

Matthew E. Gordley

## Teaching through Song in Antiquity

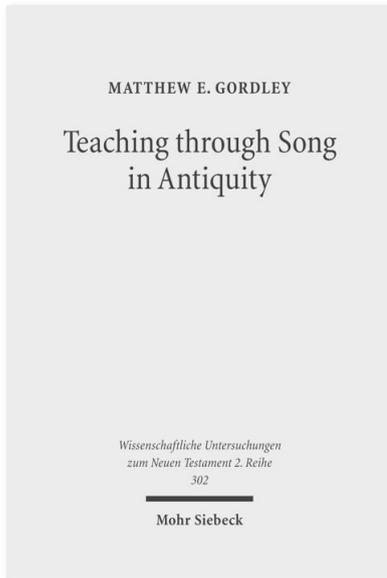
Didactic Hymnody among Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians

[Teaching through Song in Antiquity]

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While scholars of antiquity have long spoken of didactic hymns, no single volume has defined or explored this phenomenon across cultural boundaries in antiquity. In this monograph Matthew E. Gordley provides a broad definition of didactic hymnody and examines how didactic hymns functioned at the intersection of historical circumstances and the needs of a given community to perceive itself and its place in the cosmos and to respond accordingly. Comparing the use of didactic hymnody in a variety of traditions, this study illuminates the multifaceted ways that ancient hymns and psalms contributed to processes of communal formation among the human audiences that participated in the praise either as hearers or active participants. The author finds that in Greek, Roman, Jewish, and Christian contexts, many hymns and prayers served a didactic role fostering the ongoing development of a sense of identity within particular communities.

**Matthew E. Gordley** Born 1972; 2000 MDiv, Alliance Theological Seminary; 2006 PhD, University of Notre Dame; currently Dean of the College of Learning and Innovation, Carlow University (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).



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Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG  
Postfach 2040  
D-72010 Tübingen  
[info@mohrsiebeck.com](mailto:info@mohrsiebeck.com)  
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