



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

INSTITUTIO SANTORIANA  
FONDAZIONE COMEL



YALE UNIVERSITY  
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences



University  
of Exeter

Julius-Maximilians-  
UNIVERSITÄT  
WÜRZBURG



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



PSMEMM  
Palgrave Studies in Medieval & Early Modern Medicine

CSMBR  
ONLINE  
EVENTS

# ON THE EDGE OF ETERNITY

20  
APRIL  
2023  
5.00 pm CET

DEEP TIME AND VERNACULAR SCIENCE IN MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE ITALY

IVANO DAL PRETE • Yale University

Recent scholarship has emphasized the centrality of the history of the Earth to premodern and early modern Europeans. Literature on the subject often described a timeless Earth scourged by recurring natural catastrophes, suggesting deep connections between the origin(s), history, and future of mankind and the geological and climatic transformations of their abode. The Genesis story was challenged, enlightened, or complemented by the

The Genesis story was challenged, enlightened, or complemented by the possibility of spontaneous generations and pre-adamic creations. Starting from the late middle ages, translations and popularizations brought vernacular readers in contact with scholarly sources. As visions of an ancient Earth informed Renaissance pictorial landscapes, craft people and artists tried to combine their particular knowledge of rocks and soils

with the general framework provided by the Aristotelian meteorological tradition. The periodical extinction of arts, sciences, and civilization itself by an inexorable nature informed even linguistic theories, as authors advocated for the use of the vernacular instead of Latin, which appeared just as ephemeral.