

A Study of Induced Discourse in the Process

of Imam Riḍā's (as) Debate with Religious Scholars

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Abstract

During the time of Imam Riḍā (as), due to the cultural and political developments of the society, various discourses emerged, each of which defended its ideology. In the meantime, debates took place between Imam Riḍā (as) and the elders of the religions. In the battlefield of right and wrong, the Imam tries to prove the legitimacy of Islam with rational and narrative arguments. This article, in a descriptive-analytical method and with the aim of explaining the Imam's strategies in the intellectual development of society, analyzes his debate and the process of meaning formation in it, and in this direction, uses the semantic sign approach; the approach that, in a dynamic and directional process, seeks to penetrate deep into the meanings embedded in the discourse and explains its functions. Also, the sign of semantics as a scientific tool provides methodical analysis of texts. This article seeks to answer the question of how meaning can go beyond induction to production and create a particular discourse system. Findings show that induction strategies of reasoning and persuasion are among the interactive strategies used in debates. During these persuasive processes, the Imam produces words based on the power that emanates from him. As a result of this production, the range of speech increases and the opposite actor acquires knowledge. It is after reaching this knowledge that the actors (Jāthaliq, Rās al-Jālūt, Hirbod Akbar and 'Imrān Ṣābī) surrender and the legitimacy of Islam is proved.

Keywords: Semantic sign, Discourse system, Induced discourse, Imam Riḍā (as) debates.

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