



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF
MEDICINE AND THE BODY
IN THE RENAISSANCE

INSTITUTIO SANTORIANA
FONDAZIONE COMEL

UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA



STUDIO FIRMANO
PER LA STORIA DELL'ARTE MEDICA E DELLA SCIENZA

Julius-Maximilians-
**UNIVERSITÄT
WÜRZBURG**

PSMEMM
Palgrave Studies in Medieval & Early Modern Medicine

CSMBR
ONLINE
EVENTS

PERSUASIVE ARGUMENTS IN GALEN'S PHYSIOLOGY

12
OCTOBER
2022
5.00 pm CET

A NEW READING OF «ON SEMEN» AND «ON THE USE OF BREATHING»

MATYÁŠ HAVRDA • Czech Academy of Sciences

Galen believes that some issues in physiological research can be settled with certainty, for example the question of where in the body resides the ruling faculty of the soul. Other issues, however, are being resolved at best in a merely persuasive manner, without pretense to certainty. In this regard, Galen distinguishes between *scientific* and *persuasive* (or *plausible*, “pithanoi”) arguments. The question of the nature of

persuasive arguments, what it is that differentiates them from the properly scientific ones, and of their role in Galenic science – whether they have any scientific value at all, and if so, what it is – is being disputed. In this lecture, I will explore these questions on the basis of two specific examples: the discussion about the use of the so-called glandular helpers in the treatise *On Semen* and an argument about the use of breathing in

the work *On the Use of Breathing*. I will show that persuasive arguments do have a legitimate place in natural science on Galen's view, especially where a properly scientific proof is impossible or not discovered yet.

The event is free to attend but registration is required. Info at csnbr.fondazionecomel.org