

The Transitional Changes in Asian Tourism: Evolution and Historical Development of Tourism in Asia

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ABSTRACT

Asia is recognized for its considerable variety of ethnicities, along with its swiftly expanding modern locations in addition to global marketplaces. It offers wide-ranging antiquity of human encounters over time, particularly in South-East Asia, gifted with diverse historical recollections, traditional influences, social economic domains, and democratic structures. The exploration of Southeast Asia's tourism resources started after the arrival of colonial powers. It accelerated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries due to increased movement and technological advancement. With the establishment of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia obtained a strategic and economic organization distinct in terms of independent factors, languages, and constant approaches from European powers. Regarding passenger traffic, the region is subsequently referred to as "South-East Asia," and it is primarily a multiethnic society guarded by the Pacific Asia Tourism Association. The present study examined numerous critical social and economic facets that have fostered the expansion of tourism in the Asian region, particularly in the southeast regions, since the time of European colonization. Studies that have highlighted the legacy of the Southeast Asian tourism industry throughout the ages have been scarce. Due to the great variety of unclear references that must be linked to identifying the past developmental phases of tourism in this region is a complex process.

Keywords: Legacy of South-East Asia, Evolution of Asian Tourism, Transitional Changes in Asian Tourism, Historical Development, Age of Exploratory Travel, Tourism Trends in South-East Asia

Introduction

Being the world's major mainland in connection to the terrestrial zone, the Asian continent is known for its implausible yet assorted resources. It offers exotic nature-based attractions and mythological experiences of cultural fine art forms as a distinguished tourism destination. The region includes an eclectic array of leisure charms ranging from the amazingly wild and sand deserts, from the present-day malls of the Middle Eastern countries to the beaming ancient shrines, extremely lofty, massive highlands in South Asian regions, the serene oceanic shorelines and wild trekking spots, and the city areas of East Asia. The entire region offers fascinating places, accommodating the interests of every type of voyager. Countries such as Japan, Singapore, Hongkong, Taiwan, and South Korea provide remarkably high-class facilities for holidaymakers. Furthermore, China, India, and Sri Lanka have vast jam-packed provinces profusely surrounded with antique, edifying, societal characters and traditions, creating a charming look to these destinations.

Realizing the benefits, the countries established strategies to support the leisure sector to improve the images of national identity and ethnicity. The tourism industry also underpins the area's economic progression and allows correlated endeavors. Various establishments have been developed synchronously, including transportation and accommodation facilities. Tourism growth has brought about substantial expansion to infrastructure and it can fast-track the course of computerization in addition to the transformation of societies (He & He, 2012). The tour business can also become the foremost foundation for serviceable alliances. The improved turnover can regularize various small-scale, business ventures adding essential ethics and responsibilities for the local population of the destination or region.

Tracing the inventiveness of the tour activities of Asian locations could be a hard-hitting concern owing to the imprecise bases that are attainable. Seemingly, very few experiences were recorded to illustrate the olden times and evolution of the leisure business industry in the continent over the several epochs. The purpose of the holiday business competence and skill aspects of

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Asia was activated through the initiation of the local frontier regulations via the sustenance of conveyance and high-tech growth throughout the nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. Asia, known for its astonishing ethnicities, has confronted unyielding social encounters for several centuries, specifically in the southeast provinces. The place is characterized by plentiful historical recollections, communal monarchies, fiscal domains, and radical systems. Numerous cities of Asian nation states are famous for traditional practices and vernaculars in addition to community groups determined through European supremacies (Kymlicka & He, 2005).

Some of the nations in Asia, especially in the southern and southeastern provinces, contributed widely to the improvement of holiday business and unlocked their financial prudence to the global investors. The governments have proposed affable accomplishment tactics, transaction measures, and strategies envisioned to deliver native tourism products. Progressively, holiday business has been extended to the appreciated practicalities in fields such as monetary progression and the probable yields for corporate associates and investors. Numerous nations introduced new diplomacies to intensify connections through supporting segments. This will help establish a better image of the tourism industry and thereby safeguard essential justification, authorizing local systems to comprise in the enhancement of locations even more efficaciously. Pro-poor tourism has played an essential role in outspreading and escalating home-grown occupational potencies to frame better dimensions for purposeful events.

Literature Review

Asia is located along the tropic climate regions and its environments have fascinating topographical inheritance and resource competence. The number of visitors to South Asian destinations has increased because of exceptional artistic and antique traditions, community standards, and a variety of ethnicities, in addition to financial magnitudes (Hitchcock et.al., 2018). The inflow of tourists has urged the countries to contribute to improved and competent networking, despite certain problems among the states regarding converting the focal idea of the locality into the synchronizing leisure industry. In addition, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) has recognized the tourism competence of the Asian continent by distinguishing a trio of profligate tourism-stimulating areas, that is, the Middle East, the southeast region, and the southern part of the continent (Winter et.al., 2008). The entire mainland has an abundance of the sacred doctrines and moral institutions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, and Confucianism (Cauquelin et.al., 2014).

The eastern part of the continent has experienced numerous disparities concerning the accumulation of local revenues owing to wide-ranging historic variations. The primeval records highlighted China as one of the world's prime commercial centers, encircled by adjacent trade units, fostering local and interregional industrial links. The first millennium witnessed the emergence of Pan-Asian trading systems (Rahman et.al., 2012). Merchandizing networks are becoming a domineering segment of the East Asian economy. Increasingly decentralized and transnational corporate structures have emerged, contributing to uniting the region in an organized manner.

Innumerable developed cities in eastern Asia have played a vibrant role in economic integration, widespread upgrading of establishments, and well-connectivity facilities to reinforce regional cooperation. The Chinese government launched its Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank in 2013 to provide monetary assistance to numerous brands of capacity-enhancing organization ventures in the regions (Yu, 2017).

Thus, many factors have supported East Asian economic development and integration. One is the upsurge of Subregional Economic Zones (SREZs), initiated in the late 1980s (Dent, 2017). These zones include both bordering parts of diverse countries and subregional clusters such as the Greater Mekong Subregion (Cruz-del Rosario et.al., 2016). These zones are honored through governmental contracts and reinforced by multinational administrations (for example ADB, United Nations). These official assistances provided support for enduring financial partnerships exclusive to the subregional parts. The SREZ projects focused on overseeing distinctive ordinary possessions, and particularly the intercontinental channels. There are many SREZs, documented as subregional congregations of cross-border trade units, state-of-the-art profitable enterprises, and industrial networks. Asia's economic structures are increasingly significant within the continent and regarding other major nations globally. The state economic strategies play a substantial and industrious role in wide-reaching fiscal initiatives. The biggest challenge for many nations is to strengthen and support itself to spread the benefits of regional collaboration. The native economies have developed with time.

The early years have not seen substantial reception from dealers and profitable initiatives for regional incorporation. Progressively, however, the region obtained appreciation worldwide. These financial entities focused on sending factory-made products to foreign marketplaces, relatively less on selling to each other. The fiscal adversity of 1997–98 brought the region's liberation to new attention areas (OECD, 2005). The crisis represented a coincidental phase for many nations to discover inclusive modifications in investment and in other monetary areas. The milieus remained so satisfactory that Asian countries have appeared as an imperative area. The places became well-off in supply effectiveness, requiring a better obligation for its collective benefits and the worth of provincial collaboration.

In the intervening time, northeast Asia comprising the “Plus Three” nations (Calder & Ye, 2010) of APT – PRC, Japan, and the Republic of Korea – has endeavored to make an additional home-grown monetary interaction with ASEAN members in addition to their provincial gatherings (Friedman & Kim, 2007). There have been considerable levels of discretionary and political pressures in PRC–Japan–Korea (CJK) relations in recent years. Since the late 1990s, these three countries have been rationally forced to initiate a Northeast Asia Trilateral Cooperation (NATC) consular structure with a wide scope of stakeholders (Dent, 2016). NATC international relations have encouraged innovative undertakings to support cooperation and the socialization of decision-makers from all three countries covering a broad range of issues. Even though the NATC works as a “system” rather than an association, the regulatory body was established in 2011, namely, the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat to legalize and coordinate activities (Dent, 2017).

The new mass-producing economies entered a comparable growing stage in the early years of the 1960s (ADB, 2008). These notable advances were accomplished because of the assistance of global markets and comprehensive nationwide strategies. A major outcome of World War II was the emergence of Japan as a commercial power. Admittance to the US marketplaces empowered Japan to upsurge its labor-intensive deliveries, creating an escalation in savings and financial development. With the formation of the GATT in 1947, many discussions focused on depreciating blockades to manufactured imports. Globally, trade movements have extended enormously since the 1950s, three times quicker than productivity growth (WTO, 2007). This propelled the growth of Asian economies through international business organizations and their networks with markets.

The 1997–98 crisis has fortified the reemergence of Asia as one of the world’s furthestmost stimulating regions. It has paved the way for the revitalization and gradual increase in the number of visitors to the continent (Pieterse, 2017). The region’s reformation integrates collective interconnectedness in domains such as fiscal activities, supportive arrangements, and intercontinental collaborative missions. Several native organizations have been incorporated within the United Nations network, such as the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) (ADB, 2008; UNESCAP, 2017). Another organization that is regional in nature, namely, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has a pivotal role in the area’s strategic outline. The working system of the association provides a comprehensive model for exploring collaborative and innovative reworking practices (Park, 2018). It stands for the growth of Asia, integrating and exploring its inference on the future of the tourism industry.

Findings

The Historical Phases of Voyages and Asian Tourism Development

The era of exploration is considered the age of discovery. It is characterized by the voyages of European merchants, discovering the land through new adventurous sea routes (Whitfield, 2015). The main impetuses for the journey were visits to holy sites, crafts, and carnivals. The journey was troublesome due to the risky environment, violence and attacks of pirates, scarcity of well-maintained roads, and so forth. The travel arrangements were very expensive because of the circumstances and conditions used such as water mode of transportation. From ancient times onwards the Asian continent maintained commercial relations with different parts of Europe and Africa (Frank, 1998). Items that happened to be of special importance during such businesses were good quality garments, metallic objects, silk and gold, an array of expensive treasured gemstones, and herbs and sweet-smelling substances used in cuisines. Intercontinental trading relations among European countries and Asia continued prominently throughout the Greek Epoch, around the 4th century BC (Whitfield & Sims-Williams, 2004). The travel became more relaxed because of the multiple land highways that connected Greece, via Anatolia (Asia Minor), with northwest India. The Roman period saw the emergence of more land-based and marine directions starting from the Mediterranean Sea to South India (Qin & Yuan, 2015).

The ancient phase of travel to Asia was from the beginning of the 15th century to the 17th century. The mainland had seen many developments along with the expeditions of European vessels (Learn & Explore Series, 2011). On their way to progression, the voyagers came across several colonies. The famous voyagers of that time were Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Ferdinand Magellan (Silverberg, 2020). The exploratory travelers were mainly from Portugal and Spain. Spain was able to conquer a larger portion of the American continents. Meanwhile, Portugal conquered Brazil and the eastern part of the Asian continent (Friedman & Figg, 2017). The victorious experience of adventurous travel encouraged countries such as Portugal to continue their voyages and subsequently led to the legendary travel of Portuguese explorer, Vasco da Gama. He discovered a sea route via the south most tip of the African continent to India. The Portuguese had likewise traveled to the far East regions of Asia and created a merchandize colony in China at Macau (Mungello, 2012). Furthermore, the age of exploration coined the term “East Indies,” as the European explorers referred it to the complete range of Southeast Asia, and especially India (White, 2005).

Subsequent discoveries of direct sea routes to Asia by Spain and Portugal resulted in the expansions related to the universal discovery of the Western Hemisphere. This period is considered the epoch of the notable navigators of the 16th century (Kelsey,

2016). Portugal remained one of the prime countries to attempt and accumulate an impressive corporate prototypical framework with respect to the lucrative spice business with the eastern nations. It recognized a structure of barracks for mariners in Asia. In the interim, the 16th century witnessed Spain establishing supremacy over the Philippines (Newson, 2009).

The early seventeenth century witnessed the spread of foreign rule. The Dutch and the English established their own East India companies during this period (Northrup et al., 2015). The British began with the Indian subcontinent and gradually expanded their dominance to Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia (Johnston, 1986). The Dutch also established commercial ties with Ceylon (presently known as Sri Lanka) and progressively extended them to the southeast part of Asia, particularly Indonesia. The 19th century French invasion of the Indo–Chinese Peninsula was successful and they acquired smaller territories on the mainland of India. Eventually, the European industrial regimes became major colonial empires. Gradually, a progressive trading system evolved along with the expansion of the East India Company and successive foreign supremacy in Asia.

The overseas realms invaded the regions with an intention to export raw materials and import the finished commodities from their colonies. Great Britain has stopped exporting cotton merchandize from India. On the other hand, they started importing fresh fiber, spinning it into yarn and interlacing it in the newly established manufacturing factories in various colonies (Bulliet et.al., 2018). The 19th to 20th centuries were the zenith of foreign reign in the Asian continent; the period was correspondingly acknowledged as the age of Universal Colonialism (Patajo-Legasto, 2008). The first half of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of Japan as a vital military and naval power (Hezel, 2003), which ultimately enabled it to advance into a substantial business associate along with many other industrialized countries.

Gradually, several communist and noncommunist governments in Asia were liberated from the financial and radical intrusions of European communal influences. These nations started to generate native industries to distribute alternative products instead of their preceding importations. Meanwhile, countries such as Japan, augmented through refined and trained craftsman strength (McMillan, 2012), with limited natural resources, however, have initiated innovative industrial merchandize to encourage export business rather than depend on trade in comprehensive deliverables. The commencement of the 21st century also saw many republics countering to the globalized creations and encouraging local marketplaces on par with intercontinental competitors. The economies of these countries became susceptible to the fluctuations of foreign markets as a result of liberalization. There were considerable currency investment breakdowns and occurrences of economic problems in the second half of the 1990s (Lapavitsas, 2007).

The partition of labor in various nations and the metropolitan supremacies astonishingly affected the financial prudence of many of Asia's self-governing countries until the 1970s and remained relatively more thoughtful and stimulating than consistent with each other (Wan, 2007). The East and Southeast Asian nations have initiated significant industrialized, intraregional trade. Few places have used local canals noticeably as these inland waterways including stream and seaway routes are appropriate for carrying goods as well as holidaymakers at a nominal cost to travel wide-ranging remoteness.

The initial phase of the 13th century A. D. witnessed expeditions of the Europeans, including the adventurous travel of Marco Polo to East Asia (Duiker & Spielvogel, 2018). These voyages were greatly driven by rational inquisitiveness and developments in navigation and transport networks. The explorers had an excessive imprint on the locations that visited, and many nationalities slowly began to appreciate the impetus of Western ethos (Lockard, 2009). On account were numerous influences that influenced European explorers' search for innovative concepts related to the East. It includes the envisioned possibilities of technology-based trading practices across societies, such as the location-specific effect caused by the need for finding impractical commodities or resources and the social and financial ties involving the East and the West. However, it was the book "The Travels of Marco Polo" that fueled the quest for knowledge transpiration (Benedetto, 2014).

Exploratory travel observed some of the most momentous discoveries of the century, namely, the Carrack and the Caravel (a small, fast sailing ship of the 15th–17th centuries) in Iberia (Friedman & Figg, 2013). Primeval ships were a combination of conservative designs and structures native to Europe and Arab nations. They were preserved as important vessels that possibly would navigate alongside the relatively submissive Mediterranean direction and navigate carefully on the exposed areas of the Atlantic Ocean. One of the pioneering voyages was initiated by Portuguese navigator Prince Henry (Spielvogel, 2022). The Portuguese accomplished a leisurely but sturdy advancement and succeeded in going in a bit more southward direction. The next two decades witnessed expeditions through the Sahara Desert and explorers were able to overcome the blockades and trade in gold, beginning with Senegal. The year 1487 brought a decisive breakthrough when Bartolomeu Dias sailed through the Cape of Good Hope (Modelski et.al., 2007). His achievement resulted in the opening of the new sea route and entry to the Indian Ocean. Subsequently, in 1498, Vasco da Gama was able to reach India by sailing through the Indian Ocean (Bulliet et.al., 2018).

Following the example of the Portuguese, many European nations, namely, the Dutch, French, and British started to display their domination in the Indian Ocean routes and created respective commercial citadels and clusters. It is noteworthy to mention the expedition of Dutch explorers William John (Buchanan, 2015) and Abel Tasman through the coast of Australia (Cavendish, 2006). The 18th century also recorded the achievement of British Explorer James Cook who reached Polynesia (Goldberg, 2017). The

historical phase of adventurous voyages was replaced by the Industrial Revolution (Hansen & Curtis, 2022), and intercontinental trading practices became a common practice. The corporate events were so significant that the suppliers and the dealers turned out to be more influential in the social order than primitive landlords.

Age of Exploration paved the way for more sophisticated travel throughout the 17th century, along with the progression in business relations and heightened the professional expertise of individuals regarding universal locations. It permitted many European nations to navigate across the world with comfort by sea route (Cropley & Cropley, 2020). Progressively, many countries initiated their settlements and colonies in the Asian continent, with an enduring association of interactive transactions and trading practices. Subsequently, the foreign supremacies concluded searching for advanced trade directions and marketplaces for their manufactured goods.

Traveling to unfamiliar locations around the world provided a mysterious feeling to the explorers and offered an opportunity to study diverse societal and artistic communities. On their way back to their homelands, they were able to share such incredible knowledge and experiences with their family and friends. The exploratory travelers brought numerous developments in the arena of marine navigation and map reading. During the ancient expeditions, sailors used conventional portolan illustrations, which depended on shorelines and anchorages for communicating, allowing them only to travel within striking distance from the mainland. The most primitive nautical maps were introduced by Spanish and Portuguese adventurers who ventured into undiscovered exploratory travel. They identified not only the geography of the lands, but also the coastline travel routes and underwater currents they encountered during their expeditions (Choudhury, 2019).

Exploratory voyages were a stepping stone for the proliferation of geographical acquaintance with Asian destinations. Further, such travel permitted numerous individuals to perceive and understand myriad locations around the continent. The construction of ships and navigational skill advancements enabled mariners to traverse through the vast oceans with higher success rates. These voyages, combined with discoveries in mathematical concepts, astrophysics, map-making, and printed matter, facilitated extensive distribution of knowledge. Subsequently, these travel records enabled the capacity of localities to radiate beyond their borders (Mathew, 1988). As the ancient sea trading routes were overpowered by Ottomans and Venetians, many European realms started finding alternative routes for their voyages. The terrestrial pressure from the expanding Ottoman Empire resulted in expeditions to trace progressive commercial marine routes for the resourceful Asian markets (Howard, 2014).

The Middle Ages, which spanned from the 5th century to the 15th century (Hanawalt, 1998), included many changes in society and political structures. The Middle Ages also produced countless sophisticated explorers bringing out new-fangled discoveries. A highly motivated worldly traveler of this era who changed the looming travel arena was Marco Polo, the Italian voyager. He was one of the earliest Europeans to travel from Venice to the Chinese mainland (May, 2013). Marco Polo recorded his experiences, which were later interpreted in an intriguing manner. Indeed, Marco Polo recorded all his journey experiences in the manuscript “The Travels of Marco Polo” soon after his return from China (Rugoff, 2004).

Marco Polo’s book and travel accounts of various explorers exposed a virtuous impression of the complications confronted. Polo courageously encountered challenging situations during his expedition and revived them in a record with exceptional details, demonstrating discoveries, distinct practices, enticing merchandize, spatial narratives, and cultural nuances. Marco Polo’s book was acknowledged as the Bible for adventurous voyagers because it depicted the societal, cultural, fiscal, and environmental conditions of the places he had visited (Campbell, 1988). Places such as Mongolia, China, Tibet, Burma, Java, and India were mostly unknown among European voyagers of those days. Polo’s book has provoked many adventurers and rovers, including Christopher Columbus and Ferdinand Magellan, to name a few (Pletcher, 2013).

Polo traversed across Asia (Jackson, 1998), and particularly vigorously through the Chinese regions, namely, Yunan and Szechuan. His contented expeditions inspired him to sail along the coast of China further south to Vietnam and Sumatra. Furthermore, he reached Sri Lanka and India and returned to Ormuz (on the Persian Gulf). He continued his nautical journey northwest by land to the Black Sea, then the Mediterranean Sea, and finally reached Venice. Polo was widely recognized for his contributions to expeditions and treated as the architect of extended sea routes in Asia, such as the Silk Road (Adler & Pouwels, 2014). Although he was not the very first European to arrive in China, he happened to be the first to record an in-depth narrative of his travels across the Asian continent (Polo, 2016). His works contributed to spreading Chinese inventiveness and popular usage of charcoal, coinage, and compass for navigation and geographic cardinal directions to expand future explorations.

Polo’s book encompasses descriptions of diverse cultural beliefs and traditions of places he explored during his wide-ranging voyage within China (Polo, 2016). Polo encountered the standards for unfolding the notions of heritage and culture-related tourism. Later, Polo headed to the Middle East from Venice, Italy, in the Mediterranean Sea (Burgan, 2002). Subsequently, he and his team took the route alongside the Pamir Mountains and the Gobi Desert to reach Persia (modern-day Iran).

It was highly challenging to travel through the Asian continent during the time of Marco Polo’s explorations due to diverse natural and sociocultural resources. He encountered an arena of geographical disparities that very limited European adventurers might have sought to experience. Some of the old maps of Asia were created as per the evidence in Polo’s book, “The Travels of Marco

Table 1. Chronological History of Tourism Development in Asia

Year	Event/Milestone	Description	Significance/Impact	Source
1950s	PostWWII Recovery stage	After World War II, Asia saw a surge in tourism as economies recovered.	increased international travel, economic boost. Initial exploration of the region by Western tourists	Stubbs (1999); Hugo (2004).
1960s	Emergence of air travel (The Jet age of mass tourism) Regional Cooperation	The advent of commercial air travel made Asia more accessible to international tourists. Formation of the ASEAN boosts regional tourism cooperation.	Increase in foreign tourists and a growing number of international flights. Impactful effect on regional tourism policies	Becker (2016); Cohen & Cohen (2015) Ghimire (2001)
1970s	Growth of industrialized societies in Asian countries Bali's tourism boom	Asia's newly industrialized economies (NIEs) Bali, Indonesia, became a popular destination, attracting backpackers and tourists.	Societal growth in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong, and South Korea boosted tourism. Emergence of Bali as a major tourist spot	Fry(1985); Chen (1989) Picard (1990); Hampton (2003)
1980s	Economic growth in Asia	Rapid economic development in countries such as Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong led to increased outbound and inbound tourism.	Tourism became a significant contributor to the economy	March (1997); Mak & White (1992)
1990s	Asian Financial crisis Technology and globalization in Asia	Economic downturn affected tourism in some Asian countries temporarily. - Emergence of the internet and globalization impact tourism.	Decline in tourist arrivals and the impact on local economies. Changing global economy and technological innovations	Wall (1998); Chhibber & Palanivel (2009); Prideaux (1999) Watson (2004); Westphal (2002)
2000s	Rise of China as a tourism hub SARS outbreak Indian Ocean tsunami	China's economic growth led to increased domestic and international tourism. Temporary decline in tourism due to health concerns Tsunami had a significant impact on tourism in affected areas, leading to recovery efforts.	China became a major player in the global tourism industry. Economic impact Tourism infrastructure rebuilding and resilience.	Lin, (2011); Zhang & Ap (1999) Kuo et.al. (2008) Blazinet.al. (2014)
2010s	ASEAN tourism integration Digital Transformation	ASEAN countries collaborated to promote regional tourism, leading to increased cross-border travel. - Social media became a powerful tool for destination marketing. - Online booking platforms reshape the industry.	Strengthened regional ties and economic cooperation. Cooperative efforts to boost tourism in the region	Cuyvers (2019) Eryilmaz (2022); Kazandzhieva & Santana (2019)
2020s	COVID-19 pandemic	Global pandemic severely impacted tourism worldwide, including Asia.	Sharp decline in tourist arrivals, economic challenges - Shift toward domestic tourism and digital experiences - Unprecedented decline in tourism due to travel restrictions - Efforts to revive tourism through safety measures	Thomas (2021); Fauzi & Paiman (2021)

(*Source: author's observations and findings of the study)

Polo.” Thanks to this book, Europeans were familiarized with the concept of currency (Dieterle et al., 2020). Inspired by Polo's printed records of his understandings and explorations, many countries enthusiastically initiated mercantile relations with China and India. Polo assisted the Chinese traders in overcoming their dislike of Western societies and establishing tactful coalitions with European regimes (Spielvogel, 2022). Subsequently, many nations accepted and initiated policies safeguarding Europe's

trading practices. Polo's writings also glimmered the exploratory period that gave rise to several European nations competing for improved roads toward the East, specifically after the Ottoman Turks captured Constantinople and took control over it in the 15th century (Brotton, 2003). The technological advancement and the economic growth that Chinese industries accomplished through commercial relations with Europe empowered them to spread a level of progress.

Table 2. *Country-Wise Tourism Development in Asia*

Year	Country	Major Infrastructure Developments	Key events in tourism Development	Government Initiatives
1950s	Japan	Construction of hotels	Introduction of organized tours and accommodation facilities	Establishment of the Japan Travel Bureau (JTB) *Source: March (2007)
1960s	Thailand	Development of beach resorts	Launch of the "Visit Thailand Year" campaign	Creation of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) *Source: McDowall & Wang (2009)
1970s	India	Focus on heritage tourism	Implementation of the "Incredible India" marketing campaign	Formation of the Ministry of Tourism, Gol *Source: Kaur & Sharma (2012)
1980s	China	Development of key tourist sites	Opening up of China to international tourism	Establishment of the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) *Source: Airey & Chong (2010)
1980s	Thailand	Expansion of the hotel industry	Thailand relished vigorous progress in tourism	Introduction of the "Visit Thailand Year" campaign. *Source: Chon et.al. (1993)
1990s	Malaysia	Construction of new airports	Launch of the "Malaysia, Truly Asia" campaign	Implementation of the Vision 2020 development plan. Launching of Visit Malaysia Year operations in 1990 Hosting of Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. *Source: Bouchon (2014); Muda (1998)
2000s	Singapore	The "volumetric" metropolitan region is shaped by State borders plans for growth, financial and law enforcement practices, and structural and technical competence	The key site of postindependence Singaporean urbanism, the Marina Bay area	Marina Bay Sands construction Hosting of the first Formula One Grand Prix in Singapore *Source: McNeill (2019); Cheng & Jarvis (2010)
2000s	Japan	Upgrades to transportation	Technological improvements in transportation	Introduction of simplified visa requirements *Source: Sorensen (2005); Douglass & Roberts (2015)
2010s	South Korea	Expansion of cultural attractions	Focus on cultural and sports tourism	Hosting major international events such as the Winter Olympics Hosting of the G20 Summit and Yeosu Expo *Source: Wood & Meng (2021); Cooper & Parlar Dal (2016); Choi & Maliangkay (2014)
2015	Vietnam	Investment in tourism infrastructure	Increase in international marketing efforts	Economic reforms leading to increased tourism Implementation of the "Open Door" policy *Source: Nguyen (2020); Van Long & Tan (2018)
2020	Indonesia	Efforts to recover from the pandemic	Implementation of health and safety protocols	The Implementation of Health Protocol in Irrigation Small-scale Project Crisis management practices during the COVID-19 pandemic: The case of a newly-opened hotel in Bali. *Source: Rosyadi et.al. (2022); Peermatasari & Mahyuni (2022)
2021-2022	Philippines	Niche marketing strategy to revive the postpandemic situation	Promotional campaigns to boost tourism	The farm tourism initiatives in the Philippines *Source: Yamagishi et.al. (2021)

(*Source: author's observations and findings of the study)

At first, the evidence of Polo was not acknowledged by the explorers of the period. Gradually, society developed a desire for knowledge about civilizations of yesteryears and several voyagers got the stimulus to discover mysterious Asian destinations (Gosman, 1994). The prominent Silk Route was an enormous inspiration for collaborations between many nations (Barisitz, 2017). The Silk Road augmented the affluence and prosperity of mercantiles and dealings between Eastern and Western societies (Silin et al., 2018). Explorers such as Columbus, Magellan, and Vasco de Gama, fascinated by the inquisitiveness of lands, passed through the mysterious locations of Asia, which were the homelands of societies unnoticed (Appleby, 2013).

Concluding Thoughts: 20th-century Changes

The historical phase of World War II and its consequences led to a comprehensive progression of the holiday business and substantial changes in Asia as well (Li & Prescott, 2009). The countries have witnessed an increase in numbers of foreign tourists and native travelers exploring their homeland. Predominantly, among the Southeast Asian nations, the Japanese were very fervent and passionate travelers. Hong Kong and Singapore have immense mercantile dealings and entice many visitors because of duty-free ports. The simplification of journey boundaries in the 1970s caused a notable upgrading in the number of holidaymakers visiting China (Mak & White, 1992).

The 20th century advanced expeditions have caused many disparities in the folkloric traditions and ethnicities of Asia and these numerous traditional communities confronted difficulties regarding their self-governance (Scalapino, 1989). So far, the topographical position together with business connections of several Asian countries incorporated them into greater sociopolitical and commercial structures. Moreover, countries such as the Soviet Union and China have extended their fiscal and corporate expertise to Siberia and central regions of Asia (Barisitz, 2017). The century also witnessed many previous colonies in Asia being transformed into sovereign nations. The ancient Ottoman Empire was restructured into industrial realms of Asia (Bose & Jalal, 2022). In the meantime, various industrial expansions completed apprise with transport arrangements, communication linkages, and economic connections of Asia. All these developments have facilitated the modernization and integration of remote regions into international business centers (Rodrigue, 2020). Although several ancient vernaculars faded, plentiful old-style routines were preserved as fragments of preciously well-looked-after cultures (Jacob et al., 2015).

The political and commercial predominance of the nation states, to a certain extent, depends on the nation's traditional groups. In Indonesia, the Javanese have great control over political life (Jakobsen & Torp, 2001), while the supremacy was disposed to the Vietnamese in Vietnam and the Burmans in Myanmar (Lockard, 2009). In those areas, highland folkloric people such as the Hmong (in Vietnam) or the Shan (in Myanmar) frequently encounter hindrances (Clarke, 2001). The growth of major traditional gatherings has reliably restricted the area from being reachable for well-known, up-front social orders, and present-day regulatory structures have substituted previous performances.

The unswerving advancement in home-grown markets, corporate resourcefulness, and communal background have reinforced innumerable realms in the Asian continent. There is considerable potential for public-private partnerships because these undertakings may add extra worth to the leisure business. With the nurturing from the resident group, the ordinary milieu can deliver sufficient chances for guests to shape a vigorous attachment to the countryside and improve superiority in organization amenities. There is abundant progress in vacationer movement, particularly from intercontinental as well as intraregional tourism-generating countries. Nevertheless, the outlook of travelers and their predispositions are wide-ranging and increasingly varying. Although technology has become helpful in digitizing the tourism industry, appropriate expertise enrichment is still mandatory regarding manpower growth because of the prime sociopolitical encounters confronted by Asian countries.

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