Feminist theories have focused on contemporary, Western, middle-class experiences of maternity. The present volume brings other mothers, from Asia and the Pacific, into scholarly view, aiming to show that birthing and mothering can be a very different experience for women in other parts of the world. The contributors document a wide variety of conceptions of motherhood, and drawing on ethnographic and historical research, they explore the relationships between motherhood as embodied experience and the local discourses on maternity. They reveal how the experience of motherhood has been influenced by missionaries, by colonial policies and by the introduction of Western medicine and biomedical methods, and raise important questions about the costs and benefits of becoming a modern mother in these societies.
Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-58614-6 - Maternities and modernities: Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific
Edited by Kalpana Ram and Margaret Jolly
Frontmatter
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Maternities and modernities
Maternities and modernities
Colonial and postcolonial experiences in Asia and the Pacific

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Acknowledgements

These essays are a selection from papers presented at a workshop on Maternity held by the Gender Relations Project in July 1992. We would like to thank the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, for their visionary support of the project, in both research funds and in time for reflection, writing and editing. Kalpana Ram would also like to thank the Australian Research Council for their past and present support.

We would also like to express our warm thanks to all our contributing authors, who in successive drafts made their chapters better and better, and to the readers of the manuscript for their constructive comments and criticisms. Our thanks also to our editor at Cambridge, Jessica Kuper, and the production team.

Finally, our thanks to Annegret Schemberg for her continuing research assistance, for her sterling bibliographical work and her meticulous copy-editing and proofreading; to Ria van de Zandt, who has worked many long hours to render our inconsistencies, confusions and inelegancies into a beautiful manuscript, fit for publication; to Andrew Walker for excellent and fast work on our index; and to Coombs photographer Bob Cooper for superb reproduction of plates.

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