

Isaac Orobio

Studies and Texts in Scepticism

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Volume 2

Isaac Orobio

The Jewish Argument with Dogma and Doubt

Edited by Carsten Wilke

DE GRUYTER

The series Studies and Texts in Scepticism is published
on behalf of the Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies



ISBN 978-3-11-057561-3
e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-057619-1
e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-057726-6
ISSN 2568-9614



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Library of Congress Control Number: 2018955508

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie;
detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2018 Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston

Cover image: Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg, Ms Cod. Levy 115, fol. 158r: Maimonides,
Moreh Nevukhim, Beginn von Teil III.

Printing and binding: CPI books GmbH, Leck

www.degruyter.com

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Carsten Wilke

Introduction: Isaac Orobio, the Sceptic Dogmatiser

The present volume on the Jewish physician and theological controversialist Isaac Orobio de Castro (1617–1687) has its origin in an international workshop held on February 25, 2016 at the Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies in Hamburg on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the year of Orobio's birth.¹ As a religious author, Orobio cannot be easily categorised with an intellectual movement, and even less with a particular philosophical school; he was a typically eclectic thinker at an age in which Neo-Scholasticism, the scientific revolution and sceptic anti-rationalism competed for acceptance and forged shifting alliances among themselves. Yet Orobio is noteworthy for the extensive use of philosophical arguments in his clandestine polemical writings. Expressing himself in exquisite Spanish rhetoric, he defended Judaism simultaneously against free thought and Christianity.

Discussing Orobio's two-front battle in the thematic context of the early modern quest for certainty is a fascinatingly ambiguous task, since his thought alternates between moments of devastating critique and of staunch traditionalism. The Portuguese physician's main polemical work, titled *Divine Warnings against the Vain Idolatry of the Gentiles*, became famous during the Enlightenment period as an arsenal of anti-Christian arguments that served to subvert religious dogma of any sort. Voltaire found this Jewish scholar "profound, yet never obscure, a man of refined literary taste, of a pleasant wit and impeccable manners."² Recent research on Orobio's eighteenth-century reception³ has endowed the author with newfound relevance to the history of philosophy that transcends the Jewish-Christian encounter. He appears in this period as not only an opponent of Christianity, but also an enduring source of European anti-religious criticism. In this way, he became an involuntary antagonist of the religious worldview that he shared with his adversaries.

Carsten Wilke, Central European University

1 We cannot exactly determine Orobio's date of birth because the parish registers of Bragança are only preserved beginning from 1654. Conjectures by I.S. Révah and Yosef Kaplan suggest that Baltasar Álvares Oróbio must have been born and baptised between February and October 1617.

2 Voltaire, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 34 (Paris: P. Dupont, 1827), 340–341.

3 Richard H. Popkin, "Jewish Anti-Christian Arguments as a Source of Irreligion from the Seventeenth to the Early Nineteenth Century," in *Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment*, edited by Michael Hunter and David Wootton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992): 159–181; Jonathan Israel, "Orobio de Castro and the Early Enlightenment," in *Mémorial I.-S. Révah: Études sur le marranisme, l'hétérodoxie juive et Spinoza*, edited by Henry Méchoulan and Gérard Nahon (Paris and Louvain: Peeters, 2001): 227–245; Adam Sutcliffe, *Judaism and Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 170–173, and other studies quoted here.

Orobio's image as a militantly sectarian polemicist did nonetheless dominate his modern reception, especially among religiously predisposed readers. The Spanish Hebraist Joseph Rodríguez de Castro offered the following horrified words on the *Divine Warnings* and its underlying controversy in 1781:

Orobio seized the pretext for spitting all the Jewish poison against the Christians. He profaned, despised and trampled underfoot the most pure and sublime of their truthful dogmas with the most offensive expressions and the most insolent and outrageous sayings, so that all across this work, Orobio showed himself as the most obdurate Jew, the most cruel enemy of the Christians.⁴

Appreciating this judgment from the opposite side, the scholars of the "Science of Judaism" were attracted by Orobio's energetic language. He was, Heinrich Graetz wrote, "a man of valor, an acute mind, an enthusiastic partisan of Judaism, and an adversary of Christianity."⁵ Graetz, in 1868, recommended Orobio as a presentable hero for a future biographical monograph,⁶ and Meyer Kayserling, chief rabbi of Switzerland, promised indeed to write such a work,⁷ while Aristide Astruc, chief rabbi of Belgium, planned a first edition of the *Divine Warnings* in its original Spanish.⁸ Neither of these projects ever took shape: with the rising floodtide of antisemitism, Orobio's strong Jewish self-affirmation may have appeared inappropriate. The man whom Jewish historians praised for his integrity was censored by Christians for his integralism. Nineteenth-century authors became accustomed to decrying his writings, especially his sharply polarising style of expression, as an extreme abyss of dogmatism, bigotry, and intolerance. The Spanish philologist Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo observed in 1882 that Orobio "fought the religion of the Crucified with all the rage and doggedness typical of an apostate."⁹ The historian of Protestant missionary activity Johannes de le Roi gave the following biased summary of the *Friendly Conversation* between Orobio and the Protestant theologian Philip van Limborch: "Orobio attacked Christianity in the most aggressive way, Limborch however, even

⁴ Joseph Rodríguez de Castro, *Biblioteca española. Tomo primero, que contiene la noticia de los escritores rabinos españoles* (Madrid: Imprenta Real de la Gazeta, 1781), I 606.

⁵ Heinrich Graetz, "Don Balthasar Isaak Orobio de Castro: Eine biographische Skizze," *Monatsschrift für die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums* 16 (1867): 321–330, here 321; *Geschichte der Juden*, 204: "als muthiger und geschickter Kämpfer für die Religion seiner Väter."

⁶ Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* (Leipzig: Leiner, 1868), Vol. X, appendix, x: "Noch ist keine Monographie über sein Leben und seine literarische Thätigkeit geschrieben, obwohl er sie weit eher verdiente, als so viele Andere, die weiter nichts als viel Papier und Tinte verbraucht haben."

⁷ Kayserling, *Geschichte der Juden in Portugal* (Leipzig: Oskar Leiner, 1867), 304: "Das Weitere über Orobio de Castro in einer demnächst erscheinenden Monographie."

⁸ *Bulletin de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle*, January 1875, 85.

⁹ Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (Madrid: Librería Católica de San José, 1880), vol. II, 599.

when he was facing such an utterly undignified individual, defended the Christian cause in a calm and even friendly manner.”¹⁰

Building on a well-entrenched cliché of Orobio as an enraged dogmatist, Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg in his *The Jew's Trace in History* (1920) presented the author as the embodiment of Jewish fanaticism. “His worldview is based on typically Jewish pillars: an unshakeable dogma (in this case, the Sinaitic Law), the hatred of Christians, and the desire for world domination.”¹¹ Orobio’s mind is locked “with unmistakable evidence in a closed and immobile inner structure ... When reading Jewish writings, even greatly erudite ones, one can be driven to despair by their block-headedness and narrow-mindedness.”¹² Rosenberg then creates a direct historical connection from Orobio to Marx by showing that the destructive Jewish dogmatism of the former flows into the latter’s fanatical belief in human equality. Marx, in short, is Orobio for proletarians.

The Amsterdam polemicist did not, however, fare any better among Marxist readers. Gabriel Albiac, a Spanish philosopher of the far left who in 1987 published a highly acclaimed essay *The Empty Synagogue: Marranic Roots of Spinozism*, lashed out against Orobio in terms that are strangely akin to Rosenberg’s, though the grief is about the author’s disciplining of Jews rather than his contradicting of Christians. Orobio, Albiac writes, is “the thinker of the radical rabbinic orthodoxy,” he is “the ghetto inside the ghetto, with the thinly veiled incitement to purify the People in the name of the Torah,” he is dubbed “the merciless hammer of heretics and epicureans,” a fanatic, an ultra-orthodox, a “great blacksmith of orthodoxy,” a narrow-minded “fool,” he has the “insolent self-indulgence of an heresy-exterminator.”¹³ With a quick exercise in psychoanalysis, the author concludes that when “Don [!] Isaac Orobio de Castro” opposed the deist Juan de Prado in 1663, he had become a Jewish copy of the Spanish Inquisitors who tortured him seven years earlier. By giving the defender of Judaism a fictional title of nobility, Albiac accuses him of clerical

¹⁰ Johannes F. A. de le Roi, *Die evangelische Christenheit und die Juden unter dem Gesichtspunkte der Mission geschichtlich betrachtet* (Karlsruhe: Reuther, 1884), I 158.

¹¹ Alfred Rosenberg, *Die Spur des Juden im Wandel der Zeiten* (Munich: Deutscher Volksverlag, 1920), 154: “Dieses Weltbild ruht auf den typisch jüdischen Tragsäulen: eines unabänderlichen Dogmas (hier das Gesetz vom Sinai), dem Christenhaß, der jüdischen Weltherrschaft.”

¹² Alfred Rosenberg, *Die Spur des Juden im Wandel der Zeiten*, 157: “Ich muß mich mit diesen Andeutungen begnügen, aber schon sie zeigen mit nicht mißzuverstehender Deutlichkeit ein in sich abgeschlossenes, unbewegliches Wesensgefüge [...] beim Lesen der jüdischen Schriften kann man über die Hartköpfigkeit und, bei großer Gelehrsamkeit, Borniertheit zur Verzweiflung getrieben werden.”

¹³ Gabriel Albiac, *La sinagoga vacía: un estudio de las fuentes marranas del espinosismo* (Madrid: Hipérion, 1987), 89: “pensador de la radical ortodoxia rabínica,” “el ‘gueto’ dentro del ‘gueto,’ la incitación, apenas velada, a depurar al Pueblo en el nombre de la Torá,” 93: “luminaria y orgullo de la comunidad israelita de Amsterdam, martillo implacable de herejes y epicúreos,” 97: “fanatismo no exento de lucidez,” 342: “el ortodoxísimo Orobio de Castro,” 334: “ese gran forjador de ortodoxia que fuera Isaac Orobio de Castro”; 382: “necio,” 149: “la insolente autocomplacencia del fulminador aquel de herejes que fuera el portugués Orobio de Castro.”

as well as feudal arrogance. The theological fight once again resounds with fanfares of class war.¹⁴

Albiac cannot be suspected of anti-Jewish bias;¹⁵ his negative image of Orobio may reflect an established narrative of Spinoza's rebellion, which has turned Orobio into the dark foil of emerging modern philosophy. From the moment in which Spinoza's rupture with the Sephardic community of Amsterdam was given some kind of historical contextualisation, two dichotomic reconstructions emerged. The earlier one placed Spinoza's rebellion on the fault line between Judaic tradition and Christian modernity: the young philosopher was saved from his backward Jewish upbringing when he met rationally-minded Christians, such as his three lifelong friends among the Collegiants (*Collegianten*), or his ex-Jesuit Latin teacher Franciscus van den Enden. Carl Gebhardt, a non-Jewish historian of philosophy, advanced an alternative reconstruction in 1922. He located the modernist counter-movement in the midst of Jewish society, his main proof being the collective self-portrait that opens Orobio's *Invective Epistle* of 1663. In this passage, Orobio described the situation of Iberian intellectuals who joined the Sephardic communities: some adopted an attitude of humility towards the unstudied coreligionists from whom they had to learn their new cult and faith, while others would not easily renounce their academic hubris and tried a selective rationalist appropriation of traditional Judaism, if not an open rebellion against it.¹⁶ As Gebhardt recognised, Orobio's remarks fit not only the jurist Uriel da Costa, banned in 1618, but also the physician Juan de Prado, who, in 1656, dragged the young merchant Spinoza into anti-religious rebellion.¹⁷ Of Gebhardt's followers, I.S. Révah stressed the particular networks that transmitted this intra-Jewish scepticism from the "Marranos" to Spinoza, while Yirmiyahu Yovel insisted on the structural motivations that in his view favored it.

Quite commonly, the struggle between these anti-religious rebels and the synagogue authorities was interpreted as a fight between innovation and backwardness. When evoking the world of bigotry and oppression against which the young philosopher rebelled, Spinozist hagiography pointed to the rabbi who proclaimed the ban, Saul Levi Mortera, a man of Ashkenazi origin who was raised in the ghetto of Venice in traditionalist ways of thought. Orobio's case was more complicated, and, perhaps, even worse. The famed doctor was not a Jew from the ghetto; he was of Sephardic

14 Albiac, *La sinagoga vacía*, 150: "el retorno callado del rostro preciso del Inquisidor, poco a poco, va tomando posesión precisa de Don Isaac Orobio de Castro."

15 As a public intellectual, Albiac has repeatedly expressed himself in support of Israel, which is a courageous standpoint for a Spanish leftist. See, for example, his essay "Meditar Yenín," in Marcos Aguinís et al., *En defensa de Israel* (Zaragoza: Libros Certeza, 2004): 21–32.

16 Orobio, *Epístola*, in I. S. Révah, *Spinoza et le Dr Juan de Prado* (Paris: Mouton & Cie., 1959), 90.

17 Carl Gebhardt, *Die Schriften des Uriel da Costa* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1922), XX–XXI; Gebhardt, "Juan de Prado," *Chronicon Spinozanum* 3 (1923): 269–291; Gebhardt, *Spinoza* (Leipzig: Reclam, 1932), 26; cf. Révah, *Spinoza*, 15, 21–22; Albiac, *La sinagoga vacía*, 72–73; Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism: The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro*, trans. Raphael Loewe (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1989), 149–150; Yovel, *Spinoza and other Heretics*, I 51–52.

ancestry, raised as a Christian, and was an accomplished intellectual nourished within the academic culture of seventeenth-century Europe. Prado and Orobio had very similar origins and paths in life; however, the former became a free-thinker, and the latter a reactionary who had deliberately chosen the ghetto.

Orobio's reception had come a long way from Voltaire's praise to the contempt shared among historians of multiple schools. Whether or not the resulting image of an unsophisticated defender of the faith deterred scholars from further research on his personality, the monograph demanded by Graetz took more than a century to materialise. In a doctoral thesis defended in 1978 at the Hebrew University, Yosef Kaplan finally approached Orobio from a new angle, contextualising, individualising and complicating a historical figure who until then had the rather unpleasant function of symbolising a repressive religious mindset. In the light of Kaplan's study, which was published in Hebrew in 1982 and in English in 1989 under the title *From Christianity to Judaism*, Orobio appears not simply as a border-guard of closed religious identities but as an exemplary case of Christian-Jewish border-crossing. It is important for our purpose—and this has been the most powerful incentive for undertaking the present collective volume—that in a chapter on Orobio's philosophical outlook, Kaplan has inserted this Jewish thinker in the history of sceptic thought. "While from scholasticism Orobio took the conceptual basis of his thinking, in a significant amount of what he wrote one may distinguish his openness to the critique of scepticism, and particularly of that 'fideistic scepticism' that had struck root in Catholic circles in western Europe, with France as its centre."¹⁸ Kaplan uses this term in the sense of Richard H. Popkin, who showed that the antique tropes of Academic and Pyrrhonian scepticism—which challenged theological dogma since the humanism of Erasmus and Montaigne—were frequently used by early modern Catholic thinkers in order to justify religious tradition as a default criterion of truth.¹⁹ It is clear that the full thrust of fideistic scepticism, which boils down to embracing the ruling faith irrespective of its irrationality, could hardly appeal to Orobio or, for that matter, to any member of a persecuted minority. But as Terence Penelhum has shown, early modern fideism came in different shades, not all of them synonymous with religious conformism. Some fideists, for example, advocated a tentative faith grounded in action rather than doctrine.²⁰ Indeed we can and should search for ideas from the fideist school of thought that entered into coexistence and entanglement with contrasting

¹⁸ Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 316–322, here 316; similarly, in Kaplan, "Isaac Orobio de Castro," in *Die Philosophie des 17. Jahrhunderts, Band 2: Frankreich und Niederlande*, edited by Jean-Pierre Schobinger (Basel: Schwabe & Co. 1993): 889–891, here 891: "Und den Einwänden derer, die den göttlichen Charakter des mündlichen Gesetzes leugneten, begegnet er mit den Argumenten des fideistischen Skeptizismus."

¹⁹ Richard H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1979), 68.

²⁰ Terence Penelhum, *God and Skepticism: A Study in Skepticism and Fideism* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1983).

intellectual tendencies in Orobio's work. While some historians, for example the present author, tended to de-emphasise their presence,²¹ others such as Natalia Muchnik added emphasis to Kaplan's thesis by claiming that Orobio effectively "doubted the capacity of the sciences, and among them philosophy, to attain any certainty whatsoever."²² Gabriel Albiac subscribed to a particularly strong formulation of the fideism thesis, connecting it with the traditional image of Orobio as an unrestrained sectarian. Albiac observed an "unappealable fulmination against the slightest rationalist inclination"²³ in a passage where the polemicist writes that human ignorance is only an evil if it is allied with pride.

If the understanding persuades itself that it knows what [in fact] it ignores, then it does not desire more knowledge, and nobody is able to instruct it. It is then stuck inside the abyss of its ignorance ... and bringing it back to health becomes a desperate task, because it will remain sick with the things it ignores.²⁴

Here Orobio defends self-reflecting ignorance and provisional enlightenment through learning, *docta ignorantia*. This defense belongs to a sceptic line of thought that is not limited to authoritarianism, but relies on the progressive search for a provisional rational truth. Orobio's brand of scepticism did not mean to close down rational investigation, as Albiac suspected, but on the contrary sought to keep it open.

Graetz already perceived this commonsensical element in Orobio's religious mind-set. He praised the latter's "sober-mindedness, the normalcy of his character, his Jewish piety or, let us rather say, his attachment to Judaism, which relied on clear knowledge, though not on philosophical principles."²⁵ According to the more recent analysis of Práxedes Caballero, the Amsterdam physician adhered to a subtle balance between criticism and faith: the doctrines of religion cannot be the object of

21 Carsten L. Wilke, "Conversion ou retour? La métamorphose du nouveau-chrétien en juif portugais dans l'imaginaire sépharade du XVII^e siècle," in *Mémoires juives d'Espagne et du Portugal*, edited by Esther Benbassa (Paris, Publisud, 1996): 53–67, here 59.

22 Natalia Muchnik, *Une vie marrane: Les pérégrinations de Juan de Prado dans l'Europe du XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005), 382.

23 Albiac, *La sinagoga vacía*, 372: "una fulminación inapelable de toda veleidad racionalista."

24 Révah, *Spinoza*, 89: "Es, pues, la doctrina el unico remedio para que el entendimiento humano combalezca del ignominioso achaque de la ignorancia. Para que este remedio halle lugar en su execucion es necessario que el entendimiento se persuada a que no sabe aquello que ignora ... Mas si el entendimiento se persuade que sabe cuanto ignora, que no necesita de otras noticias, que ninguno es capaz de enseñarle, es forçoso que persevere en el abismo de su ignorancia: la soberbia embaraza su corazon que consistia en la doctrina, y ... queda desesperada la sanidad y el entendimiento enfermo de lo que no sabe."

25 Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* (Leipzig: Leiner, 1868), Vol. X, appendix, x: "Unter der großen Menge gebildeter und produktiver Juden in Spinoza's Zeitalter zeichnet sich Orobio de Castro aus durch seine Besonnenheit, sein normales Wesen, seine, wenn auch nicht auf philosophischen Principien, jedoch auf einer klaren Erkenntniß beruhende Frömmigkeit, oder sagen wir lieber Anhänglichkeit an das Judenthum."

a full demonstration, but they have to be in line with reason and can be compromised by inner inconsistency.²⁶ Orobio's conception of reason might thus foreshadow Karl Popper's "critical rationalism," in which truth claims can never be ultimately proven, although many of them can definitively be rejected.²⁷ Seventeenth-century thinkers already experimented with similar compromises; for example, the Spanish poet Antonio Enríquez Gómez, who lived among the French crypto-Jews one decade before Orobio, defended the following paradox in one of his political treatises: "To know that one does not know is prudence, but to posit that nothing can be known is unbearable frailty."²⁸

Orobio's statements about the border between knowledge and uncertainty would merit a renewed examination, all the more so as the author focused insistently on the subject in his first theological work, the *Invective Epistle* written in 1663 shortly after his arrival in Amsterdam, where he defended the Jewish tradition against the deism of Juan de Prado. Not only did the latter challenge the age-old consensus around the truth of the scriptures, but he also defended independent individual judgment as a social criterion of truth. By asking Orobio the fundamental question of "whether one should follow one's own judgment or that of another person,"²⁹ Prado implied that any reasoning in accordance with dominant persuasions must be discarded as interest-guided. Orobio reacted by considering Prado's rigid opposition between conformism and dissent "rather as an ingenious prank than as a serious question."³⁰ No rational judgment can be fully free of interest, as conformists and dissenters both intend to please their respective audiences, and critical spirits are particularly eager to attract applause by their wit.³¹

What Orobio advocates seems to be a mutual control of individual judgment and collective tradition. He explicitly states his conviction that all the basic principles of

26 Práxedes Caballero, "La crítica de Orobio de Castro a Spinoza," in *Spinoza y España*, edited by Atilano Domínguez (Cuenca: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, 1994): 229–237, here 231.

27 On Popper's search for a third way between scepticism and dogmatism, see Hubert Cambier, "Is the Philosophy of Karl Popper Anti-Foundationalist?" In *Karl Popper, a Centenary Assessment*, vol. 2: *Metaphysics and Epistemology*, edited by Ian Charles Jarvie, Karl Milford, and David W. Miller (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 145–156, here 154.

28 Antonio Enríquez Gómez, *Luis dado de Dios a Luis y Ana, Samuel dado de Dios a Elcana y Ana* (Paris: René Baudry, 1645), 8: "Saber que no se sabe; es prudencia, pero fundarse en que todo se ygnora; es flaqueça yntolerable."

29 Orobio, *Epístola invectiva*, in Révah, *Spinoza*, 92: "Qual dictamen o entender deve seguirse, a el proprio o el ageno?"

30 Orobio, *Epístola invectiva*, in Révah, *Spinoza*, 92: "me pareció mas travesura de ingenio que question solida."

31 Révah, *Spinoza*, 91: "Es assi verdad que el asentir o dar credito a una proposicion no es acto libre, mas tambien es verdad que [...] el que afecta no asentir a las cosas recibidas, no obra desapasionado, tambien se propone su interes, que funda en la ostentacion de ingenio con que procura el aura popular y calificacion de mas discursivo. Esto fue siempre el fin de los entendimientos inclinados a paradoxas y de los que procuran innovar, desmintiendo lo mas bien opinado." See this passage in Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 169–170.

the Jewish faith are accessible to human understanding. For example, the idea of God is a rational idea for Orobio; he blames Prado for “considering as [mere] fiction the most perfect act of rational thought, namely the recognition of an infinite Creator-God.”³² He thus attributed the sceptic’s role to his friend, who refused to see more than fictions behind universal rational concepts. Orobio, in contrast, expressed an optimistic view of reasonable knowledge whose reliable sources he extended even to “things whose truth only depends on their existence in this or that moment in time (and not in scientific concepts),” which is particularly the case with scripture.³³ Orobio’s defense of Mosaic revelation builds on the argument of the *consensus omnium*³⁴ and on the fact that biblical teachings do not contradict human rationality. Conformity with reason, he repeats, is necessary if something should be trustworthy and of absolute credit, and “it is required to speculate as reasonable beings instead of obeying like brutish animals.”³⁵ As religious teachings need to stand rational examination, he staunchly rejects the principle of “believing without reasoning” (*creer sin racionalidad*).³⁶ Twenty years later, in his treatise against Spinoza, he would even deny the conflict between speculation and obedience by maintaining “that religion does not affirm anything contrary to reason.”³⁷

In Orobio’s philosophical language and terminology, we can follow the juxtaposition of dogma and doubt on a variety of levels of reflection that should not be confused with each other: there is the contradiction not only between Christian and Jewish biblical exegesis, but also between the scripturalist, the traditionalist, and the critical approaches to the Bible, between the Aristotelian, the experimental and the providentialist approach to nature, in sum, between various scientific and religious orders of truth that intersect at this crucial moment in the history of thought. His intellectual personality does not fit into the binary opposition of rationalism and fideism, or of dogma and doubt, but it shows, in Kaplan’s words, openness towards both sides.

One important reason for the coexistence of opposing epistemological strategies in Orobio’s work is the fact that his thought, which Kaplan’s intellectual biography

32 Révah, *Spinoza*, 118: “ficción llama al mas perfecto acto de la racionalidad, al conocimiento del Infinito Criador.”

33 Révah, *Spinoza*, 98: “la repugnancia al credito de las cosas cuya verdad depende solo de su existencia en una o otra diferencia de tiempo (y no de conceptos scientificos), ni arguye mayor ingenio.”

34 Révah, *Spinoza*, 96: “todas [sectas] conspiran en la verdad infalible de la Santa Escritura. Impio y hereje se reputa quien usare dudarla.”

35 Révah, *Spinoza*, 98, regarding the authority of Scripture: “No parece que se necessita de mas autoridad de parte del que propone para que sea creyble lo propuesto, como sea ajustado al entendimiento y nada repugnante a la razon humana. Esto es lo segundo que diximos ser necessario para que la cosa sea digna de fee y de absoluto credito, y lo que se deve especular para creer racionales y no asentir como brutos.”

36 Révah, *Spinoza*, 132.

37 Orobio, *Certamen philosophicum propugnatae veritatis divinae ac naturalis* (Amsterdam: n. p., 1684), title page: “quod religio nil rationi repugnans credendum proponit.”