



Homer and the Oral Tradition

G. S. Kirk

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The Songs of Homer (Cambridge University Press, 1962) was a major contribution to Homeric studies, establishing important theories about the composition, structure and transmission of the monumental poems. In this 1976 volume, Geoffrey Kirk returns to Homer, but the themes are largely different. He considers in particular the nature of oral and epic poetry, and the meaning of an oral tradition. There are problems here of interest not only to classicists and Homeric specialists but also to students of English and comparative literature, and to anthropologists concerned with the literature of traditional societies. Those pieces that were previously published were revised and unified for the volume. The longest section, on 'the oral and the literary epic', is derived from the J. H. Gray Lectures, which Professor Kirk delivered in Cambridge in 1974 and which had not been previously published in any form.

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