

The Textual Criticism of Sumerian Literature

by Paul Delnero

DESCRIPTION:

The occurrence of textual variation is a significant but frequently neglected aspect of the study of Sumerian literary compositions. The correct evaluation of textual variants and the proper understanding of how and why they occur is essential to producing reliable editions of such texts. Such explorations also provide invaluable evidence for the written transmission of Sumerian literary works and a wealth of data for assessing aspects of Sumerian grammar. Drawing from a detailed analysis of the different types of textual variants that occur in the numerous duplicates of a group of ten compositions known collectively as the Decad, this book aims to provide a much needed critical methodology for interpreting textual variation in the Sumerian literary corpus which can be applied to editing and analyzing these compositions with improved accuracy.

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Paul Delnero is an Assyriologist who specializes in the history, culture, and society of Ancient Mesopotamia, with a particular emphasis on the study of the Sumerian language and its grammar. Delnero writes about archival practices in the second millennium BCE, the interaction of orality and literacy in the Mesopotamian textual record, and the transmission of Sumerian literature. Currently, Delnero is Assistant Professor in Assyriology in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

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