

## 23V30 – Should Philosophy of Religion do more? (Article Review)

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me today for an @ the PUNLA coffee table. I would like to share with you an article I read by Kevin Schilbrack which response to three critics or criticisms of his book, “*Should Philosophy of Religion Do More?*”. I would like to share this with you as a potential resource that at least some of you might be interested in.

### Let’s pray.

Kevin H. Schilbrack’s article is a response to three critics or criticisms of his book, “*Should Philosophy of Religion Do More?*” He identifies the three critics as Mikel Burley, Luke Fox, and William Wood. The article is separated into three standalone sections each addressing one of the three identified critics and their criticisms.

In the first section of the article, he is responding to the criticism of Mikel Burley. Burley’s questions a chapter titled “*Are Religious Practices Philosophical?*” as too ambiguous. Schilbrack points out in his response that if our definition of Philosophy broad, then the practice of law, the practice of science and the practice of religion must be deemed philosophical. Schilbrack then clarifies his perspective with a statement that the definition of Philosophy should be much narrower. The practices in themselves are activities not philosophy. Instead Schilbrack wants to focus on the idea of belief using representationist, interpretationist and dispositionalist accounts of those beliefs.

In the second section of the article, he is responding to the criticism of Luke Fox. Schilbrack begins this section by defining his ontology of religion as a “realist position,” rather than either of the extremes of abolitionists or constructionists. Fox sees this view as either empirical or nonempirical, which Schilbrack rejects. Schilbrack uses the term “superempirical” in an effort to avoid using the term supernatural or any other dualistic terms. Fox continues his criticism by challenging the rationale for Schilbrack views. Schilbrack then proceeds to define his rationale with the definition of religion should be (1) clear, (2) substantive, and (3) include concept of God. Fox criticism suggests that these types of “superempirical” realities are beyond the ability of human reason. Schilbrack responds by listing how many religious communities have offered reasons for the “superempirical”, including inferential, transcendental, experiential or prudential arguments.

In the third section of the article, Schilbrack is responding to the criticism of William Wood. Wood critiques are that Schilbrack has exaggerated the problem. Wood points to the fact modern philosophers are less concerned whether theism is rational, and metaphysics are respected in the contemporary analytic philosophy. Schilbrack respond by categorizing the criticisms as more Christian Apologetics than philosophy. Schilbrack response ends with his addressing of two questions from Wood. First, the question is more of a thesis in which Wood believes philosophy should be the priority, while Schilbrack argues for a balance between disciplines instead of hierarchy. The second question addresses the interdisciplinary role in religious philosophy. Schilbrack

addressed the philosophy practitioner's objection as being insular. Schilbrack states his opinion that religious philosophers should be more open to collaboration in order to adopt a richer understanding of their task evaluating religious beliefs.

I agree with his response to Burley, in that, we need a clear and narrow definition of what constitutes Religious Philosophy or Christian Philosophy. This allows for a more clear and concise discussion among Christian Scholars, Christian Theologians and Christian Philosophers. Schilbrack's response to Fox was more abstract than substantive. Schilbrack redefining and defining of terms makes the discussion problematic. Schilbrack's response to Wood highlights how his premise differs from many of his contemporary philosophers. Schilbrack stresses the need to be comparative and build on the work of those that have come before.

### **Let's Pray.**

I think articles like this have a lot of value. However, they are filled with terms and -isms and -isms. We, who study and write about theology and philosophy should be careful to ensure our audience understand any term we may use.

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, I hope you'll join us again.

If you liked the message, please share the link with a friend. Send me comments, my email should be on the screen.

Until next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.