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Demographic Change in Southeast Asia: Recent Histories and Future Directions. Edited by Lindy Williams and Michael Philip. Ithaca, New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2012. 221 pp.

Demographic Change in Southeast Asia is a comprehensive attempt to describe the development of the region in terms of its demographic composition, structure and prospects. This task was accomplished by bringing together the work of experts not only in the field of demography and population studies, but also in history, social policy and environmental sciences. The multidisciplinary approach proves to be relevant in the context of Southeast Asia's diverse historical and sociocultural characteristics, a reality not lost on the editors themselves. As an approach to the region, the volume's focus on population issues hinges on the argument that the role of population processes in economic development and globalization has not been given due importance in the literature and policy discourses. Lindy Williams and Michael Philip argue that appreciation and understanding of population-related issues, as discussed in the volume, "are critical to the future social and economic well-being of people within the region" (p. 1).

Demographic Change is made up of seven chapters, along with introductory and concluding chapters from the editors. As with most edited volumes, the chapters vary in style, depth and quality. However, efforts were made to ensure that, although each chapter is internally coherent, one can still situate it in relation to the volume's larger aim of providing a holistic overview of demographic growth and development in the region. This is evident in the choice of topics and the way in which the chapters are organized in the volume.

Charles Hirschman's and Sabrina Bonaparte's chapter on the historical pattern of population growth and distribution is a good starting point. In particular, it helps that the discussion not only dwells on the changes in the region's population sizes, distribution

and structure, but that it links these changes with social, economic and political conditions and transformations. This approach puts into context trends in fertility, mortality and population growth in the past and future population projections for each country in the region. A more detailed look at fertility trends, marriage, aging, migration and health as well as population and environment follows this historical overview.

In Chapter Two, Terence Hull gives special attention to levels and patterns of fertility. Following the analytical framework of fertility change originally proposed by Kingsley Davis and Judith Blake, Hull explains that the pattern of fertility change in the region results from changes in behaviour related to timing and conduct of sexual intercourse, use of contraception and abortion. His substantial discussion of how these determinants of fertility change evolved through time provides a useful framing of fertility patterns, both in historical terms and in relation to prospects for the future. In another contribution, Gavin Jones and Bina Gubhaju explore the trends in marriage by looking at age at marriage and how it varies according to residence, education, gender and birth cohort in selected countries in the region. The chapter highlights the emerging patterns of marriage postponement and dissolution and explores the factors that explain these trends.

Chapter Four treats aging, although a significant part of the chapter deals with changing trends in fertility and mortality — topics already covered in the preceding chapters. Nonetheless, despite the overlaps, Ghazy Mujahid is able to demonstrate the relevance of his attention to those trends in setting the context for his discussion of aging and the concomitant challenges that it brings. These challenges relate in particular to health care service, long-term care service, living arrangements and income security in old-age. The chapter also gives considerable focus to country-specific policy responses to problems related to aging.

Migration is the central theme of Chapters Five and Six. In Chapter Five, Graeme Hugo presents a thorough study of population mobility in Southeast Asia. This chapter is by far the longest in the

book, and understandably so. Unlike fertility and mortality, migration as a demographic process is likely to cut across other population-related issues. This reality is evident in the special focus given to migration and health in Chapter Six. However, unlike the other chapters and their focus on empirical patterns and trends, Mark VanLandingham's and Fu Hongyun's chapter proposes a conceptual approach to the exploration of migration and health. Drawing from limited studies of the effects of migration on the health of migrants, or on the spread of infectious diseases and migration, the authors argue for the need to give attention to this research agenda in the future. In the final chapter, Sara Curran and Noah Derman tackle the complicated and dynamic relationship between the environment and population processes. Their exploratory review is organized into three components: exploring the influence of environmental factors on population growth and migration in the post-colonial period of the 1950s–1970s; examining the population-driven exploitation of environmental endowments in the late twentieth century; and assessing the challenges of the twenty-first century, specifically, population vulnerabilities to environmental pollution and climate change.

Williams and Philip, in their concluding chapter, raise the question, “To what extent is a volume on population in Southeast Asia salient or instructive?” (p. 209). I believe that any attempt to describe and capture the diversity of Southeast Asia is laudable. By focusing on population issues and how these relate to economic and social development of the region, the editors of and contributors to this volume have been able to find commonalities in patterns of population growth, to highlight significant deviations and to underscore prospects for the future. Overall, the book is a good contribution to the social sciences and to our understanding of Southeast Asia in all its complexity.

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