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# **GENDER AND AGEING**

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# **GENDER AND AGEING**

## **SOUTHEAST ASIAN PERSPECTIVES**

EDITED BY

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Devasahayam**



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In 2005, the Gender Studies Programme at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies was established. Since 2009, greater focus was granted to two areas: women's roles in politics, and the social vulnerabilities and impacts felt by specific women groups such as chronically poor women, low-skilled migrant women, sex workers, older women, trafficked women, and internally displaced and refugee women.

Well into its fifth year since its establishment, the programme had seen a series of international conferences, fora, and symposia organized, focusing on a range of topics related to gender such as gender trends in the Southeast Asian region, women and mobility, women's rights, women and politics, and legislative protections for women in marriage. These events were organized with funding from the Konrad Ardenauer Stiftung (KAS). The support the programme had received from KAS throughout these years is a testament to its commitment to the study of women's experiences, interests, and concerns in the Southeast Asian region.

In 2009, the workshop focused on older men and women in Southeast Asia. The topic was selected since ageing has become an issue of immense concern to governments, communities, and families given the growing proportions of older persons in an increasing number of countries in the region. In addition to the workshop, KAS has provided for additional funding for an edited volume to be prepared based on the papers presented at the workshop.

This book is the result of a collective effort of several individuals. As editor of this volume, I would like to thank all the paper contributors for their thoughtful and significant contributions to the research, debates, and discussions around how ageing in the region of Southeast Asia is mediated by gender. All the paper contributors are "experts" on the topic of ageing in the respective countries in which each has had years of experience researching, studying, and investigating the topic. In particular, I am grateful for their commitment to bringing this book project to fruition.

Instead of sending out the entire manuscript for review, as it is the norm for most books, as editor, I decided that each paper in this volume be sent out to country experts working on gender or ageing so that each author receives relevant and appropriate comments and suggestions on their work. Several academics were called upon as anonymous reviewers to undertake this task of reviewing the initial drafts of the respective chapters in this volume, and I also wish to thank each one of them for their willingness to take up the task. There were also academics who had agreed to be discussants at the workshop, and it is in the spirit of gratitude that I would like to acknowledge their input in the ensuing discussions that emerged during the workshop.

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Since the volume includes chapters on most of the countries in Southeast Asia, it could be said to some extent that this book represents a “bible” of gender and ageing in the region. It is my hope that the volume will be of value especially to policy-makers from the countries in the region since research is important to help governments put in place relevant policies to meet the needs of the elderly and to prepare themselves to cope with the increasing dependency ratio of the older persons on the working age population as well as pressures on the public pension system.



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