

## Yam San-san

The First Movie Actress in Hong Kong (1913)



Ms. Yam San-san, née Suk-kay, was born in 1896 in Guangzhou, with origin from the Nanhai prefecture, Guangdong Province. Ms. Yam graduated from the Hong Kong Yi De Teachers' Training School. During the Xinhai Revolution, she joined the Guangdong troop and went to various places such as Nanjing and Xuzhou to tend the wounded. She was the wife of Mr. Li Min-wei, the Father of Hong Kong Movies. In 1913, Ms. Yam made her debut in "Zhuangzi Tests His Wife", the first Hong Kong-made movie which was written, directed and performed by Mr. Li. Not only was she the first movie actress in Hong Kong but also the first in China. In 1926, Ms. Yam played different roles in movies produced by Shanghai Minxin Film Company. Her signature collections included "Five Revengeful Girls", "The God of Peace" and "Reviving Romance", to name a few. Ms. Yam ended her career as an actress in 1928.

Picture Source: Wide Angle Press Limited

## Irene Cheng

The First Local Female University Graduate in Hong Kong (1925)



Dr. Irene Cheng was born in 1904. Her father was Sir Robert Ho Tung. In 1921, she entered the Faculty of Arts of the University of Hong Kong for undergraduate study when the university first admitted women students. She was the first local girl to attend the university. Dr. Cheng completed her university study in 1925 and became the first local female university graduate.

Dr. Cheng received teacher's training at the King's College of the University of London in the United Kingdom and obtained a Master's Degree from the Teachers' College at Columbia University in New York. She then taught at the Lingnan University in Guangdong, before returning to Hong Kong to work in the then Education Department. At the time of her retirement in 1961, she was the highest-ranking Chinese women in the Education Department. In the same year, Dr. Cheng was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in recognition of her contribution in the field of education in Hong Kong over the decades.

## Kimmy Koh

The First Woman Sub-Inspector of Police in Hong Kong (1949)



Ms. Kimmy Koh became the first woman police officer when she joined the Hong Kong Police Force as a Sub-Inspector in 1949. She was a Malaysian Chinese and came to Hong Kong in 1946.

Being active and outgoing, Ms. Koh joined the Force for she liked the challenging nature of the job of a police officer. She was proficient in Cantonese, English, Malay, Japanese and various Chinese dialects. Ms. Koh's duties included case investigation and translation work. She had served at the Police Headquarters, Kowloon Regional Crime Headquarters and the Police Training School.

## Ellen Li

The First Female Legislative Councillor in Hong Kong (1966)



Dr. Ellen Li originated from the Hoi Ching prefecture, Fukien Province. She was born in Vietnam where she spent her childhood. In 1923, she came to Hong Kong to study at the St. Stephen's Girls' College. After graduation she furthered her study at the Shanghai University, majoring in Business. She returned to Hong Kong to work after graduation in 1932.

Dr. Li had a long record of public services. From 1964 to 1969, she served as an appointed member of the Urban Council of Hong Kong. In 1966, she was appointed as the first female Legislative Councillor. During her term of office, she proactively strived for the abolition of polygamy. She had started a campaign back in 1953 for abolishing polygamy. While she was in the Legislative Council, she lobbied her fellow councillors, leading to the marriage reform and the enactment of the relevant legislation in 1971. In addition, she also put a lot of effort in promoting equal pay for equal work of the civil servants. Dr. Li was also committed to social and community services, and she had been the President of the Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association and the Hong Kong Chinese Women's Club, the chairman and president of The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong and a council member of the University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Dr. Li was appointed as Justice of the Peace in 1947, awarded the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 1958 and the Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1964. In 1969, the University of Hong Kong conferred on her an honorary doctorate degree in Law and in 1974, she was awarded the Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE), the first Chinese woman to be so honoured. In 1999, Dr. Li was inducted into the International Hall of Fame sponsored by the International Women's Forum.

Picture Source: Sing Tao News Corporation Limited

## Lee Ching-chee

The First Female Pastor Ordained in Hong Kong (1966)



Source: The Reverend LEE Ching-chee



Source: Sing Tao News Corporation Limited

The Reverend Lee Ching-chee was born in 1932 in Hong Kong. When studying at Ying Wa Girls' School, the Reverend Lee was deeply influenced by its missionaries, the exemplars of Christian justice and integrity, and their life of hardship. She thus started to study the bible and became a Christian. The Reverend Lee taught in her alma mater later and had served as its Chaplain and Supervisor over the years.

In 1966, the Reverend Lee was ordained by the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China (HKCCC) and became the first female pastor in Hong Kong, which turned a new page in the history of the Hong Kong Christian Church. After being ordained, the Reverend Lee went to London in 1977 and served as the Secretary for Mission Education in the Council for World Mission. In 1981, she returned to Hong Kong to assume the post of Associate General Secretary of the HKCCC, and stayed with HKCCC until her retirement in 1998. She was one of the influential figures in Hong Kong Christian Church.

The Reverend Lee was the author of "Collection of Reverend C C Lee's Essays", a collection of her works published during her service. Her other works include "The Other Half - Women's position in the Church", "Speaking from the Heart" and "My Memoirs".