A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO WAHDAH ISLAMIYAH'S ATTITUDE TOWARD PHILOSOPHY: NEGOTIATING PURIFICATION AND INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

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Abstract

This study examines Wahdah Islamiyah's perspective on philosophy within the wider Islamic intellectual tradition, focusing on how resistance to philosophical inquiry unfolds within the organization's culture. Using a phenomenological approach—combining observation, interviews, and document analysis—the research uncovers how Wahdah Islamiyah navigates the tension between engagement with philosophy and the imperative of religious purification. While previous studies have discussed Wahdah Islamiyah's roles in law, education, and politics, little attention has been given to its ideological stance on philosophy itself. The findings show that Wahdah Islamiyah does not wholly reject philosophy, but imposes strict boundaries on its study, motivated by the belief that potential harm outweighs possible benefit. Members adopt a selective attitude toward religious texts, and practices deemed as innovation—those lacking clear scriptural basis—are generally avoided. The study argues that Wahdah Islamiyah should be viewed not just through normative or political frameworks, but as an ideological movement negotiating its position within Indonesia's evolving intellectual landscape. Further research is encouraged to examine other Islamic organizations and the ongoing development of Islamic philosophy in Indonesia.

Keywords: Phenomenology, Philosophy, Wahdah Islamiyah, Purification

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A. Introduction

The emergence and evolution of Islamic religious movements and mass organizations (*ormas*) in Indonesia reflect the dynamic landscape of contemporary religious life. This phenomenon is apparent from the proliferation of diverse social and religious organizations, each with its own distinct banner and identity. As with the development of various theological streams in Islam, the formation of *ormas* is always shaped by particular backgrounds and motivations. These organizations are established by groups or individuals who seek to advance the public good. Both *ormas* and non-governmental organizations are recognized by Indonesia's constitutional and legal framework. For example, Article 28 of the 1945 Constitution guarantees every citizen the

right to freedom of expression, assembly, and association (Nuh, Abidin, et al., 2009, p. 190).

The intellectual history of Islamic philosophy is marked by longstanding controversy among Muslim thinkers. The ideas of Ibn Sina were famously challenged by Al-Ghazali in his influential work, *Tahafut al-Falasifah* (*The Incoherence of the Philosophers*). This critique prompted a substantial response from Ibn Rushd, who wrote *Tahafut al-Tahafut* (*The Incoherence of the Incoherence*). The influence of Al-Ghazali, who is widely regarded as *Hujjatul Islam*, has endured and continues to be a central subject of philosophical debate (Hakim & Saebani, 2016, p. 426). Among the groups that have adopted a critical stance toward philosophy and *kalam* are those frequently identified as puritanical movements. They place a strong emphasis on the purification of religious teachings. In Indonesia, Wahdah Islamiyah is a leading example of this approach. It is an influential organization with its headquarters in Makassar, South Sulawesi. Wahdah Islamiyah directs its activities toward *da'wah*, social welfare, and education. The organization is especially careful in selecting sources of knowledge and literature (Saleh, 2018, p. 78).

The official Wahdah Islamiyah website offers insight into the organization's stance through an article titled "Tauhid Itu Indah" ("Monotheism is Beautiful"). The article contends that engaging in philosophy and *kalam* often leads to endless debate, intellectual uncertainty, and anxiety. The story of Al-Juwaini, a renowned scholar, is used as an example. Despite his intellectual brilliance, he reportedly regretted his involvement with philosophy late in life. The article warns against speculative theology by quoting Al-Juwaini's words: "My friends, never occupy yourselves with *kalam*. If I had known that this science would only lead me to this state, I would never have studied it" ("Tauhid Itu Indah," 2023). In addition to the organization's formal statements, the author has encountered both literature and individuals who express skepticism toward philosophical traditions in Islam. One notable example is the book *Melacak Kekafiran Berpikir* ("Tracing the Heresy of Thought"), published by Wihdah Press. This book identifies several modes of thought—including religious pluralism, naturalism, and relativism—as pathways to deviation (Thalib, 1999).

Skepticism toward philosophy is not only found in published works. It can also be seen in family life. For example, a woman identified as RA experienced intense criticism

and exclusion from her family, who labeled her a "disbeliever" and a "heretic" solely for her interest in philosophy. This case shows how differing religious perspectives may cause interpersonal conflict. In some cases, these conflicts may escalate into verbal or even physical confrontation in families that strongly oppose philosophical inquiry.

The author's decision to conduct this study was inspired by witnessing RA's personal experiences. These experiences were a direct result of her interest in philosophy within the context of Wahdah Islamiyah. Her family's involvement in the organization, and her mother's role as a teacher in a *halakah tarbiah*, amplified the opposition and led to a declared zero-tolerance stance on intellectual pursuits labeled "deviant." These sensitive issues call for academic research that moves beyond anecdotal accounts. There is a need to identify the root causes of such opposition and to offer a more objective analysis. The attitudes reflected in Wahdah Islamiyah are also visible on social media. For example, a cadre posted the following statement:

> *The study of philosophy is forbidden and a gateway to disbelief. There is nothing in philosophy except ignorance and confusion. Imam al-Shafi'i said, "There is nothing I detest more than philosophy and its practitioners."*

This rhetoric is not limited to Wahdah Islamiyah alone. Similar perspectives are also found in other Salafi circles and are frequently disseminated through digital platforms and live-streamed sermons. Rejection of philosophy is further institutionalized within the curriculum of Wahdah Islamiyah's schools and universities. Courses on Islamic thought and philosophy are rarely, if ever, included. The case of a cadre named AB, who warned others about the dangers of philosophy to one's faith and eventually left the philosophy department, exemplifies this cautious attitude.

These observations highlight the significance of examining Wahdah Islamiyah's doctrinal teachings and its members' attitudes toward philosophy. Philosophy has played a major role in the development of Islamic intellectual history. Therefore, understanding Wahdah Islamiyah's perspective is essential for interpreting the broader tradition and assessing its impact on social, scientific, and religious life today. This study is guided by a key research question: Does Wahdah Islamiyah view philosophy as a threat, or does it recognize its potential value for addressing contemporary challenges? Addressing this question establishes the foundation and significance of the research.

B. Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, seeking to present an in-depth portrait of phenomena as they unfold in their natural settings. As a field-based investigation, it draws upon direct engagement with the context of Wahdah Islamiyah's activities and community life, aiming to uncover facts and interpret realities as experienced on the ground. Qualitative methods are particularly well-suited for the construction and refinement of theory and conceptual frameworks.

The research was conducted in Kelurahan Antang, Manggala District, Makassar, South Sulawesi. This location serves as the administrative and operational center of Wahdah Islamiyah. Data collection combined observation, interviews, and document analysis. The researcher observed Wahdah Islamiyah cadres, accessed official websites and social media accounts, and visited schools and campuses under the organization's management. Interviews were conducted both in-person and virtually, encompassing a spectrum of informants, including the secretary-general, curriculum head, lecturers and alumni of STIBA Makassar, as well as current and former cadres representing various levels of the *halakah tarbiyah: ta'rifiyah, tanfidziyah,* and *takwiniyah*. This diversity ensured a rich array of perspectives, which were analyzed through data reduction, presentation, and synthesis. Documentation included photographs and audio recordings to enhance data credibility.

The research approach was primarily phenomenological, aiming to interpret meanings embedded in observable phenomena by attending to the details of events and processes (Aini & Airlangga, 2024). Supplementary historical and sociological approaches were also employed, recognizing the affinity of philosophy with other social and human sciences. Phenomenology is especially apt for examining ideology and belief, as it allows for an immersive understanding of how philosophy is experienced and internalized. Following Husserl's imperative, the researcher adopted epoche by bracketing prior assumptions to allow phenomena to speak for themselves, and then proceeded to eidetic reduction, distilling essential meanings (Maraimbang Daulay, p. 34). Active participation in Wahdah Islamiyah activities, such as attending tarbiyah sessions, communal events, and women's study circles, enabled the researcher to observe and interact with members and leaders. This facilitated a nuanced understanding of the organization's culture and internal dynamics.

C. Result and Discussion

The findings presented in this section are drawn from observations, interviews, and document analysis conducted among Wahdah Islamiyah members in Makassar. The data reveal that the organization's focus on religious purification is evident not only in its formal structure and programs, but also in the daily choices and attitudes of its members. Throughout the fieldwork, varying perspectives emerged regarding philosophy and rational thinking—some members strictly avoided philosophical inquiry, while others saw limited engagement as acceptable within the boundaries of Islamic teaching. These results provide a detailed picture of how ideological commitment, intellectual tradition, and organizational practice are negotiated and embodied within Wahdah Islamiyah's community life

1. Historical and Ideological Background of Wahdah Islamiyah

The history of Wahdah Islamiyah cannot be separated from the broader political and social transformations that marked Indonesia in the late New Order era. During the 1980s, intense debates between state and Islamic groups over the imposition of Pancasila as the sole foundation for social organizations sparked anxiety and collective reflection among Muslim activists. The New Order's insistence that Pancasila aligned with Islamic values was meant to strengthen pluralism and reduce social conflict, yet in reality it prompted reactions not only in Jakarta and Java but also in Makassar, South Sulawesi (Jurdi, 2007, pp. 106–107).

According to Iskandar Kato, two major dynamics shaped the formation of Wahdah Islamiyah: first, the political pressure of the New Order, particularly the controversy around the "single foundation" (asas tunggal), and second, the emergence of a reformist spirit among students inspired by KH. Fathul Muin. Many of those who would become the movement's core founders were previously active in Muhammadiyah's youth wing, Ikatan Pelajar Muhammadiyah (IPM). Among them, Zaitun Rasmin played a central role, gathering with peers to establish Yayasan Fathul Muin in 1988—two years after the passing of their mentor (Personal communication, December 27, 2023).

After a decade of development, the need to clarify the movement's identity and direction led to a crucial meeting in 1998. The founders, including Iskandar Kato (then a participant, not yet a core leader), agreed to change the organization's name. There were

two main reasons: the desire to avoid personal veneration of KH. Fathul Muin, in line with Islamic teachings, and the intention to prevent the foundation from being claimed by his family alone. Thus, by consensus, the organization became Yayasan Wahdah Islamiyah—a name that foregrounds unity and collective purpose.

From its inception, Wahdah Islamiyah's vision has been expansive and dynamic. The first organizational "term" was to ensure the movement's presence in all major Indonesian cities and every district in Sulawesi by 2015. By the time this target was met, the goal was reformulated: by 2030, Wahdah Islamiyah aspired to succeed as an *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah* organization, with active branches (DPD) in 80% of Indonesian districts—approximately 412 out of 512 regions (Qur'ani, 2022). This vision was underpinned by key indicators: the placement of at least four STIBA alumni in every DPD, the establishment of Islamic schools and *tahfiz* boarding houses, the involvement of at least ten graduates from secular universities, active media and *dakwah* networks, and the development of productive economic programs.

Wahdah Islamiyah's commitment to unity is also reflected in its political outlook. Leaders have regularly participated in national seminars, congresses, and gatherings aimed at unifying Muslim social capital. The organization's transformation from a foundation to a mass organization was formalized at the 2002 national meeting (Muktamar Wahdah), making possible the creation of branches beyond South Sulawesi, a step that could not be taken under a foundation's legal framework (Jurdi, 2007, p. 38). At its core, Wahdah Islamiyah shares many features with other Indonesian Islamic movements: it is Sunni, honors the leadership of the four *khulafā' al-rāshidīn*, and places high value on disciplined cadre development. Yet, the organization's growth—both in quality and quantity—has been driven by the determination and vision of its senior leaders, and by the enthusiasm of its young, energetic members.

The influence of KH. Fathul Muin Daeng Magading remains central. As a figure known for his steadfast commitment to Islamic purification and his role in Muhammadiyah, he believed that Muslims needed no new philosophy of life, as the Qur'an and Sunnah offered a complete and perfect guide. His advocacy for purification was shaped not only by theology, but also by his educational journey and community engagement. He studied both in Mecca and Indonesia (including with Buya Hamka and

Haji Ba Alwi), and even gave moral support to the Darul Islam/TII movement, although he was not a formal member (Syandri, p. 48).

Viewed phenomenologically, the founding and evolution of Wahdah Islamiyah is not just an organizational history, but a lived, collective experience. The memories, aspirations, and negotiations of its founders remain alive in the present, shaping each new generation of cadres. The movement's ideological identity is constantly renewed through daily practice, study circles, and personal encounters. Becoming a part of Wahdah Islamiyah means entering a shared narrative—one that balances continuity and reform, unity and diversity, and the search for religious authenticity amid ongoing social change.

2. Perspectives on Philosophy

The place of philosophy within Wahdah Islamiyah is not simply a matter of organizational doctrine, but a living, negotiated experience that unfolds through the everyday interactions, anxieties, and aspirations of its members. From a phenomenological perspective, what emerges is not a monolithic attitude, but a tapestry of personal and collective meanings shaped by tradition, socialization, and evolving realities.

For many cadres, the richness of Islamic intellectual heritage (*khazanah*) is acknowledged in theory, yet in practice, engagement with disciplines like philosophy, *kalam*, or even Sufism, remains selective or at times deliberately restricted. This cautious stance is woven into the fabric of daily religious life. As expressed by ER, who has been part of Wahdah Islamiyah since 2015, the transmission of values within *tarbiyah* emphasizes the formation of five core attributes—*mu'min, muslih, mujahid, muta'awin,* and *mutqin*—while steering clear of philosophical discourses. When asked about the legitimacy of studying philosophy, ER described an atmosphere where "there is no problem as long as it remains within the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. My *murabbiyah* always reminds us not to judge others harshly. As long as the creed is intact, we are all sisters in faith. The creed takes precedence over any methodological difference" (personal communication, November 12, 2023). This everyday logic is not the result of explicit prohibition, but a shared sensibility shaped by educational practice and social context.

Other voices within Wahdah Islamiyah articulate a more explicit distancing. MM described the boundaries as rooted in history: "Wahdah Islamiyah does not agree with philosophy, *kalam*, or Sufism, as none of these originated from Islam. They were introduced by figures who wanted to bring external ideas into the faith" (personal communication, December 13, 2023). Here, the sense of vigilance is not merely doctrinal, but also personal, reflecting an anxiety about the preservation of religious identity in the face of outside influences.

Yet, the phenomenology of experience within Wahdah Islamiyah is not confined to rejection or suspicion. Encounters with teachers like SH reveal a complex interplay between rationality and tradition. In his view, "Reason can serve religion, as long as it does not contradict revelation. Whenever reason diverges from the revealed text, it cannot be accepted. For us, the text is the measure, and reason follows it. As long as we stay true to the text, our thinking remains rational" (Personal communication, December 26, 2023). Here, rationality is not excluded but carefully bracketed—welcome as long as it is disciplined by scripture.

This nuanced experience is mirrored in Wahdah Islamiyah's institutional settings, such as STIBA Makassar, where philosophy is absent from the curriculum, and even basic exposure is limited to those selected for comparative purposes. As one curriculum leader put it, "The risk of confusion or spiritual harm outweighs any potential benefit. Some are allowed to know philosophy to strengthen our position in debates, but only with a strong grounding in faith and within institutional boundaries." In this way, the organization seeks to harness intellectual resources without ceding doctrinal control.

What is most striking from a phenomenological standpoint is the negotiation of boundaries—not only between philosophy and faith, but between openness and caution, tradition and adaptation. AS explained that, "Philosophy becomes *kalam* when applied to creed, and this is where many classical scholars, such as Imam al-Shafi'i, issued warnings (Personal communication, January 27, 2024). They feared the risks of reading Islamic texts through a non-Islamic lens, which could distort foundational beliefs."

In leadership circles, there is a clear emphasis on the maxim, *dar' al-mafasid muqaddamun 'ala jalb al-masalih*—that preventing harm takes precedence over pursuing benefit. This perspective legitimizes caution while recognizing the intellectual gains that philosophy might bring, such as critical thinking or linguistic nuance. HN pointed out that

resistance to philosophy is often rooted in both personal stories and classical authority—citing Imam al-Shafi'i's dislike for philosophy and recounting cases where engagement with philosophy led individuals to spiritual crisis (Personal communication, January 18, 2024).

At the ground level, the lived experience of Wahdah Islamiyah members is shaped by the mediation of knowledge through *murabbi* in every *halakah*, and by the recurring refrain that Islam's essential truths have already been made clear by the Prophet. Principles such as unwavering obedience to Allah and His Messenger, the necessity for religious language in doctrine, and a wariness of debate for its own sake are consistently emphasized (DM, personal communication, November 18, 2023). These principles do not only guide belief, but also animate daily practice.

Beyond internal formation, external influences—from engagement with Middle Eastern scholars to participation in government-led moderation initiatives—add further layers of meaning to the organization's position. The result is a dynamic, lived boundary-work; an ongoing effort to negotiate the legacy of the past, the pressure of the present, and the aspirations for the future. In Wahdah Islamiyah, philosophy is both near and far; recognized as part of Islamic heritage, but always approached with caution, interpreted through the lens of faith, and ultimately subordinated to the collective experience of religious life.

3. Implications and Influence

The experience of Wahdah Islamiyah's cadres and leadership reveals that the ideology of religious purification shapes not only organizational doctrine but also the daily realities of faith and social practice. For many members, the process of becoming part of Wahdah Islamiyah is lived as a journey of continuous self-examination, vigilance, and negotiation of boundaries—between what is considered authentic Islamic practice and what is viewed as innovation or external influence. This dynamic, which emerges in both private reflection and communal interaction, demonstrates the ongoing impact of purification on the collective Islamic consciousness within the movement.

The doctrine of purification, as understood and embodied by Wahdah Islamiyah, instills a careful approach to religious knowledge. Members are taught to scrutinize all sources—whether books, teachings, or online material—before accepting or integrating

them into their understanding and practice of Islam. As described by Shahib and Akib (2022), the organization's first institutional investments were made not in early childhood education, but in the creation of a higher education institution (STIBA Makassar). This strategic move reflects a belief that graduates of such institutions, shaped by a purified curriculum, will become agents of change both within Wahdah Islamiyah and in broader society.

The principles of purification extend to daily choices, such as which books to read, which practices to perform, and even how to engage with the wider Muslim community. According to one cadre, "Every quote or argument is checked for conformity with the Qur'an and Sunnah, and any unfamiliar practice is treated with suspicion until its legitimacy is clear" (Personal communication, January 2024). This approach produces a community that is both intellectually selective and spiritually cautious—qualities that many members see as essential for safeguarding the integrity of Islamic identity.

The influence of Wahdah Islamiyah's doctrine can also be seen in its approach to dakwah, or outreach. The organization emphasizes the need to communicate Islamic teachings in a way that is both faithful to tradition and responsive to the realities of contemporary society. This is evident in their efforts to adapt to digital media, with cadres actively disseminating religious messages on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok (UH, personal communication, January 27, 2024). As one leader explained, "We understand that Generation Z dominates social media, and so our movement must also be present and effective in those spaces" (Personal communication, January 27, 2024)

However, Wahdah Islamiyah's commitment to purification does not translate into inflexibility or isolation. The phenomenology of everyday experience shows that cadres are expected to adapt to the diverse realities of the communities in which they serve. *Dai* and *daiyah*—preachers and religious teachers—are trained in comparative jurisprudence so that they can respectfully navigate different schools of thought and practices in their assigned regions (Dafid & Ramli, 2023). This balance between fidelity to one's own doctrinal framework and openness to the lived realities of others reflects an ongoing negotiation between purity and pragmatism, conviction and context.

For many members, this approach is not experienced as an abstract rule, but as an ongoing, embodied reality. The drive to avoid *shubhat*—areas of religious ambiguity—

shapes both individual and collective decision-making. Yet at the same time, Wahdah Islamiyah's adaptation to social change and commitment to social service mark it as a movement that seeks to remain relevant without compromising its core values. At the phenomenological core, the implication of Wahdah Islamiyah's stance is a lived tension: between vigilance and openness, between tradition and adaptation. The boundaries established to protect faith are not static, but are continually interpreted, challenged, and reaffirmed through daily experience. It is within this lived dialectic that the true influence of Wahdah Islamiyah's purification ideology is most vividly observed—not merely in formal policy, but in the ongoing project of shaping Muslim subjectivity in a rapidly changing world.

4. Phenomenological Analysis

A phenomenological approach to the views of Wahdah Islamiyah on philosophy brings to the fore not just doctrinal positions, but the underlying consciousness and lived experience that give those positions meaning. What emerges from the field is not a static opposition to philosophy, but a deeply reflective process of grappling with boundaries—between inherited orthodoxy, rational inquiry, and the emotional resonances of faith.

Throughout the research, it became apparent that organizational elites of Wahdah Islamiyah demonstrate an explicit awareness of the historic and functional value of philosophy in Islamic tradition. In conversations with senior figures, it was acknowledged that rationality and philosophical traditions have played important roles in shaping Islamic discourse, especially in the organization's formative years. This acknowledgment reflects an "intentionality of consciousness"—a key phenomenological construct—wherein the meanings attributed to philosophy are not fixed but emerge from collective experience and deliberation (Husserl, as cited in Maraimbang Daulay, p. 34).

Yet, this consciousness is not unlimited. The scope of reflection and intellectual openness is circumscribed by the group's normative framework, particularly the persistent orientation toward *maslahah* (benefit) and *mafsadah* (harm). The leadership's cautious attitude toward philosophy, as voiced repeatedly in interviews, is shaped as much by emotional and affective experience—stories of confusion, anxiety, or even spiritual loss—as by theoretical reasoning. This *epoche*, or bracketing of prior assumptions to let

the phenomenon 'speak for itself,' reveals an internal tension between the recognition of philosophy's potential value and the perceived risks to communal and doctrinal stability.

Within daily practice, this tension is navigated differently by leaders and regular cadres. Elites, drawing on both personal history and organizational memory, may position philosophy as a selective analytical tool—useful when bounded by strict doctrinal parameters. By contrast, many cadres, especially those on the front lines of education and family life, internalize a sharper divide: philosophy is approached warily, if not outrightly rejected, for its potential to destabilize faith. This duality in meaning—the simultaneity of philosophy as both source of benefit and of potential danger—constitutes a layered, lived experience that is never fully resolved.

The concept of *noema* (the object as intended) and *noesis* (the act of consciousness) is especially salient here. For Wahdah Islamiyah, "philosophy" does not refer merely to an academic discipline, but to a charged symbol—a field both desired and feared, legitimized in some contexts and denied in others. The act of appointing specific cadres to study philosophy, while restricting its general teaching, is a performative expression of selective noesis: only certain forms of consciousness are deemed "safe" or suitable for this task.

Affective responses within the community also structure collective meaning. Narratives of former members, such as the personal accounts of struggle with family, claims of *takfir* (excommunication), and the intense emotions surrounding accusations of heresy, reveal that philosophical inquiry is never simply intellectual—it is existential. These lived experiences of tension, fear, or even conflict are themselves constitutive of the boundaries that Wahdah Islamiyah draws around knowledge and belief.

Ultimately, the phenomenological core of this analysis is the recognition that Wahdah Islamiyah's engagement with philosophy is a site of constant negotiation—a dialogical process shaped by history, authority, emotional resonance, and lived social realities. The boundaries between rationality and orthodoxy, openness and caution, unity and differentiation are never finalized. Instead, they are continually enacted, challenged, and renegotiated in the everyday experiences of cadres, teachers, and leaders.

This ongoing dialectic—between embracing philosophy as a heritage and resisting it as a potential threat—offers a rich and nuanced lens for understanding not just Wahdah Islamiyah, but the broader dynamics of Islamic intellectual life in Indonesia. In this sense,

the phenomenological approach does not merely describe a position; it reveals the dynamic process by which individuals and communities make sense of their past, negotiate their present, and anticipate their future.

D. Conclusion

This research reveals that Wahdah Islamiyah's view of philosophy is far more nuanced than a simple rejection or acceptance. The organization's historical development, shaped by Indonesia's shifting social and political landscape, has produced an approach in which philosophy is acknowledged as part of the Islamic intellectual tradition but is engaged with caution and clear boundaries. The leadership recognizes the benefits of critical inquiry, yet consistently prioritizes the preservation of faith and community. While leaders may see value in philosophical tools for analysis, these are only considered useful when tightly framed by religious doctrine. Among regular members, there is a more guarded stance, shaped by educational practices and communal experience. For most, philosophy remains at arm's length—something to be treated carefully, if at all.

What stands out from the fieldwork is that Wahdah Islamiyah's boundaries are not fixed. They are lived and negotiated day by day, influenced by tradition, teaching, and the realities of social life. In practice, purification is not a static rule but a continual process—guiding choices about what to study, teach, or question. This dynamic is evident in the way members scrutinize new ideas, seek guidance from trusted teachers, and adapt to the broader context of Indonesian Islam. Ultimately, Wahdah Islamiyah cannot be understood by doctrine alone. Its approach to philosophy is best seen as a reflection of ongoing efforts to maintain religious integrity while navigating change. By looking closely at how boundaries are drawn and lived, this study offers a glimpse into the everyday experience of an organization balancing tradition and adaptation in contemporary Indonesia.

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