

Shi Family Tombs in China and Taiwan

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Historical and archaeological evidence proves that the relationship between Sri Lanka and China dates back at least to first century BC. However, there is not much historical evidence to prove a relationship between Sri Lanka and Taiwan. The year of 1996 became very important for Sri Lankan history because of the discovery of Shi family cemetery in Quanzhou in South China. The tombs presented 40 names which belonged to the Shi royal family that was founded by an envoy from Kotte kingdom in Sri Lanka to the Ming court in China. The tombstone of a founder named Ba Lai Na and his wife Pu were also included in the collection. Shi clan was very popular in China because teachers, translators and businessmen originated from the family. Most of them were social workers. Currently the twentieth generation is living in China. A member of the fourteenth generation of the Shi Family immigrated to Taiwan and settled in Changhua city. Two tombstones found in Taiwan bear resemblance to tombs in Quanzhou. Three generations (20th, 21st, and 22nd) are living in Taiwan. The tombs in China and Taiwan add a new chapter to Sri Lankan relations with China and Taiwan.

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