

Environmental Changes in the Semarang-Grobogan Railroad Line Area as the Result of the Change in Transportation Policy

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Abstract. Train is a kind of mass transportation in Indonesia which has expanded widely in the late 19th and early of 20th centuries. However, since the 1980s, this kind of transportation has not developed. Many railroad tracks were closed because train got a rival, namely road transportation. One of the non-functioning railroad line was the Semarang-Grobogan line. This paper examines environmental changes due to the closure of the railroad line. The method used was the historical method with document data sources and oral historical interview. The results showed that there had been an environmental change in the railroad. The train station which was originally a very clean city center became a densely populated and slum settlement center. In addition, selling stalls which have been established made the station not visible. This pattern occurred in all stations such as Godong, Purwodadi Kota, and Wirosari Stations. These environmental changes were not followed by environmental arrangements. Therefore, this made the land ownership status belonged to Indonesian Railway Company legally, but factually, it was occupied by the surrounding population. Based on these data, it was necessary to have a synergistic environmental management policy between the government of Grobogan Regency and Indonesian Railway Company.

Keywords: Environmental Changes, Train, Kind of Transportation, Settlement, Shopping Complex, Slum.

1. Introduction

Train is a kind of important mass transportation in Indonesia. This kind of transportation developed rapidly in the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century. The development of train which was built for the first time for Semarang-Surakarta line expanded to East Java and Tatar Sunda [1]. The first railroad line was related to the transport of the sugar industry in the Surakarta region, both Western-owned and indigenous-owned industry, such as the Mangkunegaran Sugar Industry [2]. At that time, almost the entire part of Java Island was united spatially by the railroad network.

Train was built in order to fulfill two benefits, namely for the mobility of goods and people. The mobility of goods was related to agro-industrial and forest products that need to be transported to the nearest port for export purposes. The main agro-industrial product is

sugar, and the main forest product is teak wood. This brought a great change in the history of transportation and land transportation which was originally based on the road to the railroad.

Railroad line has a large lane and a small lane. Large lane was intended to reach relatively far distances, and small lane was intended to reach relatively close distances. Both were connected in a system of the Java Island railroad network. The examples of large lane are Semarang-Surabaya and Semarang-Cirebon and Jakarta. Meanwhile, the example of small lane is Semarang-Wirosari-Blora line. In addition to transporting people, this small lane was intended especially to transport teak wood.

2. Research Method

The method used in this study was historical method [3] by conducting source searching to various libraries and related archival institutions, conducting interviews with land occupants on the assets owned by PT KAI (Indonesian Railway Company) and the stakeholders including PT KAI *Daop* (Operational Region) IV's Asset official, the members of DPRD (Regional House of Representatives) Grobogan Regency and the people who do not live in the territory of PT KAI's land assets. The collected data are then analyzed and presented in a paper.

3. The Closure of Semarang-Blora Railroad Line

The train is the most important mass transportation facility in Java Island. This transportation is capable to carry a large number of passengers at a relatively affordable cost. The railway line has been glorious and synergized with other transportation lines, such as roadway and sea lanes through the port [4]. However, the glory of the train has decreased since the transfer of asset management from Colonial management became Indonesia's management through a process of nationalization several years after Indonesia's independence.

The nationalization of Dutch companies was based on the Nationalization Act No. 86 of 1958 [5]. The nationalization of the railroad companies was based on Government Regulation No. 41 of 1941, namely the nationalization of the Railway and telephone owned by the Dutch. As the result of the nationalization, transportation management was under the Ministry of Land Transportation. However, the land assets were mostly occupied by the military [6].

Until the beginning of the New Order era, the Semarang-Blora railroad line was quite busy. This railroad line was one of the dominant land transportation facilities besides the roadway. The decline in the use of trains in the middle lane has occurred since the 1980s after Suharto prioritized the construction from highways to rural areas. The decline of the railroad track had an impact on the decline of Indonesian Railroad Company income so that this line was closed in the late 1980s [7]. Facilities and infrastructure in the abandoned middle lane were in the form of rails, stations and other facilities. The collapse of PT KAI's (Indonesian Railroad Company) assets for years has finally brought new problems. The problem found was that many of PT KAI's assets were lost, for example rails and bearing rails in the form of teak wood and the land that had not been used changed its function as built-up land for residential and trading places. Legal certainty and land status of the residents of PT KAI's land will bring problems in the future [8].

4. Spatial Designation Change

The closure of the Semarang-Blora railroad line was the consequence of the poor management in managing public transportation. Apart from that, the New Order Government's policy changes emphasized the roadway transportation should be more than the train in number. Because it is considered unprofitable, this railroad line has been left untreated for decades. As the result, there were many changes in the function of space.

The results of the observations and interviews at the site showed that in the case of spatial changes for residents living on the land owned by the Indonesian Railroad Company (PT KAI Daop IV Semarang), the emic approach was used. Emic approach model is based on the thoughts, views, traditions, and habits that are found in the environment of conflicting actors. From this model of approach, the emic approach is the best approach for democratic civil society. This approach is considered appropriate for resolving problems that might occur between the community and the company. Outsiders are needed in resolving conflicts through mediation.

To be able to conduct mediation, the cultural values of the conflict and the solution model that has developed in the community have to be understood. The community already has local wisdom to resolve the conflict [9]. Local wisdom can lead to an agreement between the parties in dispute such as the conflict occurred in the railroad area in Wonogiri which resulted in a joint agreement (MOU) between the community and Indonesian Railroad Company [10].

Based on the data collection in the field, an illustration that the railroad tracks in the form of teak wood was obtained in the early 1990s which were taken by PT KAI (Indonesian Railroad Company) but some were taken by the community by cutting and selling them in kilogram. Rail and rail bearings which were not taken were buried with soil and eventually they cannot be seen from the outside. While, the occupants who occupied the land owned by PT KAI which was used as a place to live mostly occurred in around the 2000s. They initially bought land for the residence in a plot with an average size of 8.5 X 10 meter at a price of 10 Million Rupiah in 2002 for the land around Purwodadi Station and 5 million for the land around Wirosari Station. The status of the land occupied by the community was rental right with proof of lease of land signed by PT KAI and the land user. Godong Station area was used as Zentrum Bus Station which served Purwodadi - Jakarta route, while the porch was turned into 4 x 6 meter boxes for shops, bus ticket sales, food stalls, motorcycle wash, and 2-wheeled vehicles buy and sell. (the result of interview with Teguh Imantoro and Basuki Mulyono on 27th of May, 2019).

Purwodadi Station was converted into a public transportation terminal since the 2000s by the regional government. Because public transportation has experienced a decline in the number of passengers, the terminal atmosphere in 2019 is quiet so that the area is used for traders of used goods such as clothes, electronic devices, shoes and others. In addition, that former multi-function station is used as resting place for the homeless and as a place for the flower sellers, pedicab drivers, food stalls and others to sell their goods and waiting for their customers. The functional shift is now not working properly and it is very dirty.

The occupants of the land around the station in Purwodadi mostly come from lower class groups and retired employees who do not have their own houses. Based on the collected data, the occupants of the Purwodadi Station area consist of approximately 100 families which are divided into 3 neighborhood units (RT). They work as banana, vegetables, and flowers sellers, construction workers, pedicab drivers, public transportation drivers, beauty parlor employees and others with income approximately of 1 to 2.5 million with family members of 4-5 people.

With this amount of income, it is only enough to fulfill daily needs, pay school fees, and the contribution for residents. Even though they have paid rent money regularly every year at an average of 1-1.5 million, the occupants of the leased land remain anxious if the land will be taken by PT KAI at any time. The payment of land leases to that state-owned company was initially paid collectively by retired Indonesian Railroad Company employees, but due to security factors and unclear payment, now the occupants are requested by the company management to pay through the Bank appointed by the company for those who have obtained mandatory lease letter. (the result of interview with Ms. FX Hartono and Wiwin on 23rd of June, 2019).

5. Conclusion

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the presence of the Semarang-Blora railroad line has established a sub-urban environment centered on the train station. However, with the closure of the route, it has changed the spatial layout of the city that has been formed since the Dutch Colonial period. In addition to changing the status of physical space, the use of the PT KAI Daop IV land assets also brought changes to the environment for residential settlements. These changes include areas that used to be the place where the trains began to function as a place to live and trade as well as public transportation terminals since the 2000s. The change in function was due to the many abandoned land and stalled infrastructure at the station. The land was used temporarily by the management to become land for rent for residents who did not have a place to live by paying rent.

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