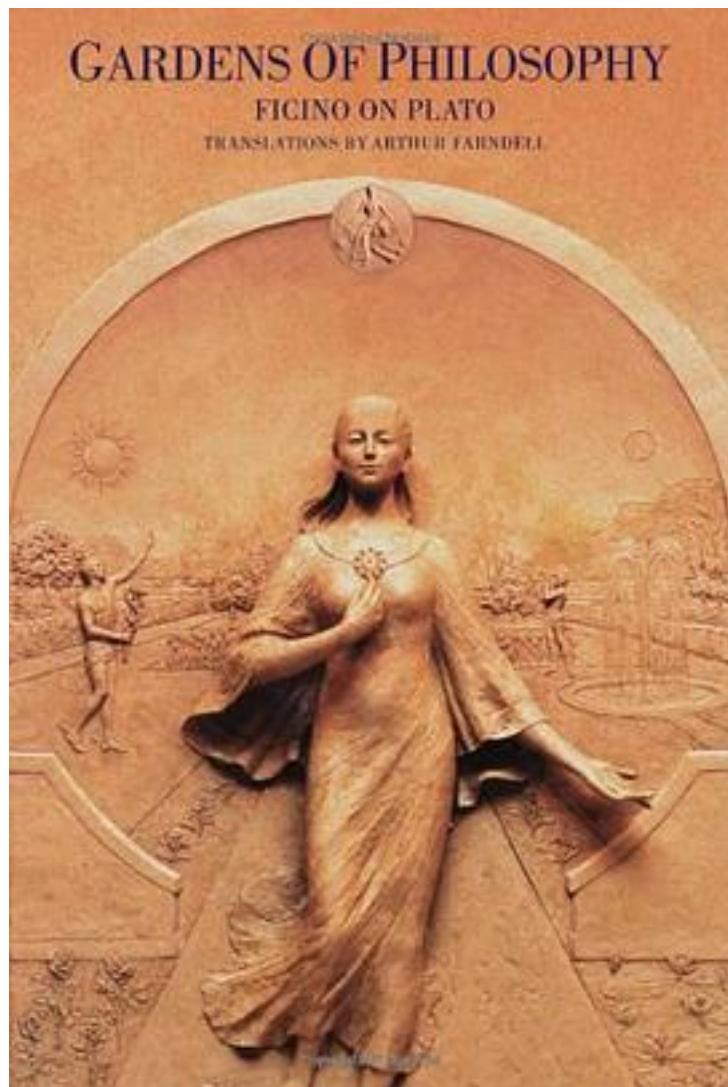


# Gardens of Philosophy



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著者:Farndell, Arthur

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What made the Renaissance tick? Why had it such a force that its thinking spread from a small group of scholars in Florence, working in their own brilliant ways but coming together in Ficino's small villa on the Florentine hillside, supported by the powerful but highly intelligent Medici family - so that it affected the thinking of the whole of Europe, and eventually of America, for five hundred years and is continuing to do so? This is the first English translation of some of the key works: Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), having translated all the extant works of Plato's Greek philosophy for the first time into Latin, absorbs their wisdom and here, in forty short articles, presents to the Medici family, as his patrons and sponsors, his commentaries on the meaning and implications of twenty-five of Plato's Dialogues and of the twelve Letters traditionally ascribed to Plato. The book puts the reader into the moment of history when Cosimo de' Medici and his family were given the opportunity which 'good rulers' have sought, from the earliest Greek state till today, to unite power with wisdom. Though this book will be an essential buy for Renaissance scholars and historians, its freshness of thought and wisdom is presented by its title, jacket illustration and introductory material as a book to be reflected on by general readers of philosophy and wisdom. Here is that extraordinary tsunami of human thought and endeavour and sheer vital power that was the Renaissance, caught for us in its early stirrings of new thought. This is a book of deep wisdom for reflection, as well as a glimpse of mankind awakening once more to its true potential.

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