

The work is divided into Part I and Part II. In Part I the author summarises the scholarly methods applied by Egyptology for interpreting ancient Egyptian mythological material – the euhemeristic (historicising) method and the theory developed by the Myth-Ritual school. He shows their main weaknesses and concludes that the historicising method is reductionistic and that the Myth-Ritual school is mistaken in its view of the type of connection between myths and rituals. He states that the structuralist tradition seems to avoid the pitfalls of these two methods. Part II is dedicated to a practical application of the structuralist method on ancient Egyptian mythological material – namely on the so-called Astarte papyrus. The author starts with summarising all the relevant literature published on the papyrus and gives its chronological overview. A theoretical summary of the basic principles and methods of the structuralist theory as proposed by Lévi-Strauss follows. Since his theory in its pure form contains several fallacies, he also presents the objections (relevant to his topic) which directed towards the structuralist method and explains how other scholars (especially Edmund Leach and Terence Turner) have managed to cope with these fallacies, modifying the structuralist theory into a form which the author used in this work. To create an interpretational framework for the analysis of the Astarte papyrus (for it is too fragmentary to be analysed directly), a structural analysis of the Tale of the Two brothers and the Osiris Cycle follow. He then explains the connection which connects these myths with the Astarte papyrus and inquires into the process myth transfer from one culture to another. In the final chapters the author concludes that the structuralist approach is a good way to understanding mythological material in general and the Egyptian in particular. He also proposes that the results of a successful structuralist analysis should be followed by a comparison with archaeological material. Only thus can its validity be ascertained and connection with the actual socio-cultural situation of the ancient Egyptians established.