



Nuptial Arithmetic: Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on the Fatal Number in Book VIII of Plato's Republic

Michael J. B. Allen

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The latest of Michael Allen's distinguished studies of the Renaissance Neoplatonist, Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), presents a difficult, fascinating text. Late in his career, Ficino wrote a commentary on the intractable passage in Book VIII of Plato's *Republic* that concerns the mysterious geometric or "fatal" number. He was thus the first modern interpreter of this famous passage, and Allen is the first in our era to translate and elucidate his remarkable commentary.

Allen's critical translation of Ficino's analysis of the fatal number passage shows how it develops philosophical, psychological, numerological, astrological, and prophetic themes that had a particular resonance at the end of the fifteenth century.

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