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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- List of Tables -- Foreword / Beng, Ooi Kee -- Acknowledgements -- Glossary & Acronyms -- Chapter 1. Introduction: Patterns and Puzzles in Malaysian Electoral Dynamics / Weiss, Meredith L. -- Chapter 2. Arau, Perlis: The Irresistible Charm of Warlords, Women and Rewards? / Fern, Chiok Phaik -- Chapter 3. Padang Serai, Kedah: Between the 'Personal Touch' and the Generous Hand / Cheng, Marcus -- Chapter 4. Kuala Nerus, Terengganu: New Malay Politics? / Razali, Che Hamdan Che Mohd -- Chapter 5. Balik Pulau, Penang: Home Run for the Home Boys / Ann, Teo Sue -- Chapter 6. Lumut, Perak: Patronage, Clientelism and the Post-Coup Order / Jagtiani, Reema B. -- Chapter 7. Kuantan, Pahang: Revealing the Ordinary / Mohamad, Nazreen -- Chapter 8. Pandan, Selangor: New Electoral Dynamics in Urban Malaysia / Yi, Wong Pui -- Chapter 9. Kepong and Titiwangsa, Kuala Lumpur: Messages or Money? / Yee, Choong Pui -- Chapter 10. Rembau, Negeri Sembilan: Personalities and Promises / Fann, Goh Teck -- Chapter 11. Pulai, Johor: A Tale of Two Coalitions / Aun, Koh Chien -- Chapter 12. Gelang Patah, Johor: Did Lim Kit Siang Truly Win His Last Gamble? / Jian, Ho Yi -- Chapter 13. Kota Marudu and Keningau, Sabah: Personality, Patronage and Parochial Politics / Puyok, Arnold -- Chapter 14. Tuaran, Sabah: Party Loyalty and Rational Voting / Gunggut, Haijon -- Chapter 15. Kota Kinabalu, Sabah: BN Loses Its 'Fixed Deposit' / Govindasamy, Anantha Raman /

Meng, Lai Yew -- Chapter 16. Beaufort, Sabah: Whither Lajim's Popularity? / Bagang, Tony Paridi -- Chapter 17. Sibul and Lanang, Sarawak: Defeat of the Bosses / Tien, Ngu Ik -- Contributors

Sommario/riassunto

Malaysia's 13th general election, held 5 May 2013, saw an unprecedentedly close race between the incumbent Barisan Nasional (National Front, BN) and Pakatan Rakyat (People's Alliance, Pakatan) coalitions. For the first time in Malaysian history, a challenger coalition not only kept the BN from regaining the two-thirds parliamentary super-majority it had lost in the previous election, in 2008, but eked out a slim majority of the popular vote. While many Malaysian election is a big event, this one in particular merits close scrutiny. The present volume offers evidence and analysis with which to probe both the merits of common interpretations of who voted how, and why, and to suggest new readings on Malaysian politics. "This team of well-coordinated young scholars has produced what is, without any argument, the best, most comprehensive and broadly based study ever of Malaysian electoral politics. With a common approach and format, their local case studies highlight not the 'wholesale' politics of broad national party strategy but the ground-level 'retail' promotion of local candidates. Malaysian electoral politics is local, these closely-focused studies show. Because voters wish to 'own' their local representatives, and they can own only those whom they know and can in some measure control. This is how fresh, young eyes see the familiar 'slog' of this country's ground-level electioneering. Thanks to them we now have a new base-line for future Malaysian electoral studies." - Clive Kessler, The University of New South Wales
