BUREAUCRACY AND THE CULTURE OF RATIONAL-EGALITARIAN STRUCTURE:
The Contribution of Religion for Strengthening Good Governance

By: Ubaidillah Achmad*

Abstract

The role and function of religion recently in the government system seem to have problems because of the believers itself. The fact shows that in the government order that is led by most righteous people, the management indicates various deficiencies, such as inefficiency, authority abuse, collusion, corruption, nepotism, and society's cooptation to support the political party of the regime. Therefore, to improve the order, it cannot be subjected to the religion believers only, without strengthening the good governance. This last statement requires knowledge, attitude, and action of the public service officials. Furthermore, this is a step of improvement of political abuse, including bad performance of bureaucracy. The article tries to highlight the significant role of religious consciousness relevant to the development of good governance. Good governance will be well-implemented, if each takes part actively, together with government, in developing community's understanding on the importance of rational-egalitarians in the government system. It is also required a firmness of moral principles and ethic awareness of all public service officials and society to execute the good governance in the government system.

الخلاصة

يعاني دور الدين في النظام السياسي من اضطراب مصدره أتباع ذلك الدين أنفسهم، ويمكن ملاحظة ذلك الاضطراب في التنظيم الحكومي الإندونيسي الذي يتمتع أغلب أعضائه بيقين والتزام ديني على نحو ما. ففي هذا التنظيم ترتفع معدلات انعدام الكفاءة، إساءة استخدام النفوذ، انتشار المحسوبية والفساد، واستخدام موارد الدولة في دعم الأحزاب السياسية الحكومية إبان الانتخابات. لذا، وعلى طريق إصلاح ذلك التنظيم، لا ينبغي الاعتماد فقط على مفهوم الأمة المتدينة من غير بذل الجهد في سبيل تقوية تنظيمات الحكم الجيد. وفي إطار تقوية الحكم الجيد يحتاج العاملون بالدولة إلى اكتساب معارف معينة، وبناء اتجاهات دافعية محددة، إلى جانب خلق سلوكيات إيجابية تتسم بالحياد والعدالة. هذا، وينبغي أن يحوي مجهود دعم الحكم الجيد خطوات إصلاحية تجاه الفساد السياسي بما فيه تردي مستوى أداء البيروقراطية. وعبر هذه المقالة، يحاول الكاتب إيضاح ما للدين من دور بالغ الدلالة في بناء تنظيمات الحكم الجيد. فالحكم الجيد يمكن تطبيقه تطبيقاً حسناً من خلال بناء الوعي المشترك بين الحكومة والجماهير حول أهمية نمط الرشد والمساواة في نظام الإدارة العامة. وإلى جانب هذا، يُحتاج إلى وضوح الالتزام بسيادة المبادئ الأخلاقية لدى العاملين بالدولة ولدى الجماهير على حد سواء؛ كل هذا على طريق إرساء دعائم الحكم الجيد. بشكل واقعي في نظام الحكم العام.

A. Introduction

Governance experiences in developing countries often be considered full of dishonesty, corruption, collusion and nepotism. Such condition has provided impetus for governments, religious figures, intellectuals and several NGOs in developing countries to find solution whether preventively as well as curatively. This kind of problem appeared because there public decisions-making not sensitive to voices of communities, hierarchical process of public decisions-making and increasing turns of culmination which lead to the real sense of poverty. It is this problem that brings about attempts to create clean governance. Corruption, collusion and nepotism have not been disappearing from practices of some persons within government circles in developing countries. For example, in Indonesian reformation that has been running for nine years, however, there still so many unclear project tenders or unprofessional license of banking administration take places and so many others. Such the case obviously cannot be separated from the influence of irrational-hierarchical system of governance.

In this article, the writer wants to suggest solution that is hoped to give a fresh breath within government and development as well. Hence, religious consciousness becomes highly significant and relevant to establish *good governance*. In other words, *good governance* will be effectively applied if religious believers along with government take part together in establishing commitment of its enforcement. However, it is still necessary to have understanding dealing with roots of the problem: Why it comes to appear deep pessimism regarding to the increasing of *poor governance*? Then, how to strengthen the role of religion in establishing *good governance*?

B. The Face of Bureaucracy: Between Irrational-Hierarchical and Rational-Egalitarian

This face of bureaucracy often misinterpreted that had an impression to be only controlled by its leader. It is the implication of system bureaucracy management that

raises assessment whether it is categorized as a good governance order or a bad governance order? Perception on bureaucracy can not be viewed apart from individual's understanding about a form of governance order. Governance order always involves in it those who are in power and those who are under control. Within governance order it is often found two terms that misunderstood frequently: *governance* and *government.*

Governance is more on attitude and behavior of those who are in power whereas *government* is an authority to govern. *Governance* has an essential meaning that is about knowledge, attitude and practice which guides to the issue of how to make changes in attitude and behavior? If government has knowledge, attitude and practice of thing bad, this can be changed in stages in order to become good. Hence, knowledge, attitude and practice constitute the essence for establishing *good governance*. Good knowledge, attitude and practice will generate a good government order. Automatically, it is realized how important an application of good principle is in carrying out a government. A good governance system required some principles such as political action; acknowledgment from those who control the power; democratization in order to be able to accept people's criticism and advises; policy intended to give opportunity for people to delivering criticisms and advices; keeping off people demands and opening people political watching involvement.

However, in addition to the need of several strict requirement above mentioned, it is also in need of supporting pillar for standing a *good governance*, among others are in economy, politics, law, social and culture and religion. All these factors influence and interact to each other. It is acknowledged that government policy which tends to pursue economic target and the centralistic system of government has caused the reform towards obtaining *good governance* is less develops maximally. As a consequence the pillar of state living becomes weak and brittle. All that mater can not be separated from the problem of moral weaknesses of society, in particular those of officials of government. In this context, religious role might be able to motivate and

to give a breath to all field of life so that it will appear just system of economy, politic, law and social-cultural order.

But in reality religion is often less powerful. Inter-ethnic prejudices as well as inter vested-interest group, inter-entities of religion even inter-entities of territorial are quite apprehensively about our national cohesive. Tendency to accuse each other and to topple down seems continuing. This phenomenon gives evidence of the high level of prejudices and how depressed the trust among people. How low the trust among elements is that appears illegitimacy or distrust to each other. People do not trust government and vise versa whereas trust is very necessary to establish the unity or cohesion of nation.

Based on realities of human civilization (*waqî'at al-'umrân al-basyarî*)[1], system of governance can be analyzed by using two approaches, namely the structure of irrational-hierarchical and the structure of rational-egalitarian. The structure of rational-egalitarian insists that all policy of bureaucracy must be easy to understand (*clearly understandable*) and easy to access (*freely available*). Whereas, the structure of irrational-hierarchical gives priority to government's interests with neglecting roles of those the governed. Such governance will impact on the causes of strong explosion that not only endangering the state and bureaucracy's authority but also depraving social order that had helped to establish it.[2]

The structure of irrational-hierarchical constitutes the problem in developing countries. Specifically, the problem is "*the paradox of development administration*".[3] It means, the existence of effective administration system does not guarantee the success of development in developing country, but the administration system of

---

[1] The writer derived this term from Abdurrahman Ibn Khaldun (1951), *Muqaddimah,* Bairut: Dar al-Fiqr

[2] Muhammad A.S. Hikam (1999), *Demokrasi dan Civil Society* (Democracy and Civi; Society), Jakarta: LP3ES. p. 21.

[3] Sofian Effendi (2000), "Revitalisasi Sektor Publik Menghadapi Keterbukaan Ekonomi dan Demokratisasi Politik," (The Revitalization of Public Sector in Facing Economic Transparencies and Political Democratization) *Pidato Pengukuhan Jabatan Guru Besar Pada Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik UGM,*(Inaugural Lecturer Professorship at the Faculty of Social Science and Politics, Gajah Mada Unicersity), Yogyakarta: UGM Press, p. 928.

which is too effective can also become an obstacle the development. This is because the will of establishing *good governance* has been a custom which is dependent on government bureaucracy that has been centered on the authority of its leader.

The paradox of development administration is the biggest problem faced by developing countries. For instance, Indonesian bureaucracy is considered the worst and does not yet experience improvement significantly since its reformation has been moving on 21st May 1998. In 2000 Indonesia got the score 8.0 that means does not change from the score of 1999, within the possible score that is zero for the best and 10 for the worst. This score of 8.0, far below the average, obtained based on experiences and perceptions of *expatriates* who were the respondent. Still there so many respondents who consider high officials of Indonesia abuse their position to enrich themselves and their close friends.[4]

Hence, it needs to have improvement and reformation of the persisting governance system. The problem that needs immediate improvement is the existence of mental dependence of those officers which always wait for guidance, command and agreement from their boss. For this reason, every chief officer in an institution of bureaucracy has to enlighten and give up their workers from the above mental problem because not everyone of them has critical awareness. However, this form of worker feudalism has been taken advances by chief officers to strengthen their control. Another problem is about the bureaucracy services which always graded lacking of quality, slow-moving and perplexed. This makes people easier to grade and to compare with the system applied in a private business which gives an interactive service, competitive and faster.

The problem of bureaucracy in Indonesia is understood as negative, complicated, and standstill. This being so because of being un-separated from the abuse of authority within each institution. Still, there are chief officers of bureaucracy institution to understand it as a careful institution and all policy that this institution

---

[4] See Problems of Bureaucracy in Indonesia, Journal of Transparency, Website of the Indonesian People of Transparency, 18th edition, Maret 2000.

decides has to be discussed though conference and meeting assemblies. For this reason, actually, institution of bureaucracy is often called table governance. In other words, the bureaucracy institution works from one table to another.[5] Such is possible things that caused to appear side effects in every bureau, table, room and department and the like.

Although bureaucracy is imperative in governance system, whether traditional government or modern one, its existence does not necessarily means neglecting attempts of reform and application of quality public service. For this, before discussing good governance building it is essential, in advance, to have the system of government bureaucracy reformed. The definition of bureaucracy which etymologically means table, its existence can be established through rational way or irrational one. Good or bad of the system of bureaucracy in Indonesia is un-separated from the development pattern that is going to be released by the central government that is bureaucracy with the structure of irrational –hierarchical and the structure of rational –egalitarian.

Form and culture of irrational-hierarchical structure of bureaucracy constitutes the form of government that often neglecting responsibility of public services. This pattern of bureaucracy gives services only to those of upper classes. Such public service process has given unconsciously to those of public officers a form of feudalistic character. It means, orientation to their boss increases to strengthen and along with this is their fully dependent attitude, this appears like frog's swimming style i.e. upward to have praying while downward to kick other so that gives rise loyalty of their staff with no reserve.

In contrast, the rational-egalitarian structure of bureaucracy and culture constitutes a form of government that gives priority of appreciation to the functioning of logical reasoning as well as the benefit of knowledge and technology. The culture

---

[5] Suhartono (2000), "Birokrasi, Kolusi dan Kriminalitas: Refleksi Historis" (Bureaucracy, Colution and Crime) in *Pidato Pengukuhan Jabatan Guru Besar Pada Fakultas Sastra UGM,* (Inaugural Lecture of Professorship at the Faculty of Art, Gajah Mada University), Yogyakarta: UGM Press, p. 424.

developed within sphere of bureaucracy of such pattern is potentially to empower all human resources. All activities are carried out based on public interest which has to be decided straightaway without waiting for the coming of natural disaster or by demand of people. Officers of bureaucracy institutions are free to arrange new ways practical to do public service anticipatively, initiatively and smartly proactive in anticipating condition of public need. Within the context of this culture of rational-egalitarian structure of bureaucracy all individuals are considered equally before the law and also respect the principle of human equality. An individual deals with institution of bureaucracy is treated as equally important as another.

If in the government system the pattern of irrational-hierarchical structure is given priority, attempts to establish good governance order will find obstruction. It is this kind of pattern that well known as the feudalistic system of governance. The reason is so simple that within a governance system which contains cultural complexities, these could not be reduced with only serving to the boss. Form of loyalty can be taken off if a staff does not fill up all order of boss. In other word, a staff has to move of leave off his/her previous position and than given another new task in alienation. This feudalistic system will give rise negative impact namely working without the principle of professionalism. The feudalistic system of governance prefers to pay attention to the principle of "as far as the boss is happy".

Basing on the form of this feudalistic bureaucracy it is easily to open opportunity for chief officers to do as they want in determining their policy direction. It is mostly possible that this form of bureaucracy will spread out a kind of collusion tree in the heart of those policy holders. It is a reality that collusion is motivated to gain economical as much as political benefit of those bureaucrats. Mostly in developing countries, collusion network spreads vertically as well as horizontally that easily fill up *webs of cancer* covering all bodies of bureaucracy. Eventually, immunity system of governance bureaucracy increases to weaken and not be able anymore to grapple with the growing fast of collusion.

This very large power of bureaucracy simply gives rise difficulty to people in realizing the function of control. All formal controlling institutions are under or at least within government bureaucracy and unluckily none of them are willing to share the access to people in general to participate in watching bureaucracy. Improving such bureaucracy, then, it is not enough to base solely on the self-controlling, means *from government, by government, and for government*, in other word government controls it self. Actually for this reason that corruption has never been fought, even grew thriving, as happened within the New Order era.[6] Such corruption may takes place in making process of a deal concerning state regulation by involving government, society and private parties which also in turn became the connecting line of crime that was oppressive to the people in general.

Government bureaucracies in almost every developing country are simply to legitimize the incumbent leaders. It is not a few that officials are always to behave as if they keep people aspiration and mandate in fact they did public prevarication in massive way. And this collusion within government system is clearly because there are the same interest between the chiefs and those who have the capital. The adjoining of government officials and capital owners constitutes a strong corps as the outcome of collusion yielded within bureaucracy for creating single loyalty. At the same time, it is easily to find officials that are willing to help people, interestingly using unexpected wrong ways, namely using the pattern and mechanism that the colonial did.

If "single loyalty" can easily move and secure, the contrast is the fate of people who always in conflict and difficulties in playing their roles. If such is the real condition, there must be something wrong in applying the principles of good governance. Evidence of this faulty is the government bureaucracy existence it self in one had, and several deviations in other hand that lose out nation and people. For this

---

[6] Miftah Thoha (2000), "Demokrasi Dalam Birokrasi Pemerintah Peran Kontrol Rakyat dan Netralitas Birokrasi" (Democracy within Government Bureaucracy: The Role of People's Control and the Nethrality of Bureaucracy" in *Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar UGM Ilmu-ilmu Sosial,* (Inaugurl Lecture Professorship at the Faculty of Social Sciences) Yogyakarta: UGM Press, p. 1125.

reason, it needs common attempts to recreate essential in Taufik Abdullah terms "moral and psychological condition" within mass democratic formation.[7]

The system of government bureaucracy constitutes political expression of elite which should not only favor "formal politic".[8] The system of government not only limited on issues of efficient and productive administration,[9] but need also to consider of principle of ethic and moral standard which is explored from genuine principle pf people and society.[10] It is this ethical principle and moral standard that categorized as a government bureaucracy that culturally as well as structurally rational and egalitarian in nature.

C. Moral Principle and Ethical Consciousness of Good Governance

Good governance is the term that has been favorable lately after the spread of people disappointment in any developing countries. *The paradox of development administration* is ironical to the management system of a government order. However, the new government is easily understood –from the languages it uses—as anti "poor governance", that is the governance which refers to previous fraudulent governance order.

This term is popularized then by UNDP with the following statement: *"Good governance is, among other things, participatory, transparent and accountable. It is also effective and equitable. And it promotes the rule of law. Good governance ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus*

---

[7] Taufiq Abdullah (2000), "Pengalaman, Kesadaran, dan Sejarah," (Experience, Consciousness and History) in *Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar UGM* (Inaugural Lecture Professorship, (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, p. 380.

[8] TIM LIP FISIP UI (1998) *Mengukur Sistem Politik Orde Baru* (Measuring the System of Poltic of the New Order) *,* Bandung: Mizan.

[9] Rene Klaff (2002), "Prinsip-prinsip Dasar Demokrasi dan Pemerintahan Yang Baik" (Basic Principles of Democracy and Good Governance), in *Islam dan Barat: Demokrasi dalam Masyarakat Islam* (Islam and the West: Democracy in Islamic Society), Jakarta: Paramadina, p. 107.

[10] Ubaidillah Achmad (2006), "Pendidikan Multikulturalisme Gagasan Walisongo Menuju Keutamaan Individu dan Budaya Lokal," (Education of Multiculturalism Walisongo's Concept towards advancement of Individual and Local Culture) in *Jurnal Terakreditasi Pendidikan Islam Universitas Islam Djakarta (UID)*, Vol. IX No. 2 Juli-Desember, pp. 178-192

in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources".[11] In the World Bank report of 1997 this issue of good governance became the most talked theme and issues which included the following: *Predictable, open, and enlightened policy making, a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos acting in furtherance of public good, the rule of law, transparent processes, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Poor governance, on the other hand, is characterized by arbitrary policy making, unaccountable bureaucracies, un-enforced or unjust legal systems, the abuse of executive power, a civil society engaged in public life, and widespread corruption. Good governance fosters strong state capable of sustained economic and social development and institutional growth. Poor governance undermines all efforts to improve policy making and to create durable institutions.*

However, key success of good governance depends on mental attitudes such as consciousness, wisdom, commitment and responsibility, and these have to be carried out well. Good governance would not work effectively and efficiently if not in balance with the control system of people. The basic argument of this idea suggests that the democratic system of politic and government lies on the existence of control made by people to the governing activities (*control of government by the governed*).[12] Miftah Toha confesses that within complex democratic society it is almost unlikely for people to make control perfectly. However, still people are in the hope with proposing the way of electing their leader by people governed.[13]

---

[11] *Governance for Sustainable Development*, UNDP, January 1997. Although it was initiated by international institutions from advanced countries (such as Europe, North American and Japan) through World Bank, UNDP, and IMF on the importance of *good* governance, this has been a seriously debated issues and discourse to talk about in developing countries. This has urged the Institution of State administration of Indonesia to give conclusion on fundamental aspects of a realization of good governance, that is   *good governance*: *participation, rule of law enforcement, transparancy, responciveness, consensus orientation, equity, effectiveness and efficiency, accountability,* and *strategic vision.* Dede Rosyada, et., el., (2000), *Pendidikan Kewargaan: Demokrasi, HAM, Masyarakat Madani,* Jakarta: Kencana, p. 182.

[12] Baca, Judith Gruber (1987), *Controlling Bureaucracies, Dilemmas in Democratic Governance*, Los Angeles: University California Press.

[13] Miftah Thoha, *Op. Cit.* p. 1121.

Although it is clear and easy to decide whether the governance system will apply the cultural and structural bureaucracy of rational-egalitarian or the irrational-hierarchical one, in practice it is often that those who are in power applies double standard within the government system. For example, there exits rationale within bureaucracy that seems influenced by the system of hierarchy of power. It is commonly happening that practice and perception of bureaucracy considers the higher hierarchy has larger power to control and the lower hierarchy has less power to control, while those beyond the hierarchy, i.e. the position occupied by people, considered to have nothing. It means if people come to face bureaucracy they would be powerless otherwise to be abused. This unbalanced ties of power clearly gives rise to weaken democracy and would likely abused as instrument of domination from those of the higher to those of the lower hierarchy or those officers of bureaucracy to people in common. It is really this perception of irrational-hierarchical bureaucracy that caused the idea of democracy does not work well.[14]

The real condition of the government bureaucracy system needs people's response. Because, if people do not force to control every activities of the governance bureaucracy it is certain that several power deviances takes place in turn. The result would be of more dangerous for people them selves. The duty of state apparatus in making people prosperous is the empowerment of all potencies of people. This effort of people empowerment needs the spirit to serve public and to be the partner of society, or in other words making the join work synergy between people and private parties, for building the nation and achieving people well-being.

Good governance within bureaucracy needs moral as well as ethic consciousness of all components of society in building equity between state institutions of central or regional government, private sectors and *civil society*. Good governance based on this outlook means an agreement of the state arrangement created together by government, *civil society* and private sectors. This agreement

---

[14] *Ibid.* p. 1122.

includes all forms of mechanism, processes and institutions in which all people and members of society may reveal his interest, using his right of law and fulfilling its duties and bridging between societies.[15]

Government bureaucracy constitutes the biggest people organization, so that its system has to be in accord with local cultural needs. Soedjito Sosrodihardjo suggests that every society has its own social value which governs its people. Under this social value is moral propriety and custom. Social values are the standard by which attitudes are valued. With such values ones could figure out what others would do in their expected contact. It is understandable then if people with different social values are coming together they often experience difficulty to estimate what others are going to do. The same would happen if there is no common understanding and appraisal within society; it would result in the emergence of distrustful among members of society.[16]

In this concern, the main cause of the problem of "*the paradox of development administration*" in applying *good governance* is that of strengthening government bureaucracy on one side and weakening people political power as well as other political institution at the same time on the other side. Unluckily, government bureaucracy as a big organization in society is unable to accommodate people's adaptation pattern, goals to achieve, integration process of members of society and people solidity in defending their identities from internal as well as external threatening.

For this reason, although government has been applying administration order, efficiency and productivity, as long as still neglecting the required function of social

---

[15] TEAM of ICCE the State Islamic University, Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta(2000), *Demokrasi, HAM dan Masyarakat Madani,* (Democracy, Human Right and Civil Society), Jakarta: Kencana, p. 181.
[16] Soedjito Sosrodihardjo (2000), "Nilai-nilai Sosial dan Perubahan Struktur Masyarakat," (Social Values and Changes Society) in *Pidato Pengukuhan Jabatan Guru Besar Pada Fakultas Sosial dan Politik UGM,(* Inaugural Lecture Professorship *at the faculty of Social and Politic of Gajah Mada University),*Yogyakarta: UGM Press, p. 29.

system for relationship of individuals and society,[17] invasive changing will take places and influences all system which has been working. It is not surprising that the commitment of good governance still remains *"the paradox of development administration."* For this, implementation of *good governance* should go along with endorsement of social systems, conducive of macro economical as well social and political condition, policy of *capacity building* program with empowering those of poor people, government free from the collusion and corruption, conducting good *public service*, professional, exercise to restructuring bank, foreign loans and rebuilding the real sector (foreign trade, national food policy, deregulation of investment and social programs for people empowerment).[18]

That which needs immediate reformation includes mode of bureaucracy which is currently in working. Current mode of bureaucracy can bee seen from the language it uses, i.e. the language of power. Bureaucracy officers of Indonesia knows only this language, the language of power, such as arrest, subversive, force out, kick out, kidnap,[19] go on, and the like which shows that only the officers are right. Other than the language of power, those not relevant to cultures of rational-egalitarian bureaucracy are among other things; *first*, centralization. It is the mark of the authoritarian state public administration. *Second*, single loyalty between bureaucrat, politician and businessman constitute the identifying mark of government bureaucracy which has not yet take the side of people, so that apparently they do just about everything but govern.[20] As such this hinders any attempts of emphasizing neutrality of government bureaucracy. Those models are constitutional representative government, *pluralist account*, *the autonomy of the democracy.*[21]

---

[17] K.J. Veeger (1993), "Realitas Sosial: Refleksi Filsafat Sosial atas Hubungan Individu-Masyarakat" (Social Reality: Reflection of Social Philosophy on the Relatonship between Individual and Society) in *Cakrawala Sejarah Sosiologi*, (Horizons of the History of Sociology) Jakarta: Gramedia.

[18] Haryoso (2002), *Pembaruan Birokrasi dan Kebijaksanaan Publik*, (Reforming Bureaucracy and Public Policy) Jakarta: Peradaban, pp. 193-194.

[19] Miftah Thoha, *Op. Cit.* p. 1127.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 1132.

[21] *Ibid.,* p. 1134

The neutrality of government bureaucracy has its own pillars as a central of government should be, namely the civil servant. They have to work carrying out of duty and responsibility whether they take one side or neutral in relation to political power. This model is called by Hussel Schultz as "natural attitude". This "natural attitude" is also known as "*lebenswelt*" or "*everyday life world*". Such concept can be used as a solution to follow up government policy of neutrality of civil servant from political parties. This neutrality means a good willing of those of civil servants to do public service of equal effectiveness to all administrations given to them.[22]

All officers can not absolve themselves from the moral principle and standard of ethic which prevails within a social system. By taking others in humanistic manner means taking his/herself intrinsically of having values of human being, for an individual, according to Immanuel Kant, is valuable within itself.[23] For this reason, intervening action violates norms of moral. If someone who is holding office or being in power pay attention only to his/her interest while others who are governed being miserable, means violates against his/her own self.

Government bureaucrat has to bestow understanding and respect to individuals. This is important because if such understanding and respect is weak, it would be easily giving rise potentially aggressive attitudes among individuals of the society being governed. For this standard of ethic and moral principle of a leader constitute guidelines whenever emerge interests within internal of the power. If interest of a leader is in line with standard of ethic and moral principle of society, public interest will remain secured through professional services. The reverse will be the case, however, if such standard of ethic and moral principle is neglected; and government bureaucracy would be the target of people angry and disappointment.

Management of government bureaucracy is a privilege of those bureaucrats. Nevertheless, if this privilege is given to bureaucrats who have no sense of

---

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 1134.
[23] Dalil Kant ini, dapat dibaca pada bukunya, Immanuel Kant (2005), *Critique of Practical Reason,* translation into Indonesian by. Nurhadi, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

responsibility, moral and ethic, people in common will be the side of miserable. This will be more suffering with the coming out of politicians and businessmen. Officers, politicians and businessmen involved in government institution are never free of interests. It is people then that has to bear on any risks of how politicians, officers and businessmen holding the government institution. The logic is simple, i.e. if amount of money is needed for the expense of carrying out a program, government just to borrow it from those of businessmen who come into bureaucracy.

Relationship with vested interests is a risk of bureaucrat which has no direct impact on the system of government. However, the decreased government bureaucracy is never separable from individual character its leader has.[24] Good character is a must that can not be neglected in driving leadership within bureaucracy. If top leader of executive pawns his/her ethic and moral standard, so there is no one will be able to hold out *good governance.* Considering any political as well as economical interests that potentially worsened bureaucracy, control from any sides is really a need to day, whether administrative or substantive. In this context, religion can be involved in the mid of bureaucracy. However, role of religion simply implied to worsened situation if religious men also come to appear with superficial ideology. So, it should be underlined that he role of religious men is such as supervisor within the process of people empowerment in its relation to bureaucracy power.

Religious men can learn from western countries[25] which then be contextualized in accord with local need. This kind of experience can be directed towards creating free public sphere, carrying out public control of the running system of bureaucracy, criticizing system and culture of which are parts of totalitarian regime; making alternative for the people of bureaucracy victims; and is able to avoid from basic

---

[24] Istilah watak ini, penulis ambil dari pemaknaan antropologis S. Takdir Alisjahbana (1986), *Antropologi Baru: Nilai-nilai Sebagai Tenaga Integrasi dalam Pribadi, Masyarakat dan Kebudayaan*, (New Anthropology: Values as Integration Energy of Individual) Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, pp. 69-70.
[25] Muhammad AS Hikam (1999), *Demokrasi dan Civil Society*,(Democracy and Civil Society) Jakarta: LP3ES, p. 199.

weaknesses of liberal-capitalistic system of democracy as well as communistic one of which is not accord with local culture.

D. Strengthening the Structure of Rational-Egalitarian

If religious community understands prominence function of religious values for building individual as well as social system its role would be very much felt in the mid of relationship between individuals, social system and government bureaucracy. The case is the opposite, however. Values of religion do not ever appear as moral teaching to which people highly esteem. People see religious teaching simply as a symbol of communality and a legitimating factor for conflicts between individuals, social system and government bureaucracy. It is still freshly remembered, ever since the concept of nation state appeared, religion is understood by its adherent for keeping the same religious community. Sadly, such condition also takes place within bureaucracy, in which certain existence of religious community just caused government bureaucracy home for corruption, collusion and nepotism.[26]

Such is definitely different with the values emphasize by religion, that it is a formula of believe, dogma, and faith which can be applied and carried out within plurality of social realities. Conception of religion ideally put down as source of building social order, source of ethic and moral in social live. Such religious building as this is parallel with empowerment program that had been conducted by the prophet Muhammad, i.e. making society which strongly hold on moral and ethic principle and establishing bureaucracy and the culture of rational-egalitarian structure.

Religion which is not understood as a source of value resulted in the spreading of religious activities that always to judge immoral acts on behalf of religion. This type of religious manner obviously colored the tension in the relationship between the same religious communities as well as between religion and the state. And if this kind

---

[26] Arbi Sanit, ets. (2004), *Korupsi Di Negeri Kaum Beragama: Ikhtiar Membangun Fiqh Anti Korupsi,* (Corruption in the Country of Religious Community: Attempt to Establish Fiqh of Anti Corruption)Jakarta: P3M.

of religious communalism is to continue the role religion as "way of life" will have no meaning in social system. Religion is simply abused as media for hoping eternal life and to legitimize politic for obtaining power within bureaucracy.

If moral principle and religious ethic are dismissed in the mid of reordering system of governance, obviously distortion of religious meaning is going take place. It is such distortion of religious meaning that unconsciously depraved the image of religion. For this, religion needs to be reverted to its role, i.e. as source of ethic and moral for the life of human being.[27] Moral principle and religious ethic can support positive orientation of life, dynamic and progressive, action oriented, quality oriented, goal oriented and future oriented; teaches human to strongly hold on the principle of justice (*al-'adâlah*), brotherhood (*al-ukhuwwah*); deliberation (*al-syûra*); equality (*al-musâwah*); and do respect plurality (*al-ta'addudiyyah*) and prefer to peaceful rather than forceful war.

To avoid clash of values gap between teaching of religion and good governance, it is necessary to assert the relevance between religious values and governance system. Principle of religious values can support the advance of governance system that has been managed well. For this reason, if religious activity neglects its values, religious teaching also will not function to set up positive relationship between religion and *good governance*. This is because *good governance* cannot ascertain ideal hope without consciousness of religious values. If such is the case, values of religious teaching can be made as source of historical advancement, in order that communities of religion pay their attention to *good governance* in carrying out life of the nation. In other words, religious communities are not suggested to

---

[27] Abdurrahman Wahid (1985), "Republik Bumi di Sorga" (Republic of Eart in Heaven) in *Prisma Pemikiran Gus Dur (The Prism Thought of Gus Dur) 1975–1984,* Jakarta: LP3ES, p. 265; Philipus Tule (2007), "Nuansa Dasariah Buku Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita: Sebuah Tinjauan Teologis, Sosiologis dan Antropologis " (Natural Nuance of the book My Islam, Yours and Ours: An Account of Theology, Sociology and Anthropology) *Makalah Acara Bedah Buku, berjudul ISLAMKU ISLAM ANDA ISLAM KITA*, (Paper for Book Seminar entitles My Islam, Yours and Ours) di Jakarta pada tanggal 26 Maret.

dismiss worldly life includes neglecting repressive conduct of government institution functionary.

Specifically, teachings of religion have something in common with good governance system to which the orientation is towards welfare society. For example, religion and *good governance* bots guarantee good governance system, assure economy as well as social and political condition that give security, keep policy and program of "capacity building" with empowering those of poor, keep responsible governance, maintain the clean governance from corruption, creating governance of public service, professional, restructuring the sector of saving and loan, restructuring obligation, endorsing policy of food for people, deregulation in the field of investment and people empowerment program. In other words, religion emphasizes values within governance system, while good governance stresses on application of governance that should be based on good system, i.e. the system that take the side of people vested interest.

For the above reason, although there institution of religion, religion based politic and other communalities of religion exist within governance system, as long as have not yet been fulfilling the above specific principle all are categorized neglectful of the real religion values. System of governance also should not tempt with movements that act on behalf of religion. Why it is religious values that ideally should be synthesized with *good governance*? Because system of governance is responsible to all people, so that it become agenda of any communities of religion to stand by and to strengthen the building that take side with people. Like the system of nature, if religion changes from the required function it will deprave all social building that has been working well so far. For this, system of governance deserves to be an alternative system which can combine all plural values of society which have been prevailing since many centuries ago.

Function of religion is to strengthen bureaucracy with the culture of rational-egalitarian structure. It is behind the time to dispute how communities of religion defend their own religion. The right logic of religion is how religious teaching can

play its role in the system which is established by people that accords with values taught in holy book. Every one who is in power, king, president, governor, regent governor, sub-district head and head of village cam take religion as a source of values model. Dealing with individuals within the frame of goal towards *good governance*, the value is as same as to carry out religious teaching. Individual is valuable in any religious teachings. For this, communities of religion should protect individual autonomy, should be medium of reform for individual and society. So, it clear that although there someone who behave on behalf of religion, as long as to it is for their vested interest, there no excuse for this can be tolerated from religious values.

It is in this context that religion and good governance become soul of modern life. Values of religious teaching and good system of governance both want to keep public interest by way of professional service; avoiding negotiation and politic of trading that sacrificing official dignity, abusing officers of government, misusing policy, and deceiving people; respecting other individuals as valuable as his/her self and not taking benefit of people as tool for legitimizing power.

Values of religious teaching and system of governance both can be the basic for reordering standard of moral and dignity of public officials. The practice of involvement of religious teaching values and system of governance also show the foundation of proportionality and insist that leaders will be asked for responsibility in order that their leadership keep human dignity be respected. For this, it is not permitted that a leader should only keep his/her dignity standing while other's depraving.

Values of religious teaching and a good system of governance can play the role of supporting empowerment of local community; establishing a free public sphere; conducting control of the running system of governance; criticizing system and culture that support totalitarian regime; making alternative for the people of bureaucracy victims; and is able to avoid from basic weaknesses of liberal-capitalistic system of democracy as well as communistic one of which is not accord with local culture.

Anticipating a bad system of governance, the role of religion is indispensable. Such is in line with the required system of governance that has been though by religion. Alloh says: *"Inna Allah ya'murukum antu'addu al-amânât ilâ ahliha wâ idzâ hakamtum baina al-nâs an tahkumû bi al-'adl"*.[28] This verse emphasize that all leader to carry out their mandate and to do justly in their leadership. Responding to this verse, pertaining to importance meaning of a leader within social live, Ibn Khaldun says that governance system, that is in keeping with religious values, is not only orientates towards *hablum minallâh* but also a governance system which uses rational political norms based on *hablum minannâs*.[29] Rational political norms mean norms of politic that are based on social contracts and local culture.

Qawâid al-Fiqh, Islamic legal maxim which has always been used as principle by Muslim thinkers so far, is more distinct in putting down the real about power: "*Tasharruf al imâm 'alâ al-raiyyah manuth bi al-mashlahah*". It means that whatever policy or act taken by leader should consider public benefit and interest. Concerning the implication of any policy taken by a leader again has been described well by Ibn Khaldun, i.e. if state distances injustice, fraud, dishonest, keeping the right system on it tract and not try to make it bent then such good commodities as gold and silver will sold out in markets. The reverse will take place, however, if the state is influenced by unhealthy rivalries and vested interest of leaders or filled by tyranny, dishonesty and despotic manner of leaders. If the latter is the case, what sold out in market are invaluable commodities and worthless metals.[30]

Critic and correction to the system of governance is the characteristic of being religious of community of religion. In other words, the relationship between good governance and religious ethic in reality colors features of religious tradition that developed among human civilizations. Attempts to unify buildings of good

---

[28] QS. An-Nisa : 59.
[29] Abd. Rahman Ibnu Khaldun (1969), *Muqaddimah*, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, p. 190.
[30] *Ibid*., p. 440.

governance with religious ethic constitute basic problem which is inseparable with history of human religiosity.

Because of this, along with the need of rational-egalitarian structure among the life of religious adherents nowadays, people of being religious usually response to the any "disaster" which always happened to the adherent of religion, particularly in relation to political interest, economy, social and culture. For this, it deserves to ask the following: When do religious adherents propose a concept of anticipation of a bad governance system? Or just they have never pay attention and have been neglectful to such issues as *good governance,* for their conception of religion still has been focused on heaven. Besides quite less motivation from outside, this is also because of internal factor of its adherents, who hold an understanding religion simply as dogma which is not applicable with reality of life.

If the concept of religiosity does not show the real of attitude and genuine character of its community, obviously religion will only play the fictive role within the spread of science and technology. The writer himself found the reality happens in governance system which is chaired by those who active in religious ritual. However, the case is precisely the running system which is not in line with *good governance* principle and religious ethic.[31] Although reality of having religious is as such, still the writer believes in that values of religious teaching can be turned back its role within governance order.

If religious activities of communities of religion do not solve the problem of the irrational-hierarchical structure, obviously it is a kind or religious form that is not in accord with the teaching of religion it self. For this, being religious means making thoughts ready facing any threats of erroneous and illusions that always to be parasite I human life. The community of religion has to struggle out the applicative values of religious teaching. Religion has to be able to answer any disposition of physiology

---

[31] Baca, A.S. Burhan, dkk (Edit.) (2004), *Korupsi di Negari Kaum Beragama: Iktiar Membangun Fiqh Anti-Korupsi,* (Corruption in the Country of Religious Community: Attempt to Establish Fiqh of Anti Corruption): Jakarta: Partnership For Governance Reform in Indonesia.

and culture which caused people to be easily susceptible to erroneousness and illusion. The goal of being religious is to keep moral values. Failure of communities of religion can be seen from the rise of violation and unjust. Any forms of resistance to the structure of rational-egalitarian and other principles of ethic constitute a kind of deviance of religious teaching.

E. Conclusion

Considering the above condition, role that still can hopefully played by religion is making its adherents realizing of the almighty, whose power is beyond human control and is very important for the safety of human life. Regarding the characteristic and the existence of this ultimate reality there are different views and believes based on each religion. Religion influences the form of society and often constitutes moral sources, ethic and value of government system.

For this reason, in religious activities is needed consciousness of its adherents in order to direct progress of government mechanism that previously destructive-represive towards objective that is more giving freedom and potency of poor citizens *(dhu'afa', mustadh'afin)*. Again, here is needed the spirit of religious men to make religion as a source of acknowledgment and believe to make people realizing about the important of religion in supporting the lofty *good governance*. This religious work for reforming bad governance seems to have not yet been thinkable seriously by each religious adherent, except on small rhetoric level of saying. Now, religious influence as truly religious influence should be is lacking. Fellow believers of the most adhered religion even easily defeated to do such bad manner as corruption, lacking responsibility in administration, business, and agreement and taking part in oppressing others.

In reality, religious adherents are still too far of making religion as a source of energy for arising positive attitude and healthy in a governance system. Hence, religious adherents need to reflect the prominence of religious principles dealing with commitment to reforming "political life" toward healthier one, supporting participation, empowering the pillars of democratic life and establishing good governance system. It has been clear and distinct that religion constitutes universal

truth. Hence, strengthening rational-egalitarian structure is as the same as strengthening the religious teachings.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdurrahman Ibn Khaldun. 1951. *Muqaddimah,* Beirut: Dar al-Fikr

Abdurrahman Wahid. 1985. "Republik Bumi di Sorga," in *Prisma Pemikiran Gus Dur 1975–1984,* Jakarta: LP3ES

Arbi Sanit, et. al. 2004. *Korupsi Di Negeri Kaum Beragama: Ikhtiar Membangun Fiqh Anti Korupsi,* Jakarta: P3M

Burhan, A.S., dkk. 2004. *Korupsi di Negari Kaum Beragama: Iktiar Membangun Fiqh Anti-Korupsi*, Jakarta: Partnership For Governance Reform in Indonesia

Dede Rosyada, et. el. 2000. *Pendidikan Kewargaan: Demokrasi, HAM, Masyarakat Madani,* Jakarta: Kencana

Gruber, Judith. 1987. *Controlling Bureaucracies, Dilemmas in Democratic Governance*, Los Angeles: University California Press

Haryoso. 2002. *Pembaruan Birokrasi dan Kebijaksanaan Publik*, Jakarta: Peradaban

Kant, Immanuel. 2005. *Critique of Practical Reason,* translated by Nurhadi, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar

Klaff, Rene. 2002. "Prinsip-prinsip Dasar Demokrasi dan Pemerintahan Yang Baik" dalam *Islam dan Barat: Demokrasi dalam Masyarakat Islam*, Jakarta: Paramadina

Miftah Thoha. 2000. "Demokrasi Dalam Birokrasi Pemerintah Peran Kontrol Rakyat dan Netralitas Birokrasi," in *Lecture of Professor Inauguration in Social Sciences at UGM Yogyakarta,* Yogyakarta: UGM Press

Muhammad A.S. Hikam. 1999. *Demokrasi dan Civil Society*, Jakarta: LP3ES

S. Takdir Alisjahbana. 1986. *Antropologi Baru: Nilai-nilai Sebagai Tenaga Integrasi dalam Pribadi, Masyarakat dan Kebudayaan*, Jakarta: Dian Rakyat

Soedjito Sosrodihardjo. 2000. "Nilai-nilai Sosial dan Perubahan Struktur Masyarakat" in *Pidato Pengukuhan Jabatan Guru Besar Pada Fakultas Sosial dan Politik UGM,* Yogyakarta: UGM Press

Sofian Effendi. 2000. "Revitalisasi Sektor Publik Menghadapi Keterbukaan Ekonomi dan Demokratisasi Politik" in *Lecture of Professor Inauguration in Social Politic Science at UGM Yogyakarta*: UGM Press

Suhartono. 2000. "Birokrasi, Kolusi dan Kriminalitas: Refleksi Historis" in *Lecture of Professor Inauguration at the Faculty of Letters of UGM Yogyakarta*: UGM Press.

Taufiq Abdullah. 2000. "Pengalaman, Kesadaran, dan Sejarah", in *Lecture of Professor Inauguration at UGM Yogyakarta*: UGM Press

TIM ICCE Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah. 2000. *Demokrasi, HAM dan Masyarakat madani,* Jakarta: Kencana

Tim LIP FISIP UI. 1998. *Mengukur Sistem Politik Orde Baru*, Bandung: Mizan

Tule, Philipus. 2007. "Nuansa Dasariah Buku Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita: Sebuah Tinjauan Teologis, Sosiologis dan Antropologis", paper presented *at Book Discussion Islamku Islam Anda Islam Kita* in Jakarta on 26 March.

Ubaidillah Achmad. 2006. "Pendidikan Multikulturalisme Gagasan Walisongo Menuju Keutamaan Individu dan Budaya Lokal," in *Jurnal Terakreditasi Pendidikan Islam Universitas Islam Djakarta (UID)*, Vol. IX No. 2 July-December.

"Masalah Birokrasi di Indonesia," in *Jurnal Transparansi*, 18 Maret 2000.

Veeger, K.J. 1993. Realitas Sosial: Refleksi Filsafat Sosial atas Hubungan Individu-Masyarakat dalam Cakrawala Sejarah Sosiologi, Jakarta: Gramedia.