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metadata

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Finding

References

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(Login required) Email the author
(Login required) Post a Comment
(Login required)

Home > Vol 10, No 1 > **Abdul Rahim**

CHRISTIAN NEO- ORTHODOXY APPROACH TO RECONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT ON SELECTED THEOLOGICAL ISSUES: AN ISLAMIC ANALYSIS

Adibah Abdul Rahim

Abstract

Christian neo-orthodoxy can be placed as a middle position between traditional orthodoxy and liberalism. Like Muslim reformists' approach of reform, which attempted to reconstruct Islamic religious thought in the light of modern science and knowledge, Christian neo-orthodoxy insisted that Christianity itself needs continually to be rethought and that theology must engage seriously with the modern world in its quest for understanding. Therefore, both Islamic approach of reform and Christian neo-orthodoxy shared a similar objective, but both present different views and methods of interpreting scriptures and traditions in the light of new scientific knowledge. This paper highlights selected theological issues advocated by Christian neo-orthodoxy for reconstruction of religious thought. At the same time, it provides an analysis on those issues from Islamic perspectives. It was found that despite of claiming themselves as belong to mediating position, Christian neo-orthodoxy seemed to ignore their scriptures and depended much on human interpretations. This is obviously contradicted to an Islamic approach which upholds that the fundamental sources of the Qur'an and Sunnah should always be referred to as primary references despite our reliance on modern knowledge and rational inquiries. Since the study is theoretical in nature, it is confined to library research. It is hoped that this study will provide a proper understanding on the response of religious thought from the perspective of two different religions, Christianity and Islam.

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[Home](#) > [Archives](#) > **Vol 10, No 1**

Vol 10, No 1

Al-Hikmah 10(1) 2018

Table of Contents

Articles

NILAI AGAMA ISLAM DALAM KESEDARAN
BERAGAMA KALANGAN MASYARAKAT
BAJAU DARAT KAMPUNG PENIMBAWAN
TUARAN, SABAH

Qurratu Ain Rapihi, Zaizul Ab Rahman

PENGARUH VLOG DAKWAH TERHADAP
KOGNITIF DAN AFEKTIF REMAJA DI
PUTRAJAYA

Muhamad Faisal Ashaari, Noor Hafizah Jujaji

TRAIT PERSONALITI PENDAKWAH MUSLIM:
SATU SOROTAN LITERATUR

Izzaty Ulya Munirah Abd Aziz, Zainab Ismail

KONSEP HISBAH DAN KEPENTINGANNYA
DALAM PENGURUSAN HAL EHWAL ISLAM
Abdul Qahhar Ibrahim, Abdul Ghafar Don, Muhamad
Faisal Asha'ari

HUBUNGAN INSENTIF KEIMANAN DAN
AMALAN PENGAJARAN: KAJIAN TERHADAP
GURU TAHFIZ SWASTA DI NEGERI PERAK
Mohamad Marzuqi Abdul Rahim, Abd Hadi Borham,
Wahyu Hidayat Abdullah, Muhammad Akramin
Kamarul zaman

KELANGSUNGAN SYARIAT ISLAM MENERUSI
PERUNDANGAN MALAYSIA

Mohd Mustaffa Jusoh @ Yusoff, Mohd Musa Sarip,
Wan Abdul Fattah Wan Ismail

DAKWAH MELALUI MEDIA BARU DI
MALAYSIA: PELUANG ATAU CABARAN?
Aini Maznina A. Manaf

MODEL PENGUKURAN APLIKASI MUDAH
ALIH PANDUAN SOLAT ANDROID (MAPS)
Siti Zuraida Abdul Manaf, Norazah Nordin, Helmi
Norman, Ahmad Syukri Mohamad Zaid., Analisa
Hamdan

PERLAKSANAAN KAEDAH PEMBELAJARAN
BERASASKAN PROJEK DALAM PROSES
PENGAJARAN DAN PEMBELAJARAN KAEDAH
FIOH

[HOME](#)

[SUBMISSIONS](#)

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[INDEXING](#)

[CURRENT ISSUE](#)

[ARCHIVES](#)

[NEWS](#)

[SEARCH](#)

[PUBLICATION FEE](#)

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THROUGH COMPARATIVE RELIGION: A
PRELIMINARY REVIEW

Aemy Elyani Mat Zain, Norsaadah Din@ Mohamad
Nasirudin, Nazneen Ismail, Maryam Habibah Kamis

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TO RECONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS
THOUGHT ON SELECTED THEOLOGICAL
ISSUES: AN ISLAMIC ANALYSIS

Adibah Abdul Rahim

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ISLAMOPHONIA IN THE WEST MEASURING
AND EXPLAINING INDIVIDUAL ATTITUDES by
MARC HELBLING

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