

## Early Greek and Near Eastern Epic Performance, Formularity, Written Transmission

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Comparison between Hellenic and Near Eastern epic is a thriving field. So far, it has mainly concentrated on the question of cross-cultural influence and literary transmission. Orality is thought to have been crucial to those processes, but much remains to be done to compare the nature of early Greek and Near Eastern poetry, and how orality, writing and performance interact. While poetic technique presents comparable features (especially formulaic conventions and repetition), more work on orality has been done among Hellenists than among Assyriologists, and the conditions of textual preservation are markedly different. Current views place early Greece squarely on the oral side and Mesopotamia on the side of writtenness, but it is likely that we need a more complex model. This paper has three parts. First, it surveys passages in Mesopotamian verse which attest to how poets portrayed composition, reception and transmission. Next, it offers a case study on comparative formulaic analysis, with examples from Homer and Old Babylonian Akkadian poetry. Finally, it discusses how performance style and writtenness may help us model the complexities of textual transmission.

**Wann: 10.06.2025 – 18:00 Uhr**

**Wo: Seminarraum 5 - 1. Stock - Ágnes-Heller-Haus**