fields or to look for other income. Monasteries for instance in recent times helped encourage agriculture in nomadic areas albeit for prospective returns. Monastic life did bring some improvement in learning, medicine and law. It provided avenues of social ascent for the ambitious and gave wider intellectual perspectives to those who had the wish and the ability to profit from them. It provided some forms of public support in some areas although in this the record seems slender. Even the monastic effect on demographic characteristics was not entirely negative for it helped to stabilize populations and prevented populations from pressing to the edge of subsistence.

The modern picture of the “traditional underdeveloped economy” is far from static and perhaps even allows for periodic advances in real income and periods of decline. Future research may show that periods of reform in the Lamaist religion, by the Tibetan reformer Tsongkapa for instance, may have also been periods of general economic advance promoted by the church. Is there any analogy in Inner Asian history to the way in which the Cistercians and Premonstratensians helped to drain the Flemish polders and to clear the wastes of Eastern Germany? It seems necessary to leave room, in present formulations about the area, for such historical possibilities.

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INDIAN AND ANCIENT CHINESE BUDDHISM: INSTITUTIONS ANALOGOUS TO THE JISA

The Tibetan term which is pronounced jisa and written spyi signifies literally terra commune or, like spyi, the principal or capital piece of land. The fact it is not to be found in the classical dictionaries of the Tibetan language, such as those of Sarat Chandra Das and Jäschke, seems to show that it is fairly recent. In these works the terms closest to it are spyi-tor and, better still, spyi-thog, which refer to a common fund or a common piece of property. These terms, too, appear to be relatively recent or at least exclusively Tibetan, for the dictionaries give no Sanskrit equivalent and they suggest that the terms belong solely to the dialects of Western Tibet. The Sanskrit terms corresponding to spyi would be sāmānyabhāmī and sādharanabhāmī in the first and most satisfactory sense, of common land, and agrabhāmī, mṛdhabhāmī and śīrobhāmī in the second sense. But these do not occur in the dictionaries of classic Sanskrit, nor of Buddhist Sanskrit (Edgerton), nor of Pali. Nor were any equivalent expressions either developed in Chinese Buddhism or preserved through Chinese translations of Sanskrit terms. If any Indian or Chinese terms corresponding to the Tibetan spyi-sa existed, they obviously formed no part of the canonical or even of the paracanonical literary language of Indian or ancient Chinese Buddhism. It follows that if Indian or Chinese Buddhism had an institution resembling the Tibetan jisa, the Buddhist monks must have considered it to be foreign to their activities and in some way unworthy.

The economic life of the little Buddhist community of early times was very simple. The laity met the material needs of the Samgha by providing woodlands for the monks to live in and by presenting them with cloth at the end of the rainy season, and with needles, razors and other necessities, and begging bowls. The monks begged for their food each morning in the neighboring settlements. A very ancient rule forbade the monks to receive, or even to touch, gold or silver or other precious objects.

In the last three centuries before our era, Buddhist communities, being favored by the Emperor Aśoka, spread all over India and beyond it into Ceylon and into Bactriana and in many regions attracted numerous converts who were rich, powerful and fervent. The life of the monks in consequence underwent a rapid transformation. The little bands that had been perpetually

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8 Tsyibkov, op. cit., p. 151.
9 Pozdneev, op. cit., I, p. 38, describes a case where the local church authorities ousted Chinese to promote agriculture among the Outer Mongols as a source of profit (the Mongols were shabinar or subjects of the monastic unit).
wandering from one place of pilgrimage to another, living in the open or in the woods, became communities of several hundred, sometimes several thousand monks, living permanently in great monasteries solidly built of brick or stone. The old economic system described above became incapable of assuring the livelihood of such important groups. New and more effective means had to be devised.

The sources telling us about these means are unfortunately scarce. They consist of a few brief allusions in certain canonical works, some contracts inscribed in stone concerning the form of gifts made by laymen to monasteries, and information gathered here and there by Chinese monks travelling in India.

The oldest data we possess are contained in the Vinayapitaka, which like other Buddhist canonical works, were compiled at some period between 100 B.C. and 100 A.D. The Vinayapitaka of the Theravādin, the Mahāsāṅghika and the Dharma-gupta, whether because they were compiled earlier or because they were more faithful to the ancient rules, recognize only the ancient economic plan under which monasteries have no means of production, possessing only their buildings and the land on which these stood, the food that was begged, the clothing and personal articles of the monks, and the furniture that they used in common. There are inalienable (avissajīya). The monks being unable to touch gold or silver, jewels or money, gifts of this kind must be destroyed, abandoned, or entrusted to laymen who will exchange them, not to the advantage of any particular monk but on behalf of the community for such necessities as clothing, bowls, furniture, or in certain sects like the Mahāsāṅghika, for food.

The other Vinayapitaka that have survived, those of the Mahāsāṅghika, the Sarvāstivādin, and the Mūlasarvāstivādin, either because they were compiled later than the above, or because the sects from which they emanate had evolved more rapidly, allude to more advanced economic conditions. Each monastic community possesses fields and gardens, slaves, flocks, and even treasures in gold, silver, jewels and money, all of them inalienable property leased or lent to laymen who turn over the product to the Saṅgha in kind. Surplus flowers that grow in the gardens and ponds of the stupa are consecrated to the cult of the latter are to be exchanged, according to the Mahāsāṅghika, for funds to be deposited with the Buddha's "inexhaustible goods", that is, funds lent at interest, the return on which is devoted to the maintenance and embellishment of the stupa.

One of the most characteristic features of these funds called "inexhaustible" is that they are not merged in a single common fund but remain distinct, the product of each addition being devoted to a separate purpose. Thus "Buddha's goods" are distinguished from "Buddha's land", and from "the Saṅgha's land", or from "the goods of the stupa", "the goods of the community of the four directions", "the goods of food" and "the goods to be shared"; and it is formally forbidden to merge any of these. As to the management of these often considerable possessions, the Sarvāstivādin entrust it entirely to laymen, thus respecting the old rules which forbid monks to engage in any commerce. On the other hand, the Mahāsāṅghika and the Mūlasarvāstivādin do not have the same scruples and they entrust the management to duly designated monks. This passage from the old economic system to the new has been admirably summarized by M. Gernet: "There is a particular moment in the history of Buddhist communities which marks the point of departure for the immense economic development to come. It is perhaps not, as A. Foucher stated, the accession of the first Saṅgha woodland, but the turning to a new procedure of giving, indirect rather than direct. Instead of aims in food, the offer of clothing or the gift of a place to rest to satisfy the immediate needs of the bhiksu, there is the gift of property producing rent or interest to maintain the religious and to meet the needs of the cult. This constitutes the great innovation in the practice of the Buddhist donation. It is the introduction of commerce into the ambit of the gift which makes a community of mendicant monks into a great economic power."

Among the hundreds of Buddhist inscriptions that have been found in India there are only a few furnishing details of interest as to the form that gifts took. They all belong to the region east of Bombay, and they go back to the beginning of the second century A.D. They differ from the other inscriptions in that instead of recording the gift of a statue, a column, a base-relief, or, what is more rare, of a cave, a cistern, a cell, or a sanctuary, all of which are unproductive, they record the gift of a field, a village, or a sum of money. Thus, at Kanheri, an inscription records the gift of a sum of money and a field situated in the village of Magalathana, as well as of a cave and a meeting hall. At Karle the record tells of the gift of a village to the community of Valuraka, living in the caves of the Valuraka. At Naśik we find an order from King Gotamiputra and the queen-mother bestowing a field within the town limits, in place of a field in the village of Kakhadi, on the

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1 J. Gernet, Les aspects économiques du Bouddhisme dans la société chinoise du Ve au Xe siècle (E.F.E.O., Saigon, 1956), pp. 63-64. Much of this article is based on this remarkable work.
2 Ibid., p. 154.
3 This is clear in the case of the Vinayapitaka of the Mūlasarvāstivādin.
5 Ibid., p. 167.
6 Vinayapitaka of the Mahāsāṅghika, Taishō 1425, p. 489ab.
7 Vinayapitaka of the Sarvāstivādin, Taishō 1435, p. 352b.
8 Gernet, op. cit., pp. 159, 161.
11 Gernet, op. cit., pp. 73-74.
12 Lüders, Epigraphia Indica, X, Appendix (Calcutta, 1912), Inscription no. 1024.
13 Ibid., no. 1100.
monks who live in the caves of Mount Tiranhrur. Also at Nāsik is an inscription recording the gift of the village of Dhambika, and still another recording a merchant's gift of money and clothing to the monks of "the community of the four directions", that is, to the Samgha as a collectivity. At Junnar, we are informed in the same way of the gift of a field in the village of Prevanada and of the investment of the revenue of another field at Vadālika planted with Karanja trees and Banyans, the investment being made with the gift of Konāchika, of the gift of several fields to be planted with jambousiers, palms, and sālā trees, and of the investment of a sum of money with the gifts of bamboo workers and caldron makers. It is above all the inscriptions of Nāsik which inform us of gifts of sums of money invested for increase with various guilds: weavers, potters, makers of hydraulic machines, oil pressers. One of these, more detailed, recites "the perpetual gift of 3000 kāhāpana for clothing and sustenance of the members of the universal community residing in this grotto. The kāhāpana have been deposited in an account with the corporations at Govardhana, as follows: 2000 with the corporation of weavers, at 1 padika % (monthly), 1000 to another group of weavers at 3/4 padika %. The kāhāpana are not to be repaid, only the interest is to be drawn. Of these sums, the 2000 placed at one padika % are destined for the expenses of clothing: "each of twenty monks passing the rainy season in my grotto will receive 12 (kāhāpana) for clothing. And the 1000 which are placed at 3/4 padika % are for the expenses of sustenance (kucassa)." Not only does this inscription give us details as to the source of funds given to the community in this way, but it shows us that the revenue from these funds is assigned to specific purposes. It is not the only example of its kind. Thus an inscription at Kanheri stipulates that the revenue from a field given to the community shall provide for the maintenance of the monks and for partitioning the porch and the pavāda (?) of the monastery. Two others mention the gift of villages to provide for the monks' maintenance. At Nāsik we find an inscription recording the gift of the village of Piśājāpadaka by the grandson of the queen-mother Gotami Balasiri for embellishment of the cave that the latter had given to the monks living on Mount Tiranhrur. Another records the gift of the village of Samali-

pada, in place of a former gift of the village of Sudasana, for the repair and maintenance of the queen's cave. A third, again, tells of the gift of a field to provide clothing for the hermits living in a certain cave, and still another tells of a field given to provide food for the monks in a certain grotto.

From these inscriptions, then, we learn that in the region east of Bombay, in the second century A.D., Buddhist communities enjoyed two kinds of endowment, one in which the community was apparently free to use the income as it pleased, and one in which the income had to be devoted to a specific purpose, such as clothing or food or in the maintenance and repair of a particular monastery building. This second kind of endowment is very reminiscent of the Tibetan institution of the jīsa.

The Chinese pilgrim Yi-tseng, who visited India, Indo-China and the Indies between 671 and 695, reported his observations of the life of Buddhist monks in all these lands in a work that has become celebrated. As a member of the Mulasarvāstivādin sect and a specialist in Vinaya—he translated the lengthy disciplinary code of his own sect into Chinese—he wanted to compare the customs of the Indian monks and those of the Chinese with the aim of reforming the latter. He has therefore bequeathed us a mass of detailed notes, the fruit of meticulous observation, and all the more valuable to us because they constitute almost the sole data of the kind that we have from this already rather late period of Indian Buddhism. From Yi-tseng we learn that at the end of the seventh century it was normal for Buddhist communities to be in possession of fields and gardens, cattle and sheep, sums of money, deeds and contracts, and of precious articles. The famous monastery of Nālandā, where over 3000 monks were permanently settled, held the land of more than 200 villages by grant from a series of kings. Property was acquired in two main ways, by donations of laymen and by devolvement of the possessions of deceased monks. As to the latter, Yi-tseng shows that it depended on the nature of these possessions whether they became indivisible corporate property or were distributed among the monks. A considerable proportion of Samgha property acquired in this way was assigned to special purposes. Thus gold and silver, merchandise in the form of handwork or other goods, and money, were divided into three parts, one for Buddha, one for Dharma, and the last for the Samgha. The part reserved for Buddha served to cover the expense of repairing temples and stūpa, and the part assigned to Dharma was used in the copying of sacred scriptures or in decorating the preacher's chair, "the lion's seat". The Samgha's part was dis-
tributed among the monks. In all Indian monasteries, Yi-tsing tells us, the clothing of the bhikṣu is provided from the common funds of the resident monks. The produce of farms and gardens and the profit of trees and fruit are shared each year to cover clothing costs, special pieces of land being reserved for this purpose. Every gift made to the community, whether it be a field, a house, or some other form of property, is considered as having been made for the purpose of feeding or clothing the monks.

In short, just as in the inscriptions, we find the same appropriation of the income of particular items of property to clearly specified ends as seems to characterize the Tibetan jīṣa. Other data come from the neighboring field of Ceylonese Buddhism. This was so strongly influenced by Indian Buddhism that at least for the ancient period we must regard it as an integral part of the latter. In his fine work, A History of Buddhism in Ceylon, the Venerable W. Rahula has investigated the economic life of the ancient monasteries of Ceylon, basing his account on inscriptions as well as on chronicles and similar works. His evidence is all the more interesting in that Ceylon belonged to one of the most archaic of the Buddhist sects, that of Theravāda, whose code of discipline, as we have seen above, was rigidly faithful to the older economic system. It is true that in the early centuries of our era other schools existed on the island and often flourished, schools whose attachment to the older rules and doctrines was much looser. On the evidence of very sound sources, the Venerable Rahula tells us that in the period covered by his work, from the middle of the third century B.C. to the tenth century A.D., the monasteries of Ceylon were in possession, by royal grant, of vast lands worked by serfs and other Samgha servants, that "monks were in charge of the revenue received from the villages and lands granted to the monastery", that "at the end of the year the annual statement of accounts was placed before the Samgha for approval, and if there were any discrepancies and shortcomings regarding the accounts, inquiries were held by theras who kept the register", that "all employees of the ārāma [monastery] were paid regularly from its revenues", and that "the monks themselves were 'paid' for their work. For example, different grades of 'payment' were fixed for monks who taught Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidhamma and for those who looked after the monastery."

A little further on we learn that "there seem to have been some monks who had agricultural and commercial interests, others who had landed property" but they were looked down on, in the same way as men who had committed grave offences, and like these were forbidden to live in monasteries. Each monastery guarded its temporal possessions jealously, and it was forbidden, except in certain circumstances and for compensation, either to alienate or lend them to laymen or even to monks of another monastery. "Labourers, cows, carts and buffaloes belonging to the monasteries could not be appropriated by anyone."

The large monasteries had four different sources of permanent revenue: "first, the grant of lands and fields and villages; second, tanks and canals; third, the deposit of paddy and other grains and moneys to be held in trust for the monastery; fourth, the levying of taxes and the collecting of fines." The first example of a gift of this kind dates from the end of the first century B.C., when King Vaṭṭagāmāna granted a sangha-bhāga "community-property" to the monastery of Kupikkala, then under the direction of Mahātissa Thera. Many grants of this kind are attested in the centuries following.

In addition to these endowments, for the general maintenance of a community there were others for particular purposes. Many grants were made for the purpose of repairing ancient dilapidated buildings. We can find grants for providing some particular varieties of food to the Sangha. For example, an inscription at Rāssahela stipulates that from the income of a certain land nothing but curd, oil and milk should be provided.

In the first few centuries religious endowments took the form of lands, fields, villages, ponds and canals. From the fourth century A.D., no doubt due to the development of Ceylonese foreign trade, especially with the Roman Empire, monetary endowments appear beside the older kinds. The money was entrusted to guilds, prototypes of our modern banks and commercial companies, which were obligated to make it productive and to pay over the return at regular intervals. Here is the same custom that we found two centuries earlier in some of the Nāsik inscriptions. Sometimes it is not money that is entrusted to the guilds but a certain quantity of grain or lentils or of some other crop. Often the interest of the endowment is assigned to the support of particular religious ceremonies, such as the festival of the Aryanama, celebrated in a particular monastery. Again, an endowment could be for other purposes, such as the supplying of a monastery with certain spices, or with food in general. It was also customary to entrust sums of money to guilds for the purpose of providing monasteries with slaves, of both sexes. Finally, there were endowments for maintaining or constructing the various buildings of the monastery.

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38 Ibid., p. 192.
39 Ibid., p. 193.
40 Colombo, 1956.
41 Monks of superior rank, "deans".
42 W. Rahula, op. cit., p. 137.
43 Ibid., p. 138.
This examination of the Ceylon documents confirms what we were able to find in the Indian evidence and on one point goes further, namely, in regard to monastic endowment in support of religious ceremonies. Now this last point appears to have been one of the most important elements in the Tibetan jisa. If we find no trace of it in the field of Indian Buddhism we must remember that only a part of the enormous quantity of documentary evidence has been searched, and that we do meet it in modern Hinduism. A brochure published in 1955 for pilgrims coming to the great temple of Vishnu at Kancheerpuram, the holy city forty miles southeast of Madras, mentions an analogous custom. After detailing the revenue from landed endowment and from villages, buildings, loans, etc., the brochure states that “the ubayakars for the several festivals contribute Rs. 12,000, of which the main portion is for the Vaisaka Brahmotsavam, which costs about Rs. 9,000”. And again, “This temple conducts about 240 festivals in a year... Out of these festivals only about 90 are by ubayakars”. The word ubayakar corresponds to the Sanskrit upayakara, literally “that which creates the means”, that is to say, for the context is clear, the financial means coming from an endowment the nature of which is unfortunately not specified. Thus even today, in a Hindu temple in a sacred city of Southern India—a milieu where there can be no question of any Buddhist or Tibetan influence whatever—the cost of an apprecciable part of the ceremonies, including the most lavish and important of all, is covered by a financial device similar to that of the jisa. This is but one example taken at random from among many others, which confirms that this institution is of Indian origin, not exclusively Buddhist, and has been preserved in India to our own day.

For the study of Chinese facts of the same order our best course is to rely on M. Gernet’s excellent work, already cited, Les aspects économiques du Bouddhisme dans la société chinoise du Ve au Xe siècle. The talents of Chinese historians and archivists, that concern for the faithful image of the past that characterizes them and distinguishes them from Indians, and also the fact that numerous documents of all kinds have been discovered since the beginning of this century, preserved in the sands of Central Asia, have placed at our disposal a mass of varied and detailed factual material for the study of the economic life of ancient Chinese Buddhism. China was converted to Buddhism in the first few centuries A.D., just at the time when Indian Buddhism was beginning to enjoy the extraordinary economic development described above. The whole system that underlay Buddhist prosperity in India was carried to China between the fifth century A.D. and the tenth, a period coinciding with the apogee of Buddhism in this country, the same economic facts as in India and Ceylon. Here also monasteries clearly drew on productive and inalienable property, lands and villages where families of serfs worked, a variety of industrial workshops, and sums of money lent at interest. Oddly enough, in all the mass of documentary evidence that we have, there are none referring to endowment for special purposes. Citing the passage in which Yi-ting speaks of landed endowment for the monks’ clothing costs, M. Gernet writes, “...I have found no trace of this custom either in Touen-hoearing or in China. But we know that analogous landed endowments for incense and lamps existed.” The only relevant document cited is a stela recording the growth of the monastery of Wan-cheou in Tch’ang-nga towards the end of the sixth century and indicating that among its properties there was a certain area (over 14 hectares) of “lands for the cost of incense (hian-t’i)”. Must we conclude from the extreme rarity of such evidence that this practice, analogous to the jisa, was rare, if not altogether unknown, in ancient China? One is tempted to think so, and a reading of M. Gernet’s work emphasizes this impression. Indeed, we find numerous cases there in which the entire support of communities rests on the monastic property in the form of land, industrial equipment, shops, and money on loan, and some instances in which the cost of religious ceremonies is covered by offerings, the result of appeals, or by special banquets.

In conclusion we may say that institutions analogous to the Tibetan jisa were known in India and in Ceylon in the early centuries of our era. From there, by the medium of Buddhism, they were soon after carried to China, and later to Tibet and Mongolia. The statement of the Venerable Rāhula in regard to Ceylon can doubtless be applied to India, although at an earlier period the endowments in question consisted at first of arable land and later of money invested with guilds of merchants and artisans. This would perhaps explain the presence of the term sa (land) in the word jisa. Unfortunately our evidence is too thin to enable us to draw solid conclusions on this point.

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52 Ibid., pp. 138-49.
53 Ibid., pp. 149-84.
54 Ibid., p. 160, note 2.
55 Ibid., p. 27.
56 Ibid., pp. 90-190.
57 Ibid., pp. 196-204, 205-12.