Record Nr. UNINA9910779277503321 Renaissance of Asia [[electronic resource]]: evolving economic **Titolo** relations between South Asia and East Asia / / editor, Pradumna B. Rana Pubbl/distr/stampa Singapore,: World Scientific Pub. Co., 2012 **ISBN** 1-280-66967-5 9786613646606 981-4366-51-X Descrizione fisica 1 online resource (277 p.) Altri autori (Persone) RanaPradumna Bickram Disciplina 337.5405 Soggetti International economic relations Economics - South Asia Economics - East Asia Asia Economic conditions 21st century South Asia Foreign economic relations East Asia East Asia Foreign economic relations South Asia Lingua di pubblicazione Inglese **Formato** Materiale a stampa Livello bibliografico Monografia Description based upon print version of record. Note generali Nota di bibliografia Includes bibliographical references and index. Nota di contenuto Contents; Tables; Figures; Abbreviations; Foreword; Acknowledgements: About the Authors: Chapter 1 Introduction and Summary Pradumna B. Rana; Reference; Chapter 2 Regional Economic Integration in Asia: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives Pradumna B. Rana; Introduction; Asia's Re-Emergence; South Asia's Economic Relations with East Asia: Historical Perspective; Precolonial years; The 19th and early 20th century (The colonial period); The postcolonial

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Sommario/riassunto

A recent study by the Asian Development Bank notes that by 2050, Asia's per capita income would rise six-fold to reach Europe's levels today, one of many indications of Asia's "re-emergence". By then, Asia's share of global GDP would have doubled and it would have regained the dominant economic position it once held some 300 years ago before the industrial revolution. What is less well-known is that during the previous eras of globalization, Asia was also regionally integrated and globally connected. During the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, Asia was divided and fragmented.