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Sino-Sri Lankan Relationship and *Trikāyastava* in an Inscription at Mihintale

米欣塔莱铭文中的中斯关系和特里卡亚斯塔瓦

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Abstract

This article focusses the history of Sino-Sri Lankan relationship from the remote past to the present in brief and discusses the evidence in relation to the inscription called *Trikāyastava*, at Mihintale, Sri Lanka pertaining to the present study. Sri Lanka and China maintained a close relationship especially, in the field of religion and trade, during more than two millennia. There are many records among the Chinese literary sources, which bare evidence to prove the cruse of representatives from Sri Lanka to China and vice-versa. In an Inscription, at Mihintale there are some verses, in Sanskrit and depict the eulogy to the *Trikāya* of the Buddha. Evidence for eulogizing *Trikāya* can be traced from China, Tibet and Sri Lanka only. As the said inscription is a unique piece of evidence in relation to a study on the Sri Lanka-China relationship, a brief discussion relevant to the fact has also been made in this paper.

Keywords: Sino-Sri Lankan, relationship, *Trikāyastava*, Mihintale

Introduction

History of Sino-Sri Lankan relationship goes back to remote past even up to 2nd millennia B.C.E. Therefore, evidence can be traced from the Sri Lankan, Chinese and other sources for the religious, commercial, and diplomatic relations between the two countries developed by leaps and bounds during the past four millennia (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89).

Trikāyastava in an Inscription at Mihintale, Sri Lanka is a unique piece of evidence related to *Trikāyastava* concept. It eulogizes the *Trikāya* or the three bodies

of the Buddha, developed by Mahāyāna tradition, in Sanskrit and *Śragdharā* meter.

Applicability of the topic mentioned above arises through two ways: (1) *Trikāyastava* has been restored into Sanskrit from Chinese transliteration and from a Tibetan codex. No other country than these three, viz. Sri Lanka, China and Tibet has so far presented *Trikāyastava* in the equal form. (2) *Trikāyastava* too being a Buddhist concept found in both countries and common in the sense too. Therefore, it is certain that Buddhism is the bridge between the two countries relationship through more than two millennia.

This article is based on the literature survey. Among the extent researches related to Sino-Sri Lankan relationship Rohan Gunaratne (1987) wrote specially based on Chinese sources and Professor S.G.M. Weerasinghe (1995) are foremost. Professor B.E.S.J. Bastianpillai also presented a paper to the Goa Conference (UNESCO Maritime Silk Roads Expedition) -1990 and the topic was “China-Sri Lanka: Trade and Diplomatic Relations including the Voyages of Cheng-Ho.”

John M. Seneviratne has translated an article by M.Sylvain Levi published in the Journal Asiatique in 1900 is the most preceding study on the subject. Seneviratne’s translation has been published in the Journal R.A.S. (Ceylon) Vol.xxiv (1915-16). At the beginning of that translation a saying of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the Vice President to the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society is Quoted. I Quote the same here as it shows the importance of the Sylvain Levi’s study related to the present study.

“The whole series of Chinese records about Ceylon, which M. Sylvain Levi has collected in the Journal Asiatique (1900), is most interesting and valuable, not only in respect of information about Ceylon and its relations with China, but also as a means of checking the chronology of the *Mahāvamsa* during many centuries. So checked, the accuracy of the Sinhalese chronicle is, in spite of slight disagreements, placed on a solid basis. M. Levi’s article, so far as it relates to Ceylon, should be early translated in full and embodied in our Journal” (Seneviratne, 1915, p.74).

Historical evidence found about the relationship between Sri Lanka and China

According to the Indian epic *Mahābhārata*, Chinese and Sri Lankan representatives attended the sacrifice, *Rājasūya* of Yudhishthira at Hastināpura, India. Referring to the *Mahābhārata*, some scholars have mentioned that the relationship between China and Sri

Lanka goes back to the second millennia B.C.E. (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89) Referring to the *Rāmāyana* and contemporary texts, some scholars have agreed to a trade relationship between China and Sri Lanka which goes back up to the 15th century B.C.E. According to them, Chinese ships transported cinnamon to Dynastic Egypt from Sri Lanka which was known, during the prehistoric time, as “the land in which cinnamon grew” (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89).

An ancient Sinhala text, the *Sīhalavattthupparāṇa*, states that 32 Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka and four *Arahats* from India visited the capital of China. This occurred in and around the 2nd or 1st century B.C.E.

“Diplomatic relations between ancient Sri Lanka and China commenced around the first century B.C.E. While the Sinhalese visited China, Chinese too have reached *Sīhaladvīpa*. Some of the Chinese visitors to Sri Lanka might have permanently remained here owing to various reasons, such as religious activities and matrimonial ties (Weerasinghe, 1995, p.98).”

Chinese text *Han Shu* records that a Chinese mission to South India met with disaster and returned to China after visiting *Sinhaladvīpa*. This incident, according to the record, had occurred at the beginning of the Christian era (1-6 C.E.) (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89).

The Roman chronicler Pliny (24-79 C.E.) and the Greek Cosmos Indicopleustes (6th century C.E.) described Sri Lanka as a “great emporium”, which the Chinese used to visit frequently from early times. Sri Lanka used to export items of value such as honey, amber and pepper. In the 14th and 15th centuries items imported from China included cotton, rose water and musk. It has been already mentioned that the transportation of cinnamon from Sri Lanka to Egypt was done by Chinese ships.

Another information provided us by Pliny was that Sinhala ambassadors from the court of Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka sat on right side of the Roman Emperor Claudius Caesar in 47 C.E. when captives from England, including two early kings Caradoc and Caractacus were paraded before him. Sri Lankans had by then also visited China and these ambassadors were able to give a description of China to the Roman Court. Pliny noted that the Sinhala travellers had reached China overland, passing through India along the foot of the Himalayan range of mountains (Weerasinghe, 1995, p.98).

The Sinhala king in Anuradhapura dispatched a number of conjurers who performed wonderful sleight of hand tricks to liven the life of the emperor. It is interesting to note that the whole of Asia sent artists some of them sculptures, magicians and conjurers to please the emperor, but the conjurers who had performed for the Sinhala king before coming to China were unique.

When the Chinese requested for the identity of these men the reply was, “We are men of the western seas. To the west of the sea (Bay of Bengal), Southwest of Shen (Sinhala) lies Tats’ in Syria and the two are in close communication. Some scholars disagree that the identity of Shen is Sinhala” (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89).

An embassy of, probably during the reign of king Gajabahu reached China in 120 C.E., included several conjurers who entertained the emperor in 121 C.E., the emperor conferred on the Sinhala king the honorary distinction of the “Mantses and the Golden Chersonese” (Seneviratne, 1915, p.74).

A mission from Sri Lanka, which reached the Chinese Court in 405 C.E., had travelled overland via India and Central Asia in a journey, which had taken ten years. Another mission, which reached China during

the time of emperor Zhouti of the Sung Dynasty, travelled overland and by sea and took three years to end the journey. According to Weerasinghe, this mission was sent by the king Upatissa I. A Buddhist monk (*śramaṇa*) was also included the mission. Weerasinghe, referring to Seneviratne, Liyanagamage and Ponnampereuma mentions: Another mission from Sri Lanka is recorded to have reached the Chinese Court overland in 405 C.E. They are said to have reached China via India and Central Asia. This appears to be an embassy sent by the Sri Lankan king Upatissa I (360-410 C.E.) to the Chinese Emperor of the Tsing Dynasty. This tedious journey was long and has taken ten years. “A Jade-stone image of the Buddha exhibiting every colour in purity and richness, in workmanship unique, and appearing to be beyond human art” is mentioned to have been sent to the Chinese Emperor through this embassy (Weerasinghe, 1995, p.98).

An important record is that of the Chinese monk, Ven. Fa Xian, who set off for India in 399 C.E. in search of Buddhist texts and sojourned two years in Sri Lanka while studying Buddhism. He resided principally at the Abhayagiri Viharaya in Anuradhapura, where there were five thousand monks at that time. Major establishments (*pirivenas*) being the Mahavihara and the Jetavana and Abhayagiri monasteries. (Ven. Fa Xian noted that there were 3000 bhikkhus in the Mahavihara. The refectory rice boat in the Mahavihara was large enough to hold cooked rice for 3800 monks, while those in the Jethavana and Abhayagiri monasteries could hold sufficient to feed 3000 and 5000 respectively.) Fa Xian was aligned to Mahāyāna but also studied the *Theravada* practiced by *Hinayanists* before he left the country in 414 C.E. While Ven. Fa Xian was in Sri Lanka, he had seen a

merchant from China offering a white silk fan to the Buddha image. Ven. Fa Xian records:

“Fa Xian had been many years from the land of Han; the people with whom he had been thrown into connection had all been foreigners; the hills, streams, plants, and trees on which his eyes lighted were not those of former times; moreover, those who had travelled with him were separated from him—some having remained behind, and others having died. Now, beholding only his own shadow, he was frequently sorrowful at heart; and when suddenly by the side of this jade image he saw a merchant make offering of a white silk fan from China, his feelings overcame him and his eyes filled with tears” (Giles, 1877).

At a time, when the Abhayagiriya fraternity was enjoying a very prosperous period, Chinese traveller monk Ven. Fa Xian (C.E. 412-414) arrived in Sri Lanka. Sanskrit works belonging to the Mahāyāna tradition, such as *Dīrghāgama*, *Saṃyuktāgama*, *Saṃyuktasañcayapiṭaka* and the *Vinaya Piṭaka* based on the Mahīmsāsaka tradition, which he took to China, are believed to have been obtained from Abhayagiri.

The fifth century C.E. was one of considerable activity in several respects. These activities included Buddhist missionary works.

Chinese and Roman ships were dealing directly with the Sinhalese from about the year 125 C.E. to the 4th century C.E. By the time of King Dhatusena (459-477 C.E.) of Sri Lanka. The ancient port of Mahatittha known as “Mantota” was becoming an entre-port (mart or emporium) for trans-shipment and barter of goods from Beijing, Rome and other cities. Exports from Lanka since early times included gems, pearls, spices, aromatic gum, ivory, metallic mercury, muslin and elephants. Imports included gold, silver, silk, perfumes, medicinal drugs, glass, porcelain, wine, diamonds, red sea coral and horses.

Three Sinhalese Bhikkhunis in 429 C.E. and five Bhikkhus in 456 C.E. were sent as an embassy to the emperor (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89).

The king Silakala (522-535 C.E.) in his respectful letter to the Chinese court mentioned that despite the great distance between Sri Lanka and China, there was awareness in Sri Lanka regarding the developments in China. Silakala was also adhering to the dhamma and wished that the relationship between the two countries would strengthen with the blessings of the Triple Gem (Weerasinghe, 1995, p.98). Mahāyāna Buddhism was flourishing in Sri Lanka at that time and Silakala’s contemporary in China, Emperor Wu was an ardent supporter of Buddhism. Subsequent encounters of the peoples of the two countries have been numerous and documented. For instance, Chinese chronicles state that there were constant voyages between China and Sri Lanka in the period between the two monks Ven. Fa Xian (5th century) and Ven. Itsing (7th century). However, many written records have undoubtedly been destroyed or lost over the years. These losses have occurred more frequently as regards the Sri Lankan than the Chinese accounts. The loss of records of such events, which occurred in the pre-colonial age of Sri Lanka, contributed to the delay of awareness until recently of substantial and important chapters of Sri Lankan history.

An order of Bhikkhunis (Buddhist nuns) was active in Sri Lanka during the 4th century C.E. The nuns of the order belonged to the Mahavihara as well as to the Abhayagiri Vihara. Eleven Bhikkhunis went from Sri Lanka to China and conferred higher ordination over 300 Chinese nuns in 434 C.E.

A number of Chinese personalities have visited Sri Lanka during the past millennia for various purposes.

Those who visited with a religious purpose especially held pleasant memories.

There are, at least, three Chinese monk travellers, scholars or translators and disseminators of the Buddha's noble Dharma teachings around the world, whose names are constantly mentioned with the history of Sri Lanka. They are: (1) Ven. Fa Xian or Fa-Hsien 法显; *Fǎxiǎn*; (337-422 CE), (2) Ven. Xuan Zang 玄奘; *Hsūan-tsang* (602-664 CE) and (3) Ven. Yi Jing; 義淨; Iching or Itsing as appearing in some 19th century publications 635-713 CE).

Out of these three monks Ven. Fa Xian stayed for two years in Sri Lanka while Ven. Xuan Zang profiled in detail the Buddhist affairs of Sri Lanka from the various documents and numerous eyewitness accounts of other travellers and pilgrims whom he met in India. There were number of diplomatic missions to China dating from the time of King Gajabahu I (114-136 C.E.). There were six recorded missions between 618-905 C.E. Out of them four were during the time of Aggabodhi VI (733-772 C.E.). Chinese coins belonging to every emperor from 976 C.E. to 1265 C.E. have been found in Sri Lanka. Envoys were sent regularly to China in 13th and 14th centuries. Chinese records indicate that China offered to help the Sinhala king get back the sacred tooth relic when in 1284 Pandya king Manavarman Kulasekhara (1268-1310C.E.) got hold of it.

Between 1273 and 1294 C.E., there were five missions. Parakramabahu VI (1412-1467 C.E.) dispatched six missions. *Kāvyaśekhara* refers that there were Chinese soldiers in the army of Parakramabahu III (1287-1293 C.E.). China has shown respect for Sri Lanka. When Cheng Ho, an envoy of the Chinese emperor was attacked in Sri Lanka, in the 15th century C.E., China took a lenient

view. Instead of beheading the Sinhala offenders, who were taken to China, sent them back with food and clothes.

During European colonialism, the historical episodes of Sino-Sri Lanka relations were dormant for almost five hundred years until Sri Lanka gained its independence from the Portuguese, the Dutch, and lastly from the British in 1948. The newly independent island established its first bilateral agreement - the Rubber-Rice Pact-with China in 1952 soon after the establishing of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

Since 1957, formal diplomatic relations began to expand, as several heads of state have visited each other's capitals. The completion of the massive Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) in 1973 was a landmark of friendship, among other projects.

More recently, Sri Lanka established close relations as China provided military, financial, and diplomatic support for Sri Lanka to defeat the separatist Tamil Tigers, ending the over-quarter-century-old Eelam War in 2009.

Trikāyastava in an inscription at Mihintale, Sri Lanka.

This inscription is inscribed on a rock lying to the north of the Ambasthala *dāgāba* at Mihintale. The inscription consists of 19 lines. Unfortunately, much of the inscription has been effaced and lines 1-16 have not been deciphered. Lines 16-19 of the inscription consist of the *Trikāyastava* (i.e. eulogy of the three *kāyas* (or bodies) of the Buddha) in three Sanskrit stanzas composed in the *Sragdharā* metre. Considering the words: "Bodhisattva Guṇākara" are carried by the inscription, Dr. Paronavitana, Sri

Lankan well versed Archaeologist, suggests that the author might be a Buddhist monk who aspires to Buddhahood (Epigraphia Zeylanica, 1943, p.243).

Paranavitana, for the first time, published two verses of this inscription in his paper *Mahayanism in Ceylon*. Sylvain Levy, having read Paranavitana's paper, passed the information to Paranavitana on *Trikāyastava*. Paranavitana records: "The late professor Sylvain Levy, who happened to read my paper, was kind enough to inform me that the verses in question belong to the *Trikāyastava* which he restored into Sanskrit from a Chinese transliteration and published for the first time in 1896, and which was later published in 1911, from a Tibetan codex, by Baron A. von Stael-Holsten" (Epigraphia Zeylanica, 1943, p.243). Therefore, the scholars have been successful in deciphering the inscription with the help of Chinese and Tibetan texts. Paranavitana, says that the *Trikāyastava* was taken to China by Ven. Fa Xian (Epigraphia Zeylanica, 1943, p.243). There is a time bar, at least 200 years, between the *Trikāyastava* in an inscription (dated about 7-8 centuries C.E.) and Ven. Fa Xian's (337-422 C.E.) visited Sri Lanka. No other source place or evidence can be traced in Sri Lanka, then the inscription mentioned here, which bears the *Trikāyastava*. Therefore, a problem arises from where Ven. Fa Xian brought *Trikāyastava* to China.

Stavas or hymns in praise or adoration to the Buddha or related are popular in many countries including India, China, Tibet and Sri Lanka. The common people as well as learned people used to practice such recitations and contemplations of hymns because they believed that the harmony and peace in the individual mind can be brought by that practice. Among the *Stavas Catustava* ascribed to Nagarjuna is prominent. *Trikāya* is a result of the later development of the Buddha concept under the Mahāyāna tradition. It is

said that the *Yāna* concept has made the fertile soil for this development of the Buddha concept. There are three *Yānas* or vehicles to attain *Nibbana* viz. *Shrāvakayāna*, *Pratyekabuddhayāna* and *Buddhayāna*. *Shrāvakayāna*, the vehicle of the ordinary *Bhikṣu* who hopes to become an *Arahat*, the *Pratyekabuddhayāna* for the rare beings who are able to become Buddhas but do not preach the Dhamma to others, and in contrast to both of these the *Buddhayāna*, Mahāyāna or the great vehicle of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Due to those who praise only the *Yāna*, *Buddhayāna* along with the *Bodhisattvayāna*, are called Mahāyāna.

The facts, mentioned below, are found in the inscription:

- i. The ideal of the Bodhisattva has been extolled.
- ii. *Trikāya* of the Buddha is eulogized.
- iii. The language used is Sanskrit (Epigraphia Zeylanica, 1943, p.243).

Paranavitana claims that the *Trikāyastava* found in Sri Lanka is closer to the same of Tibetan than Chinese. He gives two reasons to prove his opinion, viz.

- i. First line of the verse 2 of the Sri Lankan is "*sukṛta śataphalam*" which is similar to the Tibetan version, while the Chinese one reads as "*sukṛta śamaphalam*".
- ii. The fourth verse seen in the Chinese has been omitted in Sri Lankan and Tibetan.

Prof. Mudiyanse, also agrees to say that the accordance of the text of the *Trikāyastava* is closer to that of Tibetan than Chinese version.

"The text has been found to be more in accord with the Tibetan manuscript than with Chinese, except with regard to orthography regarding which the inscription is more reliable. The Chinese text contains four verses, the Tibetan manuscript and the inscription only three" (Mudiyanse, 1997, p.90).

There is much evidence, archaeological and literary to justify the existence of Chinese relationships with Sri Lankan Mahāyāna monasteries. However, there is no proof of Tibetan relationships except the similarity seen between the *Trikāyastava* and Tibetan tradition. Certainly, there is no sufficient evidence to prove whether the *Trikāyastava* found in Sri Lanka is closer to Chinese one or to Tibetan version. However, there are some points to be discussed in this respect.

- i. It is not clear in Paranavitana's note, from where Fa Xian brought *Trikāyastava* to China.
- ii. It is not clear according to the records, made by Fa Xian, whether Fa Xian brought *Trikāyastava* along with him among the texts he had taken from Sri Lanka.
- iii. If we agree to accept that Ven. Fa Xian brought *Trikāyastava* to China from Sri Lanka, it means that we agree to accept that by the time, Fa Xian visited Sri Lanka, *Trikāyastava* prevailed in another form, Text or inscription other than the inscription at Mihintale. It can also be accepted, because there were some occasions texts were burnt due to the rivalry of both Mahavihara and Abhayagiriya. Therefore, if the *Trikāyastava* prevailed in text form in Sri Lanka when Fa Xian arrived, it may have been caused to burn at a later time.
- iv. Or probably, Fa Xian brought *Trikāyastava* from India to China.
- v. Inclusion of the fourth verse as appear in the Chinese version may not be compulsory, because the content of the fourth may be personal and different as appearing in the last line which is in the fragmentary form of the inscription.
- vi. The difference between Sri Lankan and Chinese *Trikāyastava* may probably occur due to the

transliteration. Once it was transliterated into Chinese from Sanskrit and then from Chinese to Sanskrit.

- vii. Unlike the relationship between Sri Lanka and China the relationship between the two countries Sri Lanka and Tibet is very poor.
- viii. If, we consider the fact that the *Trikāyastava* was brought to China from India, after that the Indian *Trikāyastava* disappeared at a later time in India.
- ix. There may be another suggestion that the *Trikāyastava* was created in Sri Lanka, though it has historical development, even from the *Prajñāpāramitāsūtra*, and was taken into China and also into Tibet.

It is open to prove, because the most of the lines are effaced in the inscription and the content as a whole and the purpose of the inscription is unclear to us.

However, it is clear that the Mihintale-*Trikāyastava* inscription too bears evidence for the expansion of the Mahāyāna tradition in Sri Lanka during the period between the 7th and 9th centuries C.E. Besides this inscriptional evidence, there are a number of monuments associated with the Mahāyāna tradition, found in various places in Sri Lanka. The most important fact is that the *Trikāyastava* inscription bears evidence to the fact that the monastery of Mihintale, where Venerable Mahinda paid his first visit and made his first sermon, had become a Mahāyāna monastery.

The greatest bond between China and Sri Lanka was that of Buddhism. The king Mahanama (412-434 C.E.) in his letter, brought by four Buddhist monk Ambassadors, to the Chinese emperor said that a government based on Buddhist principles is the ideal government and said that the bond of friendship between the two countries was based on their

adherence to the Triple Gem. The content of the letter sent by the king is included in *Epigraphia Zeylanica* Vol.II (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89), (Weerasinghe, 1995, p.98). According to Gunaratne the letter starts: “I respectfully inform the illustrious lord of the great sung that, though mountains and seas separate us news of him reaches us from time to time ...” letter continues: “Our ancient kings considered hitherto the practice of virtue as their only duty; they knew how to rule without being severe, they served and honoured the three jewels...” The letter concludes: “I desire his Majesty to send me a letter to make known his instructions to me.”

A letter similar to the above was sent by the king Silākāla (522C.E.-535C.E.) to the emperor (Weerasinghe, 1995, P98). This evidence proves that the relationship between two countries; China and Sri Lanka existed for a long time. It is clear that the main cause behind this relationship, even from the remote past, whether it would be Theravāda, Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna, is Buddhism.

A story, which says that a group of Sri Lankan monks 33 in number, along with 4 Arahant from India, visited China through India, included in the *Sīhalavatthupparāṇa* mentioned above, also determine the same. According to the story of the *Sīhalavatthupparāṇa* the Chinese Emperor was influenced by Brahmins and learned Brahmins were the Counsellors to the Emperor. The day, when the incident took place, the emperor was at the balcony along with Brahmins saw a group of monks compassionately walking towards the palace. At the moment, Brahmins observing the senses of the emperor who was enthusiast to meet the group of monks, said to the emperor, “Sir, they are a group of dangerous spies. They have come to cause disaster to

your empire and before they do it you should sentence them to death”. The emperor, believing the word of Brahmins and having without any investigation, ordered the sentence of death to the group of monks. A layman, *upāsaka*, having heard about the sentence, approached the emperor, and asked him to release the monks and on behalf to give gold equal to the weight of each one of them. The emperor agreed and he saved 34 out of 37 and for the rest he gave his children, servants, animals and the house and committed to poor as a slave.

The emperor, having considered the whole incident, requested the monks to preach the doctrine, they listened to him. Then he, having pleased to monks, ordered to establish temples in every village and treated the layman well (Gunaratne, 1987, p.89).

The son Mahinda and daughter Sanghamitta, the two Buddhist emissaries of the Great Emperor Ashoka of India (268-232 B.C.), brought Buddhism to Sri Lanka. Over the course of history, Arab traders introduced Islam; Indian rulers promoted Hinduism; European colonists presented Christianity to the indigenous Buddhist people. Yet, throughout the millennia the island nation has remained predominantly a Buddhist depositary of teaching and learning in its original form of Theravada tradition (the lesser vehicle) while accommodating various other Buddhist sects and co-existing with the Mahāyāna tradition (the greater vehicle) of Buddhism, as Fa Xian documented in the shared destiny of the Buddhist Kingdom.

Conclusion

Although the records, to prove the relationship between the two countries, are inadequate from the Sri Lankan side, various scholars have discovered numerous the same from the Chinese side. Sri Lankan

literary sources, mostly, limited to names of China such as *Cīna*, *Jīna*, *Cīnaya* and *Mahācīnaya* etc. while Chinese sources have been preserved even letters sent by Sri Lankan monarch to Chinese monarch.

Ven. Fa Xian is the famous Chinese visitor to Sri Lanka from China and he stayed in Sri Lanka for two years and according to Chinese sources many delegates visited China in time to time. Various sources evidenced that China interceded in the trade between Sri Lanka and the other remote countries.

According to the historical evidence the Buddhism was the cultural bridge between the two countries Sri Lanka and China. Since, no rivalry has been recorded between the two countries Sri Lanka and China, in the history, although abided Theravada and Mahāyāna respectively.

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