do with the availability of verifiable documentary source material, the professional historian's life-blood. With the greater abundance of public records, personal accounts, and analytical techniques during the twentieth century, there is no doubt that it has become easier for historians to put together plausible accounts of a much broader range of social and political phenomena.

Dr. Manderson's book is itself evidence of these happier professional circumstances. Her account is informed not only by feminist concerns but by theories of modernization and social change, and her ability to draw readily upon the sophisticated tools of sociological analysis certainly assists her to draw up a comprehensive, richly detailed, and judicious picture of the Kaum Ibu UMNO. The book is a revised version of a doctoral dissertation submitted to the Australian National University in August, 1977, and the preparation of the dissertation included extensive field work in Peninsular Malaysia from June to November, 1974, and from October, 1976 to January, 1977. This field work enabled the author to tap abundant sources of oral history. Personal interviews with Kaum Ibu members, and their responses to specially-designed questionnaires, furnished Dr. Manderson with much of the necessary evidence upon which to work. The superb documentation of sources, including a massive range of statistical appendices and an extensive bibliography, is a particularly pleasing feature of this work.

After introductory chapters on the subordinate status of Malay women in traditional Malay society, and on the social and political factors which affected the involvement of Malay men and women in public life, the book traces the genesis and evolution of the Kaum Ibu women's section as part of the emergence of UMNO in Malaysian politics. There follow profiles of the members and leaders of the Kaum Ibu (including useful pen-pictures of prominent female personalities such as Puteh Maria, Hajjah Zainon binti Suleiman, Khadijah Sidek, and Fatimah Hashim). There are also interesting chapters on the role of the Kaum Ibu in electoral politics, and as a women's pressure group on government. The women's story which unfolds throughout is significant and worth telling. It is doubtful, though, whether the story alters in any dramatic way the conventional perceptions which professional historians have shared about the role and status of Malay women in political and social matters. Dr. Manderson herself reaches the conclusion that:

"the development of Kaum Ibu as a political organisation, its structure, its activities, and its functions do not reflect any essential change in the role of women in Malay society but rather suggest a continuum with the traditional roles of women." (p. 207)

Indeed, it remains to be demonstrated that a feminist perspective will necessarily yield fundamentally different insights into the dynamics of modern Southeast Asian history, although it may well extend our knowledge and understanding of familiar epochs in the region's past.

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Dominated by historians since its beginning, the Harvard East Asia Series has now wisely included the work of an anthropologist. The editors deserve further credit.
for having turned their sights on Southeast Asia and the overseas Chinese. As the pioneering research by Maurice Freedman and G. William Skinner demonstrated, the ethnic Chinese outside of China can tell us much about issues intrinsically interesting to students of East Asian societies. The fact that the Chinese minority is also important for contemporary political reasons has been underscored by the persistence of communal tension and, of course, by the mass expulsion of Chinese from Vietnam.

The basic thesis of *Chinese Village Politics* is the somewhat obvious, but nevertheless important, point that local political behavior in a developing country cannot be studied apart from the larger, national, context. Thus, Strauch argues in favor of merging the concerns of the anthropologist with those of the political scientist and sets out to try to see the ways in which bureaucratic centralization has influenced life at the local level. Although she would like to believe that the process has been seen from the "bottom up," a good part of the book inevitably deals with broader national issues. The intellectual meeting ground for the two perspectives appears to be the theoretical concept of "encapsulation:" the prism through which the author attempts, usually with success, to join the microcosm with the macrocosm.

Strauch was naturally attracted to a small, predominantly Chinese, market town in multi-cultural Malaysia. After eighteen months of field work in 1971-72, she came to appreciate that the village now named Sanchun in customarily anonymous fashion was surrounded, encompassed and even enclosed by a world of greater considerations. Encapsulation is not meant to imply isolation. To the contrary, *Chinese Village Politics* presents a rather imaginative but likewise controversial argument that the phenomenon which may have had its start in the "indirect rule" common in colonial days can be seen as a necessary stage in an on-going process of assimilation that aims, ultimately, toward the goal of a politically-integrated nation-state. Although this notion, even after it has been bolstered by theoretical postulates, seems a bit idealistic to the reviewer, Strauch has still managed to make an important contribution to our overall understanding of the Malaysian political system. Not surprisingly, the book's greatest strength comes when it actually describes Sanchun and illustrates, with welcome detail, how one Chinese community has thus far been incorporated into the political world of communal politics in a Malay-dominated state.

The book shows the demands that ethnic diversity and the constitutional advantage enjoyed by Malays have placed on the new nation. More significantly, it also helps to explain how Chinese villagers who generally eschew contact with the Malay power structure themselves, look to more-urban Chinese elites to work out a *modus vivendi* at a national level. Although much of the argument is couched in current social science terms such as "linkages," "center-periphery relations" and "ethnicity," there are also many paragraphs of no-nonsense narrative. The second chapter on "Politics and Power in Malaysia" provides an excellent short introduction for the non specialist. Chapter three, which traces the history of Sanchun from its early settlement near the turn-of-the century through the days of the Malayan Emergency when it adjoined one of the "new villages," is easily digested and offers a brief overview of the lot of rural Chinese. The next three chapters nicely illustrate what anthropologists do best for they offer the in-depth appreciation and detail that only great patience and the intimacy which comes with residence can supply. Chapter 7, which is the last before the short conclusion returns to the "encapsulation" framework, is the centerpiece to the volume.

All scholars interested in Malaysia and its multi-racial future should be thankful that Judith Strauch happened to be in the countryside when the Malaysian Chinese