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Edward Aspinall and Mada Sukmajati (eds), *Electoral Dynamics in Indonesia: Money Politics, Patronage, and Clientelism at the Grassroots*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2016, xix + 449, ISBN: 9789814722049, price: 38.00 SGD (paperback).

Popular elections are among the essential and most visible elements of democratic governance. Recurring cyclically to decide upon the composition of government for several years to come, the outcomes can signal public satisfaction with an incumbent official or put a drastic end to a term in office. They can indicate enthusiasm for and popular trust in the plans of the candidates running for office and may provide a key to understanding candidates' success in convincing the public to vote for them. This edited volume brings together 22 case studies that describe events, campaigns, strategies and the eventual outcomes of the 2014 legislative elections in various locations in Indonesia. This huge event consisted of elections for the *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* (DPR, People's Representative Council) of the National Assembly, 33 provincial-level *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah* (DPRD, Regional People's Representative Councils), and 497 *kabupaten*- (district) and *kota*- (municipality) level DPRD; a staggering 19,699 seats in total. This total includes the 136 seats of the Regional Representative Council (*Dewan Perwakilan Daerah*) of the National Assembly. However, these candidates and their campaigns were not included in the research as this body lacks law-making powers.

Electoral dynamics in Indonesia are an interesting subject given the relative youth of multiparty democracy in the country—the first democratic election took place in 1999, making the 2014 legislative elections the fourth in post-New Order history. A study of these dynamics, particularly a multi-sited and comparative one such as is presented here, thus contributes to our understanding of the 2014 legislative elections, and also adds depth to the still developing understanding of Indonesian electoral dynamics more generally. In relation to data on past and future elections, this book could be a useful source to providing a *longue durée* perspective on this subject. That is, if the focus applied and the material presented will resonate with such other elections as to be of continued relevance.

I expect that this will be the case. The approach, which is explained and discussed in the first chapter, considers the personnel, candidates, strategies, and means applied in each of the 22 cases discussed in the book. The concepts of patronage and money politics feature prominently in the ensuing understanding. These concepts are far from new in the study of Indonesian politics and are centrally placed in much of the existing core material. In this book, however, the case studies provide for a diversified picture of the meaning, place, and application of patronage and money politics. The chapters clearly

speak to one another through these common themes, but also show how differences between the cases in terms of ethnic and religious make-up, livelihood, and economy, degree of urbanism, and population density shape and direct how patronage and money play out in each of these settings. This attention to detail, or the messiness of 'real life' campaigning, might hamper a more abstract, theory-driven analysis, but it offers insight and provides a wealth of data—including, much to this reviewer's delight, several chapters describing the actual ins and outs of vote buying.

The editors did not seek to deliver a grand explanatory theory, but they do not leave the readers to fend for themselves. The analysis and comparison are modest, but a succinct set of insights is presented. First of these is the finding that candidates, can—and will—compete against fellow party members, putting individual drive and desire over party ideology in the campaigns. So providing the ground for patronage as they seek to differentiate themselves from other candidates by offering clear 'incentives' to the voters. Patronage, however, is differentiated according to local cultural values and practices. Systematic vote buying takes place in various cases, but some candidates squarely refuse to do this. Furthermore, there is no single strategy to vote buying: some target loyalists, others swing-voters. Individual gifts and community engagement provide a blurred field of exchange: cigarettes and coffee provided at a meeting are a thing one might not think too much of; presents of cooking oil, noodles, and rice are a step further. But what about gifts of health insurance, ambulances, or club goods like a new sound system or funds to construct a new drainage channel? Such axes of (expected) reciprocity versus individual and communal benefit delineate a grid of electoral relations of investment and return that warrants further exploration. Also interesting is the attention for post-election gifts of 'projects', the attention for the charisma of candidates and the observation that (the threat of) violence hardly plays a role in securing election outcomes.

The second major aim of the book is the analysis of the networks that candidates mobilize to reach out and convince voters. Not only do such actors spread the word, as brokers they are also well placed to monitor voters' ideas and ensure that gifts are reciprocated. Brokers and voters have actual, existing relations on which candidates strive to build. The cases provide fascinating reading as to the operating of these networks and the connections they entail.

The book is an exploration of campaign events, strategies, candidates' fears, assumptions and aspirations that jointly make up the dynamics of electoral campaigns. It is exploratory, providing an overview of cases rather than in-depth analysis and suggesting an agenda rather than answering to one. As such it will be of interest to a diverse audience that might include political scient-

ists, sociologists, and anthropologists studying Indonesian politics, as well as a wider less-specialist audience interested in contemporary Indonesian society. The chapters present the reader with insights but also raise many questions that had to go unanswered in this publication. These do, however, provide an exciting basis for future research on the subject.

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