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ETHNOBOTANY OF FLOWER TRADING IN TRADITIONAL MARKETS OF BANYUMAS, CENTRAL JAVA, INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT
ALFIAN, R. L., HARAHAP, J., ISKANDAR, B. S. & HYUNG-JUN, K. 2025. Ethnobotany of flower trading in traditional markets of Banyumas, Central Java, Indonesia. *Reinwardtia* 24(2): 219–236. — Flower trading has long been present in society. Particularly in Javanese society, flowers hold significant biological importance in social and cultural life. Flowers are imbued with various symbolic meanings and are used in various life events and religious rituals. This study aims to explore the existence of flower trading within the community, especially in the Banyumas region. In addition to delving into the trade itself, this research also investigates the types of flowers being traded, how they are sourced for sale, the meanings attached to these flowers, how each type of flower and plant is sold, and how the classification of flower types according to the community is divided. This study employs a qualitative ethnographic method to gather research data. The findings of this research indicate that the existence of Rampe flower traders must be distinct from the community's cultural traditions, particularly in Banyumas. Rampe flower traders typically sell several flowers used as essential components in religious and cultural ceremonies. These flowers include roses (*Rosa hybrid* L.), ylang-ylang (*Cananga odorata* (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thomson), white magnolia (*Magnolia* × *alba* (DC.) Figlar & Noot.), and several other flowers. Most Banyumas people use these flowers for the tradition of grave pilgrimage. White and yellow magnolia flowers have a higher economic value as traders sell them in seed form. Rampe flower traders classify plants into those with high economic value and those with regular value. The high economic value of a flower is usually influenced by its availability (rarity) and the specific functions of certain types of flowers. Meanwhile, plants with regular economic value are typically complementary plants (not core plants) in the community's cultural and religious traditions.

Key words: Ethnobotany, flower traders, interpretation of symbols, religious traditions, traditional market.

ABSTRAK
ALFIAN, R. L., HARAHAP, J., ISKANDAR, B. S. & HYUNG-JUN, K. 2025. Etnobotani perdagangan bunga di pasar tradisional Banyumas, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. *Reinwardtia* 24(2): 219–236. — Perdagangan bunga sudah cukup lama hadir di masyarakat. Khususnya pada masyarakat Jawa, bunga merupakan entitas biologis yang penting dalam kehidupan sosial budaya. Bunga disematkan dengan berbagai makna simbolis dan digunakan dalam berbagai kehidupan dan ritual keagamaan. Penelitian ini berupaya untuk menggali keberadaan perdagangan bunga di masyarakat khususnya masyarakat Banyumas. Tidak hanya mendalami perdagangan, penelitian ini juga menggali lebih dalam jenis bunga apa saja yang diperdagangkan, bagaimana cara mereka memperoleh bunga untuk diperjualbelikan, apa makna yang melekat pada bunga tersebut, bagaimana masing-masing jenis bunga dan tanaman tersebut dijual, serta bagaimana pembagian klasifikasi jenis bunga menurut masyarakat. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif etnografi untuk menggali data penelitian. Penelitian ini menunjukkan eksistensi pedagang bunga rampe tidak bisa dilepaskan dari tradisi budaya masyarakat khususnya masyarakat Banyumas. Pedagang Bunga Rampe biasanya menjual beberapa jenis bunga yang digunakan sebagai salah satu syarat wajib dalam upacara keagamaan dan budaya masyarakat. Jenis bunga tersebut antara lain mawar (*Rosa hybrid* L.), ylang-ylang (*Cananga odorata* (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thomson), white magnolia (*Magnolia* × *alba* (DC.) Figlar & Noot.), dan beberapa bunga lainnya. Kebanyakan masyarakat Banyumas memanfaatkan bunga ini untuk melaksanakan tradisi ziarah kubur. Bunga magnolia berwarna

putih dan kuning me-miliki nilai ekonomi yang lebih tinggi karena pedagang menjualnya dalam bentuk bibit. Pedagang bunga rampe mengklasifikasikan tanaman bernilai ekonomi tinggi dan biasa. Tingginya nilai ekonomi suatu bunga biasanya dipengaruhi oleh ketersediaan bunga (kelangkaan) dan fungsi tertentu dari suatu jenis bunga. Sedangkan tanaman yang mempunyai nilai ekonomi rendah biasanya karena tanaman tersebut merupakan tanaman pelengkap (bukan tanaman inti) dalam tradisi budaya dan agama masyarakat serta kesediaannya yang melimpah dan mudah ditemui.

Kata kunci: Etnobotani, interpretatif simbolik, pasar tradisional, pedagang bunga, tradisi keagamaan.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional markets are dynamic spaces that are always interpreted by their owners (Aliyah *et al.*, 2017; Hermawan *et al.*, 2018). Talking about markets is like kinship or religion because traditional markets are always a cultural construction. Traders in Java themselves planned, implemented, and justified economic actions within Javanese cultural concepts (Alexander, 1987). In other words, traditional markets are not just an economic space but also a social space for the stakeholders who "make a living" (Sadilah *et al.*, 2011; Seligmann, 2018). The relationships between actors who support traditional markets are not only oriented toward economic calculations; intimate personal relationships mean that calculations of profit and loss no longer burden the relationships that exist but are more focused on social exchange (Granovetter, 2017).

On the other hand, more recent research explains that markets play a very important role in providing food and non-food commodity needs in society (see Iskandar *et al.*, 2021, 2022; Supangkat *et al.*, 2021). Various commodities are sold in the market, ranging from daily food needs to other needs outside of food needs, where each commodity receives different meanings and uses from its owners (Alfian *et al.*, 2020; Iskandar *et al.*, 2021). The commodities traded include on edible commodities as well such as flowers. Being a part of the Austronesian people, flowers play a significant role in the Austronesian civilization from the daily lives to religious related ceremonies (Matthews, 1995; Swain & Trompf, 2005; Baldick, 2013). This is even more conspicuous in Indonesia which is now widely accepted as both the origin and backbone of the Austronesian civilization (Bellwood *et al.*, 2006). This can be seen throughout Indonesia, including in Java and Kalimantan (the Indonesian Borneo, see Iskandar *et al.*, 2022).

Ethnobotanically, the relationship between plants and humans is apparent and has begun even since the dawn of human civilization. For thousands of years, plant and human communities have been intertwined through domestication, cultivation, and consumption processes. Plants are in homes, backyards, gardens, farms, and the human diet. Plants provide sustenance, solace, friendship, and health to human communities (Miller, 2019). Over long periods, indigenous peoples developed and maintained their knowledge systems through direct and indirect interactions with various biophysical processes and biological species. This means that the knowledge possessed by indigenous peoples about their environment develops gradually and accumulates throughout their history (Tamene *et al.*, 2024). This knowledge developed into various medical tools, religious traditions, and community life practices, such as people in Mexico who use plants for treatment (García-González *et al.*, 2024).

In the Austronesian context, the use of flowers is prominently featured in various cultural practices among the Sundanese, Javanese, Balinese, and Betawi communities. In Balinese society, flowers serve as a crucial and formal element in numerous Hindu religious rituals (Ristanto *et al.*, 2020; Sujarwo *et al.*, 2020; Darma *et al.*, 2021; Ratnani *et al.*, 2021; Andila *et al.*, 2022). In contrast, among the Sundanese and Betawi, flowers are primarily utilized for decorative purposes and aesthetic ornaments; several types of flowers are also used as edible plants (Iskandar & Fasta, 2015; Erawan *et al.*, 2018; Iskandar *et al.*, 2020; Soemarwoto & Iskandar, 2021; Iskandar *et al.*, 2023; Pratami *et al.*, 2024; Alfinandah *et al.*, 2025). Meanwhile, in Javanese society, flowers are present in a wide range of cultural and religious practices, carrying profound symbolic meanings (Imaduddin *et al.*, 2023; Darmastuti *et al.*, 2024; Kartika & Wicaksono, 2024; Mukarromah *et al.*, 2024; Santhyami *et al.*, 2024; Afrianto, 2025; Ramadhan *et al.*, 2025).

In the last few decades, there has been an increasing number of ethnobiological studies, especially ethnobotany, which studies plants in practice and their position in religion (Cvitković, 2021). Several studies on plants show that the existence of plants is closely related to religion, especially Islam. For example, studies on plants are listed in the Koran (Qamariah, 2019; Ahmad *et al.*, 2022). In another study, ethnobotanical studies also focused on using plants as medicines listed in the Koran (Muneeb *et al.*, 2022; Dery *et al.*, 2023; Saradar *et al.*, 2024). Moreover, few focus on fruit and aromatic plants found in the Koran (Ali *et al.*, 2023; Royyani *et al.*, 2024).

Studies on the usages of flowers in relation with cultures or in the other words the ethnobotany of flowers in Indonesia have been proceeded prior to

this current study, such as by Hestiyana, 2020; Ristanto *et al.*, 2020; Sutrisno *et al.*, 2020; Ramadhani *et al.*, 2021; Latifah & Ami, 2022. This research include the study of the ethnobotany of plants and flowers at several cultural ceremonies (Hestiyana, 2020; Ristanto *et al.*, 2020; Sutrisno *et al.*, 2020; Ramadhani *et al.*, 2021; Latifah & Ami, 2022), the cultural uses of plants and flowers (Alfian *et al.*, 2020), use of flowers as material in religious ceremonies (Darma *et al.*, 2021; Ratnani *et al.*, 2021; Mukarromah *et al.*, 2024), symbolism of flower plants (Wiyono *et al.*, 2024) and also a little about the use of flowers in the form of creative imagination (Anggoro *et al.*, 2020). Through these various studies, it can be seen how the utilization and position of plants, especially flowers, in Indonesian society.

In Javanese culture, descriptions of flowers and their traditional usages have been previously studied by Woodward (1988; 1999), Geertz (2014), and Beatty (2003). Geertz, for example, gives many descriptions of how the *slametan* rites are performed, which are quoted as follows:

> "The *slametan* is simple, consisting of rice, chicken or a small amount of wet fish, soybean cakes, plus flowers. The caretaker will receive the dish, burn the incense and sprinkle flowers on the head of the Ganesha statue. Then she gathered the wilted flowers that someone had sown earlier and put them in a bag to give to the child. These flowers are brought home, then put in water, and the person giving the *slametan* will drink it or use it as an antidote for the general welfare or full safety." (Geertz, 2014: 23).

The use of flowers in Javanese ritual traditions has been deeply rooted in cultural practices for generations. This enduring presence is reflected in the work of Clifford Geertz, who, in his depiction of the *slametan* ritual among the group he identifies as the *abangan*, notes the inclusion of flowers as part of the ceremonial offerings. Similar accounts are found in the writings of Beatty (2003) and Woodward (1988), both of whom emphasize the central role of flowers in the *slametan* rituals within Javanese society (Woodward, 1988; Beatty, 2003). Although these records do not represent the origins of the practice, they provide valuable insights into the consistent integration of flowers into meaningful ritual contexts. These descriptions make it evident that flowers have long held symbolic and spiritual significance in the ritual life of the Javanese people.

Extending this further, several classical manuscripts, such as the Old Javanese *Ramayana* and *Bujangga Manik*—a pre-Islamic Sundanese text from the 15th century—also reference various types of flowers known to and utilized by the Javanese and Sundanese in earlier periods. Among them are *kenanga* (ylang-ylang) and *mawar* (rose), which are mentioned as culturally significant (see Mulyanto *et al.*, 2023; 2024).

Other ethnographic works that describe and address ritual customs among Javanese Muslims include those by Muhaimin (2006) and Nakamura (2012). Muhaimin provides a detailed account of religious traditions among Cirebonese Muslims. One such account concerns the ritual practice of *ngembang* or *nyekar* during the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, in which specific types of flowers—particularly *selasih* (*Ocimum sanctum*)—are used as part of the offering and remembrance at ancestral gravesites (Muhaimin, 2006).

Although Nakamura's study does not focus primarily on ritual practices, his work on the movements and transformations within the Muhammadiyah organization includes considerable references to Javanese Muslim rituals, especially in the area surrounding Kota Gede, the burial site of Panembahan Senapati, founder of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom. In his description of this historic city, Nakamura provides rich detail on local ceremonies and the everyday religious practices of the Muslim population. He notes, for instance, that Kota Gede holds a market every *Legi* day (one of the Javanese market days), where various commodities are sold—including batik cloth, kitchen utensils, birds, and flowers intended for royal tomb offerings (Nakamura, 2012).

In examining the culture of flowers and its close association with Javanese Muslim communities, an important connecting entity also emerges: the flower vendors in traditional markets. In various ethnographic works, flowers have been portrayed as commodities whose presence is integral to traditional markets, serving as essential elements in communal rituals and cultural practices (see Beatty (2003), Muhaimin (2006), Nakamura (2012), and Geertz (2014), as discussed in the previous paragraph). Traditional markets, therefore, constitute a significant cultural space, as they are dynamic arenas continuously imbued with meaning by those who manage and inhabit them (Aliyah *et al.*, 2017; Hermawan *et al.*, 2018).

In other words, speaking of the market is akin to speaking of kinship or religion, as traditional markets are always culturally constructed. Javanese vendors plan, carry out, and justify their economic actions within the framework of Javanese cultural concepts (Alexander, 1987). Thus, the traditional market is not merely an economic space but also a social space for stakeholders who "live" within it (Sadilah *et al.*, 2011; Seligmann, 2018). The relationships among actors that sustain the traditional market are not solely based on economic calculation. Intimate personal relationships mean that interactions are often guided not by profit and loss considerations, but by patterns of social exchange (Granovetter, 2017).

This understanding underpins the present study's objective: to explore more deeply how flowers are traded as commodities with specific

economic value, what types of flowers are sold, how vendors classify them, and which critical times or periods influence flower sales. Furthermore, the study seeks to examine more broadly the cultural use of flowers in community practices and to uncover the meanings ascribed to such uses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Site

The traditional markets selected as the study sites were Pasar Manis and Pasar Wage, both of which are general-purpose traditional markets rather than specialized floral markets. While numerous traditional markets in Purwokerto accommodate vendors specializing in flower bouquets, their presence remains limited. Specifically, Pasar Manis hosts two floral vendors, whereas Pasar Wage has five. These markets were selected based on their distinct characteristics: Pasar Wage represents the largest traditional market in Purwokerto, while Pasar Manis exemplifies a semi-modern traditional market. See Fig. 1 for the locations of Pasar Manis and Pasar Wage. Both markets are located within the city area of Purwokerto, with an approximate distance of 3 km between them.

This study employs Gary J. Martin's (1995) Rapid Ethnobotany Appraisal (REA) approach to investigate botanical data traded by flower bouquet vendors in two traditional markets in Purwokerto. This method was selected due to its effectiveness in collecting data on the inventory of plant species traded by flower vendors, as well as the associated local knowledge regarding plant and flower usage (Martin, 1995). The REA approach was also chosen for its strong emphasis on qualitative data collection, particularly concerning the function and local classification of flowers. Additionally, this method was integrated with ethnography to deepen the analysis and further explore underlying meanings. This ethnographic method is used to understand traditional markets as a locus that is lived by community members from the community's point of view. We argue that connectedness is central to an anthropological perspective in viewing traders and their trading practices and takes the form of (1) sociocultural ties between people, (2) the relationship between the micro, meso and macro levels, and (3) the relationship between the past and the present. (Verver & Koning, 2024). The use of ethnography as a research method was chosen because ethnography can tell or also describe stories rooted in local people's points of view when they live their daily lives in their communities (Fetterman, 2010).

In ethnographic research, at least several steps and practices are important in gathering data from people in the field. Commitments that need to be built include: committed fieldwork (even if the fieldwork period is short), trusting relationships between researchers and participants, and, importantly, attentiveness to subtle, ambiguous, or absent-present data (van Voorst & Ahlin, 2024).

Ethnographic methods adopt a cultural lens to interpret observed behavior, ensuring the behavior is placed in a culturally relevant and meaningful context (Fetterman, 2010). In this study, the reading of the concept of culture is understood as an active and constitutive dimension of social life rather than just a guarantee mechanism for social integration, culture being a blueprint for a person and society to create their world which is meaningful on two levels at once: emotional and cognitive (Geertz, 1973). The culture formed is then seen as a differential culture that grows out of continuous interactions between people, groups, and the environment, which is constantly changing.

The unit of analysis is the elements in the study to be carried out, such as studying the variations between; and, as well as comparing against one another (Bernard & Gravlee, 2015). In most research on social behavior, the unit of analysis is the individual. The unit of analysis in this study is rampe traders at several traditional markets in Purwokerto. This unit analysis is studied through individual traditional market administrators in Purwokerto. Informants who became the unit of analysis included rampe flower traders, traditional market traders, market managers, and offices related to traditional market management in Purwokerto and the general public.

Data collection techniques in this study use several methods such as observation methods, in-depth interviews, and also using documentation techniques. In the observation method, researchers will make observations by mingling in the activities of rampe traders and other traders in several traditional markets in Purwokerto. Things that will be observed in this study include:

1. Interaction or communication relationships carried out by traders in traditional markets,
2. Buying and selling mechanisms that occur in traditional markets, and
3. Daily activities of traders in traditional markets.

Researchers make observations almost every time because observations can be made at any time and under any conditions. Researchers will use observation as a method to dig deeper into everyday language. This choice was made because, through observation or observation, researchers can learn the use of language and communication patterns by the community in a natural way. In addition, observation also provides flexibility for researchers or the community being studied. Often data that is not explored optimally at the interview finally emerges when making direct observations, like the choices of words in everyday conversations that are difficult to explain through interviews. Observation is also a method

Fig. 1. Location of Pasar Manis and Pasar Wage (Source: Prakerta.co.cc, 2024).

used by researchers to obtain data validity. For example, when conducting interviews with informants telling information, researchers get many stories about practices and their meanings, but researchers can only imagine these stories. Observations provide a real picture of the data described earlier. Observation leads researchers to create feelings, like what the community feels when the community carries out an activity.

Data analysis is inseparable, so it is interconnected between one stage and another. The analysis itself is looking for patterns (Spradley, 1980). In addition to finding patterns and organizing meaning structures, the analysis also determines the basis of the social meaning of these structures (Geertz, 2016). Data analysis will be conducted since the data collection process is in the field. Data analysis in this study followed the model developed by Miles & Huberman (1992). The purpose of using various analytical models is to lead to the discovery of cultural knowledge frameworks (Spradley, 2007). Qualitative data analysis consists of four activity lines: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. Thus, this combined flow of data analysis begins with selecting problems, collecting data, reducing data, analyzing cultural data, writing ethnography or presenting data, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1992).

RESULTS

Overview of Traditional Markets, Trading Activities, and Commodities

Pasar Manis is a traditional market located in the center of Purwokerto, the capital city of Banyumas Regency. It is located on the Jln. Jendral Gatot Subroto, Kedungwuluh village, West Purwokerto District about 1 km East of the Purwokerto station is in a crowded urban area and within the vicinity of the office of Banyumas Regency and Purwokerto Station.

Prior to 2016 Pasar Manis was simply a traditional market that commonly found throughout Indonesia with stereotype of dirty, unorganized unsafe, chaotic, and outstandingly smelly. Nevertheless, a lot of people are still insisting to shop in these traditional markets regardless the inconvenience atmosphere. Prior to revitalization Pasar Manis unorganized, where the traders were random and recognized only by how long they had occupied the place. Vendor stalls are made of simple and low quality of wood as informed by one the senior traders at the Pasar Manis named Mrs. Sukarti (not actual name, approximately 68 years old). He said that Pasar Manis used to be a simple small market; traders only used wooden tables as a medium to display their wares. In some occasion the traders only used sack of rice or tarpaulin and directly trade on the floor. Nevertheless, the market is located of the city Purwokerto and numerous people shopped there; thus, both traders and buyers seemed to known each other well.

The government revitalized the Pasar Manis in 2016, and the impression of a market that previously seemed rundown had changed drastically into a pilot market that is clean and very conducive. The construction of the new Pasar Manis building took approximately three years, from transferring the art building to land acquisition negotiations. Pasar Manis is now transformed into a traditional market with adequate infrastructure management.

Fig. 2. Pasar Manis from outside. Photos by Rahman Latif Alfian.

The traders in Pasar Manis are organized according to the type of merchandise. On the first floor are vegetable traders, food traders, market snack traders, gold traders, fruit traders, meat traders, ketupat traders, and flower traders. While on the second floor, there are traders of groceries traders, snack, furnitures, and clothes.

Daily Activities of Traders at Pasar Manis Purwokerto

Market activities at Pasar Manis started at 05.00 WIB. At this hour, vegetable traders and vegetable Pasar Manis opens daily from 05.00 AM. UTC +7 to 01.00 PM. UTC +7; in contrast to other traditional markets which have started active trading activities before 05.00 AM. UTC +7, especially traders who are outside the market, in the Manis Market activities only occur in opening hours because there are almost no traders selling outside the market. Two potpourri traders trade in the Pasar Manis, located near the east entrance of the Pasar Manis.

On the first floor are sellers of vegetables, market snacks, crackers, traditional herbs, fruits, *ketupat*, and *bunga rampe*. The booths used for trading are rectangular and made of cast or brick covered with white ceramic on the outside. Then each stall is described with the stall number to facilitate data collection. All floors on first floor are covered in ceramic, giving a clean and neat impression. The categories (Table 1) of Traders in the Pasar Manis are as follows:

- Vegetables
- Groceries
- Meat (chicken, beef, fish)
- Spices (herbs and spices, onions, chilies and dry seasonings)
- Boiled fish
- Grains (peanuts, green beans, soybeans, etc.)
- Fruits
- Banana
- Clothes
- Food stalls
- Pottery/furniture
- Sandals and shoes
- Various plastic packaging
- Market snacks (Indonesian traditional cake)
- Light snacks (crisp)
- Tempeh and tofu
- Leaf seller (teak leaf and banana leaf)
- Flower merchant
- Gold seller

Compared to other traditional markets, log and unloading at Pasar Manis tends to be short because there are fewer commodities to trade. This is because Pasar Manis is a traditional market in the city center where most consumers are households. This is certainly different from the condition of other traditional markets in the center of Purwokerto, such as Pasar Wage. Activities at the Wage Market tend to continue for almost 24 hours, where trade commodity shipments are in the morning and evening. Meanwhile, Pasar Manis, at night, especially in the courtyard area, is used as a night culinary center in the city of Purwokerto.

The morning after dawn becomes a busy time for meat sellers, beef or chicken. Buyers of meat at this time are meatball sellers or food sellers, so shopping time is in the morning. Entering the market operating time, the traders in the Manis Market are ready to trade. Market visitors (buyers) are more crowded on holidays or weekends than on weekdays. Especially morning culinary hunters and market snacks, which are one of the attractions of the Pasar Manis Purwokerto.

Table 1. Commodities sold by traders.

Category	Common Name	Scientific Name (*Italicized*)	Notes
Vegetables	Cassava leaves	*Manihot esculenta* Crantz	
	Cassava (root)	*Manihot esculenta* Crantz	
	Sweet potato	*Ipomoea batatas* (L.) Lam.	
	Spinach	*Spinacia oleracea* L.	
	Chayote	*Sechium edule* (Jacq.) Sw.	
	Eggplant	*Solanum melongena* L.	
	Papaya leaf	*Carica papaya* L.	
	Bitter gourd (Pare)	*Momordica charantia* L.	
	Long beans	*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp. subsp. *sesquipedalis*	
	Chinese cabbage	*Brassica rapa* L. subsp. *pekinensis* (Lour.) Hanelt.	
	Carrot	*Daucus carota* L.	
	Cabbage	*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *capitate*	
	Red onion	*Allium cepa* L.	
	Garlic	*Allium sativum* L.	
	Tomato (red)	*Solanum lycopersicum* L.	
	Green tomato	*Solanum lycopersicum* L.	
	Cherry tomato	*Solanum lycopersicum* L. var. *cerasiforme* (Dunal) Spooner, G.J.Anderson & R.K.Jansen	
	Potato	*Solanum tuberosum* L.	
	Broccoli	*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *italica*	
	Dogfruit	*Archidendron pauciflorum* (Benth.) I.C.Nielsen	
	Moringa	*Moringa oleifera* L.	
	Curly red chili/green cayenne pepper/big green chili/big red chili	*Capsicum annuum* L.	Same species, cultivar variation
	Devil's chili	*Capsicum frutescens* L.	
	Peanuts	*Arachis hypogaea* L.	
Spices & Herbs	Nutmeg	*Myristica fragrans* Houtt.	
	Cumin	*Cuminum cyminum* L.	
	Cardamom	*Elettaria cardamomum* (L.) Maton	
	Black pepper	*Piper nigrum* L.	
	Candlenut	*Aleurites moluccanus* (L.) Willd.	
	Coriander	*Coriandrum sativum* L.	
	Cloves	*Syzygium aromaticum* (L.) Merr. & L.M.Perry	
Fruits	Mango	*Mangifera indica* L.	
	Durian	*Durio zibethinus* L.	
	Rambutan	*Nephelium lappaceum* L.	
	Matoa	*Pometia pinnata* J.R.Forst. & G.Forst.	
	Banana	*Musa* spp.	Multiple cultivars
	Jackfruit	*Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lam.	
	Dragon fruit	*Selenicereus undatus* (Haw.) D.R.Hunt	Formerly *Hylocereus undatus*
	Papaya fruit	*Carica papaya* L.	
Fish & Seafood	Milkfish	*Chanos chanos*	
	Tilapia	*Oreochromis niloticus*	

Table 1. Commodities sold by traders (continued)

Category	Common Name	Scientific Name (*Italicized*)	Notes
	Pomfret	*Pampus argenteus*	
	Crab	*Brachyura* (infraorder)	Refers to group, not single species
	Shrimp	*Penaeus* spp. or *Macrobrachium* spp.	
	Mackerel tuna	*Euthynnus affinis*	
	Mackerel	*Scomber scombrus*	
	Blood clam	*Tegillarca granosa*	
Meat	Chicken (free-range)	*Gallus gallus domesticus*	
	Chicken (broiler)	*Gallus gallus domesticus*	
	Beef	*Bos taurus* or *Bos indicus*	

Fig. 3. Commodities sold by rampe traders. Rampe sellers also provide ingredients for *nginang*, a kind of masticatory, which is characteristic of Austronesian tradition (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2003; Zumbroich, 2008); thus, the selling of *Areca* seeds is common including in Pasar Manis and usually bought by older people as nowaday the custome of masticatory using *Areca* seeds are no longer. Photos by Rahman Latif Alfian.

Traders (vegetables, groceries, fruit, onions, rice, grains, and various household needs) at Pasar Manis Purwokerto trade daily. At Pasar Manis itself, there is no specific market day, although the name Manis is taken from one of the Javanese market days, so traders trade daily. After the busy morning, the traders usually arrange to sort or sort the merchandise to be resold the next day. So that the activities of traders in the market last all day until noon. When the time showed 13.00, the traders in the Pasar Manis began to close their stalls. The buying and selling activities at the Pasar Manis ended at 14.00 WIB. After that time, the market officials cleaned the market and closed the doors in the market. Market activities will continue with food vendors opening after Asr or around 16.00 WIB.

Rampe Traders at Pasar Manis and Pasar Wage Purwokerto

"Rampe" is a term referring to a collection of flowers or cultural practice paraphernalia (such as grave offerings, floral arrangements, and ritual equipment) in certain communities, particularly among the Javanese and Sundanese people. In Javanese society, *rampe* is often closely associated with the concept of *ubo rampe*, whereas in Sundanese society, it is generally referred to simply as rampe. At Pasar Manis Purwokerto, two flower sellers are selling in the market, to be precise, on the 1st floor near the front door of the eastern market. These flower sellers are not related to each other but are related to one another. The florist is called Mbah Sukarti (± 68 years), and Mrs. Juminah (± 51 years). Sukarti has been selling flowers at the Pasar Manis since it was not rebuilt as it is today. At least that was made by Mbah Sukarti still gets stalls to sell even though the market is experiencing development. Mbah Sukarti started selling flowers when she had to continue selling to her parents; she said that her parents were also ramped flower sellers (flower baskets), so Mbah Sukarti is so familiar with the flowers that are sold. Mbah Sukarti gained knowledge from the past when she often helped her mother sell at the market. This knowledge starts from where to get flowers (distributors) and how to sell flowers to consumers.

The flowers sold by Mbah Sukarti are purchased from a flower supplier (distributor) originating

Table 2. Plants sold by rampe traders.

No	Local name	Scientific name
1.	Kamboja	*Adenium obesum* (Forssk.) Roem. & Schult.
2.	Kantil kuning, cempaka	*Magnolia champaca* (L.) Baill. ex Pierre
3.	Kantil putih	*Magnolia* × *alba* (DC.) Figlar & Noot.
4.	Kenanga	*Cananga odorata* (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thomson
5.	Mawar merah, mawar putih	*Rosa* spp.
6.	Melati, mlati	*Jasminum sambac* (L.) Aiton
7.	Pandan wangi	*Pandanus amaryllifolius* Roxb.
8.	Sirih, suruh	*Piper betle* L.
9.	Gambir	*Uncaria* sp.
10.	Jambe/pinang	*Areca catechu* L.
11.	Secang	*Biancaea sappan* L. Tod.
12.	Serai/sereh	*Cymbopogon citratus* (DC.) Stapf.
13.	Pisang raja	*Musa acuminata* × *M. balbisiana* (Group AAB Group) cv 'Pisang raja'
14.	Kapulaga	*Elettaria cardamomum* (L.) Maton
15.	Cengkeh	*Syzygium aromaticum* (L.) Merr. & L.M.Perry
16.	Jeruk nipis	*Citrus* × *aurantiifolia*
17.	Kunyit	*Curcuma longa* L. syn. *Curcuma domestica* Valeton
18.	Jahe	*Zingiber officinale* Roscoe
19.	Bunga sedap malam	*Polianthes tuberosa* L.
20.	Bunga lawing	*Illicium verum* Hook.f.
21.	Kayu manis	*Cinnamomum verum* J.Presl
22.	Jinten	*Cuminum cyminum* L.

from Banteran Village in the Sumbang District, Banyumas Regency, at the foot of Mount Slamet. Banteran is a lowland area with an elevation of 2.25 m alt., where the soil is suitable for flower cultivation, particularly roses. Mbah Sukarti employs several flower procurement systems to secure her flower supply. For instance, rompel roses (partially wilted petals) are sold by suppliers in sacks containing a mix of red and white roses, while intact roses—whether red or white—are typically sold in smaller baskets. Meanwhile, ylang-ylang flowers are sold in plastic bags in smaller quantities, and white champaca (kantil) flowers are packaged in even smaller amounts. This is because roses are used in greater quantities, such as for nyekar (grave pilgrimages). As Mbah Sukarti explained, "Usually, more roses are purchased because they are needed for *nyekar* and other ritual requirements" (Interview with Mbah Sukarti, November 4, 2022).

These two *rampe* traders at Pasar Manis, besides selling flowers, also sell *ubo rampe* (ritual or traditional equipment) for religious rituals and other customs, such as flowers for events (weddings and other celebrations) and also *ubo rampe* after giving birth (such as *parem*[1] powder or *wedak adem*, and *kembang macan kerah*[2]). Apart from that, *rampe* traders also sell spices such as cardamom, cloves, cinnamon, star anise, and others, as detailed in the Table 2.

Rampe sellers also provide ingredients for *nginang*, a kind of masticatory, which is characteristic of Austronesian tradition (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2003; Zumbroich, 2008); thus, the selling of Areca seeds is common including in Pasar Manis and usually bought by older people as nowadays the

Fig. 4. Rampe traders in Pasar Wage prepares *kinang* for buyers. Photo by Rahman Latif Alfian.

custume of masticatory using *Areca* seeds are no longer practized by young people. It is common believe in Austronesians that masticatory using *Areca* seeds is good for the teeth, eliminate bad breath, heal wounds in the mouth, stop bleeding gums, and act as a mouthwash.

The *rampe* traders were found to have almost the same trading system at the Pasar Manis and the Pasar Wage. Traders usually ask the kind of *rampe* the customers would like to buy and for what purpose. Traders will pick up the ingredients consumers need according to the purpose and how many IDR they would like to purchase. Consumers will usually purchase started from IDR 2,000 to unspecified flowers for pilgrimages to graves. The price will affect the amount of interest received by consumers. Flowers will be measured using hand-held measurements or merchant estimates. There is no specific weighing system or standard size in flower sales, so the number of flowers obtained from various traders will vary. However, the benchmark used is usually the benchmark of propriety/*ngumumi*/*lumrahe* (This refers to a Javanese term denoting propriety or appropriateness in giving. Consequently, the measurement is not conducted using instruments but rather relies on intuitive judgment or customary practice), so the trader's subjectivity determines the amount of interest. Meanwhile, spices are sold in wrapped form at prices ranging from IDR 2,000 to IDR 10,000.

The quantity of flowers purchased from a vendor at Pasar Wage for Rp 10,000 was intended for grave pilgrimage purposes, as conveyed by the researcher. The *rampe* vendor provided a greater number of red and white *rompel* roses, supplemented with a few pieces of pandan leaves. This composition is commonly used for grave pilgrimage rituals. The arrangement would differ if the buyer specified the flowers were intended for other traditional purposes.

Figure 5 illustrates a bundle of flowers purchased from a traders at Wage Market for IDR 10,000, intended for grave pilgrimage purposes, as reported by the researcher. The *rampe* vendor provides a greater quantity of red and white rose petals, complemented with a few pieces of pandan leaves. This composition is commonly used for grave pilgrimage rituals. The arrangement would differ if the buyer specified that the flowers were intended for other customary purposes.

DISCUSSION

The Traditional Usage of Flowers by the People in Purwokerto.

The presence of *rampe* vendors in several traditional markets in Purwokerto is inherently linked to the use of floral arrangements. In Purwokerto, characterized as an urban area, flower usage among the community demonstrates considerable diversity. Community members hold varying perspectives regarding the use of flowers in different

[1]*Parem* powder or wedak adem (cool powder) is made from rice, kencur, and sawanan (dlingo and bengle leaves), which mothers usually use after giving birth. This cool powder is believed to regenerate the skin and relax the muscles after giving birth.
[2]*Kembang Macan Kerah* consists of various flowers such as roses, jasmine, ylang-ylang, kantil, and spices such as turmeric, dlingo, bangle, secang wood, kaffir lime, sliced pandan leaves, and various other types of empon-empon. This flower concoction is usually used for bathing to cleanse oneself of various negative energies. It provides other benefits, such as avoiding convulsions/ulcer convulsions (virus disease) or non-medical convulsions. Apart from that, it also functions as aromatherapy and relaxation. This herb also relieves fatigue and tiredness so that the body will feel fresh and fit again.

Fig. 5. The number of flowers purchased from one of the traders at the Wage Market for IDR 10,000. Photos by Rahman Latif Alfian.

Fig. 6. The practice of grave pilgrimage performed by the people in Karanglewas. Photos by Rahman Latif Alfian.

activities. Some individuals report infrequent use of flowers for certain practices; for instance, during grave visitation rituals, some residents simply come to pray for the deceased without floral offerings. However, for other community members, flowers constitute an essential ritual item that must be brought during grave visitation ceremonies - a tradition deeply embedded in their cultural practices.

a. Complementary to Religious Activities

A frequently discussed notion is that flowers constitute an essential item to bring when visiting graves or conducting death-related rituals. Among Purwokerto residents, several reasons account for the use of flowers as ritual complements:

1. Symbolism of Respect and Remembrance
   Flowers symbolize respect and memorialization of the deceased. The fragrant aroma of floral arrangements is perceived as a means to commemorate and honor all virtuous conduct from the departed's life.
2. Cultural Significance
   The Javanese community, particularly in Purwokerto, consistently develops symbols carrying profound meaning within their cultural traditions. Flowers represent hopes that both the

Table 2. Types of flowers used in life cycle traditions.

No	Local name	Scientific name	Chemical composition	Use in life cycle tradition			
				Birth	Circumcision	Wedding	Funeral
1	Bugenvil, Kembang Kertas	*Bougainvillea* sp.	Saponin, polyphenols	√			√
2	Kamboja	*Adenium obesum* (Forssk.) Roem. & Schult.	Geraniol, citronellol, linallol, farnnesole, phenyl alcohol				√
3	Kantil Kuning, Cempaka	*Magnolia champaca* (L.) Baill. ex Pierre	Volatile oils (cheraniol, linalol, methyleugenol, eugenol isoeugenol)				√
4	Kantil Putih	*Magnolia* × *alba* (DC.) Figlar & Noot.	Essential oil (Minyak atsiri)				√
5	Kenanga	*Cananga odorata* (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thomson	Benzoic acid, farnesol, geraniol, linalool, eugenol, safrole, kadinen, pinen	√	√	√	√
6	Mawar Merah, Mawar Putih	*Rosa hybrida* E.H.L.Krause	Essential oil (citral, citronellol, geraniol, linalol, nerol, egenol, phenylethyl-alcohol, fernasol, nonylaldehyde)	√	√	√	√
7	Melati, Mlati	*Jasminum sambac* (L.) Aiton	Indole, benzyl, livalyl acetate, formic acid, acetic acid, benzoic acid, salicylic acid, benzyl linalol			√	
8	Pandan Wangi	*Pandanus amaryllifolius* Roxb.	Volatile Compounds (2-Acetyl-1-pyrroline, Linalool, Terpenoids), Phenolic Acids, Flavonoids, Tannins, Carotenoids, Sterols, Saponins				√
9	Soka, Asoka	*Ixora* sp.	Saponin, flavonoida				√

bereaved family and de ceased family members may receive blessings and have their virtuous deeds recorded.

The Purwokerto community also purchases floral water, typically derived from processed or distilled rose extracts. This floral water serves as a symbollic medium for prayers offered to Allah SWT, intended to benefit the deceased's family. The practice involves sprinkling the floral water on graves, embodying the hope that it will provide "spiritual solace" (*kesejukan*) for the departed. In essence, community members believe these ritual prayers will bring comfort to the bereaved family.

During grave visitation rituals, community members typically employ various types of flowers. In some communities, a composition of roses (both red and white) mixed with pandan leaves serves as the foundational floral arrangement for grave pilgrimage practices. However, other groups utilize *Ixora* (*soka*) and ylang-ylang (*kenanga*) flowers for such rituals, as illustrated in Fig. 6. Different communities maintain no standardized floral composition, as each carries distinct symbolic meanings.

The preference for red and white roses primarily stems from their fragrant aroma, making them particularly suitable for scattering during grave visitation processions. Consequently, flower vendors commonly combine roses with pandan leaves. In rural communities where yards often contain various flowering plants, various types of flowers are used as symbols of fragrance. In Javanese culture, fragrance symbol of goodness and goodwill or in Javanese known as “sekar arum” (Lestari, 2019).

Notably, rural residents frequently utilize locally available flowering plants, typically cultivating multiple species around their homes. These serve dual purposes: aesthetic enhancement and personal ritual requirements. This practice reflects the integration of practical horticulture with cultural traditions in rural settings.

b. Flowers as *Ubo Rampe* in Cultural Traditions

Rampe flowers are also used as a complement (*ubo rampe*) in various cultural traditions of the people of the Banyumas Regency. Various traditions related to cultural rites in the people of

Fig. 7. Heirloom purification procession in the *Jamasan Pusaka* tradition by the people of Dawuhan. Photos by Rahman Latif Alfian.

Banyumas Regency rarely leave flowers as a compliment. Flowers are not used as offerings to spirits. However, flowers symbolize prayers for goodness towards the ancestors and good hopes for society in the future. One community that uses flowers to complement tradition is the Dawuhan District community, Banyumas. The Dawuhan community has an annual tradition, namely the Jamasan Pusaka tradition. The Jamasan Pusaka tradition is an annual tradition of the Dawuhan people, which focuses on purifying their heritage in the form of heirloom objects.

As seen in Fig. 7, flowers complement the traditional jamasan pusaka performed by the people of Dawuhan. The use of *rampe* flowers is intended so that after wearing the heirloom will be cleaned and purifed, symbolized by the fragrant aroma surrounding it.

Chemical Composition of Flowers Used in Tradition

The cultural traditions practiced by the people of Banyumas Regency extensively incorporate flowers as *ubo rampe* (ceremonial accessories), serving as primary and supplementary components. The use of these flowers significantly influences the sales and trade cycles among vendors in traditional markets. While the selection of flower types is primarily guided by the symbolic meanings associated with each flower, botanical elements also unconsciously contribute to and support these choices. Several types of flowers commonly used in various traditions within the Banyumas community are presented in Table 2. Table 3, especially regarding chemical composition, is referenced from several secondary sources; in other words, the researchers did not directly test them in the laboratory.

Referring to the chemical content of each flower, we can find out more about the reasons for choosing these flower plants in several previously explained traditions. Referring to the book Aneka Manfaat Bunga untuk Kesehatan (Nuraini, 2014) explains that the essential oil content in roses (*Rosa hybrida*) and several other flowers function to provide freshness and relaxation for those who inhale the aroma of the flowers. In other types of flowers, such as the *kenanga* flower, the flower is used not only for death ceremonies but also for birth and post-natal ceremonies for the people of Purwokerto. The ylang-ylang flowers (*Cananga odorata*) complements the sepasar and selapan celebrations; the flowers will be soaked in water and prayed for. After the prayer is finished, the water and flowers will be sprinkled on the place where the baby's placenta is buried. In some practices, *kenanga* flowers are also made into *parem* or a topical concoction for women after giving birth. The community believes the concoction consisting of *kenanga* flowers, turmeric, *kencur*, and tamarind can prevent postpartum fever. The application of the potion is not drunk but rubbed on the back

and placed on the scar in the corset or *stagen*. Referring to the content of the *kenanga* flower itself, which consists of benzoic acid, farnesol, geraniol, linalool, eugenol, safrole, cadinene, and pinene, it can be seen that the content has antimicrobial, anti -inflammatory, or antioxidant properties that contribute to the treatment of the body (Putri *et al.*, 2020).

Apart from being used in various life cycle ceremonies ranging from birth, coming of age ceremonies, and weddings to death, several types of flowers are also widely used for several health functions. For example, there are several concoctions that potpourri sellers also sell in traditional markets. These concoctions are a combination of dried flowers and herbs that can be used by women before and after giving birth, called *sawanan dadah* herb and tiger collar herb. Tiger collar concoction is one of the concoctions sold by potpourri traders at the Purwokerto traditional market. The concoction contains a combination of dried plants with a composition of several plants, for example rose flowers (*Rosa hybrida*), jasmine flowers (*Jasminum sambac*), cananga flowers (*Cananga odorata*), *kantil* flowers (*Magnolia champaca*) (optional), dlingo (*Acorus calamus*), bengle (*Zingiber montanum*), sappan wood (*Biancaea sappan*), cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*), sandalwood (*Santalum album*), cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*), and turmeric (*Curcuma longa*). Users of this concoction will usually add lime and salt to the potion. This potion is believed to have properties that increase fertility and accelerate pregnancy. In addition, this potion is also efficacious to restore stamina and cleanse the body. Residents usually use the potion in two applications: drinking it and using it for bathing or soaking. The chemical content in the flower confirms that the selection of flower types in a tradition is not only based on philosophical meaning. The flowers chosen unknowingly also support the smoothness, solemnity, and sacredness of a tradition practiced by cultural practitioners.

CONCLUSION

The *rampe* trade in Purwokerto has experienced a long period of dynamics. The culture of the Javanese people, especially in Purwokerto, has a big role in the continuity and sustainability of *rampe* traders in Puwokerto. The survival of *rampe* and flower traders is due to the need for the community to carry out cultural practices such as religious practices. The existence of *rampe* traders in traditional markets has an important role in providing for the community's needs. However, flower traders need help partly due to the increasingly diverse understanding of religions (especially islam) in interpreting and using flowers. On the other hand, the interruption of the transfer of knowledge from the "older" generation to the "younger" generation regarding knowledge of the use of flowers and the meaning of the flowers themselves also has a significant influence on the *rampe* trade. The layout of *rampe* traders in traditional markets is no less important, as those found in the field are mostly located on the "edge" in the market location plan, making market traders increasingly marginalized and rarely getting visitors' attention to traditional markets. The difficulty of *rampe* traders trading *rampe* in traditional markets also requires these *rampe* traders to look for alternatives to meet their daily economic needs. For example, one of the flower traders at Purwokerto's wage market, apart from selling flowers, also sells vegetables, tempeh, fruit, and cassava tape. This is done so the trader's income can meet daily needs and be used as trading capital the next day. However, *rampe* traders still exist amidst various difficulties because of necessity (both traders and consumers). Thus, flower culture in Javanese society plays a vital role in the *rampe* trade, and *rampe* traders are also important in maintaining the preservation of flower culture in Javanese society, especially in Purwokerto.

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