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Beyond *Riwāyah-Dirāyah* : The Penta-Structural Hadith Studies As Edi Safri's Epistemological Contribution

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Abstract

This article aims to analyse and reconstruct the epistemological ideas of Edi Safri, Professor of Hadith Studies at UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, which are formulated as the pentastructural study of hadith. Hadith studies in Indonesia and the Islamic world in general still rely on two major classifications: the science of hadith transmission (riwāyah), which governs the transmission and preservation of hadith, and the science of hadith understanding (dirāyah), which establishes the principles of sanad and matan criticism. Although both have made fundamental contributions to the Islamic scholarly tradition, this dualistic framework is not sufficient to depict the true breadth, depth, and contemporary relevance of hadith studies. There is a significant gap in the form of a void in the framework that integrates the dimensions of authenticity, historicity, hermeneutics, intellectual biography, and contemporary responses into a cohesive epistemological structure. This research employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach and a biographical-intellectual study based on the author's direct involvement in the learning process with Edi Safri from the undergraduate to doctoral level (2012–present). The findings show that the pentastructural framework fills the epistemological gap left by classical classifications, integrating historical, hermeneutic, intellectual biography, and contemporary response dimensions into a coherent and pedagogically layered scientific architecture. The penta-structural framework of hadith studies includes: (1) al-bahs al-asāsī (main study/critique of chain-text), (2) al-bahs at-tāriqī (historical study), (3) al-bahs 'an al-fiqh al-ḥadīṣ (methodological study of hadith understanding), (4) al-bahs 'an al-a'lam wa al-muṣannafāt (study of figures and literature), and (5) al-bahs 'an al-musykilat wa al-ḥawādīs al-ḥadīṣiyyah (study of contemporary issues). This framework is relevant as an alternative methodology that is more holistic and systematic for the study of modern hadith in Indonesia and globally.

Keywords: Penta-Structural, Hadith Studies, Edi Safri, Hadith Epistemology, Hadith Research Methodology

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan merekonstruksi gagasan epistemologis Edi Safri, Guru Besar Ilmu Hadis UIN Imam Bonjol Padang, yang dirumuskan sebagai penta-struktural studi hadis. Studi hadis di Indonesia dan dunia Islam secara umum masih bertumpu pada dua klasifikasi besar: ilmu hadis riwayat, yang mengatur transmisi dan pemeliharaan hadis, serta ilmu hadis dirayah, yang membangun kaidah kritik sanad dan matan. Meskipun keduanya telah memberikan kontribusi fundamental bagi tradisi keilmuan Islam, kerangka dualistik ini tidak cukup memadai untuk menggambarkan keluasan, kedalaman, dan relevansi kontemporer kajian hadis yang sesungguhnya. Terdapat gap signifikan berupa kekosongan kerangka yang mengintegrasikan dimensi autentisitas, historisitas, hermeneutika, biografi intelektual, dan respons kontemporer ke dalam satu bangunan epistemologis yang kohesif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis dan studi tokoh berdasarkan keterlibatan langsung penulis dalam proses belajar bersama Edi Safri dari jenjang S1 hingga S3 (2012–sekarang). Temuan menunjukkan bahwa kerangka penta-struktural mengisi gap epistemologis yang ditinggalkan klasifikasi klasik, mengintegrasikan dimensi historis, hermeneutis, biografi intelektual, dan respons kontemporer ke dalam satu arsitektur keilmuan yang utuh dan berlapis secara pedagogis. Penta struktural studi hadis meliputi: (1) *al-bahṣ al-asāsī* (kajian utama/kritik sanad-matan), (2) *al-bahṣ at-tārikhī* (kajian kesejarahan), (3) *al-bahṣ ‘an al-fiqh al-ḥadīṣ* (kajian metodologi pemahaman hadis), (4) *al-bahṣ ‘an al-a‘lām wa al-muṣannaḥāt* (kajian ketokohan dan literatur), serta (5) *al-bahṣ ‘an al-musykilāt wa al-ḥawādīṣ al-ḥadīṣiyyah* (kajian problematika kontemporer). Kerangka ini relevan sebagai metodologi alternatif yang lebih holistik dan sistematis bagi kajian hadis modern di Indonesia maupun di tingkat global.

Kata Kunci: penta-struktural, studi hadis, Edi Safri, epistemologi hadis, metodologi kajian hadis

INTRODUCTION

Hadith studies constitute one of the most central disciplines within the Islamic scholarly tradition.¹ Throughout its history, hadith scholars have constructed a robust methodological foundation primarily through the criticism of sanad (chain of transmission) and matan (text content) as the primary instrument for determining the authenticity of narrations.² The contributions of the great imams of hadith, such as al-Bukhari, Muslim, and Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, have formed a monumental scholarly architecture that has endured for centuries.³

Despite this classical robustness, a critical scholarly engagement with Edi Safri's penta-structural model is necessary. While the framework offers an impressive synthetic architecture, several epistemological questions merit attention. First, the delineation between the five dimensions particularly between *al-bahṣ at-tārikhī* and *al-bahṣ al-asāsī* can overlap, raising questions about whether they are genuinely distinct ontological categories or heuristic analytical tools. Second, the substantive-philosophical approach proposed in the third dimension requires more operationalized criteria to avoid interpretive arbitrariness. Third, as the framework is drawn primarily from oral teaching rather than published monographs, its internal consistency across different pedagogical contexts warrants further systematic verification. These critiques do not

¹ Ahmad Isnaeni et al., “The Minority Stigma of Niqabi in Social Communities: A Study of Living Sunnah on Niqab-Wearing Students at the Islamic State University in Lampung,” *QIJIS (Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies)* 12, no. 1 (2024): 1, <https://doi.org/10.21043/qijis.v12i1.22587>; Arwansyah Kirin et al., “Crying From a Religious Perspective and Its Impact on the Physical Health of the Public Servant Communities,” *Pakistan Journal of Life and Social Sciences (PJLSS)* 22, no. 2 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.57239/PJLSS-2024-22.2.00769>.

² Ibn Ṣalāḥ, *Muqaddimah*, 1st ed., ed. Mahir Yasin al-Fahl ‘Abd Latif (Dār al-Kutb al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2002).

³ Muḥammad Ṭāhir Al-Jawwābī, *Jubūd Al-Mubaddiṣīn Fi Naqd Matan al-Ḥadīṣ al-Nabawī al-Syarīf* (Mua’ssarah ‘Abd al-Karīm ibn ‘Abd Allah, 1986); Muḥammad Al Ghazālī, *Al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyah Baina Abl al-Fiqh Wa Abl al-Ḥadīṣ* (Dār al Syuruq, 1990).

diminish the framework's significance; rather, they position it as a productive site for continued intellectual development⁴.

Contemporary academic realities, however, reveal mounting pressure to move beyond this classical approach. Hadith studies in Indonesia and the Islamic world at large remain largely anchored to the dichotomy of *riwayah* and *dirayah* as the sole framework of scholarly orientation. Several monumental works in Indonesian 'ulumul hadith such as those by Nawir Yuslem, Abdul Majid Khon, and Muhajirin continue to employ this dualistic framework as their primary reference point, causing other dimensions of hadith scholarship to fall outside systematic mapping.⁵

Contemporary hadith scholarship has, in fact, undergone significant expansion. A range of new approaches have been introduced from sociology and social history to hermeneutics and the study of Western scholars of hadith, such as the work of Jonathan A.C. Brown. This expansion signals that hadith studies have moved far beyond the mere criticism of *sanad* and *matan*; yet no systematic formulation has emerged to organize this entire landscape into a unified epistemological framework.⁶

Taken together, these scholarly developments spanning the sociological turn of living hadith studies (Suryadilaga & Abdullah, 2017; Qudsy, 2016), the historical-critical approach (Suryadi, 2016; Rohman, 2025), the hermeneutical expansion,⁷ the biographical-intellectual method (Ahsan, 2024), and the call for macro-methodological reform⁸ collectively demonstrate that hadith studies have evolved far beyond the classical *riwayah-dirayah* binary. Yet, despite this rich pluralism of approaches, no single integrative framework has successfully synthesized these diverse dimensions into one coherent epistemological architecture. This is precisely the gap that the penta-structural model of Edi Safri seeks to address.

Here is a major research gap, that is, the absence of a holistic framework that can organize the five major dimensions of hadith studies, namely, authenticity, historicity, hermeneutics, intellectual biography, and contemporary relevance, into one coherent epistemological framework. This gap is resolved by Edi Safri with his concept of penta-structural hadith studies, which he developed and taught consistently in the academic environment of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang.

This research contributes in several respects: first, it academically documents and reconstructs the intellectual legacy of Edi Safri, which has hitherto existed only in lecture materials and oral communication; second, it analyzes the epistemological significance of the penta-structural framework within the context of global hadith scholarship; and third, it offers a new perspective on how Indonesian hadith scholarship can make an original contribution to international hadith discourse.⁹

⁴ Edriagus Saputra; Eka Eramahi; Nana Gustianda; Arwansyah, "The Study of Living Hadith: Acculturation of Local Culture and Religion in Mandoa Asyura Tradition in West Sumatra," *Proceedings of International Conference on Muslim Society and Thought* 4, no. 1 (2024): 147–57, <https://doi.org/10.15642/ICMUST.4.2024.1723>.

⁵ Nawir Yuslem, *Ulumul Hadis* (Pt Mutiara Sumber Widya, 2001); Abdul Majid Khon, *Pemikiran Modern Dalam Sunnah: Pendekatan Ilmu Hadis* (Kencana, 2011).

⁶ Jonathan A. C. Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oneworld Publications, 2009).

⁷ Muhammad Sabri, "Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis Edi Safri," *Jurnal Ulunnuba* 10, no. 2 (2021).

⁸ Rumiati et al., "Islamic Studies Methodological Reform: Answering the Challenges of Globalization and Interdisciplinary Integration," *IJoIS: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2025): 71–82.

⁹ Edi Safri, *Ilmu Musthalah Hadis* (Hayfa Press, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of the dynamics of the development of the epistemology of hadith studies in the last ten years shows a significant paradigm shift from the conventional monodisciplinary approach to a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach. Efforts to map this expansion of scope have been initiated by several scholars, one of whom is Anshori (2021) in his historical-comparative qualitative research titled "Objects and Scope of Hadith Studies in the Classical and Contemporary Eras." Using Thomas Kuhn's paradigm shift theory as an analytical lens, Anshori found a radical transformation in the formal objects of hadith studies in the contemporary era, which have massively transcended the boundaries of traditional classifications. He concluded that if academic institutions continue to maintain rigid boundaries of past scholarship, then hadith studies will stagnate amidst the complexities of modernity.¹⁰

The challenge to this methodological stagnation is reinforced by Rohman (2025) thru his study titled "Historicity of Hadith Studies: Paradigm of Understanding, Transmission, and Contemporary Hadith Studies." By applying qualitative descriptive-analytical methods and the theory of textual historicity, Rohman re-evaluates the mechanism of textual criticism in the Islamic tradition. His research findings prove that the validity of a hadith is no longer sufficient if it is only tested thru the formal principles of sanad and matan. His main finding emphasizes that the reconstruction of genealogy and the social history of transmission (*isnad*) becomes a crucial instrument to confirm the validity of the text while also refuting the scientific skepticism posed by Western Orientalists.¹¹

On the other hand, the expansion of modern hadith studies also touches on the realm of the thoughts of figures and the authority of primary texts, as explored by Ahsan (2024) in his research titled "From Authenticity to Authority: Method and Approach of Intellectual History in the Study of Hadith Canonization by Jonathan A.C. Brown." Thru a qualitative biographical-intellectual study method based on critical text analysis, Ahsan examines Jonathan A.C. Brown's theory of literary canonization to see how the authority of the Sahihain texts is constructed. The research found that the authentication of hadith in the Islamic world does not operate in a vacuum, but rather is a product of the sociological-intellectual consensus of scholars across generations. These findings recommend the importance of a critical attitude among Muslim scholars in adopting Western methodologies to avoid reducing the internal traditions of Islam itself.¹²

Meanwhile, in the aspect of text hermeneutics, Sabri (2021) specifically examines local thot thru an article titled "Edi Safri's Hadith Understanding Methodology." Using a qualitative descriptive-analytical character study method and conventional religious text understanding theory, this research identifies the characteristics of Edi Safri's thot in responding to prophetic texts. Sabri's research results show that the understanding model offered by Edi Safri is centered on the substantive-philosophical dimension. This approach has proven to be a methodological

¹⁰ Muhammad Anshori, "Objek Dan Ruang Lingkup Kajian Hadis Masa Klasik Dan Kontemporer [Objects and Scope of Hadith Studies in Classical and Contemporary Eras]," *Journal Al Irfani: Ilmu Al-Qur'un Dan Tafsir* 2, no. 2 (2021): 1–23, <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.51700/irfani.v2i2.312>.

¹¹ M. F. Rohman, "Historicity of Hadith Studies: Paradigm of Understanding, Transmission, and Contemporary Hadith Studies," *Al-Mujtama': Journal of Social Sciences* 1, no. 2 (2025).

¹² Mohamad Nur Ahsan, "Dari Autentisitas Ke Otoritas: Metode Dan Pendekatan Sejarah Intelektual Dalam Kajian Kanonisasi Hadis Jonathan A.C. Brown," *Mutawatir: Jurnal Keilmuan Tafsir Hadith* 14, no. 1 (2024): 141–62, <https://doi.org/10.15642/mutawatir.2024.14.1.141-162>.

bridge that mediates the academic tension between the rigid textual-literalist group and the radical contextualist group.¹³

The need for a comprehensive synthesis of the various dimensions above ultimately culminates in the demand for macro-institutional reform, as formulated by Rumiati, Papriono, and Nursalim (2025) in their explanatory qualitative literature review, “Islamic Studies Methodological Reform: Answering the Challenges of Globalization and Interdisciplinary Integration.” Based on the theory of scientific integration-interconnection, they emphasize that the traditional monodisciplinary approach has lost its effectiveness in addressing the problem of globalization. Their research findings emphasize that radical methodological reforms thru the marriage of religious sciences, modern science, and digital technology are an absolute prerequisite for keeping Islamic studies relevant.¹⁴

The above studies are presented in chronological order of publication from earlier works on the classification of hadith studies (Anshori, 2021) to more recent investigations into historicity (Rohman, 2025), canonization theory (Ahsan, 2024), understanding methodology (Sabri, 2021), and macro-methodological reform (Rumiati et al., 2025) allowing the progression of scholarly thought to be traced clearly. Although the five studies above provide very valuable contributions to the mapping of modern hadith studies, there are theoretical and practical research gaps that remain unresolved. Theoretically, there is a severe methodological fragmentation where previous literature tends to examine the dimensions of hadith studies partially; Sabri (2021) focuses only on the aspect of understanding, Anshori (2021) on the general expansion of objects, Rohman (2025) on historicity, Ahsan (2024) on the study of individual figures, and Rumiati et al. (2025) on macro reform. Not a single study has successfully integrated the five dimensions of core studies, history, understanding, figures/literature, and contemporary issues into a cohesive and hierarchical epistemological architecture. Practically, the comprehensive idea of the Penta-Structural Hadith Study offered by Edi Safri is largely still held as an oral tradition within the local academic space of UIN Imam Bonjol Padang and has not yet been systematically documented. Therefore, this research aims to fill that gap by reconstructing Edi Safri's penta-structural model as an alternative new scientific architecture that is integrative-holistic for the global hadith discourse.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive-analytical approach and a biographical-intellectual study design. The biographical-intellectual study approach was selected because this research centers on the reconstruction of the thought of a scholarly figure. In this case, Edi Safri based on the intellectual legacy he left through teaching, academic supervision, and scholarly discussion.¹⁵

The primary data of this study are drawn from the lecture materials and academic guidance of Edi Safri, collected by the author throughout our studies from the undergraduate to the doctoral level (2012 to the present). Secondary data include academic literature in the field of

¹³ Sabri, “Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis Edi Safri.”

¹⁴ Rumiati et al., “Islamic Studies Methodological Reform: Answering the Challenges of Globalization and Interdisciplinary Integration.”

¹⁵ Ahsan, “Dari Autentisitas Ke Otoritas: Metode Dan Pendekatan Sejarah Intelektual Dalam Kajian Kanonisasi Hadis Jonathan A.C. Brown.”

‘ulumul hadith, reputable national and international journals, and works relevant to the methodology of hadith comprehension.¹⁶

Data were collected through documentation and library research. Data analysis employed a descriptive-analytical method: systematically describing the penta-structural framework, then analyzing it within the broader academic discourse of hadith studies. Data validity was maintained through source triangulation among lecture notes, primary academic references, and relevant secondary literature.¹⁷

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Intellectual Profile of Edi Safri and the Context of Hadith Studies Development in Indonesia

Edi Safri was born in Bukittinggi on September 18, 1955, and grew to become one of Indonesia's leading hadith experts, who chronologically and intellectually ranks among the core contemporary hadith thinkers alongside prominent figures such as Syuhudi Ismail and Daniel Djuned. His discipline and intellectual rigor were forged thru a solid formal education path, starting from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Muhammadiyah (1969), PGAN four-year program (1973), SP IAIN (1975), until he obtained his bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Sharia at IAIN Imam Bonjol Padang in 1981. His deep interest in the authenticity of prophetic texts led him to UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta to pursue a master's program in 1984, which was later solidified with the achievement of a Doctoral degree in Hadith Studies from the same institution's postgraduate program in 1991.¹⁸

His academic and structural career in the realm of Islamic higher education has been very stable, along with his extensive leadership contributions at both local and international levels. Starting his teaching career at the Faculty of Tarbiyah IAIN Imam Bonjol in Batusangkar in 1982, he was later transferred to the Faculty of Ushuluddin IAIN Imam Bonjol Padang to take on the responsibility as the Head of the Department of Quranic Studies and Hadith Interpretation in 1992. His leadership reputation continued to rise when he was entrusted as the Assistant Director of the Postgraduate Program (1994–1997 and 1999–2004), Assistant Rector IV, Deputy Coordinator of Kopertais Region IV West Sumatra-Kerinci, culminating in his tenure as the Dean of the Faculty of Ushuluddin IAIN Imam Bonjol Padang for the period 2007–2011. His intellectual expertise was globally recognized when he was invited to teach at the Muhammadiyah Islamic College in Singapore for nearly a decade from 2003 to 2012.¹⁹

Outside the realm of campus bureaucracy, Edi Safri's expertise is actively integrated into the transformation of the national curriculum and macro-religious organizations. He was recorded as part of the National Curriculum Formulation Team of IAIN (1995 and 1997), a member of the BAN-PT Task Force for Region X, and was entrusted with strategic positions as the General Secretary of the West Sumatra MUI and the Chairman of the Tarjih Council of the West Sumatra Muhammadiyah Regional Leadership. As a productive Professor of Hadith Studies, his moderate thoughts are reflected in various monumental writings that focus on the methodology of resolving

¹⁶ Kaelan, *Metode Penelitian Agama Kualitatif Interdisipliner* (Paradigma, 2010).

¹⁷ Safri, *Ilmu Musthalah Hadis*.

¹⁸ Sabri, “Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis Edi Safri.”

¹⁹ Novizal Wendry and dkk, *Batang Gadang Ranah Minang: Menyusuri 70 Tahun Perjalanan Prof. Dr. H. Edi Safri* (Penerbit Lakeisha, 2025).

conflicting hadiths, understanding the Sunnah, and critical studies of hadith texts, which embody the ideology of progressive Islam and the concept of religious moderation (*wasatīyah*) amidst the dynamics of the times²⁰.

In the context of hadith studies in Indonesia, there are hadith figures who have a strong influence in shaping hadith studies in Indonesia. Syuhudi Ismail is known as an important figure in the development of hadith understanding methodology (*fiqh al-ḥadīṣ*), while Ali Mustafa Yaqub stands out in the field of hadith criticism and sanad-based religious authority. Both represent the integration between classical tradition and modern academic systems. The next generation on this campus continues the development of hadith by opening a dialog with global approaches.²¹

In addition, from the academic community of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, there is the name Alfatih Suryadilaga, who is also known for his living hadith approach that examines hadith in the social practices of society,²² while Suryadi and Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy develop a historical-critical approach and the study of hadith in the context of modernity. who are active in the development of hadith studies in the realm of formal academia.²³ Both contribute to strengthening the methodology of hadith studies and engaging with contemporary issues, both thru teaching and scientific publications. In general, these experts have provided significant space for the integration of hadith studies with social and humanities sciences.²⁴

In other regions, such as Aceh thru UIN Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, there are hadith scholars who develop hadith studies within the local context of Acehnese Islam, such as Daniel Djuned and Maizudin, although their national exposure is relatively limited.²⁵ In Lampung, Enizar, Alamsyah, and Isnaeni are hadith scholars who develop contextual and responsive approaches to contemporary issues. Interestingly, in the Makassar region, the study of hadith has developed very massively within the framework of institutional strengthening and academic curriculum, with a considerable number of Professors of Hadith.²⁶

Thus, the hadith figures mentioned above are not only present as individual figures but also as part of the formal academic ecosystem that shapes the direction of hadith studies in Indonesia. Each region shows a different character: Jakarta with a classical-critical methodological basis, Yogyakarta with an interdisciplinary approach, Bandung with contemporary academic strengthening, and other developing regions. In this landscape, Edi Safri's position as a Professor

²⁰ Wendry and dkk, *Batang Gadang Ranah Minang: Menyusuri 70 Tahun Perjalanan Prof. Dr. H. Edi Safri*.

²¹ M. A. Zami, "Kontributor Pemikiran Hadis Di Indonesia: Studi Kajian Hadis Di Indonesia Dari Perorangan Hingga Lembaga," *MISYKAT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Quran, Hadist, Syari'ah Dan Tarbiyah* 4, no. 1 (2019): 145–62.

²² Muhammad Alfatih Suryadilaga and Muhammad Amin Abdullah, "Understanding Hadith of The Prophet: The Image and Variety of Muslims' Awareness in the Region of Gowa," *Essensia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 18, no. 1 (2017).

²³ Saifuddin Zuhri Qudsy, "Living Hadis: Genealogi, Teori, Dan Aplikasi," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 1, no. 1 (2016): 177, <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2016.1073>; Suryadi Suryadi, "Pentingnya Memahami Hadis Dengan Mempertimbangkan Setting Historis Perspektif Yūsuf Al-Qaraḍawī," *Jurnal Living Hadis* 1, no. 1 (2016): 29, <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2016.1067>.

²⁴ Gusnanda et al., "Mambadakan Paja : Pergumulan Islam Dan Tradisi Lokal Di Nagari Kamang Mudiak Kabupaten Agam Sumatera Barat Mambadakan Paja : Islamic Struggles and Local Traditions in Nagari," *Jurnal SMART* 6, no. 2 (2020): 261–75.

²⁵ Maizuddin, *Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis* (Hayfa Press, 2008).

²⁶ Ahmad Isnaeni, *Manhaj Ulama Dalam Mensyarah Kitab Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī Dan Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (IAIN Raden Intan Press, 2009); Ahmad Isnaeni, *Sikap Kritikus Hadis Terhadap Peristiwa Hadis*, 14 (2011): 61–87; Enizar, *Pemeliharaan Hadis Rasulullah: Otentisitas Dan Validitas* (Idea Press Yogyakarta, 2022).

of Hadith in West Sumatra becomes significant, as he represents the academic authority on Hadith outside the main centers while also expanding the intellectual geography of Hadith studies in Indonesia.

The Epistemological Limitations of the *Riwāyah-Dirāyah* Dualistic Framework

Classical hadith scholars constructed two major classifications that remain the primary reference points to this day: *ilm al-hadith riwayat* and *ilm al-hadith dirayah*. Within the classifications proposed by ‘Ajjaj al-Khatib, al-Akfani, Suyūṭī, Subḥi al-Ṣālih, and al-Hakim al-Naysābūrī, hadith studies appear confined to two focal areas: the transmission and preservation of hadith (*riwāyah*), and the methodological rules for the criticism of sanad and matan (*dirayah*). This framework has served as the dominant map of orientation in ‘ulumul hadith literature throughout the Islamic world for centuries.

Contemporary developments in hadith scholarship, however, reveal that this dualistic framework carries fundamental limitations. Rohman (2025), in his study of the historicity of hadith studies, demonstrates that hadith cannot be understood solely through sanad-matan criticism; it must be examined within the full context of the dynamics of its historical transmission. In a similar vein, Anshori (2021) explicitly affirms that the objects and scope of hadith scholarship in the contemporary era have far exceeded the boundaries of classical classification.

In the Indonesian context, this discourse is increasingly pertinent. Research examining reputable national hadith journals from 2015 to 2020 reveals that Indonesian hadith studies have undergone significant thematic development moving from a sole focus on hadith validity toward integration with the social sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, and responses to various problems of modernity²⁷. This expansion reinforces the need for a new epistemological framework capable of mapping the full landscape of hadith scholarship more comprehensively.

It is precisely this academic unease that drove Edi Safri to move beyond the *riwāyah-dirayah* dichotomy. In his view, these two major classifications constitute only one dimension of the broader structure of hadith scholarship which he subsequently termed the core study discourse (*al-babš al-asās*). Accordingly, Edi did not reject the classical tradition outright; rather, he engaged with it constructively and critically in order to broaden the epistemological horizons of hadith studies.

The Construction of Edi Safri's Penta-Structural Hadith Studies

The penta-structural hadith studies is an epistemological framework that systematically formulates five major areas of study within hadith scholarship, each mutually reinforcing the others. The term "penta" (five) refers to Edi Safri's conceptual structure, which divides hadith studies into five dimensions that do not stand in isolation but together form a unified and coherent scholarly edifice. As a metaphor, this framework resembles the ripples produced by a stone dropped into a pond spreading concentrically from the center outward to progressively wider layers, from the most fundamental to the most contemporary.

²⁷ Umma Farida, *Kontribusi Muhammad Ajjaj Al-Khatib Dalam Meneguhkan Fungsi Dan Kedudukan Hadis: Telaah Terhadap Kitab al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwin Dan Ushul al-Hadits*, 2022, 93–106; Ali Atabik, "Perkembangan Studi Hadis Di Indonesia: Pemetaan Dan Analisis Genealogi," *Religia* 17, no. 1 (2014): 169–94; Zami, "Kontributor Pemikiran Hadis Di Indonesia: Studi Kajian Hadis Di Indonesia Dari Perorangan Hingga Lembaga."

1. Core Study: *Al-Bahš al-Asāsī*

The first dimension is the core study (*al-bahš al-asāsī*), which functions as the foundation of all hadith scholarship. The objects of inquiry in this dimension are the sanad (chain of transmitters) and the matan (hadith text), with the aim of determining whether a hadith is accepted or rejected as a normative authority. The fields of knowledge associated with this dimension include: *‘ilm al-jarh wa al-ta‘dil*, *takbrij al-badith*, *llal al-badith*, *tabaqat al-ruwah*, *naqd al-matn*, and *sharh al-badith*.²⁸

The critique of hadith authenticity through sanad and matan criticism has been developed by scholars since the era of the Companions. Maihula and Abdulkadir (2022) affirm that the purpose of sanad and matan criticism is to identify the authenticity of a hadith by determining whether a narration is acceptable (*maqbul*) or rejected (*mardud*). Furthermore, these two aspects of criticism are inseparable: the methodology of sanad criticism gives rise to the realization of matan criticism, and vice versa (Maihula & Abdulkadir, 2022). In other words, *al-bahš al-asāsī* is not merely the "entry gate" of hadith study; it is the ontological foundation that determines the validity of all subsequent dimensions of inquiry.²⁹

Within the penta-structural framework, *al-bahš al-asāsī* occupies a central position analogous to the stable nucleus of an atom: it serves as the starting point for every layer of hadith analysis that follows.³⁰ Without a strong foundation in this dimension, hadith scholarship at the other levels loses its robust methodological footing. It is here that Edi Safri places the classical tradition in an honored position, while simultaneously opening space for broader scholarly expansion.³¹

2. Historical Study: *Al-Bahš at-Tārikhī*

The second dimension is the historical study (*al-bahš at-tārikhī*). Hadith did not emerge in a vacuum; it passed through a long journey from the time of the Prophet, through the Companions, to the scholar-codifiers of subsequent centuries. This dimension focuses on tracing the genealogy of hadith transmission historically, with the aim of clarifying the possibility of distortions or manipulations in the chain of narration.³² In more academic terms, this dimension may be described as the Social History of Hadith or the Historicity of Narration.³³

²⁸ Joel Blecher and Stefanie Brinkmann, *Hadith Commentary: Continuity and Change* (Edinburgh University Press, 2023); Muḥammad ‘Ajjāj Al-Khaṭīb, *Al-Sunnah Qabla al-Tadwīn* (Maktabah al-Wahbah, 1988); Umma Farida, "Kontribusi Muhammad Ajjaj Al-Khatib Dalam Studi Hadis: Telaah Terhadap Kitab al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwin Dan Ushul al-Hadits Autor(s): DOI:," *Mashdar Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis* 4, no. 1 (2022): 93–106, <https://doi.org/10.15548/mashdar.v4i1.3721>; Edi Safri, *Al-Imam al-Syafi'iy: Metode Penyelesaian Hadis-Hadis Mukhtalif* (IAIN Press, 1999).

²⁹ M. Suryadinata, "Kritik Matan Hadis: Klasik Hingga Kontemporer [Matan Criticism of Hadith: Classical to Contemporary]," *Ushuluna: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin* 2, no. 2 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.15408/ushuluna.v2i2.15183>.

³⁰ Arif Budiman, *The Transmitter's 'Adalah (Uprightness): The Ethical Conception in the Hadith Transmission*, 4, no. 2 (2022): 247–61.

³¹ Mutaz Al-Khatib, *Hadith Criticism between Traditionists and Jurisprudents*, in *Modern Hadith: Continue Dabates And New Approach*, ed. Belal Abu-Alabbas and Christophert Melchert (University Press, 2020).

³² Samer Rashwani, "Corpus Coranicum From Philology to Literary Analysis: Critical Vision," *مجلة كلية الشريعة و الدراسات الإسلامية* null (2020): null, <https://doi.org/10.29117/jcsis.2020.0256>.

³³ M. N. Çam and S. Türkan, "Criticisms against Muqātil b. Sulayman and Checking of Muqātil's Transmissions in this Context -Text Comparison with 'Ali b. Abī Talha's Tafsīr Narratives-," *Hitit Theology Journal* (Hitit University, Department of Basic Islamic Sciences, Tafsir, Çorum, Turkey) 22, no. 2 (2023): 511–31, <https://doi.org/10.14395/hid.1343112>.

The historical study of hadith transmission has received considerable attention in contemporary hadith discourse. From the internal Islamic perspective, this study aims to demonstrate the continuity of the chain of transmission from the Prophet to the present day.³⁴ From an external perspective, it responds to the challenges posed by orientalists such as Goldziher and Schacht, who questioned the authenticity of hadith on the basis of historical analysis of the isnad system.³⁵ Rohman (2025) shows that contemporary studies on the historicity of hadith seek to counter the orientalist view that hadith originated in the second century of the Hijra by tracing a more comprehensive genealogy of transmission.³⁶

Beyond this, the historical dimension in Edi Safri's view does not end with the classical period of narration, but extends to how the Prophet's hadith continues to exist, be received, and be practiced in the present day. This is what hadith sociologists refer to as the “social history of hadith” a study of the dynamic interaction between hadith texts and societal contexts throughout Islamic history.³⁷ This dimension affirms that hadith is a living tradition that continues to develop within its historical context, rather than a text frozen in the space of codification.³⁸

3. Methodology of Hadith Comprehension (*Al-Bahs ‘an al-Fiqh al-Ḥadīṣ*)

The third dimension is the methodology of hadith comprehension (*al-bahs ‘an al-fiqh al-ḥadīṣ*). Once an authentic hadith has been identified through sanad-matan criticism, the next methodological question becomes: how is it to be understood properly, contextually, and in fidelity to the spirit of Islamic teachings? This dimension focuses on the matan of a *sahih*-qualified hadith, with the aim of arriving at a correct and contextually relevant understanding.³⁹

In this domain, Edi Safri proposes a typology he terms the substantive-philosophical understanding. This approach is constructed as a mediating framework that bridges the gap between competing tendencies in interpreting hadith.⁴⁰ First, it critically moves beyond a strictly textualist orientation that confines interpretation to the literal or immediate meaning (*ma’na al-mutabādir*), which often risks oversimplifying the richness and depth of the Prophetic discourse. Second, it also interrogates purely contextual approaches that tend to limit the meaning of hadith exclusively to the socio-historical circumstances of their emergence, thereby potentially restricting

³⁴ A. Duderija, “Neo-Traditional Salafi Qur’an-Sunna Hermeneutics1 and Its Interpretational Implications,” *Religion Compass* (University of Western Australia, Australia) 5, no. 7 (2011): 314–25, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2011.00285.x>.

³⁵ Novizal Wendry et al., “Kufan Hadith Transmitters and Geopolitics in Early Period of Islam,” *ULUL ALBAB Jurnal Studi Islam* 21, no. 2 (2020): 213–36, <https://doi.org/10.18860/ua.v21i2.10430>.

³⁶ Aramdhan Kodrat Permana, “Diferensiasi Sunnah Dan Hadis Dalam Pandangan Ignaz Goldziher,” *Jurnal At-Tadbir* 29, no. 3 (2019): 23; Ignac Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. C. R. Barber & S. M. Stern (George Allen and Unwin, 1971); Benny Afwadzi, “Joseph Schacht Dalam Pandangan Sarjana Hadis Indonesia,” *El Afkar* 12, no. 1 (2023): 94–116.

³⁷ Novizal Wendry, “Manipulasi Identitas Periwiyat Hadis Periode Awal: Konsep, Dinamika, Dan Kritik,” *Dirayah: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Hadis* 7, no. 1 (2022): 1–9; Elfa Yusrina et al., “ETIKA PERIWAYAT HADIS MENURUT ABDUL GHANI STUDI KITAB ADAB AL-MUHADDIS WA AL-MUHADDAS,” *El-Sunnah: Jurnal Kajian Hadis Dan Integrasi Ilmu* 2, no. 2 (2022): 1–14.

³⁸ Ja’far Assagaf, “Studi Hadis Dengan Pendekatan Sosiologis: Paradigma Living-Hadis [Hadith Studies with a Sociological Approach: The Living-Hadith Paradigm],” *Holistic Al-Hadis* 1, no. 2 (2015): 289–316.

³⁹ Sri Handayana and Arif Budiman, “FROM HISTORICAL TO NORMATIVE-THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES: Hadith Studies and Prophetic Tradition According to Ruggero Vimercati Sanseverino,” *Riwayah : Jurnal Studi Hadis* 9, no. 1 (2023): 1–26.

⁴⁰ Nur Hamidah Pulungan, “Tipologi Modern Dalam Metodologi Ahli Hadis,” *Al-Mu’tabar* 2, no. 1 (2022): 67–81, <https://doi.org/10.56874/almutabar.v2i1.668>.

their broader normative and ethical relevance. Third, by positioning itself between these two poles, the substantive-philosophical approach seeks to excavate deeper, more universal layers of meaning that are simultaneously faithful to the text and responsive to wider philosophical and ethical considerations. Through this integrative orientation, the approach not only preserves the integrity of the hadith tradition but also enables its teachings to remain meaningful and applicable across diverse temporal and social contexts.⁴¹

Overall, this understanding aims to ensure that hadith are not merely perceived as static historical documents, but as a source of guidance with profound and applicable philosophical messages for modern life. This approach aligns with developments in contemporary hadith comprehension methodology. Research published in *Kontemplasi* (2024) demonstrates that an interdisciplinary approach to understanding hadith encompassing sociological, historical, medical, geographical, psychological, linguistic, and philosophical angles contributes in four ways: minimizing misunderstanding, producing deeper comprehension, providing insight into the socio-cultural setting of a hadith, and contextualizing hadith in accordance with present-day realities. Edi Safri's substantive-philosophical typology inherently embodies this interdisciplinary spirit, since it demands a reading that penetrates beyond textual literalism toward the universal substance of values.

Furthermore, this dimension also responds to the challenges of modern hermeneutics applied to hadith understanding. Rumiati, Papriono, and Nursalim (2025) assert that the complexity of modern society necessitates an interdisciplinary approach in Islamic studies, including hadith studies, which moves beyond monodisciplinary interpretation to respond comprehensively to contemporary issues. The third dimension of Edi Safri's penta-structural framework answers this challenge by establishing the methodology of hadith comprehension as an independent and systematic field of inquiry in its own right.⁴²

4. Biographical and Literary Study: *Al-Bahs 'an al-A'lām wa al-Muṣannafāt*

The fourth dimension is the study of scholarly figures and literature (*al-bahs 'an al-a'lām wa al-muṣannafāt*). Hadith scholarship did not emerge from a vacuum; it grew through the hands of scholars who dedicated their entire lives to collecting, selecting, critiquing, and documenting hadith. This dimension is also known as the study of *manāhij al-muhaddithīn*, which examines how a scholar built his unique methodology and contribution to the hadith tradition.

The biographical study of hadith transmitters and scholars occupies a highly strategic position within the tradition of hadith science. The *Contemporary Journal of Social Science Review* (2025) affirms that the documentation of transmitter biographies (*rijāl al-hadīth*) constitutes a primary pillar of the hadith transmission authentication system, and that these authentication mechanisms serve not only to verify the Prophetic tradition but also to open pathways for broader scientific hadith scholarship.

What makes the fourth dimension particularly remarkable is its relevance beyond the classical scholars such as al-Bukhari, Muslim, or Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani. It also encompasses the study of contemporary figures, including Western scholars who have engaged with hadith.

⁴¹ Sabri, "Metodologi Pemahaman Hadis Edi Safri."

⁴² Rumiati et al., "Islamic Studies Methodological Reform: Answering the Challenges of Globalization and Interdisciplinary Integration."

Jonathan A.C. Brown, for instance, is a central figure in contemporary Western hadith scholarship who introduced the concept of the "canonization theory" to assess the status of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Muslim*. The study of Brown is relevant not merely as an examination of personal intellectual thought, but also as a representation of the Western intellectual tradition of hadith studies that calls for critical engagement from within the perspective of the Islamic tradition.⁴³

The fourth dimension of Edi Safri's penta-structural framework thus has an extraordinarily broad reach: from the biographical treasury of classical scholars to the mapping of contemporary hadith intellectualism at the global level. This dimension teaches that hadith scholarship cannot be separated from the intellectual map of its key figures whether those who built the tradition, or those who challenged or reconstructed it from without⁴⁴.

5. Contemporary Issues Study: *Al-Bahs' 'an al-Musykilat wa al-Hawadis' al-Hadis'iyyah*

The fifth and final dimension is the study of contemporary hadith problems and issues (*al-bahs' 'an al-musykilat wa al-hawadis' al-hadis'iyyah*). This dimension affirms that hadith does not belong exclusively to the past; it is equally relevant to the present and the future. A wide range of new issues has emerged in Muslim communities from social and cultural concerns to modern digital technology. This area of study functions to address the question of how hadith can remain relevant and offer solutions in the face of the challenges of the age.⁴⁵

Developments in Indonesian hadith scholarship indicate that this is the dimension that has experienced the most rapid growth over the past two decades. An analysis of trends in Islamic hadith journals in Indonesia from 2022 to 2024 shows that hadith does not function solely as a normative text; it also adapts to modern social, cultural, and technological contexts, making it an integral part of the dynamics of contemporary Muslim life.

In this dimension, Edi Safri positions hadith scholarship at the forefront of engagement with modernity. Among the issues falling within its scope are: digital hadith (how hadith circulates and is understood in the era of social media and the internet), hadith and modern ethics, hadith and environmental issues, and hadith in the context of social justice. Rumiati et al. (2025) affirm that methodological reform in Islamic studies including hadith studies is necessary to address the challenges of globalization, through integrating various academic disciplines toward a more holistic understanding of Islam.⁴⁶

This fifth dimension also becomes the meeting point between hadith studies and modern science, the social sciences, and the humanities. Accordingly, Edi Safri's penta-structural framework is not merely a reconstruction of scholarly taxonomy, but an epistemological manifesto

⁴³ Nur Hamidah. Pulungan, "An Orientalist Today: Jonathan A.C. Brown's Thoughts on Hadith," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 2 (2023): 552–72.

⁴⁴ Safri, *Al-Imam al-Syafi'iy: Metode Penyelesaian Hadis-Hadis Mukhtalif*; Safri, *Ilmu Musthalab Hadis*.

⁴⁵ T. M. Jafar and A. Fitria, "Understanding Multiple Interpretations on the Hadith That Husbands Allow Wives to Have Outdoor Activities: A Study of Islamic Law Perspectives," *Samarah* (Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Indonesia) 5, no. 1 (2021): 210–31, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjhk.v5i1.9106>; S. Tabti, "The Charisma of Script: The Quran and the Hadith in Neo-Salafi Online Community," *Journal of Religion in Europe* (Center for Religious Studies – ceres, Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany) 12, no. 2 (2020): 191–216, <https://doi.org/10.1163/18748929-01202005>.

⁴⁶ Rumiati et al., "Islamic Studies Methodological Reform: Answering the Challenges of Globalization and Interdisciplinary Integration."

affirming that hadith studies is a living, dynamic discipline one perpetually in dialogue with the challenges of the age.

The Epistemological Significance of the Penta-Structural Framework

The penta-structural framework of Edi Safri carries substantial epistemological significance within the map of contemporary hadith scholarship. First, it represents an epistemological reconstruction that preserves the relevance of the classical tradition while simultaneously opening space for scholarly expansion. By placing *al-babš al-asāsī* as the non-negotiable core, Edi avoids the trap of methodological skepticism that tends to challenge tradition. Instead, he builds from within the tradition toward a broader horizon.

Second, this framework is integrative and holistic. The five dimensions of study it formulates do not stand in isolation; they mutually support one another within a cohesive scholarly architecture. Sanad-matan criticism (dimension 1) requires an understanding of the history of transmission (dimension 2) to provide historical context; the understanding of hadith (dimension 3) requires the foundation of authenticity (dimension 1) and knowledge of the intellectual tradition (dimension 4); while the response to modernity (dimension 5) requires all four preceding dimensions as its foundation. This kind of integration is the hallmark of a mature and comprehensive epistemology.

Third, the penta-structural framework makes an original contribution to international hadith discourse. Within the global map of hadith scholarship, Indonesia has largely been positioned as a recipient of ideas rather than a producer of methodological frameworks. The framework formulated by Edi Safri demonstrates that the Indonesian hadith scholarly tradition has the capacity to generate epistemological innovations of relevance to global hadith scholarship.

Fourth, this framework carries high pedagogical value. By dividing hadith studies into five clearly defined dimensions, Edi provides a systematic map of orientation for students and hadith researchers at all levels. Undergraduate students are directed toward foundational understanding of the framework; graduate students are introduced to critical and methodological analysis; while doctoral students are invited into the territory of reconstruction and more complex intellectual debate. This pedagogical value is simultaneously a methodological legacy that is continually reproduced from generation to generation.

To make this structure more tangible and analytically accessible, the penta-structural framework can be visually represented as a systematic map that illustrates the interrelation and progression of its five dimensions across different levels of scholarly engagement.



Figure 1. The Structural Approach to Hadith Studies: A Comprehensive Framework by Edi Safri

CONCLUSION

The penta-structural hadith studies of Edi Safri represents a significant epistemological contribution to the development of hadith scholarship, particularly within the Indonesian academic context. This five-dimensional framework *al-bahs al-asasi*, *al-bahs at-tarikhi*, *al-bahs an al-fiqh al-hadis*, *al-bahs an al-lam wa al-musannafat*, and *al-bahs an al-musykilat wa al-hawadis al-hadisyah* fills the epistemological gap left by the classical dualistic classification of *riwayah-dirayah*. By organizing hadith studies into five concentric, mutually reinforcing layers, Edi Safri has succeeded in constructing a scholarly architecture that simultaneously honors the classical tradition and responds to the challenges of modernity. This framework carries not only academic value as an epistemological reconstruction, but also high pedagogical value as a map of scholarly orientation for students and hadith researchers at all levels.

In the future, further research needs to be conducted to operationalize this pentastructural framework in concrete hadith studies, as well as to expand its discourse into academic dialog with the international hadith study tradition. Thus, the intellectual legacy of Edi Safri is not only preserved in memory and lecture notes but also lives and thrives in the academic tradition that continues to move forward.

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