



SHEK Ling 石玲

Actress

A native of Chao'an, Guangdong, Shek Ling was born Yiu Kwan-ye in Guangzhou and was raised in Hong Kong. She was a graduate of Kowloon True Light Middle School (later renamed as Kowloon True Light School) and Northcote Training College. In 1963, introduced by her home fellow, she joined Tung Shan Film Co. during which the company's principal actresses Ting Chor-kiu and Fong Hau-yuk successively faded out from the spotlight. Good-looking and mild in temperament, Shek Ling became the principal actress in Tung Shan's later years. She often played opposite Chong Suet-kuen, the female *xiaosheng* (young civil male); and together with director Yeung Fan, the trio established a long-time partnership.

During the three years she spent with Tung Shan, she starred in eight Chaozhou-dialect period opera films including *The Butterfly Lovers* (aka *Leung San Par Chok Ying Toi*, 1963), *Story of the Lute* (1963), *The Prime Minister in Male Disguise* (1963), *The Down-and-Out Zheng Yuanhe* (aka *The Crab's Song*, 1963), *Wife in Disguise* (1963), *Romance of the West Chamber* (1964), *The Jade Fish* (1964) and *Romance of the Military Treatise* (1965).

Bearing resemblance to Pak Suet-sin in period costumes, she was coined 'Pak Suet-sin of Chaozhou Opera' and 'the tenth lady' (after Pak who was affectionately called 'the ninth lady' by her operatic peers). As the Chaozhou-dialect cinema rose to its popularity in Southeast Asia, Shek earned her fame in the region. In 1964, she gave more than 30 performances in Thailand.

Following the decline of the Chaozhou-dialect cinema, manager Tsang Mo-hei of Tung Shan set up Pegasus Picture Production Co to film Cantonese movies. He recruited Shek Ling and Chong Suet-kuen as regular players and Yeung Fan as long-term director. Shek's Cantonese debut for Pegasus was *Double Weddings* (1965), where she played opposite Chong, as well as Nam Hung and Hsian Chun, a second pair of *sheng* (male) and *dan* (female). There was a Chaozhou-dialect version of the movie screened in Thailand, using Shek and Chong's appeal in Thailand. She later appeared in more Pegasus Cantonese titles such as *The Precious Butterfly* (1967), directed by Chu Kea; *The Imperial Warrant* (1968) co-starring Chong, and *Xiu Niang* (1970). During the later years of her career, Shek worked with South-East Asia Film Co to film *A Ghost's Moaning* (1971); and in *Mad Dragon* (1969), she took up the role of producer together with Chong.