ANALYSIS OF COMPONENTS AND DEBATE SKILLS IN IMAM REZA'S DISCUSSIONS WITH FOLLOWERS OF DIFFERENT RELIGIONS AND SECTS

[1]**Mohammad Ali Pourbadakhshan**

[1]*Phd, Department of Shia studies, University of Religions and Denominations, Qom, Iran.*

Corresponding Author: Mohammad Ali Pourbadakhshan

ABSTRACT

Imam Reza engaged in debates with a diverse group of individuals, including Christians, Zoroastrians, Jews, materialists, Mandaean Sabians, and members of various Islamic sects. In these debates, he employed a range of components and skills. This descriptive-analytical research aims to evaluate the components and skills used by Imam Reza in his discussions with followers of different religions and sects. The research seeks to answer the question of what specific components and skills Imam Reza utilized in his debates with religious and sectarian speakers. Based on the findings, Imam Reza's debates can be categorized into three primary types: ethical, logical, and free-thinking. Furthermore, the skills he employed can be distilled into five concurrent methods. These methods enabled him to advance his arguments and discussions to the point of prevailing over his opponents, even in the most challenging debates, without succumbing to incorrect or unethical reasoning traps. He achieved this by employing communicative debate techniques.

Keywords: Imam Reza, Religions and Sects, Debate Components, Debate Skills.

INTRODUCTION

Imam Reza engaged in debates with a diverse array of individuals, including representatives of Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, and materialist communities, as well as members of Islamic sects with distinct viewpoints, such as Suleiman Marozi, Abu Qurra, and Ali ibn al-Jahm. These debates encompassed a wide range of topics, including questions of monotheism and imamate.[1]

In his work "Uyoun Akhbar Al-Ridha," Al-Shaykh al-Saduq presents some of the most significant accounts of Imam Reza's debates. For instance, he refers to a debate on monotheism titled " باب ذكر مجلس‌الرضا (عليه السلام) مع اهل الاديان و اصحاب المقالات فى التوحيد عند المامون"[2]. Al-Shaykh al-Saduq describes this debate as not only extensive but also deeply explorative of the nuances of monotheistic

---

[1] Qureshi, Hayat al-Imam ar-Rida, 176

[2] Ibn Babawayh, Uyun Akhbar Ar-Ridha, 154

discussions. Imam Reza employed different approaches when engaging with materialists and Christians, respectively. In the subsequent article, we will delve into an analysis and discussion of the components and skills of debate utilized by Imam Reza in his interactions with followers of various religions and sects.

Background

To date, a variety of research studies have been conducted on the debates of Imam Reza, with some of the most notable including "The Scientific and Ethical Principles of Razavi Debates, "[3] "Analysis of the Discourse of Imam Reza's Debates,"[4] "The Methods and Characteristics of Imam Reza's Debates,"[5] "Ethical Debates and Moral Discussions in the Life of Imam Reza and Their Application in Free-Thinking Forums,"[6] and "Ethical Indicators in Razavi Debates."[7] While these studies have addressed ethical principles and the values of debate, such as truth-seeking, justice, adherence to etiquette, and fairness, the current research aims to concentrate on the components and skills of Imam Reza's debates.

1. Components of Imam Reza's Debates

The key components of Imam Reza's debates can be categorized into three primary types: ethical, logical, and free-thinking indicators. Each of these components will be described in detail in the following sections.

1.1. Ethical Components

During Imam Reza's debates, the following traits can be highlighted as the distinguished ethical qualities of Imam Reza in his discourse.

1.1.1. Mutual Respect

One of the key ethical principles in Imam Reza's debates was mutual respect. He emphasized the importance of respecting others and avoided using disrespectful language. Despite his eminent position in scholarship and his divine blessings, Imam Reza never resorted to belittling, mocking, or ridiculing his opponents during their discussions. For example, during a debate with Suleiman Marozi, when Suleiman fell into contradictions and the audience started to mock him, Imam Reza courteously urged them to show restraint[8]. His respectful conduct had such an impact that it inspired even his adversaries to treat him with humility. This influence was so profound that renowned scholars like Imran al-Sabi honored Imam Reza with titles such as "al-Sayyidi" and "Mawlawi" (ibid: 315).

1.1.2. Upholding Fairness

One of the fundamental elements in a debate is the adherence to fairness, and Imam Reza placed significant emphasis on this principle in his discussions. For example, during a debate with Imran al-Sabi, Imam Reza stated: "O Imran, ask whatever you wish, but avoid unfairness and false speech."[9] Moreover, when Imam Reza noticed that his opponent was behaving fairly, he would

---

[3] Rezazadeh, "Scientific and Ethical Principles of Imam Reza's Debates," 37
[4] Majidi, "Discourse Analysis of Imam Reza's Debates," 9
[5] Sharifi, "Methods and Characteristics of Imam Reza's Debates," 109
[6] Mahmoudi, "Ethical Aspects of Debates and Moral Debates in the Life of Imam Reza and Their Application in Free Thought Forums," 163
[7] Ghafari, "Ethical Indicators in Imam Reza's Debates," 103
[8] Qureshi, Life of Imam ar-Rida, 195
[9] Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, 310

acknowledge: "You have acted fairly."[10]

1.1.3. Avoiding Personal Attacks

Imam Reza consistently refrained from attacking the personality of his opponents during his debates. Instead, he concentrated on critiquing their arguments and pointing out their mistakes and misconceptions. In contrast, some individuals, such as Catholicos, would engage in personal attacks against Imam Reza, accusing him of ignorance and lack of scientific ability.[11]

1.2. Logical Components

Logical components encompass the principles and rules essential for accurate thinking and contemplation on a subject. In Imam Reza's debates, several significant indicators of these components can be observed, which will be elaborated upon in the subsequent sections.

1.2.1. Utilizing the Opponent's Convictions

This method is a strategic approach in debates. Imam Reza often initiated his discussions by seeking agreement from his opponent on the topic at hand. For instance, during a debate with Catholicos, Imam Reza inquired: "Do you not agree that the Gospel states that John the Apostle declared Christ informed me of the Arabian religion and promised that after him, Muhammad the Prophet would come, and I also shared this good news with the disciples, leading them to believe in Muhammad the Prophet?" Catholicos responded: "John the Apostle did promise a man and his family, but he did not specify the time of their appearance or mention their names." Imam Reza then posed the question: "If someone can read the name of Muhammad the Prophet and his followers from the Gospel, will you believe?" Catholicos answered: "Yes, I will believe wholeheartedly!" Subsequently, Imam Reza read the names of Muhammad and his family from the Gospel. Catholicos then stated: "I accept and acknowledge what has been proven to me from the Gospel."[12] In this manner, Imam Reza skillfully compelled Catholicos to admit the truth by utilizing the Gospel, a text that Catholicos held in esteem.

1.2.2. Debating with the Intent of Enlightenment

In a debate, when the interlocutor is convinced that the opponent's intentions are not self-serving, a more fruitful relationship is established between them. Imam Reza, during his discussions with scholars of the People of the Book, showcased his aim of enlightenment and disinterest by citing the Holy Quran and presenting arguments from sources that were acceptable to his opponents, all without bias.[13] For instance, during a debate with Catholicos, when Imam Reza presented his precise and scientific arguments, revealing the contradictions in Catholicos's beliefs to everyone, Catholicos asked Imam Reza to excuse him from further debate. Imam Reza, having presented ample evidence, acceded to Catholicos's request to prevent any scientific embarrassment in the session and left the continuation of the debate to him.[14]

1.2.3. Presenting Fundamental Rational Criteria

In a focused debate, through dialogue and intellectual exchange between participants, one can identify general rational principles underlying their beliefs. This is evident in Imam Reza's debates, where an examination of his discussions reveals the fundamental rational criteria he

---

[10] Ghalandari, The Eighth Imam: Life, Personality, Forced Heir Apparency and Some Miracles and Sayings of Imam ar-Rida, along with an Analysis of the Life and Greatness of his Sister al-Ma'suma, 40
[11] Ibn Babawayh, Sources of Traditions About Ar-Ridha, 385
[12] Ibn Babawayh, Sources of Traditions About Ar-Ridha, 320
[13] Hosseini, The Components of the Scientific Debates of Imam Reza, 13
[14] Tabarsi, Al-Ihtijaj, 178

supported. For instance, in a debate with Imran al-Sabi, Imam Reza invoked general principles to elucidate the concept of tawhid (unity of God), addressing various questions. The principles gleaned from this debate are as follows:

- God is the Supreme Being, indicating that the Holy Lord is "self-existent" and requires no other cause for His existence.
- Any limit or measure is beyond the Holy Divine Essence.
- God has decreed that creatures have destiny and limitations.
- God is both the Creator and the Ordainer, as creatures are governed by measure and law.
- God has ordained that destiny and the ordained are comprehensible together, and each is understandable in its own right.
- God has not created any creature as self-sufficient.
- God is peerless and in need of no support other than Himself.

1.2.4. Relying on Valid and Authentic Arguments

In debates, arguments must be grounded in sources that are both acceptable to the interlocutor and valid. This entails that statements, data, and news must be reliable and well-documented while avoiding false and baseless claims that lack logical and rational support. Imam Reza underscored the significance of this aspect in his debates, stating: "Is not the most just person the one who, in debate with their opponent, relies on their book, prophet, and religion?"[15] For instance, Exilarch agreed to debate Imam Reza on the condition that they utilize sources such as the Torah, Gospel, Psalms, and the scrolls of Abraham and Moses. In response, Imam Reza asserted: "Accept no argument from me unless it is found in the Torah in the language of Amram, in the Gospel in the language of Jesus, and the Psalms as stated by David."[16] Imam Reza would not only present an argument but also provide its source and direct the debate opponent to it. Examples of such debates include those with Exilarch and Suleiman Marozi. During a debate with Exilarch, Imam Reza inquired: "Have you seen in the Torah the claims regarding Ezekiel that he resurrected five thousand people after sixty years of death?" In this debate, Imam Reza referred Exilarch to the books of "Isaiah" and "Psalms" to substantiate the prophethood of Muhammad.[17]

1.2.5. Presenting an Effective and Goal-Oriented Conclusion
A desirable debate is conducted in such a way that, in the end, the discussions presented lead to a desired, effective, and directed outcome. This characteristic is a prominent feature of the logical aspects of Imam Reza's debates. Imam Reza, in his debates with followers of various religions and sects, managed to convince and silence them in the face of Islamic thought and Shi'ism, demonstrating that they had reached a dead end. In this process, some religious leaders acknowledged their weaknesses and converted to Islam. For example, Catholicos, when defeated in a debate with Imam Reza and having no way to escape defeat, admitted: "I swear by the truth of Christ that I never thought there would be someone like you among the Muslims.[18]"

1.2.6. Structured and Logical Presentation of Arguments

The coherent connection of words and the structured presentation of ideas are crucial elements of valuable and focused discourse in a scientific debate. Consequently, a fundamental argument must be properly structured, analyzed, and concluded to ensure that both parties in the debate achieve a clear understanding and are engaged in the discussion. Imam Reza, in his scientific debates, placed significant emphasis on this principle and utilized the logical progression of arguments to

---

[15] Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, 80
[16] Ibn Babawayh, Uyun Akhbar Ar-Ridha, 427
[17] ibid
[18] Makarem Shirazi, Historical Debates of Imam Reza with Followers of Other Religions and Schools of Thought, 51

organize his speech in a manner that eliminated any ambiguity, thereby ensuring that the interlocutor fully comprehended the truth.[19]

1.3. Emotional Components

It refers to characteristics that influence an individual's spirit and psyche, acting as a motivational force with a significant emotional impact on the heartfelt and internal acceptance of arguments. Imam Reza's debates also exhibit notable features of this kind, some of which we will discuss:

1.3.1. Accuracy and Understanding of the Message's Content

One of the fundamental principles in discussion and communication with others is to avoid unnecessary argumentation and instead focus on understanding the interlocutor's speech. Based on this principle, one can demonstrate skill in the debate by ensuring that the interlocutor has a correct understanding of what they are feeling and trying to convey[20], as a lack of understanding of the speaker's message can be a problem that completely derails the debate. Imam Reza always emphasized the importance of this component to his interlocutors. For example, Imam Reza told Imran al-Sabi: "O Imran! I will inform you about what you have asked, but consider what I say with reason and maintain intelligence and understanding in what you ask, for this is one of the most difficult topics that people face. Those who lack stable intelligence, and understanding, and are ignorant will be unable to comprehend it, while those who possess recognition, fairness, and intelligence will understand."[21]

1.3.2. The Use of Gentle Speech (قول لين)

One of the key factors for effective and persuasive communication in debate is the use of soft and pleasant language. The significance of this approach is underscored by God's command to Moses and Aaron to employ it when confronting Pharaoh: "Speak to him gently, so that he may reflect or fear God's punishment" (Ṭā ḥā /44). Similarly, the success of Prophet Muhammad is attributed to his gentle demeanor: "Had you been harsh and hard-hearted, people would have dispersed from around you" (Al Imran / 159). The value of using soft and pleasant words is so great that Imam Ali deemed it an integral part of worship. An examination of Imam Reza's debates, focusing on the words and phrases he employed, reveals that he not only considered the thoughts of his interlocutors but also their inherent nature, as reflected in his tone of voice and the quality of his speech modulation. Imam Reza consistently presented his arguments in a soft, gentle, and balanced manner, steering clear of harsh and distressing language to foster a more empathetic connection with his interlocutors. A notable feature of Imam Reza's debates is the interlocutors' enthusiasm to continue the discussion. It is clear from these debates that his words had a profound impact on his listeners, as they eagerly sought to hear more of his arguments. For instance, Suleiman Marozi, one of Imam Reza's debating partners, after hearing Imam Reza's explanation about "Bada'", enthusiastically requested further clarification on the subject.[22]

1.3.3. Creating a Peaceful Atmosphere

The most crucial element in a debate is maintaining an environment free from tension and violence, which enables individuals to engage in logical and rational thinking. This is because, when individuals are at ease, they are more susceptible to the influence of the social environment. In a climate of violence and agitation, this environment can either affirm or reject certain ideas,

---

[19] Hosseini, The Components of the Scientific Debates of Imam Reza, 157
[20] Maghami, Examining the Process of Verbal Communication and its Foundations in Islamic Education, 56
[21] Ibn Babawayh, Sources of Traditions About Ar-Ridha, 257
[22] Hashemi Ardakani, The Method of Scientific Debate in the Educational Conduct of the Infallible Imams, 11

leading individuals to unconsciously conform to it.[23] Imam Reza, in his debates, not only upheld this principle but also monitored the behavior of those around him, ensuring that the atmosphere remained tranquil for the interlocutor. For instance, when Imam Reza was debating with Suleiman Marozi and had convinced him on a particular point, the audience would laugh, causing tension. At such times, Imam Reza would caution the audience against this behavior and would say: "Do not be hard on the speaker from Khorasan and do not cause him distress."[24]

1.3.4. Understanding the Interlocutor

In religious traditions, it is stated that the Imams and Prophets must communicate with people in a way that aligns with their intellectual capabilities, their level of thought, and their diverse personalities, thereby ensuring that people can understand their message. Imam Reza generally adhered to this principle in his debates with followers of various religions and sects. He was always attentive to the spiritual characteristics, intellectual capabilities, and the level of thought and knowledge of his interlocutor, and he tailored his approach accordingly. This method had a significant motivational impact on the understanding and acceptance of the topic under discussion. When engaging with speakers of different religions and sects, Imam Reza would employ either a rational and deductive approach or a traditional method, referring to their sacred texts and the sayings of their authorities. However, in debates with Islamic scholars, he would supplement rational arguments with references to Quranic verses and historical sayings, as seen in his debates with Suleiman Marozi, al-Ma'mun, and Ali ibn al-Jahm. In another instance, Imam Reza, in a debate with Yahya ibn Zuhak Samarkandi, used the words and phrases of the Rashidun Caliphs (Umar and Abu Bakr) to substantiate his own Imamate regarding the issue of leadership.[25]

1.4. Components of Free Thinking

The components of free thinking are those elements to which every individual, regardless of race, is entitled.

1.4.1. Religious Tolerance

Islam has consistently demonstrated magnanimity in its interactions with strangers and adherents of other divine religions, acknowledging specific rights for minorities. Rather than imposing strictness on individuals of other faiths, Islam advocates and mandates religious tolerance. Imam Reza exemplified this tolerance by engaging in respectful and insightful dialogue with those of differing beliefs, striving to create an atmosphere devoid of tension and free from religious bigotry. He treated various religious sects with respect and refrained from provoking their religious sentiments.[26] For instance, when asked by someone, "Is there someone in your family who speaks ill of the Shaykhin (Umar and Abu Bakr)?" Imam Reza not only refuted the claim but also advised, "Love them, be affectionate towards them, and seek forgiveness for them from God." Beyond treating the scholars and elite of other religions with dignity, Imam Reza also extended accommodation to the common people and masses of these sects.[27] This inclusivity was so profound that a narrator recounts, "Someone asked Imam Reza, 'Should I pray for my parents, even though they do not recognize the rights of the Imams and the Prophet?'" Imam Reza responded, "Pray for them, give charity on their behalf, and if they are alive and do not recognize

---

[23] Sadat and Ghari, The Cognitive Dimensions of Imam Reza in Dealing with Scholars of Other Religions and Sects, 92

[24] Ibn Babawayh, Sources of Traditions About Ar-Ridha, 259

[25] Atarodi, News and Works of Imam Reza, 620

[26] Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, 81

[27] ibid, 89

the truth, treat them with accommodation; for the Prophet said, 'God sent me with mercy, not with harshness and cruelty.'"

1.4.2. Patience and Tolerance of Opposing Views

Another key element of Imam Reza's approach to debates was his patience and tolerance. When he encountered differing opinions, he did not reject them; instead, he embraced and welcomed diverse perspectives. During one such debate, when Catholicos challenged Imam Reza's assertion that "We believe in God and also in Christ, who acknowledged the prophethood of the Prophet, and our only criticism of Christ is the shortcoming in his fasting and prayers," Catholicos exclaimed in astonishment, "You have undermined your knowledge, we believed you to be the most learned among the Muslims." In response, Imam Reza addressed him with composure, acknowledging the Christian reverence for Christ, and provided a thoughtful reply.[28]

1.4.3. Freedom of Expression

In the debates conducted by Imam Reza, a significant element is the freedom of expression and thought. He allows his audience the liberty to express their views without any restriction, viewing freedom of speech and thought as fundamental human rights. Consequently, during these debates, he ensures that his counterpart is granted this inalienable right. For example, in a debate with Suleiman Marozi, Imam Reza adeptly guided the discussion to the point where Suleiman was left bewildered and unable to respond on five occasions. Suleiman's numerous errors even prompted laughter from al-Ma'mun and the other attendees. Despite this, and even when presented with convincing answers from Imam Reza, Suleiman persisted in repeating his statements and contradicting himself until the end of the debate. Imam Reza, however[29], did not deny Suleiman the opportunity for a free and open debate, despite his continuous contradictions.

1.4.4. Avoidance of Unwarranted Prejudice

Imam Reza never allowed prejudice to influence his interactions with adherents of other religions or with individuals who held differing viewpoints. Regardless of his interlocutor's lack of belief in the foundational principles of Islam, he would, without prejudice, utilize the same scripture that they held sacred as the basis for their debate. He would then present arguments and evidence derived from that scripture, ensuring that the opposing party could not refute its authority. For example, during one session, Catholicos inquired of al-Ma'mun, "How can I engage in a debate with someone who refers to a book and a prophet that we reject?" Imam Reza responded, "O Christian! If I provide you with evidence from the Gospel, will you accept it?" Catholicos answered, "Yes, I swear by God, I will acknowledge it, even if it contradicts my position.[30]"

2. Imam Reza's Debating Skills

The subsequent section will provide a detailed account of some of the most significant skills and techniques employed by Imam Reza in his debates.

2.1. Skill in Utilizing the Dialectical Method

In this skill, Imam Reza initiates by posing questions and presenting arguments that transition from specific instances to general principles and analogies. He asks, "Can you explain why you acknowledge Moses as a prophet?" The Jewish individual responds that Moses could perform

---

[28] Tabarsi, Al-Ihtijaj, 413
[29] Majlesi, Bihar al-Anwar, 322
[30] Tabarsi, Al-Ihtijaj, 404

miracles. Imam Reza then inquires, "If that is the case, why don't you accept others who can perform miracles that are beyond the capabilities of others as prophets? For example, Jesus or Muhammad." The dialectical skill encompasses not only questioning but also the strategic arrangement of questions, such that, for instance, the fourth question leads to the core discussion. This approach is rooted in Plato's theory that humans either know everything or nothing, with two dominant theories emerging: 1) Some Muslim scholars argue that humans are devoid of innate knowledge. 2) Plato's theory of recollection suggests that human souls acquire certain knowledge in a higher realm before birth but forget it upon entering this world, necessitating a teacher to remind them.[31] Socrates similarly posited that humans possess inherent knowledge that needs to be reawakened, and the subsequent principle is that in defining the essence of something, one must proceed from the general to the specific. In this segment of the debate, Imam Reza eschews direct argumentation; instead, he elicits admissions from his interlocutor through questioning and then introduces the general cause and rule, ultimately guiding the other party to recognize the application of the rule to a different scenario.

2.2. The Skill of Questioning

The majority of the arguments presented by Imam Reza during his debates are framed as questions. Typically, objections are raised in a manner where the individual presents their viewpoint, but when a question is directed at the interlocutor, they are more inclined to accept it. Consequently, the technique of posing questions acts as an educational instrument and a sophisticated method of argumentation. This strategy avoids any hint of egoism, wherein one might assert, "I know and others do not." Instead, it motivates individuals to pursue knowledge from both an educational and moral perspective, implying that knowledge is not the sole possession of any one person; others can also acquire it through their efforts.

2.3. The Skill of Analogical and Refutational Reasoning

This method of reasoning involves presenting a specific and exemplary case to counter another specific case, arguing that if Jesus resurrected the dead, other prophets would have done so as well. For example, Imam Reza references other prophets who resurrected the dead to illustrate that if one worships Jesus for this ability, one should also worship Elisha, Moses, and Prophet Muhammad, and view them as gods.[32] In this manner, Imam Reza provides several similar examples to refute the interlocutor's argument. This approach is known as a refutational response because Imam Reza does not present his case but instead aims to demonstrate that the interlocutor's claim is incorrect. He achieves this by providing examples and employing a method of refutation through similarity or analogy. In this skill, Imam Reza offers a refutational answer and draws parallels between the abstract and the concrete through examples or events to engage the interlocutor in the discussion. Consequently, this skill of Imam Reza is deemed suitable for evaluation.

2.4. The Skill of Proof by Contradiction

In one instance, Imam Reza addressed a Christian individual who believed Jesus to be God, stating: "The Jesus we believe in had no faults, except that he was weak in prayer and fasting.[33]" Imam Reza employed a contradictory approach to make his point. Catholicos responded: "By God, you have not organized your knowledge well, meaning you have stated a baseless and unfounded claim. I did not expect you to say such a thing." The Imam inquired, "Why?" Catholicos replied: "The statement you made that Jesus was weak in prayer and fasting is

---

[31] Copleston, A History of Philosophy, 193
[32] Ibn Babawayh, Uyun Akhbar Ar-Ridha, 159
[33] Ibn Babawayh, Uyun Akhbar Ar-Ridha, 158

incorrect because Jesus always fasted and spent nights in vigil." Imam Reza then posed the question: "If he was God, for whom did he pray and fast?" At this juncture, Catholicos fell silent. In this part of the debate, Imam Reza utilized the skill of proof by contradiction.

2.5. The Skill of Utilizing the Modeling Method and Simultaneous Immediate Instruction

During one of the debates, when prayer time arrived, Imam Reza paused the discussion and rose to perform the prayer. This action serves as a modeling method, where Imam Reza stands up and proceeds to pray, effectively demonstrating that it is time for prayer and that we should pray promptly. Although the interlocutor was under his influence, this approach is also referred to as immediate instruction. In this method, while teaching the interlocutor, another incident occurs simultaneously, teaching a different lesson. One of the effective methods is immediate instruction, which capitalizes on optimal opportunities.[34]

CONCLUSION

In the social and political history of the infallible Imams, Imam Reza's debates with leaders of various religions and sects hold particular significance due to their extensive influence on Islamic and Shiite thought. Imam Reza's debates serve as an exemplary source for identifying the components and skills of debates endorsed by the Holy Quran. Through a thorough evaluation and analysis of these debates, the prominent components and skills have been categorized into four main groups: 1) "Ethical Indicators," including respect, fairness, and avoiding personal criticism; 2) "Logical Indicators," encompassing logical structure, the use of sound arguments, and persuasion; 3) "Emotional Indicators," such as gentle speech and maintaining a calm environment; 4) "Open-minded Indicators," including freedom of expression, religious tolerance, and broad-mindedness.

Additionally, Imam Reza's debates reveal a range of skills, including the dialectical method, the skill of questioning, analogical and refutational reasoning, proof by contradiction, and the skill of utilizing the modeling method and simultaneous immediate instruction. By employing these diverse skills, Imam Reza conducted his arguments and discussions in the most challenging and prolonged debates without resorting to false or unethical arguments, ultimately leading to his victory over his adversaries.

In conclusion, religious preachers can play a strategic role in promoting and spreading the true culture and civilization of Islam by acquiring and applying these components and skills.

REFERENCES

1. Ibn Babawayh, Muhammad ibn Ali. Uyun Akhbar Ar-Ridha. Beirut: Mu'assasah al-A'lami li-l-Matbu'at, 1404 AH.
2. Rezazadeh Kohangi, Fariba. Osul-e Elmi, 2015.
3. Hosseini, Alireza. "The Components of Imam Reza's Scientific Debates: A Superior Model for Religious Free-Thinking and the Spread of Islam in the Contemporary World." Razavi Culture Scientific-Research Journal 2, no. 6, 2018: 149-177.
4. Atarodi, Azizollah. Akhbar va Asar-e Imam Reza, Bita.

---

[34] Mohseni, Foundations of Health Education, 26

5. Ghafari, Mohammad. "Ethical Indicators in the Debates of Imam Reza." Ethics Research Journal 35, 2017: 103-122.

6. Qureshi, Baqir Sharif. Hayat al-Imam ar-Rida. Qom: Sa'id bin Jubayr, 2001.

7. Ghalandari, Hamid. The Eighth Imam: Life, Personality, Forced Heir Apparency and Some Miracles and Sayings of Imam ar-Rida, along with an Analysis of the Life and Greatness of his Sister al-Ma'suma. Qom: Faragoft Publications, 2002.

8. Copleston, Frederick. A History of Philosophy. Tehran: Soroush Book, 2001.

9. Sadat, Fatemeh. "The Intellectual Dimensions of Imam Reza's Interactions with Scholars of Other Sects and Religions." Collection of Articles on Imam Reza's Debates, vol. 2, 2012: 92.

10. Sharifi, Enayatollah. "The Methods and Characteristics of Imam Reza's Debates." Allameh Tabataba'i University Collection of Articles, no. 290, Winter 2013: 109-122.

11. Tabarsi, Ahmad ibn Ali. Al-Ihtijaj. Najaf: Dar al-Nu'man, 1966.

12. Majidi, Hasan. "Analysis of the Discourse of Imam Reza's Debates." Razavi Culture Magazine 1, no. 2, 2013: 9-40.

13. Majlesi, Mohammad-Baqer. Bihar al-Anwar. Tehran: Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah, 2007.

14. Maghami, Hamid. "Investigation of the Process of Verbal Communication and its Foundations in Islamic Education and Training," 2004.

15. Mahmoudi, Marzieh. "Debate Ethics and Ethical Debates in the Life of Imam Reza and their Application in Free-Thinking Classes." Bioethics Journal 15, 2015: 163-194.

16. Hashemi Ardakani, Hasan. "The Method of Scientific Debate in the Educational Life of the Infallible Imams, A Case Study: Imam Reza's Scientific Debates." Islamic Education Scientific-Research Journal, no. 7, Autumn and Winter 2008: 7-21