



2016

Bradley and Muller's " Church history: An introduction to research methods and resources, second edition" (Book Review)

Rebecca A. Givens
University of Alabama

The Christian Librarian is the official publication of the Association of Christian Librarians (ACL). To learn more about ACL and its products and services please visit <http://www.acl.org/>

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl>

 Part of the [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), [History Commons](#), and the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Givens, Rebecca A. (2016) "Bradley and Muller's " Church history: An introduction to research methods and resources, second edition" (Book Review)," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 59 : Iss. 2 , Article 25.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol59/iss2/25>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Christian Librarian by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolf@georgefox.edu.

reconstruct the church structure during this time, identifying important characters of Christianity in Oxyrhynchus, understanding some of the sociopolitical issues faced by early Coptic Christians of this region, and giving us an idea of the things which interested the Christian community during the second to the fourth century in Oxyrhynchus.

Although both editors are faculty from Brigham Young University there is no denominational bias in this work which is academically sound and serves as a very valuable function for all scholars of early Christianity. As with any work like this it will suffer from a shorter useful life because research on Oxyrhynchus is ongoing and additional fragments are almost certainly going to be found which will make *The Christian Oxyrhynchus* incomplete. Hopefully further editions can remedy this problem. The reasonable price makes this a good investment regardless. The failure of the editors to include LXX material from Oxyrhynchus will make this less useful to some scholars. Lack of English translations for the 52 New Testament fragments is another negative which limits the usefulness of this work to more academic scholars or those with some background in Greek who can easily translate these for themselves. A lack of reproductions of the actual fragment in some form is another negative, although these can readily be found in resources such as those listed above.

Overall this is a highly valuable work for scholars of early Christianity. Libraries serving graduate level students and faculty working with early Christianity, Coptic Christianity, or upper Egypt should definitely have a copy of *Christian Oxyrhynchus*.

Reviewer

Joseph Baumstarck, Jr., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Bradley, J. A., & Muller, R. A. (2016). *Church history: An introduction to research methods and resources, second edition*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing. 214 pp. \$30.00. ISBN 9780802874054

Church History: An Introduction to Research Methods and Resources is a reference book which offers guidelines to the graduate student researching church history. This new edition is a much updated version of the 1995 first edition, which takes into account the latest information on digitized primary source materials and internet research. Chapters 1 and 2 deal with the theory behind the study of history, church history in particular, providing some context for the student's research. Chapters 3 through 6 lead the student through the entire research project, including choosing and narrowing a topic, researching and evaluating different types of sources, writing research papers, monographs and articles, and preparing lectures. The last third of the book is a bibliography broken down by time period and an appendix of internet

resources. As with all reference material in this age of information, it is likely to be somewhat outdated by the time it gets into students' hands (the authors state it is not comprehensive to begin with), but it should provide a valuable starting point to any researcher. This book would be invaluable for the new graduate student; its step by step guidelines give a nice framework for a thesis project. James E. Bradley is Geoffrey W. Bromiley Professor Emeritus and Senior Professor of Church History at Fuller Theological Seminary. Richard A. Muller is P. J. Zondervan Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary. Recommended for graduate students of church history.

Reviewer

Rebecca A. Givens, University of Alabama

Bautch, R.J., & Knoppers, G.N. (Eds.). (2015). *Covenant in the Persian period: From Genesis to Chronicles*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. 452 pp. \$58.05. ISBN 9781575063560

This edited volume brings together twenty-two essays discussing covenant understanding during the Neo-Babylonian, Persian and Hellenistic periods. Besides overt statements of covenant in scripture, the selected authors highlight the development of covenantal thinking throughout all Old Testament genres: law, narratives, psalms, oracles and wisdom literature. Old Testament scholars themselves, the editors present the latest developments in covenantal theology put forth by European, Israeli and North American scholars, and introduce their works with an informative introduction that defines covenant and details why each chapter is included and how they relate to each other. Although this volume includes only contemporary scholars, each author cites numerous works spanning the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries.

As well as looking at Hebrew scripture, many authors trace covenant development in Ancient Israel's contemporaries, and how these nations may have influenced Israel's changing understanding of covenant. Although other ancient writings are referred to, this volume is separated into sections according to Hebrew scripture: the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomistic historical books, prophetic works, wisdom literature, and concluding with Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. These essays are based on Hebrew scripture, so knowledge of Hebrew is an asset for total comprehension of these highly technical essays. Detailed author and scripture indices provide two additional, helpful access points to the information in these essays.