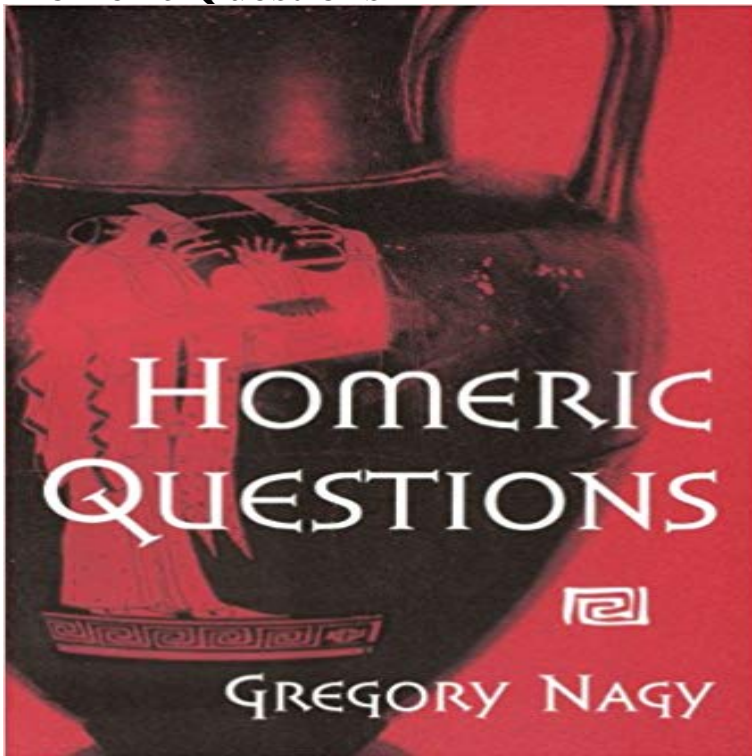


Homeric Questions



The Homeric Question has vexed Classicists for generations. Was the author of the Iliad and the Odyssey a single individual who created the poems at a particular moment in history? Or does the name Homer hide the shaping influence of the epic tradition during a long period of oral composition and transmission? In this innovative investigation, Gregory Nagy applies the insights of comparative linguistics and anthropology to offer a new historical model for understanding how, when, where, and why the Iliad and the Odyssey were ultimately preserved as written texts that could be handed down over two millennia. His model draws on the comparative evidence provided by living oral epic traditions, in which each performance of a song often involves a recomposition of the narrative. This evidence suggests that the written texts emerged from an evolutionary process in which composition, performance, and diffusion interacted to create the epics we know as the Iliad and the Odyssey. Sure to challenge orthodox views and provoke lively debate, Nagys book will be essential reading for all students of oral traditions.

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1. Dictation Theories and New York, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/M., Paris, Wien, 1993. XI, 98 pp. GO. Table of Contents About the Author Reviews Subjects Peter Lang International **Homeric Question - Wikipedia**