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## Aristotle's Ladder, Darwin's Tree: The Evolution of Visual Metaphors for Biological Order

By J. David Archibald

Columbia University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Aristotle's Ladder, Darwin's Tree: The Evolution of Visual Metaphors for Biological Order, J. David Archibald, Leading paleontologist J. David Archibald explores the rich history of visual metaphors for biological order from ancient times to the present and their influence on humans' perception of their place in nature, offering uncommon insight into how we went from standing on the top rung of the biological ladder to embodying just one tiny twig on the tree of life. He begins with the ancient but still misguided use of ladders to show biological order, moving then to the use of trees to represent seasonal life cycles and genealogies by the Romans. The early Christian Church then appropriated trees to represent biblical genealogies. The late eighteenth century saw the tree reclaimed to visualize relationships in the natural world, sometimes with a creationist view, but in other instances suggesting evolution. Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859) exorcised the exclusively creationist view of the "tree of life," and his ideas sparked an explosion of trees, mostly by younger acolytes in Europe. Although Darwin's influence waned in the early twentieth century, by midcentury his ideas held sway...



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