



## Nationalism of Nani Wartabone: Nation Character Building Foundation of Indonesia

Mursalat Kulap\* ; Wartyo; Hermanu Joebagio

Department of Teacher Training and Education, Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia

Email: [mursalatkulap@gmail.com](mailto:mursalatkulap@gmail.com)

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### **Abstract**

Nani Wartabone is one of the Indonesian nationalist leaders who came from Gorontalo. Nationalism of Nani Wartabone implemented in the form of various movements of resistance against Dutch colonial rule, the Japanese military occupation, revolution in defending independence, until the threat of national disintegration Indonesia after independence. Nani Wartabones' nationalism is not nationalism that leads to chauvinism, but a nationalism that has come from an egalitarian view and leaning on humanitarian aspects. Thus, nationalism of Nani Wartabone is very important if it is implemented in the present life as a cornerstone of the nation character building of Indonesia. This writing will analyze how the concept of Nani Wartabones' nationalism, and its implementation in the present.

**Keywords:** Nationalism; Nani Wartabone; Nation character building; Indonesia

### **Introduction**

In the President of Megawati Soekarnoputeri era, Nani Wartabone conferred as an Indonesian national hero who came from Gorontalo. The conferment of course have to consider how his dedication and contribution to the state. Nani Wartabone is one of the Indonesian nationalist leaders who had proved consistency of Indonesian nationalism throughout the course of his life, since the Dutch colonial rule, the Japanese military occupation, the revolution Indonesia, until the period of disintegration of Indonesia itself.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Nani Wartabone became one of the modern Indonesian elite who came from Gorontalo. In the conception of van Niel (2009), modern elite is a group whose positions are viewed in society because it has been an education. In the Dutch colonial administration, Nani Wartabone gained access to western education carried out by the Netherlands. Legge (1993) said that in general the western-educated intellectuals, especially those who are competent and have not gotten a job as they see fit absolutely possible to achieve a high level of political consciousness. So he was able to appear as a leader in accommodating a variety of aspirations for the next against the Dutch colonial regime. According to Kartodirdjo (1988), western education began to open to the natives were able to give birth to a new modern elite who have awareness of the fate of democracy and equality of all nations.

In a further development, Nani Wartabone became intellectual who struggled to knock down the practice of Dutch colonialism.

The culmination of the nationalist struggle of Nani Wartabone, looks at the events of January 23 1942 in Gorontalo. In that event, the case acts takeover of the Dutch government, followed by the raising of the flag in front of the post office of Gorontalo. The movement was led by Nani Wartabone. In his speech, Nani Wartabone said that the Indonesian people who are in Gorontalo had been independent of the practice of Dutch colonialism (Apriyanto, Pinau, 2013). Furthermore, during the Japanese military occupation, Nani Wartabone continued to fight for the independence of Indonesia in full so that he should be confronted with the arrest and torture in military camps Japan (Habibie et.al, 2004). At the time of Indonesian independence revolution, Nani Wartabone rejected the invitation of the allied forces to hand over their arms to Gorontalo, so Nani Wartabone back suffered torture in prison (Habibie, 2004). Furthermore, when Indonesia became independent and was confronted with one of the separatist movement (Permesta), Nani Wartabone again showed how the consistency of the Indonesian nationalism by establishing "jungle troops" to fight the army of Permesta (Haras, 1960).

The struggle waged by Nani Wartabone from the Dutch colonial period until the uprising Permesta in Gorontalo is the visible manifestation of Indonesian nationalism. The dedication that he showed should be used as the moral basis in the life of the nation in the present era. Of course, the implementation of nationalism shown by Nani Wartabone will be different to what should be done by the present generation. What kind of Nani Wartabone nationalism and its implementation in this time?. This paper will discuss in the next section.

### ***Who Is Nani Wartabone ?***

Nani Wartabone was born in Suwawa, on April 30, 1907. Genealogically, Nani Wartabone is part of Nobiliteit. His father name is Zakaria Wartabone who is a descendant of the king of Suwawa and taked the place of parents in the *Jogugu Suwawa*. His mother name is Saerah Mooduto which is also a highborn (Hasanuddin, 2012). Based on the background of heredity, Nani Wartabone is part of a group of local elites in social stratification is above ordinary society groups (especially local people Gorontalo). Thus, the opportunity to get an education was opened.

After completing his education at the village school in Suwawa, Nani Wartabone continued his education at HIS (*Hollands Inlandshe School*) in Gorontalo in 1916. According to Nasution (2011), the establishment of HIS base on the principal of the natives stronger desire to obtain education, especially the West. HIS curriculum has not changed much from the ELS curriculum. The curriculum is not adapted to the needs of children and people of Indonesia, but in the interests of the Dutch colonial government.

Before graduating in HIS, Nani Wartabone continued to Surabaya Lagere School in 1923. At this stage Nani Wartabone started interacting and expresses an interest in the world of the organization when it does become a manifesto of *zeitgeist* (spirit of the age) in Java. In the same year, Nani Wartabone and his colleagues namely Uno, Abd. Rasjid Tangahu, and Jassin (father of H.B. Jassin) established a youth organization Jong Gorontalo. The organization aims to unite students of Gorontalo in Surabaya (Hasanuddin, 2012).

After completing school, Nani Wartabone continued his education in MULO (*Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs*) in Tomohon. Nani Wartabone moved again in MULO school of Surabaya in 1926. It was caused by his mother was sick and needed to be treated in Surabaya. Nani Wartabone back again interacted with organization and even more active than before. The meetings of youth organizations in

Java was always followed by Nani Wartabone, and brought him to meet with someone who admired and inspired many movements in the region of Gorontalo later. The figure was Soekarno (Hasanuddin, 2012).

The influence of aggressive youth movement toward Nani Wartabone was very large. Non-cooperative attitude and anti-colonialism had begun embedded in thought and action since undergoing Nani Wartabone educational process. Not infrequently Nani Wartabone expressed the anticolonial attitude in school by criticizing the political views of teachers in MULO which is derived from the Dutch. Discriminatory treatment to indigenous students at the school was not free from criticism of Nani Wartabone. School conditions that were no longer attractive to ultimately strengthen Nani Wartabone taking a stand to stop continuing education, and chose to continue to be the world's movement (Habibie et.al, 2004). The choice taken by Nani Wartabone described the formation of awareness about the bad practice of colonialism in Indonesia, and interaction with the national movement figures also were form Nani Wartabone awareness within the framework of the nation-building with large-scale integrated. The consciousness became the struggle foundation after he returned to Gorontalo in 1928.

The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was a time of birth, growth, and development of Nani Wartabone in Gorontalo. In the midst of change towards a slightly more humane politics, Nani Wartabone grown, developed, and became the protagonists of modernization in the region of Gorontalo. The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is an era moving toward a unity of group identity which then moved further to the broader identity (national). The most significant change was a change in thinking of indigenous people from traditional towards the modern, where elements of westernization - not in total - were part of supporters.

In general, it was the early period of the 20th century that was a period of national movements in Indonesia. Kartodirdjo (2005) said that the period of the national movement began as a national revival in general, namely the emergence of a collective consciousness, as well as the identity of the group. Indeed, in the early period of the movement it was still restricted to ethno-nationalism. Anyway his political stance had not appeared. The collective aspirations of progress and backwardness that is about to be eradicated. Stigma native paced deemed low and inferior try eliminated with westernization, although the process invited pros and cons among the elites of Indonesia itself.

The early of 20<sup>th</sup> century was a period in which the ethical politic discourse and implemented. Modernization of west social suprastructure provided new opportunities for the people of Indonesia. Business expansion western nations and even government functions continue to grow creating job opportunities for people in Indonesia who have trained in administrative and technical positions (Wertheim, 1999). Despite the economic aspects of Indonesia is still in the shadow of progress, but in matters of educational opportunities and contribute in a container organization, the Indonesian people have been classified as loose (though in political matters, the supervision of the Dutch colonial government still tight).

Gorontalo development at the beginning of the 20th century, especially on communication, education, and maritime transport into the driveway and the development of ideologies organization at the same time found its point of departure in Java. Through Gorontalo local elites, *zeitgeist* (spirit of the age) who was being felt in the island of Java has been felt in Gorontalo. At these times, Nani Wartabone was born, grow, and flourish, which later became one of the actors in the formation of national consciousness in Gorontalo.

## ***Nationalism of Nani Wartabone***

The formation of nationalism awareness of Nani Wartabone will be seen from the influence of family environment, and also the influence of Nani Wartabone process of interaction with the outside world, the influence of the ideas of nationalist figures in Java which has cemented his understanding about Indonesian totally. Family environmental factors play an important role in the effort to identify himself. Nani Wartabone parents especially his father, a person who has a tough stance, firm, and an open mind (Hasanuddin, 2012). His children (including Nani Wartabone) must defy nature indolent (lazy) and had to work hard. Discipline and commitment shown by his father also contributed greatly in shaping the character of Nani Wartabone.

Nani Wartabone was a generation of the traditional elite where his father had a strategic position in the colonial administration as *Jogugu Suwawa*. Position in colonial structural made Nani Wartabone faced with two realities that he and his family as part of the colonial government (structurally government), and also its identity as part of a group of natives (Gorontalo). In this period Nani Wartabone was in the process of "dialectic of recognition". According to Lacan (in Sarup, 2011) "dialectic of recognition" is a condition in which a person begins to identify about himself that is seen from how others treat him.

Nani Wartabone was born in a situation where the social stratification in Gorontalo, there are groups who controlled (Dutch) and be controlled (native), or in the terminology of Hegel (in Sarup, 2011) known as master and slave. However, in daily life, lifestyle and behavior of Nani Wartabone show an inclination to admit his identity as common people and do not follow the elite bureaucratic practices like his father. That trend could be influenced by knowledge about the history of her ancestors who always opposed the Netherlands. It helped establish the historical awareness (history) of the Netherlands and his ancestors were not so getting along (Abdussamad et.al, 1985). Not only that, these practices are discriminatory colonialism, and not infrequently lead to the practice of torture, deprivation of the people who cannot afford to pay taxes or did not participate peonage, have contributed to the knowledge base Nani Wartabone since childhood (Abdussamad et.al, 1985).

Nani Wartabone knowledge about the practice of colonialism since childhood formed from the dialectical process in the real world became a reference in practice of Nani Wartabone on the next stages of its struggle. The knowledge in accordance with what was said by Marxist (in Santoso, 2015) that the knowledge of the real human dialectic process, and to the senses to be interpreted, to be able to become a force of change. Its simple said that the circumstances forming the human consciousness to act. Although knowledge of the discriminatory practice of colonialism and the practice of torture had existed, but it had not seen significant resistance from Nani Wartabone such practices until he entered the education area and interacted with prominent of nationalist who were in Java Island. All of them were only a strong foundation on the consideration against Dutch colonialism.

At the time, Nani Wartabone found the national consciousness and against the Dutch government, his parents were seemed to let and almost without restriction, however, they also did not show support for Nani Wartabone (Habibie, 2004). It has two possible attitudes that their ambivalence attitude towards the Dutch government, or part of a strategy of support for Nani Wartabone closed. The attitude is clear and bright in the movement against, Nani Wartabone only came from Ayuba Wartabone (his brother), who was in favor of the Netherlands to maintain the status quo. That conflict ended with his defense of his father to Nani Wartabone, and even supported the movement of Nani Wartabone (Abdussamad et.al, 1985).

In addition to environmental family factors that influenced the formation of the foundation identity (the dialectic of recognition), Nani Wartabone nationalism awareness also firmly established the

process of interaction with the outside world while pursuing, especially in Surabaya. The encounter with the nationalist leaders in Java such as Sukarno, Muhammad Yamin, Soetomo, H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, brought the impact on critical thinking encounter against the practice of colonialism, and continued to strengthen the non-cooperative attitude in his fight in Gorontalo. Among the luminaries who met with Nani Wartabone, Sukarno was a figure who was instrumental in the formation of the sense of Nani Wartabone nationalism. Thought and struggle Soekarno widely adopted by Nani Wartabone in the struggle. Organizationally, Nani Wartabone became a pioneer in establishing the PNI in Gorontalo, which dominant was much influenced thought and struggle of Soekarno. Not only that, even after PNI was dissolved Nani Wartabone and Sukarno were in the same corridor Partindo struggle. Thus, the line of thought and movement of Nani Wartabone nationalism can be said as proliferation of Soekarno's thought in the region of Gorontalo.

Sukarno saw that nationalism is as a faith, conviction of a nation that they are a group, a nation. In define "nation", Soekarno quoted Renan's opinion that the nation is a soul, the principle reason, which is formed from lives in the past, and desire to live together. Nation is not based on race, religion, language, equality need, as well as the territorial boundaries (Soekarno, 1959). Indonesian nationalism to be achieved is a nationalism that is able to stand and create alone, not the European nationalism that is stuck on chauvinistic (Soekarno, 2004). Nationalism is also used as a means of unifying of the groups that exist at the time. Sukarno said that unity is an important part in achieving nationalism and the independence of Indonesia. This is an important base of Sukarno in the idea of the union of two other major powers namely Islam and Marxism with nationalism. Soekarno thinking was known as *Nasakom* (Nationalism, Religion, and the Communists). Soekarno battle lines are non-cooperative in achieving the independence of Indonesia (Sukarno, 1959). Soekarno against colonialism and imperialism. This is very evident in his defense speech "Indonesia Sues" in Bandung court in 1930.

Soekarno's opinion about nationalism above is embodied by Nani Wartabone as the cornerstone of the struggle movement in Gorontalo. Non-cooperative attitude also characterizes the struggle Nani Wartabone. Revivalism struggle with the principle of nationalism by Nani Wartabone in Gorontalo little easier because it does not deal with the other political forces such as Marxism. In Gorontalo itself, the power of Islam is one of the major forces in the movement against Dutch colonialism. But it is not the force that leads to the Pan-Islamism.

Nani Wartabone struggle approach to form the national consciousness of the people of Gorontalo who later became an important instrument of the fight against Dutch colonialism is through a political approach, and socio-cultural. Through PNI founded in 1928, Nani Wartabone intensely provided political education to the community. Awareness about the practice of colonialism only resulted in economical decadence, and social discrimination continues to spread in the community. Nani Wartabones' political attitude that seeks to gather all the strength of the various elements of the party, faction, and the group, leading to a point that the factor of unity was the fundamental element in efforts to achieve the emancipation of Gorontalo people with Dutch.

Another interesting point was done by Nani Wartabone as part of the effort to gather the masses in the fight against Dutch colonialism was using *HULUNGA* tradition as an important instrument. *HULUNGA* is a cultural institution that brings people to work in the fields, in the garden, or in the party. Simply put, meaning *HULUNGA* is mutual cooperation. Meaning of mutual assistance in *HULUNGA* then becomes as a forum in galvanizing the collective consciousness of the people about the ideal of independence. Mutual help serve as a base strength of unity of the people. Through hulunga, Nani Wartabone united the young people and farmers around Suwawa and other areas. Their number reached more than 300 people. This group was later (in the events of January 23, 1942) became the core strength of the people. Besides conducting farming activities in *HULUNGA*, the national spirit is as part of

Indonesia was grown. One of the steps taken is to teach Indonesia Raya song and even a red and white flag has been hoisted in the middle of farmland (Habibie, 2004).

Efforts in forming people national consciousness of Gorontalo against the Dutch colonial government found its momentum in the period of the 1940s, and reached its top on January 23, 1942. Before the events of January 23, 1942 occurred, the position of the Dutch colonial government was facing the Pacific war against the Japanese forces who commit invasion to the countries of Southeast Asia (including Indonesia).

### ***Nationalism of Nani Wartabone as Foundation of Nation Character Building***

One of the values that can be taken in studying the history particularly about struggle of Nani Wartabone in the area of Gorontalo is nationalism. Indeed, the knowledge of history with nationalism is not something without correlation. Zuhdi (2014) said that history would be able to establish nationalism and also able to define the identity of people. Moreover, in facing globalization era, we need a strong foundation to be able to maintain the identity of the Indonesian. Seeing Zuhdis' view that discussed about historical correlation with national identity, it is no exaggeration to say history is an important element of national integration issues. In addition, Carr (1965) said that history also has the ability to explain events or thought leaders in the past holistically and is also able to provide a capable solution in the present context.

If you look at the struggle of Nani Wartabone from formation period of national consciousness of people in Gorontalo to the period of the uprising Permesta, we can see a pattern that is consistent with Indonesian nationalism. Nationalism is the basis of the struggle of Nani Wartabone tribal nationalism is not at extreme levels turn into chauvinism, but nationalism was based on a common awareness about the cruelty of the practice of colonialism. Nationalism by Sukarno (1959) called nationalism which emphasizes humanitarian aspects, and also formed from the same condition that is not independent. So in some of the momentum of struggle, Nani Wartabone ruled out the views of ethnicity (Gorontalo, Arab, Bugis, Chinese, and so on). The struggle always involves all elements feel one condition to win independence from colonialism.

Nationalism of Nani Wartabone is always disseminated to the people of Gorontalo is proliferation (spreading) of the region of Java island. Nationalism is also synonymous with understanding and thought Sukarno. So Soekarno fight non-cooperative struggle was also actualized by Nani Wartabone in Gorontalo area. Although there are some similarities in the movement way, but there is also differentiation (difference) in the other between Sukarno and Nani Wartabone. The difference among them is about the response to communism in Indonesia, where Sukarno integrated communism in a common struggle that gave birth to what is known as Nasakom, while Nani Wartabone did not use the element of struggle in the area of communism in Gorontalo. Indeed, the influence of communism in Gorontalo did not tend to be strong one of them because labors that became the basis of communism is not so great in Gorontalo.

The struggle of Nani Wartabone constituted form Indonesian nationalism tends to be consistent. It can be seen from its struggle on January 23, 1942 on behalf of the people of Gorontalo, Nani Wartabone stated remain within the concept of Indonesian nationality, even though at the time Indonesia had not been proclaimed. It took a strong understanding and consistency not to be shifted from the struggle as a nation (Indonesia) are equally fared no independent being under the control of the Dutch government. Not only that, the consistency of Indonesian nationalism was also shown by Nani Wartabone after independence, including continued to struggle so that Indonesia became a unitary state and not a federal state. Nani Wartabone Gorontalo struggled to enter Gorontalo as part of the Republic of Indonesia.

Furthermore, during the uprising Permesta time, Nani Wartabone back appeared as leaders who opposed Permesta movement that had severed ties with the central government.

In addition to consistency, nationalism is the basis of the struggle of Nani Wartabone also described an egalitarian value (of the same human dignity). In situations where the Dutch people considered the people of Gorontalo (natives) were the lowest class in social stratification, Nani Wartabone viewed that the people of Gorontalo especially the farmers also have the same rights and the need to strive for. Moreover, nationalism of Nani Wartabone also relied on humanitarian aspects. Nani Wartabone tendency to make a resistance when the people of Gorontalo in a suppression enough to represent the statement. For example, when a scorched earth around the assets in Gorontalo then it harms the people, Nani Wartabone responded by doing a takeover of the Dutch. Likewise, during the Japanese occupation, although caught, but Nani Wartabone had shown a view of humanity to defend the people of Gorontalo. During the uprising Permesta too, Nani Wartabone opposed when the human side by Permesta Army. When practice of intimidation and discrimination happened to the people of Gorontalo, Nani Wartabone led Pasukan Rimba to fight back.

In addition to the value of nationalism, there are many of the values embodied in the struggle of Nani Wartabone in national movement in Gorontalo. All depends on which perspective one looks at. One of the examples is the values of patriotism which is a manifestation of the love of a nation against the homeland (Budiarti, 1995). However, the most important thing of it all is how the delivery of these values to the younger generation now because it is so important in the process of nation character building.

Explanation history about Nani Wartabone and his struggle in Gorontalo is one step to reach that goal. However, it should be noted that in the context of internalizing and actualizing the value of nationalism in the contemporary era has differences. At the national movement time, Nani Wartabone implemented his nationalist consciousness in the form of struggle in achieving independence. Of course this will have different context to reformation era. The challenge faced is also different. Therefore nationalism was about to be implemented must conform with the current era.

## **Conclusion**

Nowadays, the problem of nationalism is confronted with the reality of globalization that requires unity in the global interaction. Interaction among human sometimes, overrides country limitation and cultural identity. The development of information and communication would be the driving factors behind the interaction. Here nationalism is contested. On one hand, people increasingly go to the interaction has improved, but on the other hand they wanted to maintain their identity. Being a closed group in the global interaction is a risky choice, so that, like it or not, the interaction is increasingly open today should be faced.

Another problem faced when discuss about nationalism is the nationalism of the narrow issues that could be involved with chauvinism. Regional autonomy demands of the present era, would not want to construct a local identity as a spirit to build each region. Behind it all, there are challenges regarding how to maintain the identity to the Indonesian-ness, which in the early period of the 20<sup>th</sup> century into the historical foundation in building awareness of Indonesian nationality, like what has been understood and championed by Nani Wartabone. The development of fundamentalism, according to Meyer (2007) is one political ideology that recruits its members of ethnoreligious based on the same characteristic, should be a concern in the present era. Simmel (in Hobsbawm, 1992) said that if fundamentalism increasingly intense happens, it will establish an intolerance paradigm. This description about nationalism that described here is not the only one problem. There are still many challenges faced in the development of Indonesian

nationalism. However, in essence, the implementation of Indonesia nationalism in present era is very complex and requires a touch of the various elements.

Struggle of Nani Wartabone in Gorontalo, a clear picture of how the views of true Indonesian-ness. The wave of challenges that came from variety of directions with different periodization, did not shake his views about Indonesia. According to the views of Nani Wartabone, Indonesian nation in the Dutch colonial rule era are those who do not had the same place in social stratification with European nations, but had aspired to independence. In the struggle, Nani Wartabone always made Indonesian nationalism as its foundation. Gorontalo is not seen as something separate from Indonesia. This spirit should be the spirit of the present generation struggle. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that the spirit of nationalism of Nani Wartabone have differences in orientation and its practical with today's generation. If Nani Wartabone looked Indonesia at that time are based on a common destiny, not independence, and under the authority of the Netherlands, so the orientation is independence, then the current generation, the good regard Indonesia as a nation born of the same desire, and have the same life goals as well as the next generation of our ideals.

Related to nationalism in this era, then what is the context of nationalism? Kusumawardani and Faturochman (2004) describes about the manifestation of nationalism in the contemporary era through the fulfillment of its elements, that is the love of the homeland and the nation, participate in the construction, to enforce the law and uphold social justice, using the resources at the same time future-oriented, achievement, independently and responsibly with respect ourselves and others, and is ready to compete with other nations and engage in international cooperation. Ideal nationalism like this will deliver the citizens as people who have high psychological quality.

Kartodirdjo (1999) outlined five principles of nationalism, namely, first is unity (oneness) that puts the territorial unity, nation, economic principles, and so to strengthen national integration. Second is liberty (freedom) associated with aspiration, freedom of religion, freedom of group, and freedom of organisations, Third is equality (similarity) related to the rights and obligations, as well as the position in law, Fourth is personality (personality) associated with identity, self-esteem, and pride as a nation. And the last is performance (achievement) concerning the embodiment of dreams and ideals in creating prosperity, greatness, nation and humanity itself. Furthermore, Aman (2011) said that the attitude and behavior of nationalism formulated as follows: proud of being Indonesian, love of homeland and nation, willing to sacrifice for the nation, received a plurality, proud culture of diverse, appreciate the services of the heroes, and give priority to the public interest.

Based on some opinions above, nationalism in in era is executed based on five principles (unity, liberty, equality, personality, and performance). In practical, the implementation of nationalism in the present era which is as follows: maintaining national integration (unity), receiving diversity (liberty), forward egalitarian (equality), pride in the nation and the state (personality), and have a vision of nation building (performance). Thus, internalization and actualization of the nationalism depends on whether the current generation has not implemented basis of the five principles. As the hope of the nation, university students in every university should use its struggle with the principles of nationalism. Thus, the expectation of the birth of figures like Nani Wartabone in the contemporary era, will add many great people which build Indonesia of their regions.



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