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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE AFTER INDONESIA'S REFORMS

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CONTINUITY AND CHANGE AFTER INDONESIA'S REFORMS

Contributions to an Ongoing Assessment

EDITED BY

MAX LANE

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PREFACE

This book is primarily the outcome of a workshop held at the ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore in March 2018. Thirteen researchers studying contemporary Indonesian politics gathered at the Institute to discuss the extent to which the previous several years had ushered in a “new politics” or whether such a process was indeed evolving. The discussion also involved other researchers from the ISEAS Indonesian Studies Programme acting as discussants to the ideas presented by those who have contributed chapters. As reflected in this volume, the majority of those present were Indonesia-based researchers.

The reason for asking such questions about the extent of political change was that such a discussion was rife among both observers of Indonesian politics as well as actors and participants. In 2014, Joko Widodo, a furniture manufacturer and former mayor of the provincial city of Solo was elected president of Indonesia, defeating Prabowo Subianto, a Soeharto-era general and part of the milieu of conglomerate capital that had been dominant for so long in Indonesia. Was the election of a president from such a different social milieu than that which was seen to be previously dominant a symptom of deeper changes in Indonesian politics? Or was this new development less significant than many thought?

The eleven chapters in this book are a product of the workshop discussion as well as a reflection of the ongoing assessment of the individual authors. The topic is too wide and complex to expect a collection of 11 contributions such as this book to give definitive answers or resolve major issues. Furthermore, the chapters are not meant to reflect a consensual outcome but rather represent 11 individual contributions to a discussion of political developments over the last

several years, especially in relation to the issue of the depth and extent of political change. Although with an eye to the question of change versus continuity, these contributions also focus on specific aspects of recent developments. Only the first chapter makes an attempt to give a general picture of developments based on the materials in this book. It is likely that other kinds of summations of this material are also possible.

In any case, what is happening in Indonesia today is still in process. Attempts to sum up these developments in one work or collection while events are still unfolding would be unwise. We hope this book, however, will be a useful and interesting contribution to the ongoing discussion and analysis of current developments.

*Max Lane
Yogyakarta, Indonesia
September 2018*

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Leo Agustino, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa

Richard Chauvel, Honorary Fellow, Asia Institute, University of Melbourne

Ulla Fionna, Fellow, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore, 2014–18

Max Lane, Visiting Senior Fellow, ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, Singapore

Cornelis Lay, Professor of Politics and Government, Department of Politics and Government, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta

Rizky Alif Alvian, Researcher, Department of International Relations, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta

Yatun Sastramidjaja, Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Amalinda Savirani, Head of the Department of Politics and Government, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta

Mada Sukmajati, Lecturer, Department of Politics and Government, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta

Ahmad Rizky Mardhatillah Umar, PhD Candidate, School of Political Sciences and International Studies, University of Queensland, Australia

Wawan Mas'udi, Lecturer, Department of Politics and Government, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta