SYNESIS: Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences, 7(2)2026: 15-31
https://doi.org/10.63356/sin.2026.013

CC BY NC ND

Review Article

The tension between philosophy and (Christian) faith according to Siger De Brabant and its influence on issues of intellect, soul, and world

Rachid Kaddour

University of Biskra, Faculty of Human and Social sciences, Algeria
rachid.kaddour@univ-biskra.dz

This article examines a highly contentious problem dinstinctive of medieval thought: the convergence of Aristotelian-Averroist philosophy with Christian theology in the thirteenth century, as well as the shock and the conflict that arose between them in the thougt of Siger de Brabant, the foremost representative of Averroist philosophy in the Latin world, commonly known as Latin Averroism. It examines the tension between philosophers, advocates of reason and demonstration, and theologians, advocates of revelation and faith, as reflected in Siger of Brabant's philosophy. His philosophy underwent this tension and fluctuating opinions due to the prohibitions and condemnations of some of his philosophical views, beginning with the decree of excommunication in 1270 CE. He also faced threats from theologians and the Church, and criticisms, particularly from Thomas Aquinas. This led to a lack of consensus among scholars regarding Siger's position on the relationship between philosophy and religion. Furthermore, the article explores the impact of this tension on questions of the mind, the soul, and the world.

Keywords: Siger de Brabant, philosophy and religion, the soul, intelect and the world according to Siger

Introduction: During the Middle Ages , particularly in the thirteen century, the latin world witnessed the entry of Averroist philosophy which is grounded in the view that truth is realized in Aristotle's philosophy as presented and interpreted by Averroes, this philosophical current gave rise to profound debate, due to the sharp tension and direct confrontation it generated with christian theology, whose proponents hold that truth resides in reveald scripture and its sacred texts. Siger de Brabant is considered the most prominent representative of Latin Averroism. He attempted to address the tension between philosophy and religion, between reason and Christian faith, under pressure and threats from theologians and philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas. This influenced his philosophical views on the intellect, soul, and world. This article aims to shed light on this tension, its reflections on

Siger's conceptions of these issues, and how it contributed to the development of philosophical thought in medieval Latin Europe. Therefore, the problem we pose is: How did the tension between the demands of philosophical reason and the requirements of religious faith manifest itself in the thought of Siger of Brabant? Did this lead him to achieve a reconciliation between them or to acknowledge the separation of the two domains? And how did this reflect on his conception of the mind, the soul, and the world?

To answer these questions, we must begin by shedding light on his life and philosophical works, and the condemnation and pressures he faced.

1. Siger de Brabant: Life, Works, and Philosophy: A little-known Belgian philosopher whose books remained buried for centuries, only gradually being rediscovered starting in 1847. Little is known about him. According to the scholar Mondonnet, the first to write about Siger and the first to publish his works (which were, and still are, in the form of neglected manuscripts), he was born in 1235. He studied at the University of Paris, in the Faculty of Arts, and from the beginning of his teaching career, he boldly demonstrated his adherence to pure Aristotelian philosophy, paying little heed to theology or Orthodox Christianity. He is the greatest philosopher representing Latin Averroism. He lived through a fierce struggle with churchmen and philosophers such as Thomas Aquinas, who described Aristotelian-Averroist philosophy as heretical and wrote a book criticizing him entitled "On the Unity of the Intellect" specifically to attack him. Aquinas considered Siger the leader of a philosophical trend that posed a threat to Christian doctrine, since his philosophy Ibn Rushd was generally a point of contention between the Latin Averroists on one side, and theologians and churchmen on the other (a conflict between proponents and opponents of the Enlightenment).

Despite the excommunication (condemnation) of December 10, 1270, a canonical decree issued by the Bishop of Paris, Étienne Tempier, which included among its provisions the issues Siger was studying—namely, the condemnation of certain philosophical views taught at the University of Paris at the time, such as the eternity of the world and the unity of the human mind—a period marked by the spread of Latin Averroism at the University of Paris, Seger continued to clash with the opposing faction in the Faculty of Arts, the group adhering to dogma. This conflict did not cease until May 1275, under the threat of severe penalties. The real conflict began when Pierre d'Espagne, who had previously taught logic at the University of Paris, became Pope in September 1276, taking the name John XI. He summoned Siger and others for questioning on November 23, 1276, until the excommunication of March 7, 1277, proved to be the final blow for Siger and his followers. This excommunication brought an end to his work as a university professor, and Siger was tried for heresy and imprisoned in the city of Orvietto. There, in November 1284, his scribe, having gone mad, stabbed him to death. Thus, the bold Siger of Orvietto and the first Averroist lost their lives in a cruel manner, though it reflected the intellectual climate of the time. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 32-33)

His Works: Siger de Brabant's works are divided into: commentaries on Aristotle's books, and various other original works. He wrote his works between 1266 and 1276 CE.

The Commentaries: These are commentaries on Aristotle's works, including "On Metaphysical Problems," which is a commentary on the second part of Book VII of Aristotle's Metaphysics, completed in 1276; "Problems of Nature," which consists of twelve problems in Aristotelian physics; "A Concise Treatise On Cosmos and Corruption"; "Problems in Book III of the Soul," which consists of seventeen problems concerning the rational soul; "Minor Natural Physics," which is a commentary on Aristotle's natural books; and a commentary on Politics, which is lost.

Major Philosophical Works: The most important of these are "The Book of Impossibilities" in Logic, "The Question of Necessity and Possibility" in the field of Metaphysics, "Natural Problems" known as the Paris Problems, "Natural Problems" known as the Lisbon Problems, "The Question of the Eternity of the World" and his philosophical works on the soul, "A Treatise on the Rational Soul" and "On the Intellect" in which he responds to the unity of the intellect of Thomas Aquinas, and it is a lost book, as Mondonnet confirms that this book is the most important of the psychological books, "Ethical Problems", and "On Happiness", which is a lost book.

2. His Philosophy: Siger is considered one of the most prominent representatives of Latin Averroism. He represents a current that attempted to reconcile religious doctrine with Aristotelian philosophy. This reconciliation is based on the separation of Aristotelian philosophical truth from religious truth, influenced by Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle's philosophy and his method of reconciling philosophy with Islamic law. The issue of reason and faith is considered one of the most important philosophical issues that Siger addressed, in particular, and medieval thought in general.

2.1. Reason and Christian Faith: Siger believes that there is a philosophical rational truth taught to us by Aristotle and Averroes, and a religious truth taught to us by revelation or transmission. Siger considered the Aristotelian school to be the philosophical school that presents the absolute rational truth, Siger remained somewhat faithful to Aristotle, though not entirely, drawing heavily on literal Averroistic commentaries. This stood in contrast to Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas, who interpreted him exclusively from a Christian perspective. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 172)

As we noted in the introduction to this article, the spread of Averroism in the 13th century was a shock to Christian thought. This shock and this shock and interaction gave rise to three intellectual currents during that period. **The first** was the Augustinian current with its Neoplatonic leanings, represented by traditional theologians who rejected Aristotelian philosophy because of its conflict with the tenets of Christian doctrine. **The second** current was the Aristotelian current, which adopted Aristotle's philosophy as interpreted by Averroes. This current separated the fields of philosophy and theology, and its most prominent representative

was Siger of Brabant, known as Latin Averroism. **The third** current attempted to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with Christianity, believing that Aristotle's philosophy contained fruitful ideas from which Christian theological thought could benefit. (Saleh, 2005, pp. 41-42)

It seems that Siger, who represents the second (Aristotelian) current, completely separates reason from faith, following in this the position of Aristotle. His main goal was to deal with philosophical topics away from any religious influence, as he says in his book "The Rational Soul": "Here we are looking for the intention of the philosophers in particular, the intention of Aristotle, even if the philosopher has an opinion contrary to (doctrinal) truth and even if revelation gives us teachings about the soul that natural reason cannot reach, we do not pay any attention now to divine miracles, since we, as naturalists, are discussing natural things" (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 172).

In his book "Islam and Christianity," Żurawski argues that Siger attempted to demonstrate a separation between rational and philosophical truths. He asserts that the conclusions of philosophical knowledge can contradict revealed teachings and matters of faith. Thomas Aquinas, however, countered that while truths of faith may transcend the level of rational understanding, they do not contradict reason; in other words, truth is singular (Żurawski, 1996, p. 49).

What comes from revelation or God cannot contradict reason. Therefore, Siger stated that some matters of faith surpass reason, but they do not contradict it at all. This appears to have been Siger's position before the ban, and Thomas Aquinas's response was contemporary to him.

The only truth that Siger believes in is the philosophical truth emanating from reason. However, he began to back down somewhat after the heinous campaign launched by Thomas Aquinas against him and the Averroists in his book "The Unity of the Intellect". He and his followers among the Averroists began to say that they do not seek philosophical truth in itself, but rather they seek the intention of the philosophers. He says that he is merely a historian and commentator of Aristotelian philosophy, and he tries to know the thought of the previous philosophers, and he is not a philosopher who seeks the truth. Philosophy is not a declaration of truth, but rather a search for an intention. The philosophers (Karam, 2017, p. 171) responded to Thomas Aquinas's "Unity of the Intellect," saying, "We must study this problem (the problem of the unity of the intellect) with all the care that philosophers are capable of, and with all the means that human reason and experience allow us to understand it, seeking the philosophers' intention more than we seek the truth, since we are following a philosophical path" (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 173).

His courage and boldness gradually diminished as the Church and theologians intensified their attacks on the radical Aristotelian current, which they labeled heretical. In his book "On the Rational Soul," written between 1272 and 1273 CE, when discussing the union of the soul and the body, he stated that this was the philosopher's view, and if the Catholic doctrine conflicted with the philosopher's

opinion, then we would prefer and adopt the doctrine's view. and This applies to other similar issues (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 171).

Thus, Siger became merely a historian of philosophical thought, particularly that of Aristotle, prioritizing religious truth and believing in the existence of another realm of truths beyond philosophical truths—the realm of revelation and Christian doctrine. This was a departure from his earlier stance, before the excommunication of 1270, where he believed in philosophical truth as the sole truth. His shift in favor of revealed truths stemmed not from faith but from fear of the Church's reprisals. This fear compelled him to abandon his adherence to Aristotelian philosophy.

Despite this, a philosophical text in his commentary on Aristotle's "Heaven and the World," written after the excommunication, affirms that truth lies in what Aristotelian philosophy presents. He asserts that his role as a philosopher is to seek truth, not merely to interpret the thoughts of philosophers. He states, "The aim of philosophy is not to know what people think, but to know the truth of things" (Mandonnet, 1908-1911, p. 174). Here, Siger contradicts himself. The influence of Averroism is evident in Siger's philosophy, as he believes that the human mind can attain intellectual truth, that is, knowledge. Knowledge, he argues, is not the creation of a single individual, but rather the result of the combined efforts of a group of thinkers. This aligns with Averroes's view in his book "The Decisive Treatise," where he states, "There is no craft that can be created by one person alone, so how could the craft of crafts, which is wisdom, be created by one person?" (Averroes, 1987, p. 31)

Furthermore, Averroes asserts that the goal of philosophy is to know the true nature of things, not to know what people think. He considers philosophizing to be contemplation and intellectual reflection upon existence in order to reach the truth about its Creator—that is, the transition from the known to the unknown. He states at the beginning of "The Decisive Treatise," "The act of philosophy is nothing more than contemplating existence and considering it in terms of its indication of the Creator." (Averroes, 1987, p. 27)

2.2. Between the Dual Truth and Single Truth: Siger spoke of the dual truth: the rational philosophical truth, and the religious truth, and its content is that if the religious truth of faith (what comes from revelation and sacred texts) and the philosophical truth (what reason and proof reach) conflict, then it can be said that both are right, because the two truths are not measured by the same standard, as each has its own method. Therefore, a conflict may appear, but it is not a contradiction within the same level. What is philosophically true is what reason proves within its limits, and what is religiously true is what must be accepted by faith even if reason does not grasp it, as it is supposed to be. He did not explicitly state the two truths, but his philosophical results made his opponents consider that his doctrine leads to the assertion of a kind of duality of truth, and this is what Gilson stated. In the eternity of the world, he concludes that the world is ancient, and this conflicts with the religious truth in Christianity, which says that the world was created, but

he does not deny the religious truth (Gilson, 1955, pp. 388-392) Here, he distinguishes between two realms of knowledge (the realm of reason and proof, and the realm of faith), accepting the results of each, which may appear contradictory. This is the theory for which he issued the decrees of excommunication in 1270 and 1277 CE, following attacks from theologians and philosophers, including Thomas Aquinas. His reasoning was that truth is one, and sound reason cannot contradict sound revelation. The notion of two truths is what was mistakenly attributed to Ibn Rushd, because he did not subscribe to it. Rather, he affirmed one truth. In his view, there are two sources of knowledge: reason (philosophy) and revelation (religion). However, these do not produce two different truths; both lead to the same truth if understood correctly. If the apparent meaning of a religious text contradicts certain rational proof, the text must be interpreted and explained in a non-literal manner (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 175). For example, Averroes was influenced by Aristotle, who believed the world to be eternal. However, religious truth, that is, religious texts, state that the world... The created, meaning it has a beginning and an end, presents a clear contradiction. Averroes argues that if something is proven by conclusive rational proof, then religious law cannot contradict it, because truth is one. The solution lies in interpretation, where he reinterprets the meaning of "creation" in religious texts. Creation does not necessarily mean temporal occurrence following non-existence, but rather dependence on God in a perpetual causal relationship. Averroes arrives at a single truth: the world is temporally eternal, without beginning, yet it is created and dependent on God. Here, Averroes interprets the apparent meaning of the text, thus eliminating any real contradiction between what reason has established through proof and what revelation has revealed.

However, scholars differ on whether Siger advocated a theory of dual truth. Some argue that Siger posited a religious truth and a philosophical truth in cases of apparent contradiction between the two. The second group, however, posited a single truth, arguing that when two truths—religious and philosophical—conflict, one must be true and the other false. This group is further divided into two factions: one that believes Siger's single truth is philosophical truth, represented by the historian of philosophy Émile Bréhier; and another that believes Siger's only truth is religious truth, considering philosophical truth merely statements, represented by Étienne Gilson and Abd al-Rahman Badawi.

A. The first group: represented by Émile Bréhier, who stated that all Averroists, especially Siger, affirmed the one truth, which is rational truth. Theologians rejected Aristotle's philosophy in favor of theology, while Averroists rejected theology in favor of Aristotle's philosophy. Bréhier questions Siger's position, who sometimes declares that there is only one truth, and that even if human reason is well-guided, it must be mistaken. In cases of conflict between philosophy and religion, Bréhier argues that Siger either believes what he says when he declares it, or he says it out of fear of the Catholic Church and the threat of religious excommunication. In this case, Siger would also be a believer in the one truth, which is philosophical rational

truth. Bréhier considers this latter possibility to be Siger's correct position, because in most of his writings he was enamored with Aristotelian philosophy, considering it the primary source of truth. All the philosophical texts he wrote suggest that he was a rationalist Aristotelian-Averroist philosopher who always believed in the truth of reason as the one truth, even if he declared otherwise. Religious pressures from the Catholic Church. (Brier, 1945, p. 388)

Despite this, Siger's position differs from that of Averroes, because the latter saw philosophy and religion as two different expressions of the same truth (the path of reason and the path of revelation), while Siger believed that if philosophy and religion conflict, it is a genuine conflict, and that the only truth is philosophical truth. However, he had to reconcile the two fields to avoid threats and persecution from the Church. This reflects a genuine epistemological dilemma resulting from the conflict between the conclusions of Aristotelian reason and the data of revelation, which led him to adopt a problematic position that oscillated between philosophical tension and ecclesiastical caution.

Both Averroes and Siger believed absolutely in Aristotle. While the former attempted to liberate Aristotle's thought from the dominance of scholastic theology, the latter resorted to a superficial retreat from the First Teacher's thought whenever he faced external pressure from the Church. For, at that time, explicitly stating the nature of reason was tantamount to suicide. Averroes approach was more complete and successful than Siger's, because the Christian philosopher was bound by a religious authority that precisely defined religious truths and represented the sole authority for interpretation. The Muslim philosopher Averroes, however, was not bound by any religious authority, and interpretation was permitted within its specific conditions, whereas in Christianity it was not. In his book "The Decisive Treatise," Averroes was able to establish conditions for interpretation while adhering to the principles of Islamic law, whereas in Christianity, interpretation is only allowed within very narrow limits, because the prevailing belief is that the literal meaning encompasses all meanings. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 176)

B. The second group: led by Etienne Gilson, who believes that the only truth for Siger is religious truth, as Gilson states that when the truths of revelation and sacred texts conflict with the truths of natural reason, Siger says, "These are the conclusions I reached with my mind in the field of philosophy, and since God cannot lie, I believe in the divine truth, and I hold fast to my faith." (Gilson, 1922, p. 196) He says that Averroes' position is more explicit than Siger's. Averroes used to say that pure truth is what we arrive at through reason, and religion has a degree of truth but less than reason. If a contradiction occurs, then the text is what is interpreted, so we extract from it the meaning that we arrived at through reason. Averroes is the only one in the Middle Ages who spoke of the two truths. Gilson believes that Seger did not use the word "truth" because, for him, truth is what came from revelation and sacred texts. (Gilson, 1922, p. 197) In fact, as we discussed earlier, Averroes did not speak of two truths, but rather of one truth, and the paths to it are different:

whether we follow the path of reason and proof, or the path of faith, revelation, and sacred texts, we arrive at one truth. His position is the same as Ibn Tufayl's: reason is a light from God, and revelation is a light from God, and God cannot be the source of two contradictory lights. The Sharia addresses the highest faculty in humanity, which is reason, and he believes that there are truths that transcend the capabilities of the human mind, which must be accepted without question.

Gilson observed that Siger had inexplicably altered the course of the reconciliation problem when he declared that philosophy is not the search for truth, but merely a presentation of philosophers' opinions. Gilson explained this stance by suggesting that Seger was a clergyman and professor at the University of Paris, in an environment dominated by religion. Therefore, he lacked the courage to assert that truth attained through reason surpasses the truths of revelation.

In response to Gilson, it was argued that Siger did not alter the nature of the problem of the relationship between philosophy and religion by stating that philosophy is not a search for truth, but merely an examination of philosophers' ideas. Rather, he evaded confronting this complex problem in an era dominated by the Church, as if to say, "Do not hold me accountable for my opinions, because they are merely a presentation of philosophers' views, and besides, my philosophy does not seek truth at all." Furthermore, Gilson relied on a single text that supported his argument, neglecting other writings by Siger, such as his commentary on "Heaven and the World" (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 178-179).

Gilson's position is supported by the Dutch historian of philosophy, Ferdinand Sassen. He argues that Siger explicitly states that he does not wish to undermine the value of revealed truths. As a philosopher, not a theologian, he simply seeks to explore the conclusions reached by reason and the intentions of philosophers, particularly Aristotle. However, he does not grant these conclusions the same degree of certainty as he does revealed truth. While he gives complete trust to the latter, because faith transcends reason, he acknowledges that even the greatest philosopher can err in many things. Seger himself does not deny that Aristotle strayed from the truth, because truth is always aligned with faith. Consequently, it is possible that the opinion of a philosopher, representing human reason, may not be in accordance with truth. In this case, Siger prefers the sacred Catholic faith to the philosopher's opinion. (Sassen, 1931, p. 171) Thus, according to Sassen, faith is superior to reason, and religious truth is of a higher order than philosophical truth, representing ultimate truth.

Sassen states that Seger found himself confronted with a contradiction between the philosophical conclusions stemming from his veneration of Aristotle, which he considered representative of natural reason, and the tenets of faith. Unable to resolve the problem, he remained at that point, but ultimately submitted to the truth of faith and did not grant philosophical theories the status of absolute truth. (Sassen, 1931, p. 178)

Abdel Rahman Badawi believes that Siger attempted to reconcile religious

doctrine and Peripatetic philosophy. This reconciliation is based on the premise that Aristotelian philosophical truth does not represent the entirety of truth, but rather that another truth, religious truth, is added to it (Badawi, 1969, p. 161). This means, in Badawi's view, that Siger posits the existence of two levels of truth: philosophical truth, which is a lower and incomplete truth, and religious truth, which is of a higher and more complete order. There is an integration between the two truths, with religious truth taking precedence. This interpretation is closer to that of Gilson and Sassen.

C. The third group: This group is represented by Steinbergen, who adopted a different stance. He connects Siger's philosophy with the developments of events in the thirteenth century, leading him to believe that Siger's philosophy evolved. He divides Siger's philosophy into two phases. In the first phase, Siger presented Aristotle's philosophical theories, and when he found a contradiction, he simply stated the conflict between them and doctrine, leaving the choice to the reader. The second phase, after the intervention of Thomas Aquinas and the Bishop of Paris in 1270 AD, changed Siger's thinking. Steinbergen launched a fierce campaign against Siger, stating that truth is singular and that the concept of dual truth is erroneous. He argued that there is either revealed truth or rational truth, and if they contradict each other, we must believe in one of them, because two propositions cannot be true simultaneously. If what reason dictates is truth, then revelation is false. If what revelation dictates is truth, and what reason dictates contradicts it, then reason is false. Therefore, we must affirm a single truth. It is revelation or theology, or one truth is philosophy. (Badawi, 1969, p. 164)

At this stage, whenever he addressed an issue, he declared that his role as a philosopher necessitated presenting the views of other philosophers. He indicated that if these views contradicted doctrine, they must be false. He even sometimes resorted to revelation, bypassing philosophy, regarding divine will and miracles. He occasionally pointed to the limitations of human reason in the face of complex metaphysical issues, explicitly acknowledging that these are the issues found in doctrine, which surpass all human reason because they rely on revelation and the testimony of the prophets. He urged the philosopher not to delve into these matters that transcend human reason and are associated with miracles, asserting that his role is limited to explaining the natural world. Steenburgen concludes that after enduring great suffering, Siger developed a somewhat vague theory about the relationship between philosophy and religion. This theory can be found in his writings after 1270 CE, as prior to this date he was indifferent to doctrine. He cited texts from "Issues In his works "On Metaphysics" and "On the Rational Soul," he wrote them after the prohibition. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 179-180)

Steenbergen claims that Siger believed in a general law governing his philosophy: that there can be no contradiction between revealed truth and truth discovered by reason. This is because truth is what exists, and it cannot reconcile contradictory things; that is, it cannot make what exists non-existent, nor can it make the impossi-

ble possible. This is the principle of non-contradiction upon which Averroes based his theory of reconciling wisdom and Sharia, expressing it by saying, "Truth does not contradict truth." However, Zainab Mahmoud Al-Khudairi argues that there is nothing in Siger's texts to confirm the existence of this principle. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 182)

He is also attributed with a second principle, claiming it governs the relationship between philosophy and religion. This principle states that religious truth is superior to philosophical truth, which the mind arrives at through its own efforts, in terms of absoluteness and degree of certainty. Therefore, if they conflict, we must choose the former and acknowledge that the latter contradicts the truth. Zainab Mahmoud Al-Khudairi believes that he did indeed adopt this principle, but only after the prohibition of 1270 CE. He incorporated this principle into his syncretic philosophy as a precaution against religious attacks, not out of faith, since his entire philosophy is rational. He resorted to the principle of faith being superior to reason whenever he found himself in a predicament. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 183)

Steinbergen points out that Siger used a third principle to define the relationship between rational and religious truth: that the human mind is limited in its capacity, and therefore what it arrives at does not correspond to reality. This is especially true when there are supernatural matters, related to the First Cause (God) in the cosmic order or the human order, such as divine miracles. Zainab Mahmoud Al-Khudairi responds that there are many texts in which Seger rejects explaining anything by resorting to miracles or supernatural phenomena. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 183)

Steinbergen himself states that Seger was angry with the theologians because they repeatedly forced him to abandon a philosophical statement after condemning it. If he had truly believed in the doctrine, he would not have been angry. This means that Steinbergen, who defended Seger's sincerity in the second stage, was himself a skeptic, and his defense is weak. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 184)

Youssef Karam said regarding the truth that Siger believed in, "Siger's change of position is of little concern to us, because his initial position (purely Aristotelian-rationalist-Averroist) is what distinguishes his personality and what secured his place in the history of philosophy" (Karam, 2017, p. 211).

Because without Siger, Averroist thought would have ended in Europe and its universities, reality proves the resilience of Averroist theories in the face of their opponents, which allowed them to impose themselves on European thought, especially in universities. The University of Paris retreated and decided to include Aristotle's philosophy with Averroes' commentaries in its curriculum. This occurred in the 14th and 15th centuries. Averroism did not end at the University of Paris, but rather spread to the University of Padua in Italy. The Averroists, whose thought was an extension of Siger's, revered Averroes and considered him the primary source of their philosophy. Louis XI (1423-1483) recommended relying on him. Aristotle's school of thought, as interpreted by Ibn Rushd, on the organization of education, was previously introduced by Siger at the University of Paris. (Nasser, 1992, p. 106)

This demonstrates that Siger's personality was that of an Averroist, one who revered philosophical truth. He left behind students who continued his philosophical project, such as the Danish scholar Bois de Dacia and Bernier de Nivelle, both of whom taught at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Paris, in addition to Marsilius of Padua, who attacked Catholic authority in his book "Defense of Peace" (Zinati, 2003, pp. 22-26).

2.3. Siger vs. Averroes : We find a number of points of agreement between the two philosophers, as well as points of distinction, which are:

Firstly, Siger agrees with Averroes that Aristotle's philosophy is the complete and final expression of truth, and he agrees with him on the necessity of separating the realms of philosophy and religion. This position is called the demand for freedom of thought. Aerroes, however, remained a pure philosopher, and he did not attempt to reconcile philosophy and religion except in his own books, namely "The Decisive Treatise" and "The Methods of Proof," which he wrote specifically for this purpose. We find Siger often stating that what he says is merely a presentation of the philosophers' opinions, and he is not responsible for them, because he is only an interpreter and does not aim to discover the truth. He moved beyond this position after the prohibition and condemnation of 1270 CE and attempted to reconcile philosophy and religion in his books.

Secondly, Averroes was a purely rational philosopher, reconciling Aristotelian philosophy with Islamic doctrine in his two books written for this purpose, "Fasl al-Maqal" and "Manahij al-Adillah," while Siger was forced to abandon his philosophical conclusions if they conflicted with Christianity.

Thirdly, the two philosophers are similar in that they were both rationalists who did not aim to reconcile their philosophies. Rather, their goal was to present Aristotle's philosophy in its purest form, although Averroes' aim was to defend it, as he believed it had been distorted by theologians and by Eastern philosophers such as Avicenna (according to Averroes' belief). However, he did not neglect to reconcile the two. Thirdly, they shared the same religious environment in which they lived, but each attempted to defend his philosophy in his own way. Averroes wrote his own books to demonstrate that philosophy and religion are not contradictory. He famously said, "Philosophy is a foster sister to Sharia," in response to religious figures who attacked philosophy in the name of religion. However, he never retracted what he presented in his commentaries on Aristotle's philosophy. Both philosophy and religion affirm the existence of the true soul, and if a conflict arises, interpretation is the solution. As for Siger, before 1270 CE, he simply stated that he was presenting the opinions of philosophers, especially the philosophy of Aristotle, are what Averroes presented. He was merely a historian of philosophy. However, after 1270 CE, following intense and fierce attacks against him and the Averroists in general, he was forced to attempt reconciliation within his philosophical works. When religious truth conflicted with rational truth, he was compelled to reject the philosophical truth and accept the religious one. It can be argued that

had it not been for the religious pressure in the last third of the thirteenth century, he might have gone even further than Averroes. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 186-187)

Fourthly, Averroes spoke of a single truth, attainable through reason or faith. Siger's position, however, was a matter of debate. Some believed that for him, the only truth was religious truth, while others saw it as philosophical truth. In my opinion, the truth he espoused was philosophical truth, representing the first stage before he was attacked by theologians. The second stage does not reflect his explicit position, as he was under duress. Louis Jonier, one of the modern Thomists, said, "Siger was greatly influenced by Averroes, and he ended up with issues that sound Christian doctrine cannot accept, such as the unity of reason in all people, and the eternity of the world. He did not explicitly accept the theory of the two truths, and he laid down its principles, despite his sincere attempts" (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 187).

2.4. The Unity of Intellect: Siger believes that all souls are one, as there is a single mind common to all people that connects with different bodies, bringing about its action within them. In other words, the connection of the soul to the body expresses a connection and relationship of action only. That is, the connection of matter (the body) and form (the soul) is a unity in action, not in essence. This is what is called the active mind (or unity of mind), which is a universal mind separate from individuals, in which everyone participates. It is not an individual mind, but a universal and cosmic one. Thus, knowledge is not attributed to a purely individual soul, but to this common mind. This theory has raised problems because it contradicts religion, as it leads to the denial of responsibility, the afterlife, reward and punishment, and the immortality of the soul. (Badawi, 1969, p. 165)

Siger adopted Averroes's interpretation of Aristotle, who stated that the active intellect is transcendent, eternal, and common to all people, while individual intellects are merely predispositions for connection with it. Thinking only occurs when the human soul connects with this eternal intellect. Sieger distinguishes between the rational soul and the vegetative-sensing soul, and these two souls unite to form a single soul. For Sieger, the intellect cannot be created; that is, it is eternal. This is because Aristotle emphasized that it is unmixed, immaterial, and transcendent. Therefore, the intellect must be immaterial to receive material forms. Here, Siger agrees with Averroes that the rational soul is a universal entity with a spiritual essence that exists independently. However, he differs from Averroes, who stated that the connection of the rational soul with the body creates a substantial form of it. Sieger simply states that it unites with the body through its function and knowledge. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 375-377)

In his theory, the soul is not an essential form of the body. This is the most serious Averroist issue concerning the soul, namely the unity of the mind. The human soul is one, ancient in the past and eternal in the future. Although he wrote the book in the wake of the 1270 CE ban and the condemnation of Thomas Aquinas's attack on the unity of the mind (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 377-378), he states in his book "On the Rational Soul" that the principles of Aristotle's philosophy neces-

sarily lead to accepting the unity of the rational soul. Faced with the contradiction between this philosophical truth and religious truth, and in a state of confusion and bewilderment, one must cling to the light of faith that transcends reason. He defends himself by saying that he is only presenting the philosophers' theory. In reality, Siger remained sincere, but the increasing religious pressure and the Church's control over the course of intellectual life led him to try to reconcile his views with Christian doctrine. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 378-379)

2.5. Immortality of the Soul: Siger argues that the soul is immortal and never perishes with the body. Although it is never entirely separate from matter, it is always united with a certain number of individuals through whom it exercises its specific function (the unity of the active intellect), which is reasoning or thinking. That is, the soul or intellect is immortal in its nature, but it is connected to other human beings to exercise thought. Therefore, it is neither entirely separate nor entirely material; it exists in between. Siger explains this apparent contradiction by saying, "The rational soul is separate from the body in its nature and united with it in its function" (Mandonnet, 1908-1911, p. 133).

As for whether the rational soul is corruptible or eternal in the future, Siger answers that it is incorruptible because it is not material, and matter is, in fact, the principle of corruption. The immaterial nature of the rational soul is evident from the nature of its function, as it can receive the intelligible types of all material things that share in the materiality of these material types. This is a theory common among Peripatetic philosophers. Christianity, as Siger argues, affirms the eternity of the soul in the past and future, drawing on arguments from Aristotle.

Regarding the question of whether the rational soul is separable from the body, and what its state is after separation, Siger acknowledges the difficulty of the matter. However, he adopts Averroes interpretation, which is likely Aristotle's, and arrives at a series of seven arguments concluding that the soul does not perish with the body, and moreover, it does not separate from it. It is always united with a number of individuals in whom it exercises its essential function, which is understanding. Because the rational soul does not operate outside the scope of what it performs in its union with the body, and is never separated from it or from any of the individuals, the state of the soul after separation does not exist. His theory has been challenged on the grounds that it negates reward and punishment in the afterlife, which should accompany human life. He responds to this difficulty with a solution considered by many thinkers to be ancient: that good and bad deeds are themselves reward or punishment, and in this lies the individual's happiness or misery. (Mandonnet, p. 134)

This means that the rational soul is immortal and eternal, according to Siger and Avrroes, but it is a universal soul, a soul shared by all humankind. Individual souls, however, do not share in this conception of immortality (Mandonnet, p. 134). According to Siger, the rational soul consists of an active intellect (which achieves understanding) and a potential intellect (which possesses the capacity for understanding), as in the philosophy of the Peripatetics. Individuals practice thinking

through these two intellects. Siger, as a pure Averroist philosopher, argued that the active intellect is the basis of our abstract thinking, while the potential intellect is the bearer of this thought. This was before the prohibition of 1270 AD and before Thomas Aquinas's famous book "Against the Averroists." The potential intellect has known the active intellect since eternity, but it has not united with it. Both intellects are universal, as Averroes said, and they are eternal and immortal because they are not connected to a body (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 381-382). Man does not possess a purely individual, independent, and immortal intellect, but rather participates in a universal and immortal intellect. However, this theory underwent a change, with the active intellect being identified as God Himself. It was asserted that the active intellect is involved in the formation of the rational soul through its contribution to its abstract function. This entailed the introduction of Neoplatonic analogies, which ultimately undermined the survival of Aristotelian philosophy (Al-Khudairi, 2007, p. 383). Here, knowledge ceased to be a natural intellectual process and instead came to encompass a kind of illumination or emanation—a connection of the human intellect to a higher source (God). This stance does not represent a complete reversal of his position but rather an attempt to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with the requirements of Christian doctrine.

2.6. Eternity of the World: The theory of the eternity of the world expresses a form of conflict that was raging in the Latin West after the entry of Aristotelian-Averroist philosophy into this world. Aristotle said that the world is eternal, that the world is created without beginning or end, with an eternal, infinite past, while the Book of Genesis (the Old Testament) and the New Testament (Christian doctrine) say that it was created from nothing, that the world was created with a temporal beginning. Thus, the philosophers and theologians of the thirteenth century found themselves facing the dilemma of the contradiction between Christian doctrine and Aristotle's theory. Siger de Barabant, as a pure Aristotelian-Averroist, said that the world is eternal, and he presented this theory in his book "On Necessity and Possibility," which he wrote between 1271 and 1272, that is, after the prohibition. He justifies this theory in his book "On the Eternity of the World" with two proofs: In the first proof, he relies on a logical idea, which is the eternity of the genera that constitute the earthly world, that is, those genera into which individuals fall and in which they perish. This evidence was derived from the Organon, and Siger sees in this evidence that, in general, genera and species (animal, plant, human) are immortal even if individuals are contingent (i.e., they are born and die), but the individual species, such as a human being, is constant and continuous. Individuals in the human species are created by reproduction, and this human species is realized successively in its individuals, so they do not all exist at one time. In other words, this continuity is realized by reproduction, so each individual comes from an individual before him, and there cannot be a first individual, because that would mean the interruption of the chain, and its interruption contradicts the principle of natural continuity. Therefore, the chain has no beginning, i.e., the species exists eter-

nally through an infinite succession of individuals, and it is impossible to establish a first cause, because it would in turn require another similar, previous cause. The second argument, based on the concept of transcendental substances, or intellectual substances, is discussed in his book "On the Intelligent Soul." These transcendental substances are immaterial beings not subject to generation and corruption. They have neither beginning nor end, and they are the intellects that move the celestial spheres. This eternal and perpetual movement of the world, including its motion and time, is eternal because time is linked to motion. If motion is eternal, then time is eternal; therefore, the world is eternal. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 275-276). Consequently, the earthly world is eternal. What is eternal in the past is eternal in the future, and vice versa.

However, if the world is eternal, is it created according to Seger, or not? And what is the relationship between the Creator and creation, or between the One and the many, in his view?

2.7. Creation and Emanation: Siger adopted the famous philosophical principle, "One can only produce one." The First Cause directly produces only one thing. God directly produces only one simple being, the First Intellect. The First Intellect comprehends itself and comprehends God. Thus, creation, according to Siger, occurs through a gradual emanation. Siger considers the First Intellect, which emanated directly from the First Cause (God), to be as eternal as God. By this, he means that it was not created in time; there was no moment in time when God existed alone and then created it. Its existence is concomitant with God's existence, a permanent relationship between cause and effect. This can be likened to the sun and light. We cannot say that the sun existed first, and then its light emerged later; rather, light is always concomitant with it. Siger's theory of creation relied on the famous Platonic principle, "Only one thing can emanate from a simple nature." This means that the First Cause creates the first being, which in turn creates the second, and so on until the material world emanates. Since this chain of emanation... Eternity, for the entire world is ancient. Here, Siger's Platonic influence is evident, despite his Aristotelianism, and in this idea, he differs from his teacher, Ibn Rushd (Al-Khasiri, 2007, p. 277). This progressive structure of creation highlights a striking similarity between Siger's cosmological view and Plotinus's philosophy of emanation, where all reality flows hierarchically from the ultimate "One". God controls all of existence through His indirect control over His first creation, the First Intellect.

But was the world created from nothing?

Siger's position is unclear. In his book "Questions on the Third Soul," he stated that God brought the world forth from nothing, implying a belief in creation from nothing. However, he changes his opinion in a later work, "Questions on Metaphysics," written after the ban, between 1272 and 1276 CE, where he says, "Nothing comes from nothing." There is no cause capable of transforming something from nothing into existence, since the rational soul, in this case, would exist before the body—a theory of Aristotle. Siger also denied free will in creation, believing that

creation occurs according to necessity. (Al-Khudairi, 2007, pp. 279-280)

Conclusion: Siger de Brabant's philosophy represents a pivotal moment in the history of medieval philosophical thought. He sought to defend the autonomy of philosophical reason against the authority of theology within the Christian Church. His project manifested itself in his attempt to address major philosophical issues, the first of which is the central question in all medieval philosophies, regardless of their form (Islamic, Jewish, or Christian): the reconciliation of philosophy and religion. He separated the two spheres, asserting the existence of religious truth taught by revelation and philosophical truth taught by Aristotle and Averroes. Siger considered Aristotelianism the only school of thought that offers absolute truth. This implies that he advocated the principle of dual truth (rational truth and faith-based truth). In other words, if they conflicted, he accepted the former as a philosopher and the latter as a believer. However, scholars differ on whether Siger advocated the principle of dual truth or the principle of a single truth. On this point, we find three main viewpoints: one group, represented by Émile Bréhier, believes that the only truth Siger espoused was rational truth; and another group... He believed that the only truth Siger spoke of was religious truth. A third group linked Siger's thought to a historical context and social and political circumstances, dividing it into two phases: the pre-1270 phase, where he spoke of philosophical truth, leaving the choice to the reader when the two truths—religious and philosophical—conflicted; and a second phase, after 1270, after his views were condemned and denounced. In this phase, he declared his adherence to revealed truths when they conflicted with rational philosophical truth, under pressure, threats, and the Church's oppression. Siger defended the unity of the intellect (the active intellect), which he considered a single, shared entity among humankind. This diminishes the independence of thought and the individual nature of human knowledge. Regarding the immortality of the soul, he considered the universal soul to be immortal and eternal, the soul common to humankind, while individual souls have no share in immortality. This conception contradicts the religious view, the destiny of humanity, and the concepts of reward and punishment. As for the eternity of the world, he adopted the Aristotelian view, which states Influenced by Ibn Rushd's commentaries, Siger's philosophy of the creation of the world was rooted in the concept of the world's gradual emanation, while the latter positioned on creation from nothingness. This ambiguity was particularly pronounced after the Church's condemnations and the attacks launched against him and the Averroists in general by theologians, including Thomas Aquinas.

Siger's philosophy reveals a profound tension between the demands of reason and the requirements of faith. He failed to reconcile the two, and his philosophy remained an expression of intellectual conflict characteristic of the Middle Ages. Unlike Averroes, Siger lacked the courage to take a bold stance in favor of religious truth, philosophical truth, or a synthesis of the two.

References

Al-Khudairi, Z. M. (2007). *The Influence of Averroes' Philosophy on Medieval Philosophy*. Dar Al-Tanweer for Printing, Publishing and Distribution.

Averroes. (1986). *The Decisive Treatise and the Report on the Connection between Philosophy and Sharia*. Catholic Press.

Badawi, A. R. (1969). *Medieval Philosophy*. Egyptian Renaissance Library.

Brier, E. (1945). *Medieval Philosophy*. Bibl. de synthèse Historique L'évolution de l'humanité

Gilson, E. (1922). *Medieval Philosophy from Scotus Eriugena to Geoffrey of Ockham* (Vol. 1). Payot Collection.

Gilson, E. (1955). *The History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Age*. Random House.

Karam, Y. (2017). *A History of European Philosophy in the Middle Ages*. Hindawi.

Mandonnet, P. (1908-1911). *Siger of Brabant and Latin Averroism in the 13th Century*. (Vol. 2, Belgian Philosophers VI-VII, 2nd ed.). Louvain.

Mansia, M. A. (1999). *Averroes: Philosopher of East and West*. Tunisian University.

Nasser, M. A. (1992). *Latin Averroism*. Moroccan Academy Publication.

Saleh, H. (2005). *An Introduction to the European Enlightenment*. Al-Tali'a Publishing House.

Sassen, F. (1931). Siger of Brabant and the Theory of Double Truth. *Neo-Scholastic Review of Philosophy, 30*. pp. 170-179)

Zinati, G. (2003). *Journeys into Western Philosophy*. Arab Selection House.

Żurawski, A. (1996). *Islam and Christianity*. National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, Kuwait.

Napetost između filozofije i (hrišćanske) vjere prema Sigeru de Brabantu i njen uticaj na pitanja intelekta, duše i svijeta

Rachid Kaddour

Univerzitet Biskra, Fakultet humanističkih i društvenih nauka, Alžir

Istraživanje se fokusira na ključnu epistemološku i istorijsku problematiku koja se odigrala na latinskom Zapadu tokom trinaestog vijeka, a to je susret aristotelovsko-averoističke filozofije sa hrišćanskom teologijom i sukob koji je izbio između autoriteta razuma i autoriteta religijskog teksta. Rad posebno osvjetljava misao belgijskog filozofa Sigera de Brabanta (Siger de Brabant), koji se smatra prvacem i najistaknutijim predstavnikom pravca poznatog kao „latinski averoizam". Istraživanje prikazuje kako je Siger živio u samom središtu oštrog sukoba između zagovornika razuma i dokaza (filozofa) i zagovornika objave i vjere (teologa i Crkve), pokušavajući da analizira tenziju koja je obilježila njegove stavove i da definiše prirodu odnosa između filozofskog znanja i hrišćanske doktrine.

Siger od Brabanta i njegov intelektualni projekat suočili su se sa žestokim egzistencijalnim i doktrinarnim izazovima koji su uobličili opasne prekretnice u njegovom životu i naučnom radu. Bio je izložen crkvenom progonu i proglašenju jeretikom kroz dekrete o ekskomunikaciji i osudi njegovih stavova (od kojih su najznačajniji dekreti pariskog biskupa Etijena Tempijea iz 1270. i 1277. godine). Takođe, vodio je oštru intelektualnu raspravu sa teologom Tomom Akvinskim, koji ga je napao u svom djelu „O jedinstvu intelekta". Ova ograničenja su rezultirala njegovim udaljavanjem sa nastave na Univerzitetu u Parizu, suđenjem i zatvaranjem u Italiji, gde je tragično ubijen 1284. godine. Zastrašivanje i psihološki pritisci primorali su ga na „intelektualno kolebanje" i tvrdnje da je on samo istoričar koji prenosi tuđe ideje bez njihovog usvajanja kako bi se zaštitio.

Rad se bavi trima velikim intelektualnim temama koje su bile pod uticajem ove tenzije: Prvo, problematikom „dvostruke istine", optužbom pripisanom Sigeru da jedna tvrdnja može biti filozofski tačna, a njena religijska suprotnost istovremeno istinita, što autor smatra suprotnim stvarnom Averoesovom metodu zasnovanom na „jednoj istini" i tumačenju. Drugo, pitanjem „jedinstva intelekta", gdje je Siger usvojio averoističko tumačenje Aristotela da je aktivni intelekt jedan i zajednički za sve ljude, što direktno ugrožava crkvenu doktrinu o ličnoj besmrtnosti, odgovornosti, nagradi i kazni. Treće, pitanjem „vječnosti svijeta i teorije emanacije", gde je branio tezu o vječnosti svijeta i postepenom ishođenju, nasuprot hrišćanskom učenju o stvaranju ni iz čega. Zaključak ukazuje na podijeljenost savremenih tumačenja o njegovom stvarnom stavu i na njegov neuspjeh u stvaranju stabilne sinteze filozofije i religije zbog odsustva fleksibilnosti tumačenja u hrišćanskom ambijentu, uprkos tome što je latinski averoizam opstao i utro put evropskoj renesansi.

Ključne riječi: Siger de Brabant, filozofija i religija, duša, intelekt i svijet prema Sigeru