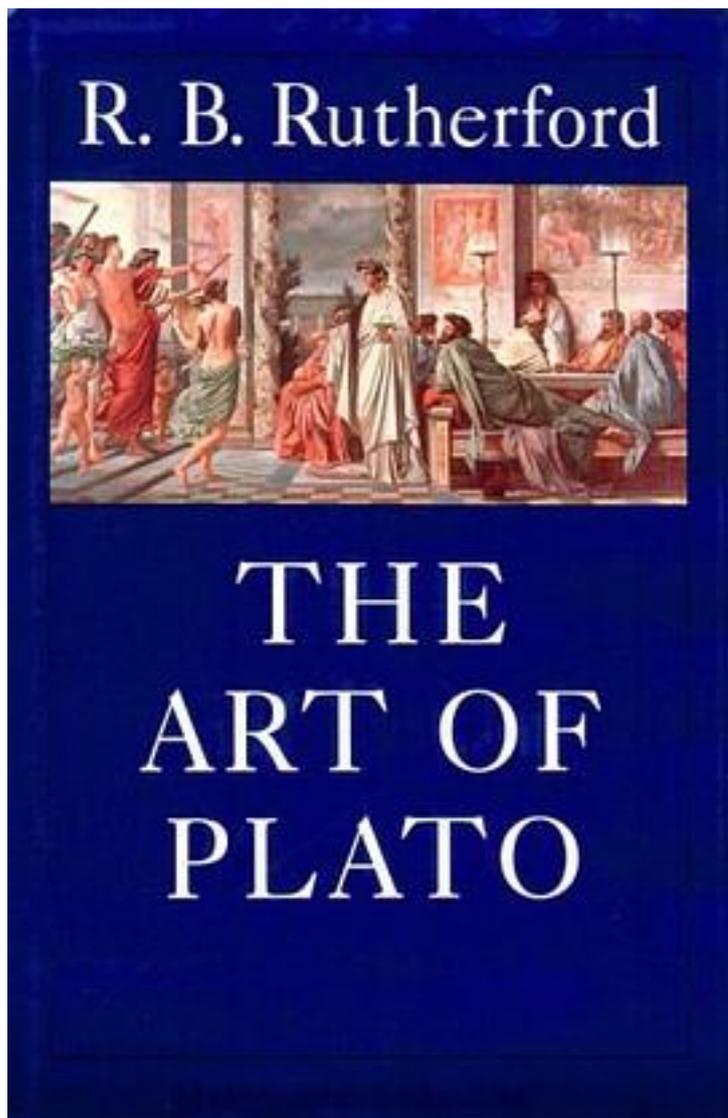


The Art of Plato



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著者:Rutherford, R. B.; Rutherford, Rb;

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The enduring fascination of Plato's dialogues rests not only on the dazzling range of his arguments and opinions, but also on the extraordinary richness of his literary style. The great Greek philosopher captures the imagination and stimulates the curiosity of his readers through his expert use of the techniques devised by the rhetoricians and the poets of his time: Plato, the critic of art and poetry, shows himself a consummate artist. This book is not a study of Plato's philosophy, but a contribution to the literary interpretation of the dialogues, through analysis of their formal structure, characterization, language, and imagery. Among the dialogues considered in these interrelated essays are some of Plato's most admired and influential works, including "Gorgias," the "Symposium," the "Republic" and "Phaedrus." Special attention is paid to the personality of Socrates, Plato's remarkable mentor, and to his interaction with the other characters in the dialogues. The author also discusses particular problems such as the sources for our knowledge of Socrates, the origins of the dialogue form, Plato's use of myth, and the "totalitarianism" of the "Republic." This combination of sympathetic literary criticism and exact historical scholarship makes "The Art of Plato" a valuable contribution to the study of one of the greatest of all Greek writers.

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