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## Structural Anthropology Zero

By **Claude Lévi-Strauss**

### From the reviews:

*"This volume makes available the early writings of the great anthropologist and philosopher Claude Lévi-Strauss, which together constitute a prehistory of structuralism. It sheds light on his American period, in exile during World War II, a time of great creativity during which he met and was strongly influenced by Roman Jakobson and was introduced to Northwest Coast art—in short, a time of life that was a catalyst for who he would become in his later incarnation as an international intellectual celebrity."*

**Michael E. Harkin, University of Wyoming**

### About the book:

Published here in English for the first time, this volume of Lévi-Strauss's texts from the 1940s bears witness to a period of work which is often overlooked but which was the crucible for the structural anthropology that Lévi-Strauss would go on to develop in the years that followed.

Like many European Jewish intellectuals, Lévi-Strauss had sought refuge in New York while the Nazis overran and occupied much of Europe. He had already been introduced to Jakobson and structural linguistics, but he had not yet laid out an agenda for structuralism, which he would do in the 1950s and 60s. At the same time, these American years were the time when Lévi-Strauss would learn of some of the world's most devastating historical catastrophes—the genocide of the indigenous American peoples and of European Jews. From the beginning of the 1950s, Lévi-Strauss's anthropology tacitly bears the heavy weight of the memory and possibility of the Shoah. To speak of 'structural anthropology zero' is therefore to refer to the source of a way of thinking which turned our conception of the human on its head. But this prequel to *Structural Anthropology* also underlines the sense of a tabula rasa which animated its author at the end of the war as well as the project—shared with others—of a civilizational rebirth on novel grounds.

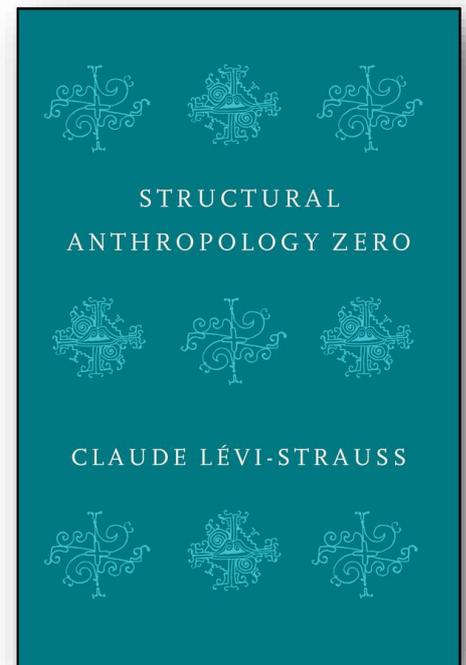
### About the author:

**Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009)** was one of the most influential anthropologists of the twentieth century. He held the Chair of Social Anthropology at the College de France from 1959 to 1982 and was the author of many books, including *Tristes Tropiques* and *Structural Anthropology*.

### PUBLICATION DETAILS:

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