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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
