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history of the Great Chain of Being.

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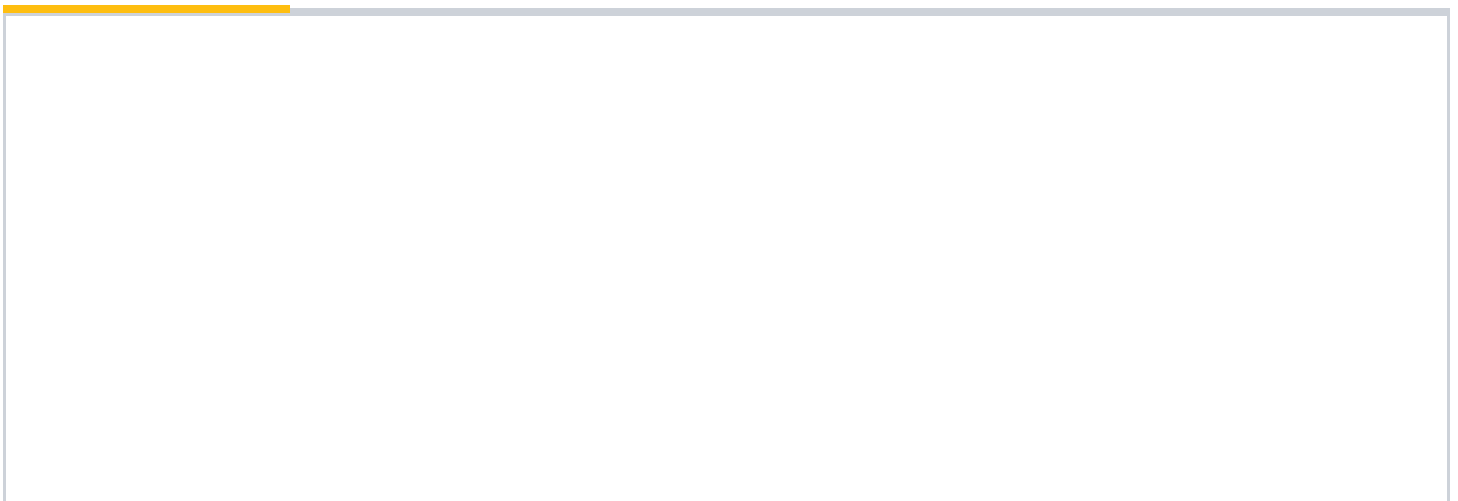
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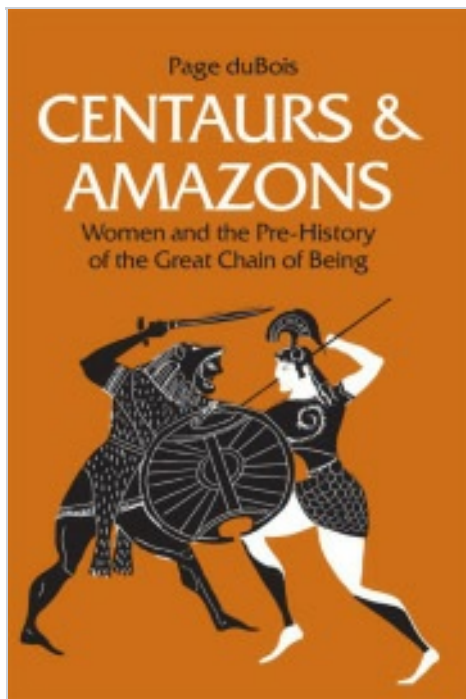


Centaurs and Amazons:  
Women and the Pre-  
History of the Great  
Chain of Being



In this Book





## **Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being**

*Page duBois*

1991

[Book](#)

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**SUMMARY**

In *Centaur and Amazons*, Page duBois offers a prehistory of hierarchy. Using structural anthropology, symbolic analysis, and recent literary theory, she demonstrates a shift in Greek thought from the fifth to the fourth century B.C. that had a profound influence upon subsequent Western culture and politics. Through an analysis of mythology, drama, sculpture, architecture, and Greek vase painting, duBois documents the transition from a system of thought that organized the experience of difference in terms of polarity and analogy to one based upon a relatively rigid hierarchical scheme. This was the beginning of "the great chain of being," the philosophical construct that all life was organized in minute gradations of superiority and inferiority. This scheme, in various guises, has continued to influence philosophical and political thought. The author's intelligent and discriminating use of scholarship from various



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