

A PRIORI JUSTIFICATION

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Casullo's project in this important book is "to provide a systematic treatment of the primary epistemological issues associated with the a priori that is sensitive to recent developments in the field of epistemology" (p. 3).¹ Such a treatment is badly needed. Traditionally, discussions of a priori knowledge have been cast in terms of a conflict between Rationalism and Empiricism, and the Logical Empiricists' distinctive version of the latter, which aimed to explicate the phenomenon in terms of conventional linguistic meanings, was widely accepted in the early twentieth century. This 'moderate empiricist' account of a priority is generally agreed to have been buried sometime around the middle of the twentieth century by the Quinean attacks on analyticity and the project of linguistic/conceptual analysis. But over the second half of the century, instead of looking elsewhere for an explication of a priority (or attempting to rehabilitate the linguistic approach) most epistemologists seem to have neglected the issue. And when they did touch on it, philosophers of the time often conflated the notion of a priority with those of analyticity, necessity and indefeasibility.

Happily, interest in a priority has recently been rekindled with a welter of exciting new material by Bealer, Boghossian, Bonjour, Casullo, Goldman, Peacocke, Plantinga, Sosa and others. Casullo's book—a model of clear rigorous argument—constitutes the most thoroughgoing contribution to date to this body of work. Apart from articulating and defending a bold new approach to the a priori, which does indeed reflect recent developments, in epistemology and elsewhere, it provides much needed comparative evaluations of many of the recent proposals (as well as some of the more traditional ones) and throughout the book, germane issues are advanced in important and novel ways. I'll argue below that there is a serious gap in the range of theories Casullo considers, and I'll suggest that two of his most distinctive arguments are unconvincing. But none of this weakens my conviction that this book sets a new benchmark for work on a priori knowledge, and must be studied by anyone with a serious interest in the issue.

I

The book is in three parts. The first two address in turn the questions Casullo considers to be most fundamental: *How should a priori knowledge be characterized?* and *Is there any?* The topics for the third part are the relations between a priority and, respectively, necessity and analyticity. This third part contains

1. *A Priori Justification*, By Albert Casullo (Oxford University Press, 2003. xiv + 250 pp. £35.00).

a great deal of incisive and important argument, but as I tend to sympathize with Casullo's view that the questions considered in the first two are, at least *prima facie*, the more fundamental for epistemology, I'll confine my attention to those.

Not only do epistemologists disagree about how the notion of a priority should be *explicated*, there is even widespread disagreement over precisely which notion/concept it is they are seeking to explicate. Hence the importance of Casullo's first question. He begins with the plausible contention that the concept of a priori knowledge should be analysed reductively, in terms of that of a priori *justification*, and he distinguishes two kinds of conditions in terms of which analyses of that notion are proposed. *Epistemic* conditions concern, for instance, the strength, source and/or defeasibility of justification, while *non-epistemic* conditions invoke non-epistemic notions such as necessity and analyticity. Casullo argues that non-epistemic conditions are not conceptually constitutive of the notion of a priori justification, as follows. First, they cannot be (conceptually) *sufficient* for a priori justification, since that notion is so distinctively epistemic. The question remains whether the correct analysis of the notion of a priori justification might feature a non-epistemic *necessary* condition. Casullo convincingly rebuts various proposals (from Bonjour, Plantinga and Chisholm) that invoke *necessity* in such a role. However, he barely touches on the contention that the notion of *analyticity* is in this way conceptually necessary. This strikes me as a little odd, not only because analyticity featured so prominently in the analyses of a priority that were orthodox in the early twentieth century, but also because formidable proposals which are in my view importantly related to that analysis have recently re-emerged in work by, for instance, Peacocke and Boghossian²—none of which Casullo considers. I'll have more to say about this omission in §IV below, but for now we can say in Casullo's defence that these theorists may not intend notions like analyticity to feature as constituents of the very *concept* of a priority. Indeed, the characterizations of the notion offered by Boghossian and Peacocke at the beginnings of their discussions are in terms epistemic conditions of the kind favoured by Casullo.

Turning attention to the *epistemic* conditions, Casullo argues that it is not constitutive of the concept of a priori justification that such justification is *stronger* than a posteriori justification. Nor, he argues, is it constitutive of the concept that such justification cannot be defeated—whether by further a priori evidence, or by empirical evidence—or that it can never be rational on the basis of such evidence to *revise* an a priori justified belief.

The final type of condition to consider involves the *source* of a priori justification. Many philosophers agree that a priori justification has a *non-experiential* source: the problem is to explicate the notion of *experience* invoked in that condition. The five senses deliver paradigmatic examples of experiences, but many epistemologists agree that, for example, justification by

2. Christopher Peacocke, 'How Are A Priori Truths Possible?', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 1–2 (1993), pp. 175–199; Paul Boghossian, 'Analyticity Reconsidered', *Noûs*, 30 (1996), pp. 360–391.

testimony, memory and introspection ought also to count as experiential in the relevant sense. What, if anything, is distinctive of all experiential/non-experiential sources of justification? Casullo postpones further discussion of this to later in the book: the positive conclusion of the first part is simply that the concept of a priori justification should be characterized not in terms of strength, indefeasibility or conditions involving non-epistemic notions like necessity, but rather as justification with a *non-experiential source*.

II

The first two chapters of the second part of the book respectively consider arguments in support and in opposition to ‘a priorism’—the contention that there is a priori justification/knowledge. Casullo first reviews ‘conceptual arguments’ (from Putnam and Field) which proceed by proposing conceptual analyses of a priori justification in terms of certain conditions (indefeasibility, for instance) and arguing that certain beliefs are justified in ways that satisfy those conditions. Given his defence of the minimal analysis of the concept in the first part of the book, it’s quite easy for Casullo to rebut these arguments by rejecting the proposed sufficient conditions which they invoke. He is equally unconvinced by ‘criterial arguments’, which proceed by identifying features of certain (purportedly) known propositions (such as necessity, irrefutability) and arguing (though this time not on the basis of *conceptual analysis* of a priority) that such propositions cannot be known a posteriori. The chapter ends with a discussion of Bonjour’s ‘deficiency arguments’ which attempt indirectly to support a priorism by disclosing difficulties with the opposing thesis, ‘radical empiricism’.³ Casullo finds these arguments ineffective, mainly on the ground that Bonjour’s own position faces analogous difficulties. Thus, for example, while Bonjour argues that radical empiricists have not provided a plausible account of how experiences of *particular* objects can justify the principles of inference needed to warrant *general* beliefs, Casullo complains that Bonjour does little better. Bonjour’s account of the justification of such principles makes crucial use of the idea that thinkers ‘grasp’ universals, but according to Casullo, he provides no satisfactory non-metaphorical explication of this obscure contention. This complaint is fair, but seems to me to demonstrate less than Casullo assumes. Bonjour is far from the first philosopher to contend that thinking involves some kind of ‘grasp’ of abstract objects like universals. If any advocate of that fairly common realist thesis can provide a more satisfactory explication of it than Bonjour, then Bonjour’s objection to radical empiricism survives Casullo’s attack.

Casullo is also unconvinced by the opposing arguments. First there are, again, ‘conceptual arguments’ which proceed by offering analyses of the *concept* of a priori justification and alleging that none of our beliefs satisfy certain conditions implicated in the analyses. The condition most often advanced in

3. Laurence Bonjour, *In Defense of Pure Reason* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 3–4.

this context (for instance, by Putnam and Kitcher) is ‘unrevisability’: the condition of an a priori justified belief’s being such that it could never be rational to revise it. As we have seen, Casullo rejects the claim that such a condition is constitutive of the concept of a priori justification, but this leaves in play the possibility that unrevisability might be a *consequence* a priori. Casullo constructs an argument against this around a number of striking examples (pp. 113–121). First he considers a false belief that a proposition of logic is true which a novice logic student might form on the basis of a reliable but fallible non-experiential process. Suppose the student later comes correctly to believe that the proposition is false on the basis of an exercise of the same kind of process. If, as seems highly plausible, the student’s post-revision belief is justified a priori, there seems to be no good reason not to consider the first belief to have been justified a priori too (its falsity notwithstanding). Thus, a priori justified beliefs can be rationally revised on the basis of further a priori evidence. Casullo goes on to articulate an analogous scenario in which an a priori justified belief appears to be rationally revised on the basis of a posteriori evidence. Here, a logician’s belief in the conclusion of what he takes to be a valid proof is revised on the basis of his becoming convinced on the basis of strong neurophysiological evidence that at the time he formulated the proof, his brain was manifesting an inference pattern which, in the past, has always occasioned his construction of erroneous proofs.

Next there are arguments from radical empiricism (from Mill, Kitcher and Quine) which attempt to demonstrate that beliefs assumed to be justified a priori are really justified a posteriori. Casullo’s response to the basic, Millian version of this is to concede that such beliefs can be justified a posteriori but to point out that it does not follow that they are not *also* justified a priori. Mill rejects this possibility on grounds of *simplicity*, and to this Casullo responds, “the goal of an epistemological theory is not to offer the *simplest* account. . . . The goal is to offer an *accurate* account” (p. 122). This response is unpersuasive. Philosophers (and scientists) who defend the selection of one theory over another on the ground that it is simpler usually endorse a methodological principle to the effect that simpler theories are, precisely, more likely to be accurate/true. If Casullo has a good reason to reject that principle, he doesn’t explain it here.

The final set of opposing arguments Casullo considers aim to disclose tensions between a priorism and *naturalism*. Different construals of ‘naturalism’ engender different arguments here, but the basic idea (first promoted by Benacerraf) is that a belief can be justified only if it is causally related to its truth-maker, in which case the truth-maker cannot incorporate acausal abstract objects, as those of typical a priori justified beliefs seem to do. In response, naturalist a priorists propose analyses of justification/knowledge free of such a strong causal condition. The most promising such is ‘process reliabilism’, according to which a belief’s justification is a matter of its production by a generally reliable process—that is, one which generally engenders true beliefs. The question then becomes whether there is a distinctive process which underlies the beliefs at issue, and is generally reliable. Borrowing from a familiar debate between Bonjour and Goldman, Casullo draws an interesting

methodological analogy with *telepathy*. In each case there is some evidence that a suitable process exists and is reliable, but also some against; and, of course (by the reliabilist's own lights) evidence against the reliability of the process at issue depreciates the justification it is apt to confer. Moreover, the acausality of the apparent truth-makers of a priori justified beliefs worryingly suggests that even if the process at issue is reliable, we'll never explain *why* it is so in anything like the way we do in the cases of processes underlying a posteriori justified beliefs. The proposal "introduces an explanatory gap" (p. 138).

III

The discussion of process reliabilism sets the stage for the book's most distinctive positive contributions, developed in the final chapter of the second part of the book. Casullo notes that most of the arguments a priorists have advanced in support of their thesis have been *a priori* arguments. He suggests that this restriction is unmotivated: there may be *a posteriori* evidence for the existence of a priori justification, and if there is, a priorists should exploit it.

Before this strategy can be pursued, Casullo must resolve the question postponed earlier of how to characterize the notion of *experience*. He considers various analyses of the notion (from Chisholm, Plantinga, Bonjour and McGinn) and finds them all wanting. His bold alternative proposal is that 'experience' is a putative *natural kind term*, and behaves semantically in the way that Kripke and Putnam describe for terms such as 'water' and 'gold'. Thus, Casullo proposes, the "cognitive processes associated with the five senses" (p. 159) serve as 'local paradigms' which fix the reference of the term 'experience', but not its extension. The extension is determined by "the underlying nature of the paradigms. In any possible world, something is an experiential process just in case it has certain important properties in common with the paradigms" (p. 159).

On this conception, whether there really is such a kind as *experience* (and so, such a phenomenon as a distinctively *non-experiential* process) is an empirical question, which psychology and cognitive science have yet to resolve. Casullo recommends that a priorists pursue two projects. The first is a philosophical 'articulation project': to formulate, *inter alia*, "a generally accepted description, at least at the phenomenological level" (p. 164) of the cognitive states that appear (to a priorists at least) to confer a priori justification upon certain beliefs. Casullo notes that there is surprisingly little consensus on this issue amongst a priorist philosophers. Many characterize the states in terms of perceptual metaphors—as experiences of coming, in a sense, to *see*, that a proposition is true/certain/necessary—but proceed to unpack the metaphors in different ways. For instance some a priorists contend that the states at issue can be "articulated in terms of some more familiar cognitive state" (p. 165), for instance belief, conviction, etc., while others regard them as irreducible. Resolving these issues requires substantial philosophical, conceptual work.

Meanwhile, according to Casullo, there is a second project for a priorists, which—like that of investigating whether there is such a kind as *experience*—is in large part empirical. This 'empirical project' involves assembling a posteriori

evidence for the various claims which a prioriists make about the cognitive states and processes at issue: (i) that the states described by the articulation project correspond to cognitive processes of a single type, (ii) that these processes do indeed give rise to the beliefs at issue, and (iii) that they do so in a reliable (that is, truth-conducive) way. Proponents of the empirical project might furthermore endeavour to explain how the processes at issue give rise to the beliefs they do. In sum, Casullo's boldest and most distinctive suggestions are that empirical evidence can and should be brought to bear on the questions of what non-experiential processes are, and whether they provide justification in the manner maintained by a prioriists.

IV

As I noted in §I, Casullo does not consider accounts of a priori justification which are articulated in terms of the notion of analyticity, and I suggested that this is especially strange in the light of the fact that formidable proposals importantly related to it have recently been advanced, for instance by Peacocke and Boghossian. According to Boghossian, there is a sense of the term 'analytic' in which to say that a statement is analytic is not to say that it "*owes its truth value completely to its meaning*, and not at all to 'the facts'" (op. cit., p. 363), but rather that a thinker's grasping its meaning suffices for his belief in the proposition it expresses to be justified. Boghossian endorses a version of 'conceptual role semantics' inspired by work of Carnap, and he argues that the account of linguistic understanding that emerges from this explains how certain statements could enjoy this feature of 'epistemic analyticity'.

Meanwhile, Peacocke's (op. cit.) 'metasemantic' account of a priority is not articulated in terms of linguistic meanings per se, but rather in terms of concepts. On Peacocke's 'neo-Fregean' account of understanding, concepts are individuated by 'possession conditions'—conditions which suffice for a thinker to count as possessing them, and associated with each possession condition is a 'determination theory' which articulates the relation between the possession condition and the concept's reference, or 'semantic value'. His proposal about a priority is that certain propositions enjoy the feature that a thinker's possession of the concepts they incorporate is sufficient for his beliefs in them to be justified, and he maintains that we can explain this by showing how the determination theories for the concepts involved guarantee the propositions' truth. Although Peacocke's account is clearly not articulated in terms of linguistic meanings, the accounts of a priority and linguistic understanding he favours suggest that he would endorse Boghossian's claim that statements expressing a priori justified propositions are 'epistemically analytic'. Indeed, although like Boghossian he takes pains to eschew the conventionalism associated with the logical empiricists' account of a priority, he describes his proposal as "building on the thought of those grappling with these problems in the 1930s" (ibid., p. 188) such as Carnap.

As I mentioned in §I, Casullo might be excused for not considering these proposals in the first part of his book on the grounds that Boghossian and

Peacocke may not intend to suggest that notions like analyticity are constituents of the very *concept* of a priority: rather the roles they play emerge only in the context of the *substantive theories* of a priority they develop. Indeed, they begin their discussions with minimal characterizations of a priority much like Casullo's, as justification "without appeal to empirical evidence" and "[independent] of any particular kind of experience or empirical information" (Boghossian, *op. cit.* p. 362, Peacocke, *op. cit.*, p. 175).⁴ But this is not a reason for Casullo to omit consideration of the 'metasemantic' proposals later in the book. As we saw in §II, he does devote considerable attention to one account which endeavours to explain a priori justification in terms of thought or understanding: *BonJour*'s. However, *BonJour* does not seem to hold, like Boghossian and Peacocke, that understanding a proposition of the relevant type is sufficient for a belief in it to be a priori justified. Rather, in his exposition (in the example below, of a priori justification of the belief that nothing can be red all over and green all over at the same time) understanding seems to be only the first stage in a two-stage process:

First I understand the proposition in question. This means that I comprehend or grasp the property indicated by the word 'red' and also that indicated by the word 'green' Second, given this understanding of the ingredients of the proposition, I am able to see or grasp or apprehend in a seemingly direct and unmediated way that the claim in question cannot fail to be true . . . (*BonJour*, *op. cit.*, p. 101)⁵

Not only do Boghossian's and Peacocke's accounts seem quite different from *BonJour*'s, they do not seem vulnerable to Casullo's objection to the latter. Recall, what that came down to was the complaint that *BonJour* fails to offer a satisfactory non-metaphorical account of how understanding can incorporate relations to universals. Neither Boghossian's conceptual role semantics nor Peacocke's neo-Fregean theory of concept possession explicates understanding in terms of such a relation.

4. I suspect that Peacocke and Boghossian might question the sharpness and efficacy of Casullo's distinction between an analysis of the concept of a priority and a substantive theory of a priority. The method for constructing a theory of a priority they favour seems to be a largely a priori one—something like another exercise (albeit a lengthy one) in conceptual analysis. If we were to reject Casullo's distinction and count Peacocke's and Boghossian's substantive proposals as *analyses* of a priority, we might further wonder where they belong in Casullo's taxonomy of analyses. Analyticity and understanding are semantic notions, and so *prima facie* would appear to be, as Casullo assumes, 'non-epistemic'. However on some conceptions of understanding—including, I suspect, those favoured by Boghossian and Peacocke—understanding is a cognitive, 'epistemic' notion.
5. Insofar as *BonJour*'s exposition implicates a conception of linguistic meaning and understating, it appears to be a paradigmatic example of a kind of conception Peacocke derides as "quite obscure": "a conception of meaning on which a thinker can first fully grasp the meaning of an expression and then, for any a priori proposition involving it, somehow or other move rationally from this prior grasp of meaning to the conclusion that the proposition is correct" (Peacocke, *op. cit.*, p. 188).

For an example of a substantial and germane epistemic thesis which an advocate of the metasemantic account might maintain in the face of Casullo's arguments against it, consider the traditional contention that a priori justified beliefs are *unrevisable*. The cornerstone of Casullo's story of the novice logic student who revises her belief about whether a proposition is true is the fact that her post-revision belief appears to have the very same kind of basis as her pre-revision belief: that is, the exercise of a "nonexperiential process" (p. 114) of reflection. The metasemantic theorist who holds that it can never be rational to revise an a priori justified belief can object that on his account, if the student's post-revision belief is indeed justified a priori, its status as such is not due to its being based on any process of reflection: rather (proceeding in terms of Peacocke's version of metasemantic theory) it is due, *inter alia*, to the fact that the determination theories which articulate the relations between the concepts incorporated in the proposition and their semantic values guarantee the proposition's truth. Meanwhile they do not guarantee the truth of the proposition involved in the pre-revision belief.

V

I turn next to consider some aspects of Casullo's distinctive positive account, beginning with the suggestion that 'experience' is a putative natural kind term. This proposal is bold, well worth exploring, and inspired as it is by currently topical work in semantics, it certainly satisfies his stated aim of bringing 'recent developments' to bear. However, I think he is insufficiently clear about the 'local paradigms' that he proposes to fix the reference of the term 'experience', and about which of those paradigms' properties are, on this account, shared by all other instances of the envisaged natural kind.

The term 'experience' is often used to express the 'qualitative' aspect of consciousness—the sense in which there is always 'something it's like' to occupy a conscious state. On this reading, phenomenological conditions are constitutive of the concept expressed by 'experience'. It's unclear whether Casullo means to use the term in just this sense. It is also unclear whether he holds that the 'underlying' properties of the paradigms which all other instances of the envisaged natural kind must share include phenomenological properties. But I don't think he endorses the latter thesis. He seems inclined to allow that phenomenological qualities might number amongst the 'surface characteristics' in terms of which the reference-fixers for 'experience' are identified. (As examples, he suggests: "such characteristics as providing information about the actual world, involving a causal relation to physical objects, and perhaps having a distinctive phenomenology" (p. 159).) And, as he says, the Kripke-Putnam model is generally taken to allow that "the surface characteristics that are used to identify samples of the kind in question are not necessary features" (p. 158) of instances of the kind. Thus, for instance, the Kripke-Putnam model implies that there could be water which was not wet, transparent, etc. Applying this to the case of 'experience' we get the consequence that there could be an experience which exhibited none of the phenomenological

qualities characteristic of familiar experiences, indeed, which exhibited no phenomenological qualities at all. But if phenomenological conditions are constitutive of the concept expressed by 'experience', this cannot be right.

I suspect that Casullo means his analysis to be of a term which expresses a concept which is not in this way distinctively phenomenological. For instance as someone whose principal interests are epistemological, he is as we have seen happy to count *testimony* and *memory* as experiential sources of justification—yet having a belief justified by testimony or memory is not, I would say, distinguished by phenomenological features. Moreover, in the course of his discussion of the 'articulation project', Casullo emphasizes that the characterizations offered by a priorists of *non-experiential* justifying states are typically articulated in phenomenological terms. Thus, whether or not phenomenological conditions are constitutive of the relevant concept of experience, Casullo does not think that all phenomenological states are experiences in this sense.

This 'non-phenomenological' interpretation would suggest a *functional* explication of the concept expressed by 'experience', in terms of input relations to (sensory, testimonial etc.) information and output relations to beliefs and other states. But while there may well be a perfectly intelligible functional concept here, it is highly questionable whether it is this, as opposed to the phenomenological one, that philosophers and normal folk express with the term 'experience', when they speak of experiential and non-experiential sources of justification. In any case, if this kind of functional analysis is what Casullo has in mind, he owes a more developed articulation than is provided here.

VI

Suppose that these worries can be overcome, and, additionally, that a priorists accomplish the 'articulation project' of settling upon a satisfactory characterization of the states that (to them) seem to confer a priori justification. I think Casullo is correct to suggest that, if all this were in place, the project of identifying the cognitive process (or processes) that gives rise to these states, and the relations between them and the beliefs at issue would be a largely empirical exercise. But I think his claim that it would also be an empirical, a posteriori issue whether this process is *reliable* is insufficiently supported. In particular, while I think that Casullo establishes that *radical empiricists* ought to accept the thesis that there could be a posteriori evidence for the reliability of the process at issue, I don't think he does enough to convince a priorists of this. The problem, in a nutshell, is that few a priorists would accept that we can assemble standards against which to test the process's reliability whose sources are suitably independent of that very process.

Suppose that empirical investigation uncovers a single type of process responsible for the conscious states which seem (to a priorists) to justify a priori justified beliefs, and suppose that all parties agree that this—call it the *AP-process*—is not an a posteriori source of justification. We should distinguish the question whether there could be a *posteriori* evidence for the reliability of

the AP-process from that of whether there could be evidence of any kind for this. To provide genuine, non-circular evidence for the reliability of the AP-process we would have to compare its output against a stock of relevant 'benchmark propositions' which were known on independent grounds to be true—that is, known to be true on grounds that do not involve operations of the AP-process. A theorist who held that our only justification for believing the benchmark propositions was one whose source involved an operation of that very process ought not—at least without substantial further argument—accept that there can be genuine evidence for its reliability. To insist that there can be AP-process-based evidence for the reliability of the AP-process would be like insisting that there can be inductive evidence for the reliability of induction.

Now, as Casullo emphasizes (pp. 160–161), radical empiricists generally agree with a priorists about which of our beliefs are justified—thus they agree that those of our beliefs which appear to be justified by the AP-process are indeed justified. Moreover, their view is that they are justified a posteriori, and so, a fortiori, on grounds independent of the AP-process. Hence, radical empiricists ought to accept that there can be evidence—and indeed, a posteriori evidence—for the reliability of the AP-process.

In some passages Casullo writes as though all he aims to establish is that *radical empiricists ought to accept* that there can be a posteriori evidence for the reliability of the AP-process. Thus, for instance

A case for the a priori that is based on evidence and methodological principles endorsed by radical empiricists is one that they must acknowledge by their own lights. Hence it offers the prospect of engaging the radical empiricist and moving the philosophical debate forward. (p. 161)

More often, however, Casullo's intention seems to be to establish the more interesting unqualified contention that *there can be a posteriori evidence for the reliability of the AP-process*. Thus, for instance, "The claim that a process is truth conducive or, more minimally, that it is not error conducive is a contingent general claim that can only be supported by empirical investigation" (p. 171). His arguments do not seem to me to establish this stronger, unqualified contention. The reason they do not is that they do not suffice to destabilize the position of the a priorist who holds—as I presume many do—that our only justification for some of the benchmark propositions is, at least in part, a priori. An a priorist of this sort should insist that the source of the only justification we can have for believing the benchmark propositions are true involves operation of the AP-process. Hence she should insist that no comparison of the output of that process with those benchmarks can constitute genuine, non-circular evidence for its reliability. On this view, there cannot be a posteriori evidence for the reliability of the AP-process simply because there cannot be *evidence* for its reliability.

In various places in the book, Casullo touches sympathetically on the idea that beliefs which are justified a priori can also be justified a posteriori. If a fully generalized version of this thesis could be defended—if, that is, it were

established that *all* a priori justified beliefs can be justified on wholly a posteriori grounds—then the type of a priorism just mentioned would be undermined, and the unqualified contention that there can be a posteriori evidence for the reliability of the AP-process would follow. But Casullo does not explicitly defend that generalized thesis in this book.

In the first part of the book, which, as we saw in §I above, is concerned with analysis of the *concept* of a priori justification, Casullo argues, in effect, that it is not *constitutive of that concept* that a priori justified beliefs cannot also be justified a posteriori (Chs. 1 and 2, *passim*). In this part he also argues that one of the strengths of the minimal analysis he favours is that it is *consistent* with the possibility that a subject can have both a priori and a posteriori justification for the same proposition (pp. 43 ff.). But neither of these contentions entails the generalized thesis needed here. Later, as we saw in §II, in the course of his critical discussion of conceptual arguments against the existence of a priori justification, Casullo argues that a priori justified beliefs are, generally, revisable in the light of empirical evidence. But while this argument has the requisite generality, it too fails to imply that, in general, propositions justified a priori can also be justified a posteriori. (Moreover, I argued in §IV that this argument need not convince metasemantic a priorists). Finally, in the course of his discussion of radical empiricist arguments against the existence of a priori justification, Casullo maintains that the radical empiricist claim that a belief is justified a posteriori does not imply that it is not also justified a priori. Again, however, this does not imply the contention needed here.⁶

6. I'm extremely grateful to Albert Casullo for his helpful and incisive comments on earlier versions of some of this material.