources of humoral therapy, and in particular to Hippocrates and his great systematic interpreter, Galen."[1] This definition underlines the fact that these men were primarily philological scholars. Though this assessment suits the early medical humanists who were contemporaries of Erasmus in the early sixteenth century, it does not sufficiently describe the second wave of medical humanists who began to produce vernacular medical works by the 1540s. By the publication of Elyot's *Castel of Helth* in 1539, the initial philological goals of the early medical humanists were fulfilled, and so the humanist approach to medicine shifted from one concerned with the production of translations to an emphasis on the practical application and dissemination of medical knowledge to a larger, English-reading public.

Although there have been numerous studies on English humanism and a significant number of medical and scientific histories of the Tudor period, there are only a few studies that examine the connections between the two. Most of the scholarship that

[1] Nutton, Vivian. "John Caius and the Linacre Tradition," *Medical History* 23 (1979).

does exist on humanism and science concentrates heavily on the Stuart period specifically. For the question of early Tudor humanism and medicine, most of the literature covers Dr. Thomas Linacre exclusively, because he was the founder of the Royal College of Physicians of London, and also is the namesake of an Oxford graduate school. While the biographies of Linacre are crucial to understanding the humanist attitudes towards science and medicine in the period, it is clear that Linacre was not the only academic within the Oxford humanist circle who made advanced scientific knowledge in the period. The other prominent literature regarding Tudor-era medicine and science is dominated by discussion of the plague and the scientific advancements on the European mainland by figures such as Copernicus and Vesalius. However, the effect of humanist thought on medicine within England is under-studied in the pre-Harvey period.

The historiographical coverage of the medical humanists and their intellectual descendants can be encapsulated in three main bodies of scholarship: the research on the Erasmian humanist circle, the scholarship concerning the medical humanists Thomas Linacre and John Caius in relation to the College of Physicians, and finally the historical coverage of the vernacular medical texts that arose in the second-half of the sixteenth century. Of these three bodies of scholarship, the studies on the Erasmian circle in Henrician England are, not surprisingly, very numerous and complex in their coverage. This literature is crucial for the understanding of medical humanism, because the early medical humanists in England were key members of the Erasmian social circle that centered on Oxford. It should be noted that the only existing correspondence of Thomas Linacre, for example, consists of his letters to Erasmus, who was his close friend and

colleague. The historical coverage of Linacre and Caius specifically is small yet substantive, primarily because of the efforts at Gonville and Caius College, Oxford to preserve the historical tradition of their namesake. The literature on the growth of English medical texts in the middle of the sixteenth century exists primarily antecedently to the scholarship concerning the medical boom in England of the seventeenth century; however, it should be noted that the scholarship that does exist is very comprehensive.

The historian C.D. O'Malley's work in the 1960s on early Henrician medical humanism clearly influenced later historians and reshaped contemporary understandings of the medical humanists, in particular Linacre. However, O'Malley's 1965 book *English Medical Humanists: Thomas Linacre and John Caius*, a literary condensation of his lectures, is far too brief to do justice to his scholarship. Despite the work's failings, it is still considered one of the most important advances in modern medical humanist scholarship. Perhaps most importantly, O'Malley made it clear throughout his works that the men in question were philologists first, physicians second, and therefore should be regarded in this way. He also de-emphasized Linacre's involvement with the creation of the College of Physicians,[2] which is an aspect of the humanist's life that has been especially examined in recent scholarship. O'Malley states: "As a medical humanist Linacre's contribution lay in his introduction to English physicians of a series of classical medical texts which he considered as essential to any reputable physician and which were in fact superior in quality to other medical writings then published in England."[3] In particular, O'Malley viewed Linacre's Galenic translations as the main focus of his

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[2] When Linacre founded this institution it was commonly called the "College of Physicians in London," however, in 1682 it was officially named the "Royal College of Physicians." For the purposes of this work I will refer to the former when referring to pre-1682 events.

[3] C.D. O'Malley, *English Medical Humanists: Thomas Linacre and John Caius.* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1965), 17.

academic life. However, O'Malley's work does not fully contextualize the medical humanists within their respective intellectual environments. Thus, O'Malley's main failing is his tendency to isolate medical humanism from the general Northern humanist movement.

Despite the limitations of much of the modern scholarship concerning the early medical humanists, it is clear that several scholars have accepted views more in line with O'Malley's. For example, in the last thirty years the historian Vivian Nutton has been the foremost medical humanist scholar, particularly in the area of Linacre's and Caius' respective philological efforts. In his 1987 work *John Caius and the Manuscripts of Galen*, Nutton maintains that the translation and understanding of Galenic texts was the central academic focus of both Linacre and Caius.[4] In particular, Nutton attempts to improve the modern day historical representation of Caius. Caius' position as one of the last great Galenic apologists has caused some historians to maintain that he was antiquarian and reactionary in his academic approach. Although Nutton admits that much of this is true in terms of Caius' personality, he maintains that the Vesalian anatomists had not yet conclusively shown Galen to be fallible. Nutton writes:

> In the context of the 1540's and the 1550's...Caius was in no way old-fashioned in his belief in the supremacy of the classical physicians over their Arabic and medieval successors. The leading physicians of his generation were medical humanists almost to a man. There might be disagreements over what authors should best be followed, and over the extent to which the rediscovery of the original Greek texts of Galen had removed the need to refer to Arabic intermediaries such as Avicenna, but until the Paracelsian revival of the 1560's, there was no obvious

[4] Vivian Nutton, *John Caius and the Manuscripts of Galen*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

> alternative to the Galenic and Hippocratic tradition other than folk medicine and pure empiricism.[5]

This depiction of Caius as academically innovative is clearly different from much of the scholarship. Linacre, Caius, Elyot and the other Northern humanists were adamant supporters of Galenic theory. They believed that the secrets to health and the human body existed in the writings of the Galenic corpus, and therefore the works of Galen should be translated as accurately as possible. However, the majority of the Galenic corpus had been primarily preserved through the writings of Arabic interpreters, such as the eleventh century physician and philosopher Avicenna. Rather than use the existing Galenic versions from the Arabic tradition, the humanists sought to read the classical medical authorities in the original Greek and produce Latin translations that were more consistent with the original texts.[6]

The Northern humanists had been influenced in this approach by the Italian medical humanists of the preceding two centuries. Nutton and a few other scholars have demonstrated that Linacre, Caius, and several other prominent humanists had strong intellectual ties to the teachings at the University of Padua medical school.[7] For Nutton, the importance of the Italian connection to the development of English medical humanism cannot be overemphasized. Nutton states:

> In England the humanist physicians, from Linacre onwards, had generally spent some time in Italy, which was in the sixteenth century in advance of the rest of Europe, not just in its medical theories, but in its system of medical

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[5] Nutton, *John Caius and the Manuscripts of Galen*, 2.

[6] For more information on Renaissance approaches to humoral theory and the Arabic Galenists see: Timo Joutsivuo, "Neutral Bodies and the Galenic Idea of Health in Renaissance Medicine," in *Scholastic Tradition and Humanist Innovation: The Concept of Neutrum in Renaissance Medicine* (Saarijarvi: The Finnish Academy of Science and Letters, 1999), 111-153.

[7] Vivian Nutton, "John Caius and the Linacre Tradition," *Medical History* 23 (1979): 373.

> education, its provision for public health, and the organization and status of its medical profession. A visit to Italy not only strengthened one's links with the classical heritage, it offered a modern medical ideal that might be put into practice on one's return.[8]

Though Nutton's assertion that English medical humanism derived from the medical programs of specific Italian schools is not in scholarly dispute, there is a lack of academic coverage of the connection. The primary study of the Northern humanist connections to Padovan medicine is Jonathan Woolfson's 1998 work *Padua and the Tudors*. The work is largely a biographical register, and describes the influence of specific Italian medical professors on certain English students, such as Linacre.[9] The development of the medical programs of the Italian schools in the sixteenth century is more thoroughly covered in contemporary scholarship, however, primarily because the Italian schools of Padua and Salerno were the centers of all European medical knowledge.[10]

Within the last thirty years there has also been a rise in the historical analysis of vernacular literature in early modern Europe. However, this scholarship is still lacking in its approach to vernacular medical literature in the period, particularly in England. Despite this noticeable absence of historical coverage, there have been some works that have discussed vernacular approaches to medicine in sixteenth century England.[11] However, the humanist intellectual connections to the sixteenth century increase in vernacular medical literature remains under-studied.

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[8] Nutton, "John Caius and the Linacre Tradition," 377.
[9] Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485-1603*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).
[10] For more information see: A. Wear, R.K. French, and I.M. Lonie, eds., *The Medical Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
[11] For more information see: Margaret Healy, *Fictions of Disease in Early Modern England: Bodies, Plagues, and Politics*. (London: Palgrave, 2001).

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The physician ought to know literature...to be able to understand or to explain what he reads. Likewise also rhetoric, that he may delineate in true arguments the things which he discusses; dialectic also so that he may study the causes and cures of infirmities in the light of reason.
-Isidore of Seville, (570-636 CE)

In order to understand the development of English medical humanism, it is necessary to contextualize it within the general Northern humanist movement in the early sixteenth century. English medical humanism should be understood as a specific vein of intellectual query within the Erasmian humanist approach. For those scholars who are now considered "medical humanists," medical study was often only a minor aspect of their overall intellectual interests. Therefore, the designation of "medical humanism" is quite misleading, because the term implies a distinct intellectual movement. It should instead be viewed as a result of the infusion of the Erasmian form of humanism into pre-existing medical philosophy.

Perhaps no one individual had as much influence on this injection of Erasmian humanist ideals into sixteenth-century medical thought as Thomas Linacre. In the latter decades of his life, and for many after his death, Linacre was revered so much in the English medical community that he achieved a status that approached sainthood. Simeon Fox, the physician son of the famed martyrologist and close friend of John Donne, requested that on his death he be buried in St. Paul's Cathedral with one caveat: he wished to be buried as near as possible to the body of Thomas Linacre.[12] Linacre's

[12] Margaret Pelling, *Medical Conflicts in Early Modern London*, 31.

intellectual legacy exists in three main respects: he was an influential friend, colleague and tutor to several members of the Erasmian circle; he produced the first reliable Galenic translations from the original Greek; and he helped establish the position of the physician in England as an elite and noble profession.

The details of Linacre's life are not always clear, as is typical for this period. Nothing is known of his early life, except that he was born in 1460, somewhere in the Canterbury diocese. He became a fellow of All Soul's College, Oxford, in 1484. In 1487 he traveled to Italy and would stay there until 1499. In the first two years of his residence in Italy he studied in Florence under Demetrius Chalcondyles and Angelo Poliziano along with Giovanni de'Medici (the future Pope Leo X) and his fellow Englishmen and friends William Grocyn and William Latimer. He then spent two years in Rome where he was named a warden of the English hospice, before he left for the famed medical school at the University of Padua in 1492. He took his degree in medicine four years later, and then worked for three years on projects for the famed Renaissance printer, Aldus Manutius. While in Manutius' household, he worked primarily on the publication of Aristotelian works in Greek along with several other English humanists.[13] He returned to England sometime in 1499 and gained a position as the physician to Prince Arthur soon after dedicating a prominent translation to him.[14] It was also sometime in this year that his friendships with Desiderius Erasmus and Thomas More blossomed, and he became more focused in his intellectual endeavors. The historian Robert Adams viewed England at the

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[13] *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, 331. For more information on the early details of Linacre's life see: O'Malley, *English Medical Humanists: Thomas Linacre and John Caius*, 1-10.

[14] The translation was the Aldine edition of Pseudo-Proclus' *Sphaera*.

turn of the century as the beginning of the "Golden Age" of Tudor humanism,[15] and an early letter by Erasmus seems to support this assertion. In a 1499 letter Erasmus writes:

> I have found here... so much culture and learning, not of the commonplace and trivial sort, but accurate, scholarly knowledge of ancient Latin and Greek, that now I have little desire to visit Italy except as a tourist. When I hear my [John] Colet, I seem to be listening to Plato himself, and who can not but admire the fully rounded learning of [William] Grocyn? What mind could be more penetrating, profound, and subtle than Linacre's?[16]

Erasmus was essentially describing the personalities that would comprise the English humanist collective in the early Henrician period, along with others such as Thomas More, Thomas Lupset, and the aforementioned William Latimer. This group of intellectuals was a tight-knit circle of scholars and for the first quarter of the sixteenth century was primarily centered on Erasmus and More.[17]

The private letters from the period show that Linacre's Greek translations were clearly a literary endeavor with which many members of the English humanist circle were heavily involved. Such intense philological efforts as the Galenic and Hippocratic translations took a great deal of work and were in many ways a collective effort. This is reflected in the letters that survive from the period, because most are concerned in some aspect with a classical translation. In particular, a number of personal epistles of Erasmus show that Erasmus and More were heavily involved with Linacre's forays into medical

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[15] Robert P. Adams, *The Better Part of Valor*, 29.
[16] Erasmus, *Opus Epistolarum Erasmi*, 1: 273.
[17] This humanist collective is referred to by various names, including the "Tudor humanists" and the "London Reformers." They have also been described as the "Erasmian Circle" and the "Thomas More Circle." I will use these terms interchangeably.

philology.[18] The circle was also collectively involved with Linacre's Latin grammatical works, and Linacre appears to have helped Erasmus with his 1516 edition of commentaries on the works of St. Jerome.[19] Linacre can thus be viewed as an active member of the intellectual circle, and therefore his intellectual endeavors were likely affected by and consistent with the philosophical and ideological aims of his colleagues.

Linacre chose to translate specific Galenic works that he felt would be the most useful for physicians. His most prominent translations, *De sanitate tuenda, Methodus Medendi, De temperamentis, De naturalibus facultatibus, De pulsuum usu, De symptotatum differentiis* were all works that were considered vital to the practicing physician.[20] These specific works detail Galen's notions of symptomology and advice on disease diagnosis. Linacre's translations reveal his underlying motivations for his philological efforts. He was not making these ancient works available out of antiquarian fancy, but was rather attempting positively to contribute to contemporary understandings of health and medicine.

The letters of Thomas More reveal that Linacre did not believe that classical medical knowledge should be reserved for licensed physicians, but was rather something that could benefit any ambitious scholar. In an October 1504 letter to John Colet, More refers to Linacre as "my master in learning."[21] Apparently, Linacre aided More with his own study of Greek around 1500, and the physician even read Aristotle's natural history

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[18] For more information see: *Collected Works of Erasmus.* Vols.1-9, *Letters.* Charles Trinkaus and others eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974). Specifically, see letters: 502, 687, 690, 726, 755, 785, 971.
[19] Desiderius Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, 3: 169 (Letter 50, Erasmus to Richard Pace).
[20] For more information on Linacre's medical translations see: Giles Barber, "Thomas Linacre: A Biographical Survey of His Works," in *Essays on the Life and Work of Thomas Linacre, 1460-1524*, ed. Francis Maddison et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 290-336.
[21] Thomas More, Selected Letter, Rogers, 6.

work, the *Meteorologica* to him.[22] Written more than a decade later, an October 1515 letter from More to Martin Dorp gives insight on the early academic relationship between Linacre and More. More specifically mentions their reading of the *Meteorologica* and points out Linacre's unmatched skill as a Greek philologist. More candidly writes:

> Some time ago I was listening to Linacre read and explain to me the Greek text of this very work of Aristotle, and occasionally, for the sake of experiment, I would take a glance at a popular translation of it…I was suddenly reminded of a comment once made by [Linacre]…Linacre said it had been edited in such a fashion as not to have been edited at all; so too this work seemed to have been translated in such a fashion as not to have been translated at all, and so much so that that I thoroughly understood from the Greek was unintelligible to me in translation.[23]

This letter demonstrates Linacre's influence on More and confirms that the humanist approach to classical study was one of proper philological approach through contextualization of the language used by the author.

The same letter to Dorp also shows that the entire circle was very familiar with the production of Linacre's various translations. In the letter, More blames Linacre's solid commitment to his translations of Galen for the delay in the completion of the Aristotelian works, particularly *Meteorologica*. More writes:

> I have hopes that this work will soon be presented to Latin readers by my fellow countryman Thomas Linacre, the physician of our illustrious King, as he has already finished two of the books. He undoubtedly would have completed and published the entire work by now, if Galen, by reason of his high rank and authority in medical matters, had not prevailed upon Linacre to set aside even Aristotle for the

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[22] *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, 330. Linacre's position as a Greek reader to a young pupil will later be mentioned by Sir Thomas Elyot in his 1541 preface to the *Castel of Helth*.
[23] Thomas More, *St. Thomas More: Selected Letters*. Ed. Elizabeth Frances Rogers. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 53.

> moment and first attend to a Latin version of his own works.[24]

Clearly Linacre believed the medical texts of Galen deserved his attention more than the natural histories of Aristotle.

These private correspondences also remind us that medical humanism in this embryonic stage was primarily a philological effort. The letters show that the medical translations that were produced by Linacre were an operation that concerned many of the Henrician humanists, particularly Erasmus and More. It should also be noted that at this point Linacre and his associates were not specifically scrutinizing the content of the texts, but were instead attempting to produce a reliable and properly contextualized translation. It is also clear that Linacre chose only specific Galenic works from the available Greek corpus to translate and bring to the elite reading public, which means that he probably supported the medical validity of the selected works wholeheartedly.[25]

The effects of the "new learning" of humanist philological studies in England on attitudes towards university medical education can be seen in the writings of several of Linacre's close associates. In particular, the first Greek reader at Cambridge and close friend of Linacre, Richard Croke, identified the profound influence of renewed classical linguistic study on medical knowledge. In a 1519 oration in praise of Greek studies he states:

> Medicine urges me on and bids me to speak out against those unskilled in Greek, as she is about to exact a bitter punishment from them, who have so often turned her precepts, invented for moral health, to its destruction, and

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[24] More, *Selected Letters*, 52-3.

[25] For more information on Linacre's specific translation choices see: Giles Barber, "Thomas Linacre: A Biographical Survey of His Works," in *Essays on the Life and Work of Thomas Linacre*, 290-336.

> have taken it so far that just as they once approved of her after good trial, now they condemn her before any experience, as if she were a butcher and executioner, with the many savage burnings and cuttings which those are accustomed to practice who have never read Galen, Hippocrates, Aeginetes or Dioscorides in the way in which these can be understood, that is in Greek. With their backslidings into barbarism and their too credulous belief in the delusions of translators, it is their fault that today the men of this most noble profession appear to be experimenting with our lives and to be learning at the peril of humanity.[26]

Such a blatant attack on the Arabic Galenists demonstrates the Linacre circle's strong commitment to the new ideals of philology and proper classical education.[27]

The surviving letters of Erasmus and More demonstrate that both the Dutchman and the English physician held each other in high regard.[28] C.D. O'Malley and other Linacre biographers seem to have ignored Linacre's position as a private physician in the years before he became the King's physician, but a letter from Erasmus in June 1506 shows that the Englishman already had a reputation as a man of medicine. In the letter Erasmus describes an illness and bemoans Linacre's absence. The ailing humanist complains, "The glands under my ears on both sides are swollen, my temples throb, and I have a ringing noise in both ears: and no Linacre here either, to give me relief with his

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[26] Richard Croke, *Orationes Richardi Croci duae, altera a cura, qua utilitatem laudemque Graecae linguae tractat, altera a tempore, qua hortatus est Cantabrigiensis, ne desertores essent eiusdem*, 1520, as presented in Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua*, 79.

[27] This oration is also remarkable because it represents an outright attack on the Arabic Galenists eight years before Paracelsus publicly burned the Avicenna cannon at the University of Basle.

[28] It should be noted that most of the personal correspondence that survives from these years among the humanist circle exist only in the personal letter collections of Erasmus and More. For example, there are only 10 known letters in existence that were to or from Linacre, and these are in correspondence with Erasmus or More.

skill!"[29] Clearly Linacre had already established a positive image of himself as a physician. This underlines Linacre's commitment to the ideal of the physician as a healer. Obviously he did not accept the notion of the physician as a mere purveyor of textual knowledge through diagnosis, but also endorsed the implementation of Galenic knowledge as a practicing doctor.

Although Linacre served as the King's physician from 1509 to as late as 1519, it appears that he still maintained a private medical practice. This commitment to practice demonstrates that although Linacre was a medical philologist, he was so in order to satisfy his over-arching intellectual goal of improving the effectiveness of doctors. At some time during this period Erasmus came down with "the stone,"[30] and it is from this episode that we get the only surviving account of Linacre as an actual, working physician. O'Malley once stated that "as a practicing physician, [Linacre was] obviously careful and prone to under treat in that age of frequent and fearsome medicinal compounds,"[31] and this assessment is remarkably clear in Erasmus' account. The Dutchman writes:

> I am not inclined to demand attention, and Linacre is not such as to thrust his services upon one. A friend advised me that he could be aroused by the charm of words. I tried this, and no one could have been more diligent. An apothecary was summoned. The prescription was prepared in my bedroom in the physician's presence. After it had been administered a second time, I was aroused from sleep by the passage of a stone the size of an almond.[32]

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[29] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, 2: 117 (Letter 194, Erasmus to Linacre). It is also interesting that Erasmus refers to Linacre as "my most learned and very kind teacher."
[30] Erasmus maintains that he contracted the stone "from drinking beer," *Opus Epistolarum Erasmi*, vol. 6, 47.
[31] O'Malley, 11.
[32] Erasmus, *Opus Epistolarum Erasmi*, vol. 6, 47.

Erasmus was obviously impressed with Linacre's successful treatment of his illness, because in 1516 he wrote a letter to Linacre from St. Omer, asking him again to send the prescription. He writes: "I have occasion to ask you to send me a note of the medicine, which I took by your advice when I was last in London, as my boy has left your prescription at the apothecary's, and I shall be very glad to have it again."[33] Obviously the Dutchman had not left his fondness for beer in England. Once again, Linacre can be seen in the correspondence of Erasmus as not only a philological scholar, but also as a practicing doctor.

Due to the scant historical record concerning Linacre, he is often forgotten as one of the close friends of Erasmus during the early Henrician years. However, the few letters that do exist between Erasmus and Linacre suggest a candor that befits a close friendship. For example, in a 1506 letter to Linacre, Erasmus is both candid and sardonic in a manner that is seen only in the correspondences with his closest friends. Erasmus even tells Linacre of a practical joke he played involving a disagreeable Greek tutor.[34] A decade later, in a February 1516 private letter from More to Erasmus, More points out that Linacre is still a devoted friend of Erasmus.[35] More writes:

> You can be sure, Erasmus, that Linacre has a very high opinion of you and talks about you everywhere. I recently learned this from some men who were dining with him at the King's table, where he spoke of you in very fond and lavish terms; the King's response, in the course of the conversation, was such as to give my informants the clear impression that you were soon to be the recipient of some

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[33] Erasmus, *The Epistles of Erasmus*, 274.

[34] Erasmus, The Epistles, 274. (Erasmus to Linacre, 5 June 1516): "You would not be able to keep from laughing if you knew how greedily my Greek friend is waiting for the present I promised him in return for the reed-pens from Cyprus. How often he has reminded me of this present, and reproached me for failing to send it! What fun it is to tease a crow when its beak is so very wide open! But the foolish fellow does not notice that what I wrote was to the following effect: 'I shall send a gift worthy of you,' meaning a worthless one."

[35] This letter is also significant because it is the first surviving letter between the two men.

> unusual bit of good luck. May such be the will of Heaven![36]

This of course would have been wonderful news to Erasmus, who was always concerned with gaining more royal patronage. The letters demonstrate that Linacre was a vital and influential member of the English humanist circle, and therefore medical humanism as a movement cannot be viewed as independent from the other philosophical and idealistic aims of the Erasmian circle.

Linacre's modern legacy is mainly his position as founder of the College of Physicians in London. However, this administrative move was only a minor aspect of the later years of his life and did not reflect his main intellectual focus. Linacre's involvement with this apparent apparatus of the nobility underlines the often paradoxical nature of the Tudor humanists in this period.[37] Although they were often innovative in their philosophical and intellectual ideals and aims, they were still undoubtedly elitist at times. Although the creation of the College of Physicians did in fact encourage the education of young physicians in England, it can also be seen as a reactionary attempt by the physicians to maintain social superiority over the barber-surgeons and those of less medical education.

Developed and championed by Linacre, the Medical Act of 1512 was the first act of Parliament concerned with medical affairs. The expressed purpose of the act was officially to license all practicing physicians within a seven mile radius of London,

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[36] Thomas More, *Selected Letter*, Rogers, 72.

[37] Some scholars have viewed Linacre's involvement with Tudor medical legislation as an attempt to preserve the rights of licensed physicians to the detriment of peasant practitioners. For more information see: Harold J. Cook, "Good Advice and Little Medicine: The Professional Authority of Early Modern Physicians," *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Jan. 1994): 1-31.

supposedly in the hopes of diminishing the presence of "empirics" and "quacks." The act states:

> Forasmoche as the science and connyng of physycke and surgerie, to the perfecte knowledge wherof bee requisite bothe grete lernyng and ripe experience, ys daily within this royalme exercised by a grete multidue of ignoraunt persones, of whom the grete partie have no maner of insight in the same…some also can no letters on the boke, soo far furth that common artificers, as smythes, wevers and women…partely use socery and which crafte, prately applie such medicine unto the disease as to be verey noyous, and nothing metely therefore, to the high displeasure of God…[38]

The expressed intent of the law was to prevent the medical practice of anyone who was not a licensed physician, but it is not immediately clear why physicians such as Linacre were so concerned with banning such people from practicing. It is interesting that the act first enumerates the use of "socery and which crafte" as the principal cause. The act also argues that the dangers of unlicenced practitioners are obvious. It states that the quacks had previously caused "great infamye to the faculties, and the grievous hurte, damage and distruccion of many of the Kynge's liege people, most specially of them that cannot descerne the uncunnyng from the cunnyng."[39] Although modern scholarship has shown that in fact many of the so-called "quacks" often held more practical medical knowledge than the licensed physicians, it is also clear that the legislation's claim was probably fairly accurate.[40] Elizabeth Furdell has also pointed out that there were a large number of

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[38] A Parliamentary Act of 1512, "Concerning Phesicions and Surgeons," *Sources for the History of Medicine in Late Medieval England*, 66.
[39] A Parliamentary Act of 1512, 66.
[40] For a detailed examination of the dynamic between physicians and quacks in this period see: Cook, "Good Advice and Little Medicine," 1-31.

questionable people selling fake medical cures in London during the period.[41] Regardless of the intent, it is clear that the humanists of the period heartily endorsed the act. Furdell asserts that while the act was Linacre's brain-child, his close friends Thomas More and John Colet probably gained Parliamentary support for the act.[42] The licensing apparatus established in the bill required that the Bishop of London and the Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral (namely, Colet), with the aid of qualified physicians of their choosing (namely, Linacre), would personally examine and license potential physicians.[43] The fine levied against any persons practicing without a license would be £5, and would be split between the king and the informant.[44] The inclusion of an informant's fee, as well as the involvement of the local ecclesiastical structure meant that the act could be enforced, if only at a localized level.[45]

In 1518 Linacre gained personal control over the licensing of physicians when he petitioned Henry VIII for the right to create the College of Physicians. Since Linacre was a royal physician at the time, along with John Chamber and Ferdinand de Victoria, it is not surprising that the King readily accepted his proposal. Essentially, the Medical Act of 1512 remained the same except the Bishop of London and the Dean of St. Paul's were replaced by the College. C.D. O'Malley viewed this action as an attempt by Linacre to maintain medical uniformity throughout London. O'Malley writes, "Linacre naturally hoped that such power would, by weeding out the unqualified, lead to an improvement in

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[41] Elizabeth Furdell, *The Royal Doctors, 1485-1714: Medical Personnel at the Tudor and Stuart Courts*, 23.
[42] At the time the Act was passed, More was serving as an under-sheriff in London, and John Colet was the Dean of St. Paul's. See: Furdell, *The Royal Doctors*, 23.
[43] O'Malley views this as an example of Parliament's wish to keep medicine subordinated to religion. O'Malley, *English Medical Humanists*, 24.
[44] A Parliamentary Act of 1512, 67.
[45] Attempts to expand the law to a national level in 1523 would prove ineffective. See: Furdell, *The Royal Doctors*, 23.

medicine practiced legally and, of course, Galenically."[46] As the first president of the College of Physicians, Linacre basically controlled the philosophical direction of the institution and even held its meetings at his private home near St. Paul's.[47] That Linacre based the medical ideals of the College on the works of Galen may help to explain why later members of the College, such as John Caius, were such adamant Galenists.

Although the College of Physicians was initially a licensing agency only, under Linacre's influence it became an educational institution as well. However, shortly before Linacre's death in 1524, he endowed three annual lectureships at Oxford and Cambridge through the control of the College.[48] This was clearly an attempt by Linacre to encourage the growth of medical study in England, which was still dismal when compared to the Continent. O'Malley maintains that Linacre wanted the lectures to be directed at medical education for medical students, not already licensed physicians, but that after his death the universities and the College of Physicians failed to maintain the initial purpose of the endowments. O'Malley writes: "A combination of conservatism and lethargy in the universities resulted in the failure of the Linacre Lectures and whatever effect they might have had towards revitalizing the medical curriculum and promoting a more distinctly separate and independent professional medical faculty."[49] This is an example of the eventual metamorphosis of medical humanism. Following Linacre's death, many of the humanist aims concerning medical education failed within the universities. However, the philosophical legacy of Linacre and the other early English humanists, though modified,

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[46] O'Malley, *English Medical Humanists*, 15.
[47] Furdell, *The Royal Doctors*, 24.
[48] McLean, *Humanism and the Rise of Science*, 189.
[49] O'Malley, *English Medical Humanists*, 24.

survived in the works of the vernacular medical writers in the mid to late sixteenth century.

Aside from Linacre, several other members of this first generation of English humanists were also concerned with the development of medical thought in England. This overall level of involvement among the English humanist circle not only demonstrates that the application of humanist ideals in medical study was not limited to those humanists that happened to be physicians, but it also reveals medical humanism to be an extension of the larger philosophical aims of the Tudor humanist circle. In particular, Erasmus produced several medical texts in the period. His work with Linacre shows his profound interest in the Galenic translations, and beginning in 1526 he also began work on his own versions of several Galenic works. It is interesting that his first Galenic work was not published until 1526, two years after his friend Linacre's death.[50] Considering that Linacre had been producing medical translations until the end of his life, Erasmus may have seen his translations as the continuation of his friend's work. However, it is clear that Erasmus chose to translate specific works that were more in tune with his pedagogical interests, just as the physician Linacre had chosen to translate works that he viewed as beneficial to practicing physicians. The first Galenic translation by Erasmus was the *Exhortatio ad bonas artes, praesertim medicinae* (Exhortation to Study the Liberal Arts, Especially Medicine) in 1526.[51] This treatise encouraged young men to take up liberal studies, particularly in medicine. Essentially, the text is an argument for the dominance of intellectual occupations over those that involve an excess of physical exercise, and it maintains that the physician's position in society is noble. Perhaps

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[50] For more information on Erasmus' specific Galenic translations see: Erika Rummel, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 220-223.
[51] Galen, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, trans. Erasmus, 220.

Erasmus' most interesting translation for our purposes was *Qualem oporteat esse medicum* (The Proper Physician). This work is primarily a Galenic defense of Hippocratic philosophy. In particular, Galen emphasizes the necessity for integrity, reason, and knowledge of the natural world.[52] As followers of Galenic medicinal principles, Linacre and his colleagues attempted to reinsert this understanding of the proper role of the physician. It is also interesting to note that many of the tenets of *The Proper Physician* directly correlate to several of the principles of the Medical Act of 1512. Essentially, through an examination of which specific Galenic works these men chose to translate and make available to the educated public, we can maintain a sense of their attitudes towards proper medicinal practice and its various intellectual applications.

For our purposes, the most relevant medical translation completed by Erasmus was Plutarch's work, *De sanitate tuenda* (Hygiene). Although the translation contributed little to actual medical knowledge at the time, it is highly significant for its attitudes towards medical philosophy. An essential argument of the work is that one need not be a physician to gain medical knowledge or to practice medicine. Erasmus' choice to translate this specific work shows that he did not view medical knowledge as preserved only for the elite physicians, but rather felt it could benefit anyone who pursued its study.

Erasmus also produced an original medical work with the 1518 *Declamatio in laudem artis medicae* (Oration in Praise of Medicine) that provides additional insight into his influence on the development of medical humanist philosophy. Probably written during his first English residence in 1499 or 1500, it was finally published in 1518 in

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[52] Galen, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, 220.

dedication to the physician Henricus Afinius.[53] Although the work is clearly a literary exercise in the classical model of a panegyrical oratory, it still provides the reader with a glimpse into Erasmus' attitudes and beliefs concerning medicine and its study. This is not a work on specific technical knowledge in medicine, but rather a treatise on the philosophical attributes of medical practice in this period. It is easy for the modern reader to view a work such as the *Declamatio* as being completely lacking in actual medical knowledge, but for the pre-Vesalian world of the early sixteenth-century, Galenic theory still dominated. Medicine was viewed philosophically and theologically just as often as it was biologically and chemically. However, this is not to assert that Erasmus' praise of medical practice was not unique, because it certainly was for its time. As can be seen with most of his intellectual endeavors, the famed humanist could take any subject and give it an innovative, namely, an Erasmian spin. Erasmus' *Declamatio* is interesting in its presentation of a holistic approach to medical knowledge, as well as in its continual emphasis on the spiritual connections to a physician's work. Erasmus writes:

> Now the physician is concerned not only with the care of the body, the lower element in man, but with the treatment of the entire man, and just as the theologian takes the soul as his starting point, the physician begins with the body. And rightly so, because of the very close relationship and connection between them, so that, just as the sins of the spirit recoil upon the body, so likewise the diseases of the

[53] It was published at the Froben press and was followed by the publication of an English translation by Robert Redman. The story of the dedication itself is also of interest. Apparently Erasmus originally wrote the work in a private letter to his friend, the physician Ghisbert, and the work remained untouched in Erasmus' private collection for many years. However, in 1518 Erasmus was becoming annoyed that his acquaintance Afinius had not given him a set of silver cups that had been promised him several years before. In order subtly to urge Afinius to send the promised gift, Erasmus reworked the *Declamatio* and publicly dedicated it to the stingy physician (This exchange is described in Epistle 637). For more information on the publication of the *Declamatio* see: Brian McGregor, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 32-35.

> body can hinder, or even completely check, spiritual growth.[54]

It is difficult to ignore the vein of dualism that runs throughout the work, and the historian Brian McGregor has distinguished its strong sense of neo-Platonism through Erasmus' *philosophia Christi*.[55] Therefore, this work can be safely viewed as consistent with Erasmus' overall intellectual philosophy.

In brilliant humanist form, the Dutch scholar is able to argue that medicine's primary purpose is to aid in good works. He states: "If the best type of man is he who renders the greatest service to the state, then this art of medicine should be learned by the best men, because among the duties of the civil magistrate…the principal one is to see to it that the citizens are in good health."[56] The humanist argues that this duty to use medical knowledge for practical use is based on ancient medical authorities as well as Biblical sources. He points out that Christ referred to himself as a physician, and so therefore the work of the medical man is to heal others in God's name.[57] Erasmus also views this Christian distinction as being compatible with classical sources of knowledge. He writes, "The ancients, who arranged the things which make for human happiness on a scale of values, placed good health at the very top."[58]

Throughout the *Declamatio*, Erasmus also urges all people to gain for themselves a basic knowledge of health and medicine. Such a seemingly harmless attitude was actually very unusual for the period, when elite physicians explicitly discouraged common familiarity with medical knowledge. Erasmus states:

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[54] Erasmus, *Declamatio in laudem artis medicae*, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 39-40.
[55] McGregor, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 33.
[56] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 46.
[57] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 45.
[58] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 46.

> Among humankind, different men learn or profess different arts; but everyone should learn this one art which is vital to everyone... While no man will remain ignorant of the difference between genuine and counterfeit coin, lest he be cheated in matters of gross materialism, there is no corresponding zeal to discover how he can protect his most valuable possession.[59] In monetary matters he does not trust to somebody else's eyes, but in the business of life and health he is content to follow somebody else's judgment...if absolute knowledge of the whole art is reserved only to the few who have dedicated a lifetime to this single branch of study, there is no reason why anyone should be ignorant of at least that part which pertains to the maintenance of good health.[60]

It is clear how such a statement can be viewed as intellectual foreshadowing of the vernacular medical works that would arise only a few years later in England.

In the *Declamatio*, Erasmus also emphasizes the importance of a proper diet in maintaining good health. He writes, "For even if you abolish disease and imagine everyone to be blessed with good health, how shall we be able to protect our health unless the physician instructs us to discriminate between wholesome and harmful food."[61] This is consistent with Galenic notions of the time, and explains the rise of Galenic "dietaries" in the mid-to-late sixteenth century. It also provides some insight into humanist notions of the role of the physician at this time. The physician was not merely someone who diagnosed illness, but someone who was active in preventing it through dietary and lifestyle devices. This was clearly a holistic understanding of health and medicine, in which humoral theory was the rule.

The *Declamatio* is also significant because it continually encourages students to study medicine. Considering that medical study in this time was largely based on

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[59] An ironic statement considering Erasmus published this work in hopes of gaining some silver.
[60] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 45.
[61] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 39.

classical literary authorities, it makes sense that it would be praised by the humanist scholars of the period. In the conclusion to the panegyric, Erasmus urged people to undertake medical study, because it was beneficial to humanity. He concludes: "I exhort you, the best of students: embrace medicine with all your heart, apply yourselves to it with every nerve and fiber of your being...by its agency you in turn will confer no mean blessing upon your friends and country, nay more- upon all mankind."[62] It is interesting that Erasmus encourages young people to take up medical studies, because at this time medical schools were experiencing a steady revival. In the same year as this publication, Linacre had helped create the London College of Physicians, with one of its specific purposes being the encouragement of medical study in England. It should also be noted that although Erasmus used a classical literary style in the form of the panegyric oration, he did not produce the work as a trivial literary exercise. His personal correspondence years later prove that he wrote the *Declamatio* primarily for pedagogical encouragement. In particular, in a 1523 letter to Johann von Botzheim, Erasmus states that the *Declamatio* should be grouped with his works that he had deemed instructional in nature.[63] Erasmus also believed that medical knowledge should be widely disseminated, although he never spoke specifically on the vernacularization of medical literature. In his *Education of Young Children* he expressed a message similar to the *Declamatio*, and encouraged all interested readers to examine classical medical treatises.[64] The message of the *Declamatio* also fits in with humoral theory through its connections of mental attitudes to physical well-being. There is also a profound element of practical application that runs

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[62] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 29, 50.
[63] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 24, 694-7. (Erasmus to von Botzheim). Interestingly, this letter is the basis for the traditional organization for Erasmus' collected works and letters, such as in P.S. Allen's Latin collection, the *Opera Omnia Erasmi*.
[64] Specifically, he recommended Aristotle's *Letter to Alexander*.

through the panegyric. Clearly Erasmus is not praising the physician for his knowledge, but rather for his ability to apply that knowledge to the betterment of humanity. This emphasis on practical application is an example of the intellectual framework within which the later medical humanists could justify their production of vernacular medical works.

Erasmus' attitudes towards the purveyance of medical knowledge also appear to be consistent with most of the Tudor humanist circle. An examination of Sir Thomas More's household in the early sixteenth century demonstrates that medical knowledge among the humanist circle was highly valued. This suggests that More, along with Erasmus and the other Northern humanists, did not consider medical knowledge as reserved only for the licensed physicians. In her book, *The Sir Thomas More Circle*, Pearl Hogrefe maintains that the More household served as the intellectual center for the English humanists, and medical study was common among them. Many young scholars, such as Thomas Elyot, found themselves being tutored at the More household by More, Linacre, John Rastell, Erasmus or other members of the humanist intellectual community. The young humanists Richard Herde and John Clement studied medicine under Linacre while at the More household, and both went on to distinguished careers as physicians.[65] Women were also given a medical education at "More's school." It is clear that the three Margarets: Gigs (More's foster daughter and wife of John Clement), Roper (More's daughter), and Elyot (wife of Sir Thomas Elyot), all had some form of classical medical education. More's biographer, Nicholas Harpsfield, even described how on one occasion

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[65] Herde is best known for translating and commenting on Juan Luis Vives' *Instruction of a Christian Woman*, while Clement became a prominent humanist physician and was eventually named president of the London College of Physicians in 1544. For more information see: Pearl Hogrefe, *The Sir Thomas More Circle*, 26-27.

Gigs was able to diagnose an illness of More's because she had read several works of Galen.[66] In a letter to Roper, More encouraged her to continue her studies in medicine, because it would allow her to have "a healthy soul in a healthy body."[67] More himself likely had an excellent medical education, and showed on several instances that he could put it into practice. According to Harpsfield, on one occasion physicians were summoned to attend to an ailing Margaret Roper, and More himself suggested a successful remedy to the physicians, which they reluctantly admitted they had not thought of.[68] Clearly More had a considerable medical knowledge for a layman of the period and did not believe that medical knowledge should be reserved only for educated physicians.

More's approach to medicine can also be seen in his seminal work, the *Utopia.* As Hythlodaeus departs he gives the Utopians several medical works by Hippocrates and Galen, which they greatly admire. This fact alone demonstrates that More did not view medical textual knowledge as something to be guarded from the public, but rather another avenue of intellectual discovery through classical texts. Of the Utopians and medicine, More writes:

> Though there is no nation in the world that needs physic so little as they do, yet there is not any that honors it so much: they reckon the knowledge of it one of the pleasantest and most profitable parts of philosophy, by which, as they search into the secrets of nature, so they not only find this study highly agreeable, but think that such inquiries are very acceptable to the Author of nature; and imagine that as He, like the inventors of curious engines among mankind,

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[66] Hogrefe, *Sir Thomas More Circle*, 27.
[67] More to Margaret Roper, as presented in Hogrefe, *Sir Thomas More Circle*, 27.
[68] The remedy was the use of a "glister," which I believe (from personal communication with Professor Michael Osborne) is another term for clyster, which is itself an archaic term that was used to describe an enema. According to Harpsfield, the physicians tried the glister after "much meruailing." This was probably due both to the physician's reluctance to accept More's advice, as well as to their hesitation to perform such a procedure on a female patient.

> has exposed this great machine of the universe to the view of the only creatures capable of contemplating it, so an exact and curious observer, who admires His workmanship, is much more acceptable to Him than one of the herd, who, like a beast incapable of reason, looks on this glorious scene with the eyes of a dull and unconcerned spectator.[69]

In this passage medicine is presented as beneficial knowledge for all citizens. In Utopia, medical knowledge is not a secret of the physicians, but rather is available to all "creatures capable of contemplating it."

More also examined the maintenance of physical health as correlative to spiritual health in his work *Dialogue of Comfort*. More seems to play on Erasmus' ideas of Christ as physician by presenting Satan as a cause of bodily illness and disease. More maintains that Satan exploits the spiritually weak by disrupting the balance of their humours. More writes:

> Marketh well the state and condicion that everye man standeth in, not onely concerninge those outwarde thinges, as lands, possessions, goods, authoritie, fame, fauour, or hatred of the world, but also mennes complecions within them, as helth, or sickness, good humours or bade, by which they be light harted or lumpyshe, strong harted or faint and fieble of spiryte, bold, hardye or tymerouse, & fearful of courage... Let no man thinke strange yt I would aduise a man to take counsayle of a phycicion to the bodye in suche a spirituall passion. For syth ye soule and the body be so knytte and ioyned together, that they both make betwene them one person, the distemperaunce of either other, engendereth sumtime the distemperaunce of both twaine.[70]

This holistic, spiritual, and Galenic attitude towards medicine can clearly be seen as an intellectual antecedent to the dietaries and guidebooks of health that were produced by

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[69] Thomas More, *Utopia*, Book 2: chapter 5.
[70] More, *Dialogue*, as presented in Skov, 80.

the later generation of English humanists in the mid-sixteenth century. Several of the later humanists infused spiritual elements into their dietaries and health regimens in a manner reminiscent of More's *Dialogue*.[71] The *Dialogue* also shows that the humanist approaches to medicine were not seen as separate from other philosophical ideas. More's infusion of Erasmian spirituality with Galenic medical thought elucidates the distinctly Northern humanist approach to medical knowledge; although early medical humanism in the strictest sense was a philological endeavor, it did not exist in an intellectual vacuum, and was influenced by other humanist ideals.

Another member of the intellectual circle at More's household who was interested in medicine and science was his brother-in-law, John Rastell. In 1518 Rastell published an English play loosely based on astronomy and the humoral theory, entitled "The Four Elements." The prefatory advertisement for the play states:

> A New Interlude and a Mery, Of the Nature of the Four Elements, declarynge many proper poyntys of philosophy naturall, and of dyvers straunge landys, and of dyvers straunge effectis and causis... Of the sytuacyon of the four elementis...the yerth, the water, the ayre, and fyre, and of theyr qualytese and propertese, and of the generacyon and corrupcyon of thyngys made of the commyxion of them.[72]

Rastell incorporates aspects of humoral theory into the play in a manner that was supposed to appeal to the common man through the use of English and a comedic context. The fact that Rastell infused aspects of scientific and medical learning into his comedy would have likely infuriated many of the elites of the period. The English scholar Richard Axton has pointed out that Rastell would have required an impressive

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[71] For an example of this see: William Bullein, *Bulwarke of Defence* (1562).
[72] John Rastell, "Four Elements," in *Three Rastell Plays*, ed. Richard Axton (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1979), 30.

scientific education for the period and was likely very well read.[73] Rastell would have likely come into contact with many of the classical sources of science and medicine while at the More household. It is also clear that Rastell and More shared intellectual endeavors as late as 1510, when Rastell edited and published his brother-in-law's work, *The Life of John Picus*.[74] Rastell was also a friend of Linacre and even published one of Linacre's Latin grammars.[75] The content of *The Four Elements* itself also has a distinctly humanist message in that it encourages literary study over all other aspects of life. In the conclusion of the play, the character "Studious Desire" is successfully reunited with "Humanity" against the nefarious forces of "Ignorance" and "Sensual Appetite."[76] Rastell's use of medical and scientific ideas in a specifically pedestrian and vernacular form also demonstrates that the Northern humanist approach could embrace the transmittance of medical knowledge to a popular audience.

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"This then is the fruit of all studies; this is the goal. Having acquired our knowledge, we must turn it to usefulness, and employ it for the common good."
- Juan Luis Vives[77]

With John Caius we see the first breaks with the ideals of medical humanism of the first generation of Linacre and More, as English physicians' commitment to Galen

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[73] Axton, *Three Rastell Plays*, 11.
[74] John Guy, *Thomas More*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 37.
[75] Rastell published Linacre's 1511 *Progymnasmata grammatices vulgaria*. For more information see: Giles Barber, "Thomas Linacre: A Bibliographical Survey of his Works," in *Essays*, 292.
[76] Rastell, 30-68.
[77] Major, 33.

began to override their notions of practical applications of the medical text. Although in fact he was producing his works well after Sir Thomas Elyot, the academic aims of Caius are clearly in the tradition of Linacre's philological efforts. However, I would maintain that in Caius' endeavor to pursue the intellectual legacy of Linacre, he ignored the ideas of early Erasmian humanism in general. Caius seems never to have realized that Linacre himself did not translate Galenic works purely out of antiquarian passion, but did so rather with the intent of helping provide manageable and pragmatic medical knowledge to the practicing physician.

Nevertheless, Caius continued the philological aims of Linacre well into the 1540s, and made much of the newly discovered Galenic corpus available through finely edited translations. In his unpublished autobiography, *De libris propriis*,[78] he continually espoused devotion to Greek in a time when many medical humanists were making their first forays into the vernacular. At times Caius' memoirs echo the Greco-centric sentiments of Croke's aforementioned 1519 oration. Caius writes:

> Everyone flies to the Latin translation, none reaches for the Greek, either because there is more profit to be won from the Latin, or because we all want what is not ours, or because, if translations are driving out the originals, one's errors of translation are less easily detected. Galen's writings are full of genius: they must be preserved from the perils of translation by enlarging the number of those who know Greek, by the production of better texts based on older and better manuscripts, by universal scholarly co-operation, and by a wider appreciation of the difficulties of a translation in expressing clearly all the ambiguities and idiom of a particular style. Only then would science flourish in the schools of medicine, the health of mortals be preserved, and life and vigour prolonged.[79]

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[78] Caius obviously modeled the title after Galen.
[79] John Caius, *De libris propriis*, as quoted in Nutton, *John Caius*, 389.

It is interesting that both Thomas Elyot and Caius had been profoundly influenced by the ideas and works of Thomas Linacre, but each man held very different understandings of the venerated doctor's intellectual legacy. Both Elyot and Caius adopted Linacre's devotion to humoral theory, but held remarkably different attitudes towards the dissemination of medical knowledge. Caius' contribution to the completion of the Galenic corpus is undoubtedly a continuation of the philological works of Linacre; however, it seems that Caius glorified Galen in a manner that Linacre did not. Caius depicted Galen as being nearly infallible as a medical authority, despite the credible criticism coming from Continental anatomists such as Vesalius. Caius himself had been a roommate of Vesalius while in Italy but was offended by the manner in which the anatomist had "very incongruously and clearly incorrectly" represented Galen's views.[80] At one point Caius' staunch defense of Galen bordered on fanaticism as he had a fellow member of the College of Physicians jailed for questioning the reliability of Galen. Though Caius believed he was working in the spirit of Linacre, it seems that he misunderstood the reason Linacre took up his philological efforts. It is telling that Elyot, who knew Linacre personally, maintained very different attitudes towards medical knowledge.

Caius' glorification of Galen seems to parallel the characterization of the Ciceronians as presented in Erasmus' 1528 satire *Cicerionanus*. Although Erasmus rejoiced in the use of Latin and Greek (and at times glorified them), he was still a realist and saw the necessity for the practical use of language. It was this attitude that led him to turn his acerbic wit towards the strict Ciceronians in this controversial colloquy. In the

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[80] John Caius, *De libris propriis*, as presented in W.S.C. Copeman, "John Caius" in *Cambridge and Its Contribution to Medicine*, 27-33.

satire, Erasmus presents a character named Nosoponus. Though a brilliant linguist, Nosoponus has become obsessed with the writings of Cicero to such a degree that it is as though he is diseased. He has spent the last seven years of his life compiling an alphabetical lexicon of every word and phrase ever used by Cicero, and will only speak or write in a perfect and pre-meditated Ciceronian style. In the colloquy, Nosoponus states:

> No one will be Ciceronian if even the tiniest word is found in his works which can't be pointed to in Cicero's *opus*. I shall judge a man's entire mode of expression spurious and like counterfeit money if even a single word which doesn't bear Cicero's stamp finds a lodging there. Heaven granted to no one but him, the prince of eloquence, the right to strike the coin of Roman speech.[81]

Erasmus used the *Ciceronianus* to lampoon those theologians and rhetoricians who unreasonably glorified classical authorities. Although Erasmus often praised ancient authors, and greatly respected Cicero, he maintained that the purpose of classical studies was not the acquisition of knowledge, but rather the attainment of knowledge that could be employed to the benefit of the common good. Therefore, the Northern humanist approach to knowledge is one that emphasized practical application over strict literary style. This approach can be viewed as intellectual precedent on which the second generation of medical humanists could justify the publication of vernacular texts in the mid-sixteenth century.

Linacre also helped create the intellectual framework for popular medical knowledge. Not only were his Galenic works popular among physicians, but they were also widely read by educated laypersons. Although Linacre never produced a work that

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[81] Erasmus, *Collected Works of Erasmus,* vol. 28, *Ciceronianus.* ed. A.H.T. Levi. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1986), 349.

expressed his own ideas concerning the availability of medical knowledge, it can be safely assumed that his attitudes on the subject were similar to those of Erasmus and More. One crucial piece of evidence that provides a small glimpse into Linacre's position on the popularization of medical knowledge is the title page to his 1521 edition of Galen's *De temperamentis*. The title page simply stated: "Opus non medicis modo, sed et philosophis oppido quam necessarium" (A work not for doctors alone, but very necessary for philosophers also).[82] Not surprisingly, Elyot would explicity mention his knowledge of Galen's *De temperamentis* in the preface of his 1541 edition of *Castel of Health*, in which he defended his right to propagate classical medical knowledge to a non-medical audience.

This sentiment can also be seen within the early More circle in the works of Rastell. In Rastell's *Four Elements* he defended the dissemination of knowledge through vernacular works. Using the same argument that Elyot would employ fifteen years later in his *Castel of Helth*, Rastell asserted that all of the ancient authorities wrote their respective works in their native tongue. In the beginning of the play Rastell writes:

> The grekes the romaynes with many other mo
> In their moder tonge wrote warkes excellent
> Than yf clerkes in this realme wolde take payne so
> Consyderyng that our tonge is now suffycyent
> To expound any hard sentence euydent
> They might yf they wolde in our englyshe tonge
> write wrokys of grauyte sometime amonge
> For dyuers prengnaunt wyttes be in this lande
> As well of noble men as of meane estate
> which nothynge but englyshe can vnderstande
> Than yf connynge laten bokys were translate
> In to englyshe, wel correct and approbate
> All subtell sciens in englyshe might be lernyd

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[82] Stanford Lehmberg, *Sir Thomas Elyot: Tudor Humanist* (Austin: University of Texas, 1960), 132-133.

As well as other people in their owne tongs dyd.[83]

Rastell used the play to put forth his personal defense of English literature. In this sense, Rastell's message is consistent with the approaches supported by the other members of the Henrician humanist circle. The prominent English language historian R.F. Jones viewed the early Tudor humanists as vital to the development of the argument in favor of vernacular academic texts in England in the latter half of the sixteenth century. According to Jones, "The earliest expressions of confidence in the mother tongue originated in More's circle."[84] It is from this intellectual framework developed by the Erasmian humanists that Elyot and the other vernacular medical writers in the mid-sixteenth century could justify their works.

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How may a man (said he) with idle speach
Be wonne, to spoyle the Castle of his health?
I wote (quoth he) whom triall late did teach,
That like would not for all this worldes wealth:
His subtile tong, like dropping honny, mealt'h
Into the hart, and searcheth euery vaine,
that ere one be aware, by secret stealth
His powre is reft, and weaknesse doth remaine.
O neuer Sir desire to try his guilefull traine.
- Edmund Spenser, Fairie Queene[85]

Of all the second generation Tudor humanists, Sir Thomas Elyot most effectively implemented the Erasmian ideals of practical application into medical literature. Although not a licensed physician, Elyot maintained a strong humanist pedigree and used

[83] Rastell, "Four Elements," *Three Rastell Plays*, 31.
[84] Richard F. Jones, *The Triumph of the English Language* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1953), 89.
[85] Edmund Spenser, "Fairie Queene," in *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, vol. 1, 7th ed. (New York: Norton, 2000), 728.

this to justify his right to produce medical texts based in humoral theory. In his seminal medical work, *The Castel of Helth*, Elyot used English to relate the knowledge of Galen, Hippocrates and other ancient authorities to a large reading public. Elyot's commitment to popular vernacular medical literature signifies a divergence from the previous medical humanist objectives, which had been mostly limited to philological efforts. As an academic he was primarily a social philosopher, and he was greatly influenced by the works of Erasmus, More, and the other members of the Henrician humanist circle. In particular, John Major has described Erasmus' strong influence on Elyot's approaches to social and moral philosophy.[86] While Caius was influenced by the specific philological approaches of the early Tudor humanists, Elyot was undoubtedly influenced by the larger philosophical aims of the Erasmian circle.

Elyot probably became familiar with the various ideals of the early Henrician humanist circle from first-hand experience. He was likely tutored by several of the key members of the Thomas More circle, including Linacre and More himself. From the letters of More it appears that Elyot's wife, Margaret, was also a regular fixture in the More household and was one of the students in "More's school" for women. Although no direct correspondence between them survives, Elyot also appears to have been a pupil and close friend of More. Their association was so strong that when More was executed for treason in 1535, Elyot feared that he would also suspected of disobedience. Following More's July execution, Elyot wrote a letter to Cromwell emphasizing his allegiance to Henry VIII. In the private letter, Elyot also attempts to apologize for his friendship with the treasonous More. Elyot writes:

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[86] John Major, *Sir Thomas Elyot and Renaissance Humanism*, 77-88.

> I therefore beseech your good lordship now to lay apart the remembrance of the amity between me and Sir Thomas More, which was but *usque ad aras*, as is the proverb, considering that I was never so addict unto him as I was unto truth and fidelity toward my sovereign lord, as God is my judge. And where my special trust and only expectation is to be holpen by the means of your lordship, and natural shamefastness more reigneth in me than is necessary, so that I would not press to the king's majesty without your lordship's assistance unto whom I have sundry times declared mine indigence, and whereof it hath happened.[87]

Although Elyot's fear for his own welfare in the letter does not show him to be the most loyal of friends, it does positively show that a strong association between Elyot and More did exist at one point. Therefore, Elyot's humanist connections were firmly established, and his academic endeavors can be viewed within the Northern humanist intellectual framework.

Even though it was written in the vernacular, Elyot's *Castel of Helth* was a logical continuation of the medical humanist intellectual legacy. In particular, the prefaces of the different editions of the work provide insight into Elyot's intellectual goals. The preface of the 1541 edition marks a prominent difference from the original version of the text. When it was first published around 1536, Elyot had clearly not anticipated much of the work's eventual reaction, and therefore the drastic changes in the prefaces of later editions can be viewed as an attempt to respond to criticisms from various groups. It is evident that the primary purpose of the 1541 edition of the preface is to defend the academic qualifications of the author as a learned medical author. Not only did Elyot apparently receive sharp criticism from the licensed physicians who were members of the

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[87] Sir Thomas Elyot to Thomas Cromwell, February 1537, as printed in Hogrefe, *The Life and Times*, 270-272.

London College of Physicians, but textual clues also show that he was criticized by other English noblemen who viewed his dabbling in medical studies as ungentlemanly.

For our purposes of examining the merits of The *Castel of Helth* as a distinctly humanist text, the 1541 preface is an invaluable source. When Elyot set out to defend his academic credentials, he did so by underlining his place within the burgeoning English humanist circle. It may even be stated that Elyot's defense in the preface can be viewed not only as a justification of the work itself, but also as an argument for his own position as an English humanist. In the heart of the 1541 prefatory defense, Elyot makes four primary claims in response to his critics. First of all, he defends his personal connection to the renowned Erasmian humanist circle, specifically to the tradition of medical humanism as it was established by Thomas Linacre. Secondly, he references his knowledge of several classifications of classical medical authorities. Thirdly, he defends his lack of an official medical education at one of the prestigious continental medical schools. Finally, Elyot explicitly addresses the "phisitions" who had criticized the earlier editions of his work.

In the 1541 preface, Elyot states: "Whan I wrate this boke, I was not all ignorante in phisycke. Fore before that I was .xx. yeres olde, a worshipfull phisition, and one of the moste renoumed at that tyme in England, perceyuyng me by nature inclined to knowledge, rad vnte me the workes of Galene of temperaments, natural faculties, the Introduction of Iohannicus, with some of y Aphorismes of Hippocrates."[88] Although Elyot's exact date of birth is unclear, the prominent Elyot historian Pearl Hogrefe maintained that he was likely born in 1490, or possibly even 1489.[89] Therefore, Elyot

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[88] Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Castel of Helth*, 1541.
[89] Pearl Hogrefe, *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Elyot*, 11.

was read the works of Galen by his "worshipfull phisition" sometime around 1510. Since Thomas Linacre was essentially the only English physician who could have read the works of Galen in the early sixteenth century, it is most likely that Elyot was referring to him. Since Elyot used this preface to defend himself against the licensed physicians, it is logical that he would refer to the "worshipfull" Linacre: not only was Linacre the founder of the London College of Physicians in 1518, but he was also by far the most renowned physician of the early Tudor period.

Elyot also mentions Linacre by name specifically within the body of the work. Again seeming to emphasize to the reader that his knowledge of Galen began with Linacre, Elyot specifically describes Linacre's translations of several Galenic works. For example, when discussing Galen's views on muscle rubbing he recommends that the reader look to the source itself, which had been "translated most truly and eloquently out of Greke into Latyne by Doctour Linacre, late physytion of mooste worthye memorye to our soveraygne lorde Kynge Henry the VIII."[90] By continually emphasizing his strong humanist connections, specifically to the late founder of the College of Physicians, Elyot was clearly attempting to defend his work to the physicians.

Not only does Elyot make occasionally blatant references to his humanist education, but he also used the preface to underline his personal knowledge and humanist reputation by emphasizing his wide knowledge of the medical classics. Since this section of the 1541 preface is clearly Elyot's reply to official physicians who had criticized his earlier editions, he makes a strong effort to demonstrate that he held a medical education that was *par excellence*. However, as a veritable English humanist and courtier, Elyot is able slyly to applaud himself without appearing to do so at all. When he describes his

[90] Elyot, *Castle*, fol. 51v.

classical education, Elyot points out that he read the ancient sources "by mine owne study."[91] By making this clear, Elyot is emphasizing not only that his intellectual endeavors were his own, but also that he had the mental and linguistic skills to read and understand works in their original Greek and Latin forms. Considering that this medical work was likely the first of its kind written in English, and that Elyot had been thoroughly criticized for producing a vernacular work on such a prestigious academic subject, it is logical that he would emphasize the breadth of his own intellectual capabilities. The classical medical sources that Elyot actually references seem fairly impressive for the period, because the list includes not only the standard medical authorities of the day, but also a few surprises.[92] This was likely Elyot's intent, because he desired to demonstrate to his detractors that he had a thoroughly developed medical knowledge. Naturally he named Galen and Hippocrates first, because the works of these two Greek medical authorities were directly (through the new tradition of medical humanism) or indirectly (through the works of the Arabic commentators who dominated the medieval medical university curriculum) the basis for most of the medical knowledge of the period. Although Elyot does mention the great medieval Arabic Galenists Avicenna and Averroes, the manner in which he does so makes it clear that he has relegated them to a secondary role.

Elyot also uses the 1541 preface to defend his lack of an official medical education at one of the prestigious continental universities. He writes, "All thoughe I haue neuer ben at Montpellier, Padua, nor Salerne, yet haue taken no little profyte

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[91] Elyot, Castel, Preface.
[92] For an analysis of Elyot's sources see: Hogrefe, "Authorities, Chiefly Medical, for The Castle of Health" in *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Elyot*, 361-366.

concernynge myne owne helthe."[93] Elyot clearly mentions these three universities because they were the most prestigious and progressive medical institutions of the time.[94] John Skov has pointed out that the medical school at Salerno had an exalted reputation in England in the mid-sixteenth century, primarily due to the English connection to a popular medieval Latin medical poem entitled *Regimen Sanitatis Salerni.*[95] The medical schools at Montpellier and Padua were also renowned in England at the time, especially among the English humanist circle. However, it is clear that Elyot had only indirect connections to these universities and did not study at them in any respect. Although Elyot seems to recognize this is a fault in the eyes of his critics, he does not hesitate to defend the power of his self-taught education and his personal judgment as a reliable medical authority. This sentiment seems to echo Erasmus' defense in the *De Arbitrio* of his own intellectual prowess regarding theological matters, despite his lack of an advanced theological education.

However, Elyot did attempt to respect certain rights of the physicians. For example, there are numerous indications throughout the text that demonstrate Elyot was cautious in giving away the physicians' knowledge, especially when concerned with certain advanced procedures and medications. In a section on purgation, Elyot defers discussion of the specific treatment. He writes, "The makynge and ordringe therof I wylle omytte to write in this place, partly that I would not, that phisitions shuld to much

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[93] Elyot, *Castel of Helth* (1541), preface.
[94] For more on 16th century medical schools see: Woolfson, *Padua*, 73-102.
[95] For more information see: Skov, *The First Edition of Sir Thomas Elyot's 'Castell of Helthe'.*

note me in presumption."[96] Elyot truly was not trying to diminish the profession of the physicians through his work.

Although he would not hesitate to defend his lack of an official medical education, it seems that Elyot understood the necessity of the physicians for certain treatments. For example, when discussing the curative powers of bloodletting, Elyot states: "All other thinges concernying this matter, partayn to the curatiue, which treateth of healynge of sycknes, wherof I wyll not nowe speak, but remytte the reders to the consaile of discrete phisitions." It is also clear that although Elyot believed that a basic medical knowledge should be made available to the reading public, he still felt that certain curatives should not be known, because they could not be properly administered without the presence of a trained physician. When explaining his reasons for not discussing a certain intensive treatment, Elyot states that he has censured himself "bycause it moughte be reputed in me a great presumption, as also forasmoche as it were very perilous, to dyuulgate that noble science, to commune people." Again Elyot was attempting to make it clear that he did not want the physicians to view him as being in "presumption," but was merely trying to contribute positively to the health of society.[97] In this sense Elyot is attempting to fulfill the charge of Erasmus' *Declamatio*, in that he was not proposing medical knowledge for its own sake, but rather supporting its use as a practical tool for better health and longer life.

There is also a strong sense in both the 1539 and 1541 editions that Elyot recognized many physicians would view his treatise as an assault on their profession. In

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[96] Elyot, Castle of Health…
[97] Elyot, *Castel*, 60v.

order to calm these fears he continually insists that he produced his work in order to aid the physicians. In the conclusion of the *Castel of Helth* Elyot writes:

> Thus make I an ende of this treatyse, desyrynge them that shall take profyte therby to defende it agaynste envyouse disdayne, on whom I have set the adventure for the love that I bare to my countrey: requyrynge allhonest phisitions to remember that the intent of my labour was that men and women readynge this warke, and opbservynge the counsayles therin, shulde adapte therby their bodyes to receive more sure remedye by the medicines prepared by good phisitions in dangerous sicknesses, they kepying good diet, and infourmynge diligently the same phisytions of the manner of their affectes, passions, and sensible tokens. And so shall the noble and moste necessarye science of phisycke, with the ministers therof, escape the sclander whyche they have of longe tyme susteyned, and accordynge to the precept of the wyse man, be worthily honoured, forasmoche as the highest God dyd create the phisition for mans necessitie, and of the earth created medicine, and the wyse man shall not abhorre it.[98]

Elyot is acknowledging that his work would be viewed as a threat by the physicians, but he attempts to placate them by asserting that the purpose of his work is to prepare the patient for treatment. Elyot also plays on a nationalistic theme by claiming that he produced the work for "the love that I bare to my countrey," which was a basic justification for vernacular works of all genres in the late sixteenth century.

Although he had tried pre-emptively to mollify the physicians in 1539, Elyot's attempts obviously had failed, because his 1541 preface is almost exclusively a defense. The author, however, did not shrink from the criticism he endured but responded sharply. He began the 1541 preface by conceding that Galen himself had expressed concern that medical works could hurt his economic gains, but his commitment to providing

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[98] Elyot, *Castel*, 94r-v.

knowledge had overcome this fear.[99] Elyot seems almost surprised that some physicians could not understand why all educated laypersons should have a basic knowledge of Galenic medicine, including him. Elyot also claims that his work should be used as a "commodity" by the physicians, because it explains to patients how they can relate their various symptoms accurately to their doctor. In particular, Elyot emphasized his discussion and analysis of "vrynes and other excreementes,"[100] which at the time was viewed as a crucial diagnostic tool for physicians. Although Elyot's examination of urine in the treatise is only a minor section, he uses it to stress his book as a physician's aid. There is also a sense in the preface that he had been criticized by other noblemen for producing a medical work. Elyot responds to this critique by providing a list of emperors, kings, and other elites who had desired medical learning without being physicians themselves. Elyot's style is in classical humanist form, because he never misses an opportunity to employ an ancient authority in his own defense.

Elyot also uses the 1541 preface to defend his use of the vernacular. Many physicians were incensed that Elyot dared to relate classical medical knowledge in English, as it was viewed as a slight to the spirit of the ancient authorities. However, Elyot sharply justifies his use of the vernacular by once again citing the same classical authorities he was accused of disrespecting. Elyot states:

> But if phisitions be angry, that I haue wryten phisike in englyshe. Let theym remember, that the grekes wrate in greke, the Romanes in latyne. Auicena, and the other in Arabicke, whiche were their owne proper and maternal tonges. And if they had bene as moche attached with enuy and couaytise, as some nowe seeme to be, they wolde have deuysed somme particular language, with a strange syphre or fourme of letters, wherin they wold haue writen their

[99] Elyot, *Castel*, 1541, Aii recto.
[100] Elyot, *Castel*, 1541, Aiv recto

> science, which language or lettres no man shoulde haue knowen that hadde not professyd and practisid phisycke: but those, although they were painimes and Jewes, in this parte of charitye they farre surmounted vs Christianes, that they wolde not haue soo necessary a knowledge as phisicke is, to be hyd frome them, which wolde be studious aboute it.[101]

Therefore, Elyot embraced the vernacular as a tool for the practical application of knowledge. For Elyot, stylistic reservations about English were overshadowed by the possibilities made available by the vernacular. Furdell has pointed out that the intended audience for a particular medical work in this period can be determined by the typeface used by the printer. The use of gothic type, such as is in *The Castel of Helth*, meant that the work was reserved "for the lower class and the marginally literate."[102]

Elyot's argument in defense of the vernacular also had a humanist precedent. In his 1529 *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, More had defended the possibility of a Church-approved English Bible. Although More criticized the existence of Lollard Bibles because they were heretical, he maintained that English could still be used as a positive tool in the right hands. More writes in the *Dialogue*:

> Nor I never yet heard any reason layd why it were not convenient to have the bible translated into the englishe tong but al those reasons...might...as wel be layde against the holy writers that wrote the scripture in the Hebrue tongue, and against the blessed evangelists that wrote the scripture in Greke, and against all those in likewise that translated it oute of every of those tonges into latine, as to their charge that would well and faithfully translate it oute of latine into our englishe tong. For as for that our tong is called barbarous is but a fantasye...there is no doubte but it is plenteous enough to expresse our myndes in anye thing wherof one man hath used to speke with another...For scripture...was not writen but in a vulgare tong, suche as

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[101] Elyot, *Castel*, 1541, Aiv r-v.
[102] Furdell, *Publishing*, 50.

> the whole people understode, nor in no secrete cyphers but such common letters as almost every man could rede.[103]

More's argument obviously parallels that employed by Elyot only a few years later in the *Castel* preface. Therefore Elyot's position can be reliably placed within the humanist tradition. More and the other Henrician humanists had established an intellectual framework that allowed for the eventual use of vernacular literature, and Elyot logically applied these pre-existing ideas to the study of humoral medicine.

Despite Elyot's intentions, it is clear that there was a sharp resistance among many in the medical community who abhorred the prospect of vernacular medical literature. Although Sir Thomas Hoby proposed in the preface to his translation of *The Courtier* that there should be more English versions of academic works, he recognized the strong resistance to this idea among certain professions. He writes, "Our learned menne for the moste part hold opinion, to haue the sciences in the mother tunge, hurteth memorie and hindreth lerning."[104] Many of those academics who disparaged vernacular translations seemed to have feared that the universities would suffer due to this influx of readily available knowledge.

The thematic connections to Erasmus' aforementioned colloquy *Ciceronianus* and the anti-Ciceronian movement are evident. The Northern humanists had always rejoiced in the development of linguistic elegance, yet there was an inherent element of pragmatism in their collective message. The refinement of Latin and Greek skills was encouraged in order better to understand and relate the classical pool of knowledge, not out of a stubborn commitment to romanticized antiquity. In the preface to the translation

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[103] Sir Thomas More, *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, Third Book, Chapter 16, as presented in Hogrefe, *Life and Times*, 251.
[104] Sir Thomas Hoby, English preface to Castiglione's *The Courtier*, as presented in Jones, *Triumph*, 47.

of a health treatise by Conrad Gesner, George Baker stated: "Some, more curious than wyse, esteeme of nothing but that which is most rare, or in hard and vnknowne languages."[105] Although the Northern humanists were perhaps the most prominent proponents of the study of classical language, this was done with the goal of improving the standards of contemporary knowledge.

Some critics of vernacular translations also believed that English literature could disrupt the natural social balance. Many noblemen in this period were appalled by the prospect of members of lower classes reading works that had been previously reserved for learned men. This sentiment is evident in the English preface to Count Annibale Romei's *The Courtiers Academie*. The anonymous prefatory author maintains that many educated people were resistant to the idea of vernacular translations. He writes:

> Translations therefore in generall by some vaine pretendants, in tongues, and languages, hath bin thought altogether a thing, not only vnnecessary, but further preiudicial, the chiefest reason...that knowledge being an ornament, most befitting those noble or honorable, who command, ignorance agreeing best with the vulgar sort, who be subject and obey: it is therefore requisite (say they) that high wisedome, and excellent workes, should be concealed from common sight, lest they through equall experience, anf knowledge in things puffed vp, shake off likewise that humility of spirit, which shuld comprehend them vnder the obedience of laws and magistrates.[106]

This general distrust of vernacular knowledge is perhaps most prevalent in the medical works. In his English translation of a medical work by Arcaeus Franciscus, John Read describes how one physician even approached him to protest vernacular medical works. Read writes: "It was told me vnto my face, that there were too many bookes set foorth in

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[105] George Baker, as presented in Jones, *Triumph*, 46.
[106] Anon., as presented in Jones, 48.

the English toung, and that the Arte is therby made common. For that quoth he, euerie Gentleman is as wel able to reason therin, as our selues."[107]

This idea that the popularization of medical literature could lessen the importance of the physician as a profession is also described by Baker. He discusses how certain physicians "cannot abyde that good and laudable Artes shoulde be common to many, fearing that their name and practice should decay or at the least shoulde diminishe."[108] For many strict Galenic physicians, Latin was viewed as the only proper language for medical knowledge. Some practitioners and medical scholars viewed any professional works that were not produced in Latin as dishonorable to physicians and disrespectful to the classical authorities of medical knowledge. The prominent physician John Securis believed that the rise in vernacular medical literature would lead to a growth in unreliable medical practices by laypeople. In a published defense of English medical orthodoxy entitled "A Detection and Querimonie of the Daily Enormities and Abuses Commited in Physick," Securis stated: "If Englyshs bookes could make men cunnying physitions, then pouchemakers, threshers, ploughmen and cobblers mought be physitions."[109] The fact that Securis produced his defence of medical Latin in English shows that his reservations about the vernacular were in many ways limited to medical practice. Securis also seems to view the popularization of English medical knowledge as being disruptive to the natural and proper social order in England in a manner reminiscent of the nobleman in the aforementioned *Courtiers Academie*. Securis' position was very similar to Caius' in regards to popular medical knowledge, because he also abhorred the use of English in medical texts while at the same time utilizing the vernacular in certain circumstances.

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[107] John Read, as presented in: Jones, 48.
[108] Baker, as presented in: Jones, 50.
[109] Wear, *Popularization*, 23.

Securis believed that the physicians were required to defend the privileges of their profession. For Securis, this defense was in the best interest of both the physicians and the general public, because it helped ensure a higher quality of medical practice. Securis writes:

> Then wer it a great foly for us to bestow so much labour and study all our lyfe in the scholes and universities, to breake oure braynes in readyng so many authours...yea and to the greatest follye of all were to precede in any degree in the Universities with our great coste and charges, when a syr John Lacke latin a peddler, a weaver, and oftentimes a presumptuous woman, shall take uppon them (yea and are permytted) to mynister Medicine to all menne, in every place, and at all tymes...and so, many tymes not only hinder and defraud us of our lawful stipende and gayness: but (which is worst of all and to much to be be lamented) shall put many in hasarde of their lyfe.[110]

It is against these specific qualms that Elyot defended the use of the vernacular in the preface to the 1541 edition of his *Castle of Health*.

However, not all physicians resisted the prospect of vernacular medical literature. A contemporary of Elyot, the estranged Carthusian monk Andrew Boorde also wrote medical texts and dietaries in English. Boorde was a licensed physician, and even took his medical degree from the esteemed University of Montpellier. In his 1547 work *The Breviary of Helthe*, Boorde synthesized herbal knowledge with astronomy and medical practices that were based on a loose Galenic knowledge. Unlike Elyot, Boorde did not attempt to enumerate his humanist credentials and was not at all apologetic about divulging medical secrets to the reading public. Boorde writes:

> Olde auncient and authentic actours or doctours of phiciske in their bokes, doth write many obscure terms, giving also to many and divers infirmities darke and hard names,

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[110] Securis, *Detection and Querimonie*, as presented in Porter, *Popularization*, 23-4.

> difficile to understand, some and most of all being Greke words, some and few being Araby wordes, some being latin words, and some being barbarous words. Therefore I have translated all such obscure words and names into English, that every man openly and apartly may understand them. (Furdell Pub 31)

Yet even such a staunch defender of the popularization of medical knowledge as Boorde realized that English had its shortcomings, especially when relating esoteric medical terms. Although his contemporary Elyot rejoiced in the development of the mother tongue as a literary language, Boorde used English reluctantly. He at once defends the use of vernacular languages as a tool for spreading medical knowledge while simultaneously noting English to be inferior to the classical languages. In one instance Boorde even proclaimed that "The speche of England is a base speche to other noble speeches."[111] Ironically, Boorde wrote this and other denigrations of English in English.

Despite Boorde's strong (though occasionally paradoxical) defense of vernacular medical writings, he also defended the rights of the physicians as the sole medical practitioners in England. As Elyot had done in the *Castel of Helth*, Boorde also encouraged readers to seek only physicians for treatment. Boorde states, "He doth kill himself who does not observe the commandment of his phisicion."[112] Although Boorde's books were very popular at the time, it does not appear that they were taken seriously by the orthodox medical establishment. His astrological leanings and commitment to vernacular writings made him many enemies, and eventually contributed to his downfall.[113]

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[111] Andrew Boorde, *The Breviary of Helthe*, as presented in Jones, *Triumph*, 178.
[112] Furdell, *Publishing*, 77.
[113] Boorde was at one time in good standing with several noblemen, including the Duke of Norfolk, to whom he dedicated his *Dyetary of Helthe*. He also even attended Henry VIII at one time. However, as a

Even among the physicians who were writing in English, there was a realization that their mother tongue was younger and less developed than the classical languages. In his 1547 preface to *The Vrinal of Physick*, Robert Recorde writes:

> But now as touching myne entent in writing this treatise in the english. Though this cause might seme sufficient to satisfy many men that I am an englysh man, and therefore may more easely and plainly write in my natyue tonge, rather then in any other: yet vnto them that knowthe hardnes of the mater, this answer shuld seme vnlykely: considering that is it more harder to translate into such a tonge, wherein the arte hath not ben written before, then to write in those tongues that are accustomed, and (as I might say) acquainted with the termes of science.[114]

Recorde, like Elyot before him, simply employed the Latin word when a proper English substitute could not be found or invented an anglicized version of the original medical term.

This technique also had a strong precedent in the early Tudor humanist circle in the ideas of Thomas Lupset. Lupset was a close friend of Erasmus, Colet, More, and Linacre, and was heavily involved with the literary endeavors of each. In particular, he was Erasmus' daily editor in the production of the New Testament editions, supervised the second edition of More's Utopia, and managed the printing of two of Linacre's Galenic translations.[115] Lupset had also been one of the four English editors of the 1525 Aldine edition of the Greek *editio princeps* of Galen,[116] and he was highly esteemed

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former Carthusian monk he was continually accused of impiety, and his eccentricities exacerbated his already waning repution in the 1540s. In 1549 he was sent to Fleet's Prison for keeping three prostitutes in his home. His public enemies made sure he stayed in prison, and he eventually committed suicide. For more information see: John Thornton, "Andrew Boorde, Thomas Linacre and the 'Dyetary of Helthe'," Bulletin of the Medical Library Association 36 (1948): 204-209.

[114] Jones, *Triumph*, 73.

[115] *Contemporaries of Erasmus*, 357.

[116] Woolfson, *Padua*, 80.

among the humanist medical community. In his English work *A Treatise of Charitie* he writes (regarding the use of the word "charity"):

> How be it whan we be driuen to speake of thynges that lacke the names in oure tonge, we be also driuen to borowe the wordes, that we haue not, sometime out of latin, sometime out of greke, euen as the latin tonge doth in like necessitie borowe and take of other. And though now at first herying, this word stondethe straungelye with you, yet by vse it shall waxe familiar, specially when you haue it in this maner expressed vnto you."[117]

This demonstrates the early humanists were often willing to manipulate language in order to suit their needs.

Although a few medical writers rejoiced in the vernacular as a positive tool for reaching a larger audience, others such as Caius only used English reluctantly. In fact, it was only in response to a mass epidemic that Caius finally expressed his thoughts in a language other than Latin or Greek. In his primary English work, Caius attempted to spread knowledge of the "sweating sickness," a mysterious and devastating disease in which the victim would experience incredible fever, headaches, breathing difficulty, and the characteristic profuse sweating before usually dying within a 24 hour period.[118] This 1552 treatise, *A Boke or Counseill Against the Disease Called the Sweate*, was published by Caius for the expressed purpose of helping anyone who read it. The title page declares that the book was "necessary for euerye personne, and muche requisite to be had in the handes of al sortes, for their better instruction, preparacion and defence, against the

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[117] Thomas Lupset, *A Treatise of Charitie*, as presented in Jones, *Triumph*, 75.

[118] Although the disease was epidemic throughout England from the late fifteenth through to the early seventeenth century, its exact nature is still unknown today. Several scholars believe the disease may have been an early form of the modern Hanta virus. For more information see: G. Thwaites and others, "The English Sweating Sickness, 1485-1551," *New England Journal of Medicine* 336 (1997): 580-582.

soubdein coming, and fearful assaultyng of the same disease."[119] Caius' position, that the book was meant only as a defense against the sweating sickness, also appears to be confirmed by a passage in which he describes hurriedly writing the work so that it could be published by Christmas.[120] However, Caius is obviously reluctant in his use of the vernacular and uses the preface to establish his defense. He maintains that he wrote the book only because his friends and colleagues had urged him to, and that he complied only out of love for his countrymen.[121] It is only through his sense of a physicians' duty to aid the sick that Caius can justify his use of English. He writes:

> Therefore as I noted, for I wrate as laisure then serued and finished one boke in Englishe, onely for Englishe men not lerned, one other in latine for men of lerning more at large, and generally for the help of them wich hereafter should have nede, either in this or other coūtreis, that they may lerne by our harmes.[122]

This passage demonstrates that Caius believed that English as a written language should be reserved only for the uneducated. It is also odd that Caius mentions that he produced a Latin version of the same treatise, since it appears never to have been published. Caius also describes the shortcomings of English as a language for medical writing but states that he did not hesitate to anglicize Latin and Greek words.[123]

Caius' apologetic tone throughout the work is perhaps most evident in the conclusion, in which he again clarifies that he produced the book as "plainly as I could for ye commune saufty of my good countrimen, help, relieve, [and] defence of the same

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[119] John Caius, *A Boke or Counseill Against the Disease Called the Sweate*, 1552, title page.
[120] Caius, *A Boke or Counseill*, Fol. 2 Aiiv.
[121] Caius, *A Boke or Counseill*, Fol. 2Aiir.
[122] Caius, *A Boke or Counseill*, Fol. 2Aiiv.
[123] Caius, *A Boke or Counseill*, Fol. 10Biir-v.

against ye souddaine assaultes of the disease."[124] Caius may have also had royal encouragement to produce the text considering that the disease had ran rampant through the chamber of Anne Boleyn, and the work was eventually published by the royal printer, Richard Grafton.

This treatise also raises an interesting contradiction in the approach of committed classicists such as Caius. If in fact Caius wrote his treatise on the "sweat" in English because he believed it was knowledge that could truly benefit anyone who read it, then does this not also mean that those esteemed Galenic works that were reserved for Latin or Greek were seen as less directly beneficial in their knowledge? Interestingly, Caius did not draw on Galen and other classical authorities extensively, but did so only to substantiate convictions based on his own observations of the illness. However, his analysis and advice were deeply based in traditional humoral theory, as can be seen in his continual emphasis on therapeutics.

This work is also the only example of Caius in any way enacting the ideals of his Italian mentor, G.B. Da Monte (Montanus). Da Monte was a prominent professor at the University of Padua medical school and is credited as being one of the first proponents of a bedside medical education. Da Monte even went so far as to take his students to visit the ill at hospitals, believing that, to a certain extent, proper medical education should come from practical experience.[125] In his 1544 *Method of Medicine*, Caius produced a digest of his teacher's beliefs on medical methodology and therefore made available a distinctly Paduan approach available to medical communities throughout Europe. This work makes for an interesting contrast with Elyot's *Castel of Helth*: both works were

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[124] Caius, *A Boke or Counseill*, Fol. 39r.
[125] For more information on Da Monte and his influence on Caius see: Nutton, *Caius and the Linacre Tradition*, 381-383.

written with the intent of providing a modern knowledge of therapeutics to a wider audience. However, Caius' intended audience was educated and practicing doctors throughout Europe; while Elyot wrote his Galenic digest for a larger reading public in England. Despite his literary dissemination of Da Monte's thoughts, Caius appears never to have implemented any of his mentor's ideals into practice as a physician, aside from his observations detailed in the *Counseill.*

Caius' *Counseill Against the Disease Called the Sweate* also provides a glimpse into the application of the medical humanist philosophy among the elite physicians who dominated both Oxford and Cambridge in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Although Caius had continually defended the traditional rights and authority of physicians as an exclusively noble position, he viewed knowledge of epidemics very differently. After all, the sweating sickness was a genuine national emergency, and therefore it is not likely that physicians would have criticized Caius' vernacular text as they had Elyot's *Castel of Helth.*

Although it took an epidemic to prompt Caius to produce a vernacular medical publication, some medical scholars were not so hesitant. Despite the criticisms from many of the licensed physicians, Elyot's work greatly influenced several prominent medical writers in the sixteenth century. The *Castel of Helth* can be seen as profoundly shaping attitudes towards vernacular medical literature, and the work's success led to a flood of Galenic dietaries based on Elyot's model. Although many of these dietaries were essentially poor imitations of the *Castel*, some authors produced academically credible Galenic digests. Some of these authors, such as Thomas Cogan, were

completely unapologetic in their use of Elyot's treatise. In his 1584 treatise, *The Haven of Health*, Cogan writes:

> If they (the readers) finde whole sentences taken out of Maister Eliote his Castle of Health or our of *Schola Salerni*, or anie other author whatsoever, that they will not condemne me of vaine glorie...as if I meant to set foorth for mine owne works that which other men have devised, for I confesse that I have taken *Verbatim* out of others where it served for my purpose, and especiallie out of *Schola Salernie*: but I have so enterlaced it with mine owne that... it may be the better perceived. And therefore seeing that all my travaille tendeth to common commoditie, I trust everie man will interpret all to the best.[126]

Such a direct admittance of influence shows that Elyot's work was well-respected among certain intellectual circles. A survey of vernacular dietaries published in the second-half of the sixteenth century shows a number of titles in the *Castel* model. Many of these imitative dietaries, such as Cogan's *Haven of Health* and William Bullein's *Bulwark of Defense*, were themselves very well received among the elite reading public.

By the late sixteenth century the Paracelsan and Vesalian influences from continental Europe were beginning to diminish the gravitas of many of the classical medical authorities such as Galen and Hippocrates. These innovative medical ideas along with the strong nationalistic attitudes that dominated Elizabethan England led to a much more nationalistic sense of medical knowledge among some intellectual circles. For example, Cambridge physician Timothie Bright declared in his 1580 work, *Treatise Wherein is Declared the Sufficience of English Medecines*, that medical knowledge must be much more localized. According to Bright, only English medicines and curatives could work for illness in England. Why should physicians look to Roman medical

[126] Thomas Cogan, *The Haven of Helthe* (London, 1584), 4v.

sources when only English physicians could truly know the complexities of the English body and its response to illness? Bright writes:

> The whole art of physic hath been taken partly from the Greeks and partly from the Arabians. And as precepts of the art, so likewise the means and instruments wherewith for the most part the precepts of the same art are executed: which hath bred this error in times past, now by a tradition received, that all the duty of a physician touching restoring of health, is to be performed by the same remedies, not in kind only, but even especially with those which the Grecian and Arabian masters used, who wrote not for us, but for their Greeks and Arabics, tempering their medicines to their estates.[127]

Obviously drawing upon nationalistic sentiments and the vernacular defenses of the preceding decades, Bright glorified the power of English medical knowledge in a manner that would become more common into the early seventeenth century.

Although the vernacular medical works by Elyot and his successors were very different from the forays into philology by earlier humanists such as Linacre, they were still philosophically indebted to the Henrician humanists. The vernacular medical literature began as a logical continuation of the Northern humanist tradition, because it was an implementation of the Erasmian ideals of practical application to the newly-established medical corpus. Though works of the initial medical humanists were primarily philological, they were enacted with the purpose of expanding reliable medical knowledge to a larger audience. Therefore, the second-generation of English humanists could justify the production of vernacular medical works while still maintaining a purpose consistent with the philosophical ideals of the Erasmian generation of Northern humanists.

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[127] Timothie Bright, *Treatise Wherein*, Porter, *Popularization*, 27.

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