

Galen's style has not been much appreciated by scholars, from Photius to recent critics. This is quite a paradox as Galen was careful to shape his arguments according to his intended audience and readership, and was particularly concerned about the means of maintaining, or restoring, clarity in all contexts. Indeed, persuasion is at the heart of Galenic writing, and subsequently crucial in the history of medicine: Galen was central in medical canons for centuries. Interestingly, he was at the same time cast out of the literary canon. A literary critic and a philologist himself, however, Galen deserves more attention as a prose writer than he has enjoyed so far; by focussing on Galen's rhetoric, I intend to complement Galen's established picture as a prominent doctor and intellectual of the Roman period. Emerging from a three-year research project, this paper aims to identify the difficulties of reading Galen for a 21st century scholar and to highlight a number of rhetorical strategies used by Galen in his works, from the display of classical culture to the rhetoric of providence. The resulting analysis will provide readers with tools to approach Galen's numerous, multifaceted works, and offer an insight into the reasons for Galen's millenary success.