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THE METHOD OF HUNG GA's GING



余志偉

By Master Frank Yee (translated
by Pedro Cepero Yee)

Differences between Strength and Ging 勁

Normally when people talk about strength, they are referring to a person's natural power, size and build. When looking at strength in the martial arts, we divide it into two categories: static (still) and active (moving). Examples of static strength are training the horse stance, stretching and hanging the leg, as well as the single finger Zen. Examples of active or moving strength are categorized under speed and weight. In speed strength, all actions — like jumping, moving and attacking with the hand, foot or other body part — are referred to as speed strength. In traditional training methods, the practice of throwing the arms while holding stone locks, lifting weights with a stone barbell, and practicing heavy weapons that weigh in excess of thirty pounds, are referred to as weight strength.

Ging

Ging (invisible power) is the smart way to use strength and does not refer to your body's natural power. Hard practice and much time well spent are needed to acquire this. If you've never trained to obtain *ging*, what you use is referred to as stiff or dead strength. Use of stiff strength usually causes people to exhaust their power. Fatigue sets in, and the shoulders, elbow, back, arms and legs suffer muscle failure. If you know how to use the *ging*, you can use the mind to lead the *qi*, from inside, energizing the muscles, concentrating the power to the desired point. When a practitioner uses *ging*, the shape is rarely seen, being as quick as lightning. The hands extend and retract very quickly, being extremely flexible, not stiff. When you're using muscular power, there is a finite amount of energy that can be expended. But *ging* can be used infinitely, because of the practitioner's ability to combine hard and soft and also regulate it. *Ging* originates from the waist. All of the *ging* in Hung Ga is generated from the waist, traveling to the four limbs. The waist is like the center point of the clock, controlling the minute hands. The hands' power comes from that center. When beginners learn to use *ging*, they most frequently have trouble coordinating the upper with the lower body. Hung Ga uses a multitude of complex upper limb movements and directions. Therefore, the Hung Ga practitioner has numerous upper limb options at his disposal to handle attacks from any angle, which may be difficult for beginners. The lower body is used differently as the movements are

simpler. The lower body is used to coordinate, follow and support the upper body. The most frequent mistake made by beginners is that the horse stance finishes before the striking hand does. If the upper limbs and horse don't coordinate, they are not performing the *ging* method of Hung Ga. "When you move, the whole body must move. When you stop, the whole body must stop; the upper and lower limbs must coordinate and match together."

Exploding the Ging (Faht Ging 發勁)

We explain *faht ging* as natural strength combined with body connection, speed, sudden power and technique. This is performed in the span of an instant. Speed is the base ingredient of *ging*; without strength there is no *ging*. These must be combined, never separated. You also need to combine the loose and tight to have the *ging* explode. When not using *ging*, your muscles and body should be loose and relaxed. When exploding the *ging*, the muscle has to release like a spring, abruptly tightening at that moment only. If you correctly use the loose and tight (*gong* 剛 and *yao* 柔) within the muscles and the entire body, it allows you to bring your internal *qi* together, exploding the *ging*, saving — not wasting — energy. However, your ability to explode *ging* will be affected if the movement is incorrect and all the essential elements are not combined.

The Hard (Gong) Ging 剛勁

People larger in weight and size usually have the advantage in this type of brute power. When people use movements like tiger, combined with shouts, it makes the movement look stronger, startling the opponent. Stamping the feet to sink and explode energy also helps send power. The *gong ging* is heavy, like a hammer hitting the ground, like a bomb exploding. In fighting, *gong ging* is good for straight forward attacks and getting inside, using big force against small. Hung Ga's *gong ging* techniques are represented in the twelve bridges by *gong kiu* 剛橋 (left), *man fu ha san* 猛虎下山, leopard, five element fist, tiger movements, eight strong techniques and others. The *gong ging* result requires extensive foundational training, developing the outside shape. This is why it looks as strong as a tiger. This is also why *gong ging* is referred to as visible power (*ming ging* 明勁), or *yang ging* 陽勁.



Hard Gong (*gong kiu*)

Soft Ging (Yao Ging)

Most times, *yao ging* is used for defense, especially before striking back at the opponent. *Yao ging* uses weak force against strong and does not use force against force. Instead, it goes with the force and uses circling or rotational power with angles. For example, when making contact with an opponent, the arm rotates, then the waist and the angle. In this way the body does not stop. The technique depends on how the opponent attacks. Regardless of which technique is used, you must apply the circle, then the technique, to change direction.

"When the boat comes toward you, stay to the side, push the end of the boat, redirecting the force"

In confrontation, the only movements needed are left, right and backwards. This allows the force to "hit empty," letting the larger force go by, using "four ounces of power against a thousand pound force". This is called "stay away and strike or get into the opponent" technique. When using *yao ging* techniques, you must know how to open and close. *Yao ging* is good at closing your body when you stay away. It prepares you to utilize *gong ging* to hit back. Both *yao* and *gong ging* must be combined. *Yao ging* is useless by itself. In traditional martial arts there are the expressions, "four ounce against a thousand pounds" and "bring the lamb back to the stable" (*seurn sao hin yeung* 順手牽羊), and also the saying, "When the boat comes toward you, stay to the side, push the end of the boat, redirecting the force" (*sun sui tui jiao* 順水推舟). *Gong ging* also needs *yao ging* to back up the technique, because there is always a stronger person to confront. In addition, *yao ging* is used to regulate breathing, calm the mind, and loosen the muscles. This is why the *ging* never finishes. The *yao ging* strategically hides its power, never using force against force. This is also why we call it the dark *ging* or invisible *ging* (*yin ging* 陰勁). This *yin ging* is used defensively, to absorb a strong



Inch power ging: *biu gee*

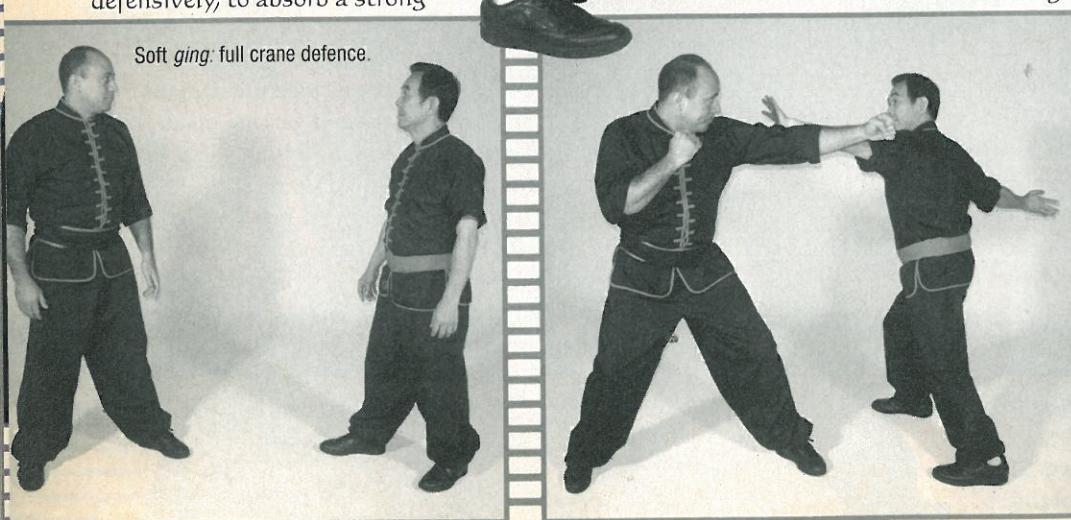
attacking force, allowing us to stay away and wait for our chance to use *gong ging* to strike back. Combining both *gong ging* and *yao ging* allows us to reach a higher level. Hung Ga's *yao ging* is represented by the snake and crane. When the opponent approaches, you must step to the side and stay away, rotating the hand as you move up, turning the waist, staying away from the force. Defend with a hooking hand from low to high (below), then attack with the full crane.

Key point: when doing crane beak technique to hit the eyes or temple, you must use the pecking technique, which is one of the four techniques of the crane's beak. The others are: hooking, leading, and pointing. When pecking, it helps to not make sound because we have to deliver the energy from inside the body to the outside, reaching the fingertips.

Inch Power Ging (Chuen Ging 寸勁)

The amount of inch *ging*, or exploding power, depends on a person's size combined with body connection, speed, and the manner in which you tighten the muscles, not just hand and foot movements.

Hung Ga inch *ging* techniques are: the side single hand *biu gee* (left). When using this, you must combine the leg twisting and hip turning to



deliver the *ging* from the shoulder to the upper arm, forearm, to the last inch, the tip of the finger. This is why we call it inch *ging* (*chuen ging*) (below). We look at Hung Ga inch *ging* in two ways: 1. If we deliver the *qi* to the edge or focused point of power, such as the tip of the elbow, ball of the foot, head, shoulder, hips or any other contact area, it is called inch power. 2. If we explode the power over a short distance (or when close to the end of the movement) with sudden speed, tightening the muscles, for a very quick, short, strong movement, it is called inch *ging*. Inch means short distance and *ging* means combining all the components that relate to *ging*. In Hung Ga's *hok ding sao fah* 鶴頂手法, we use the phoenix eye fist to try and get close to the opponent's body target, like the neck, throat, eye or solar plexus (*gao mei yuet* 鳩尾穴). Then I explode inch *ging* (right), sending my opponent back.

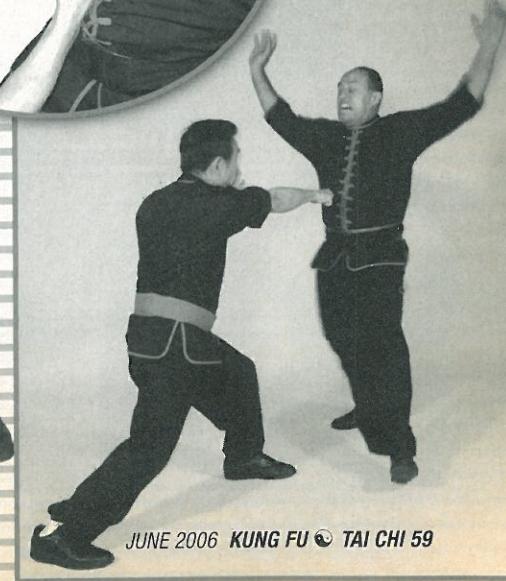


The 6 Gings of Hung Ga

The six *gings* of Hung Ga consist of back and forth (horizontal *ging*), left and right (across *ging*), and up and down (vertical *ging*).



Inch power ging: chuen ging



Forward & Backward Ging

Anything done in a straight line with forward or backward motion is called *jik ging* 直勁. An example of *jik ging* is: moving forward into our opponent with a facing punch (below A-B); when our opponent counters with a grab, step back (C) using the left hand to bang your opponent's ulna nerve (sometimes referred to as the funny bone) (D); the right hand simultaneously moves back, doing single hand bridge (*duk bei dan kiu* 獨臂單橋) (E). This technique applies a forward direction offensive attack while simultaneously coming backwards for defense, demonstrating back and forth *ging*. Another example is the "strong tiger exits the cave" (*man fu cheut dan* 猛虎出洞) (G). Here we have to use the *ton yiu lok ma* 攤腰落馬 (a method of leaning the stance) combined with the "hiding tiger" (F). When applying this offense and defense, forward and backward, we are referring to the direction of movement, not just the shape of the limbs. Usually when applying *jik ging* we move forward and strike using a low stance. When we move back to avoid attacks, we use a high stance (cat or crane stance). The key when striking with facing punch is everything must move together. To do this is similar to an inch worm. The front leg moves and the back leg follows, but not too closely. When exploding the *ging*, three things must happen. First, start with the hand. Second, follow with the waist turning from front to side. Third, horse stance must chase. If you combine all these things, you will have acquired the *jik ging* result.



Horizontal ging; single leg flying crane



Left & Right Ging

Horizontal *ging* is any movement left and right that opens and closes. The "iron wire" form's *sup gee sao* 十字手 (top right) and single leg flying crane (right) are examples of horizontal *ging*. *Sup gee sao* closes and locks up the opponent, while *duk gerk fei hok* 獨腳飛鶴 demonstrates opening. The lateral movements of the kwan dao set as well as the *gawt* (腳) and *boot* (步) techniques of the eight-diagram pole demonstrate this.

"The *ging* must come from the waist, which is also one of the most important things in the *ging* method."

Forward & backward *ging* application.

A.



B.



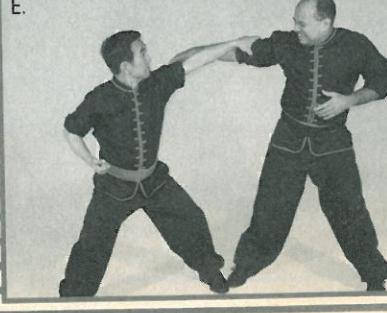
C.



D.

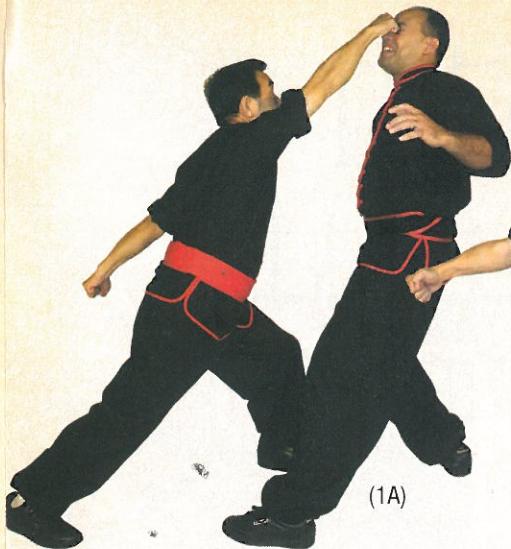


E.



F.





Vertical *ging* application



Vertical Ging

Vertical *ging* is demonstrated in the high and low, up and down movements of the Tiger Crane form. The *lin wan jak kam* 連環責 movement (above 1A) covers from high to low to hit our opponent's nose, and in the *tung ting kuen faht* 通天拳法 the hand rises up (1B) to hit our opponent's groin. These techniques represent vertical *ging*. These two techniques are often performed in combination. In Hung Ga these are two of the *baat man da* 八猛打 as well as two of the five element techniques. Key point: after completely understanding the six *ging*s, we can combine them to our advantage in fighting. Of course, this comes only with hard work, practice and experience.

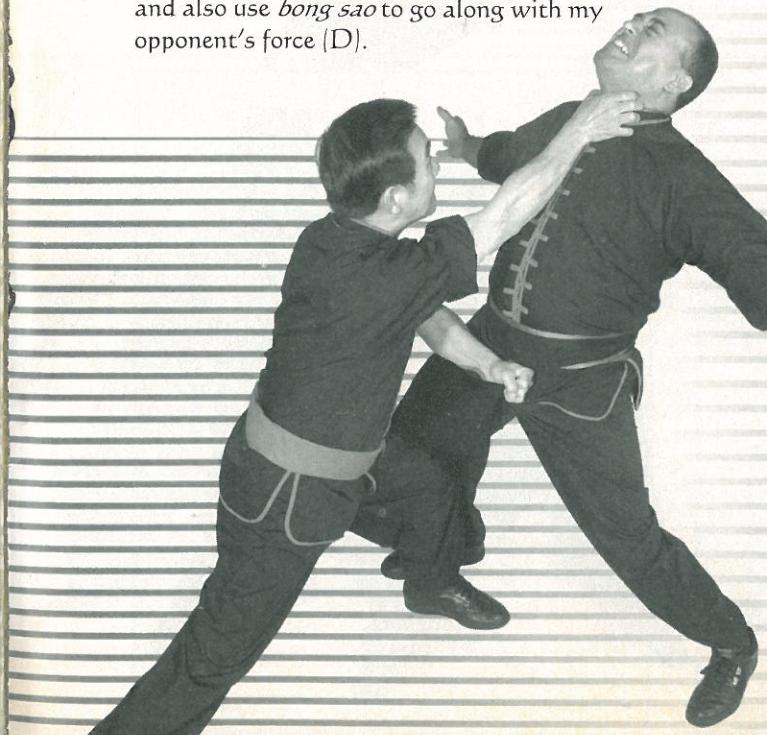
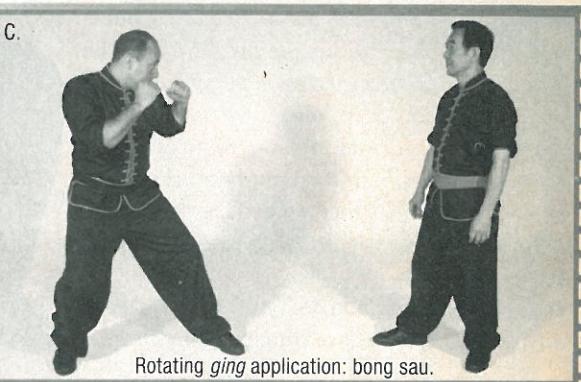
Rotating Ging (Suen Ging 旋勁)

Suen ging is the basic *ging* method of Hung Ga. If you move forward, backward, high or low, left or right,

Continued on page 65



you have to use *suen ging*. "Suen 旋" describes something round that rotates. In Hung Ga, *suen ging* is seen when people strike us and we do not go against their force, but instead go with it. When moving away with *suen ging*, our body closes using the *bong sao* with the turning of the forearm, as well as waist turning, allowing our opponent to continue his attack into empty space. When applying crane techniques, we usually close up first, waiting for the chance to strike back and deliver *ging*. The *suen ging* goes inside, then suddenly to the opposite direction for striking. Still, *suen ging* can be combined for defense and offense, traveling to the edge, one side to the other. *Suen ging* originates from the waist — the body's main energy center — not the hands, arms or shoulders. In all of Hung Ga's techniques, offense or defense, you have to use the waist to twist and turn. Any type of *ging* uses *suen ging* to make power. The old saying goes, "The *ging* must come from the waist, which is also one of the most important things in the *ging* method." In Hung Ga's *suen ging* techniques we have the leopard-shaped *chop choi* 插撻. When using *chop choi*, if our opponent tries to block upwards (right A), we use waist turning, twisting horse stance, applying *suen ging* with *chop choi*, like a screw (B). We must use *suen ging* to send and concentrate the power to the edge of our *chop choi*, driving it downward to attack our opponent's floating ribs. Here, our whole body is used to deliver the *ging*. An offensive technique is side-facing *bong sao* 膀手. When standing and looking at each other (C), if our opponent tries to use facing punch to hit the chest, I move my right leg to the right side, turn my waist to stay away and also use *bong sao* to go along with my opponent's force (D).



Sticky Coiling Ging (Chi Chin Ging 黏纏勁)

When two things come together, sticking like glue, you cannot divide them. If your four limbs or body are close to your opponent, you can lock him up, avoiding his escape. When this happens, it is called sticky coiling ging (chi chin ging).

Hung Ga's sticky ging

uses the tiger claw and *sup gee sao* 十字手 specifically

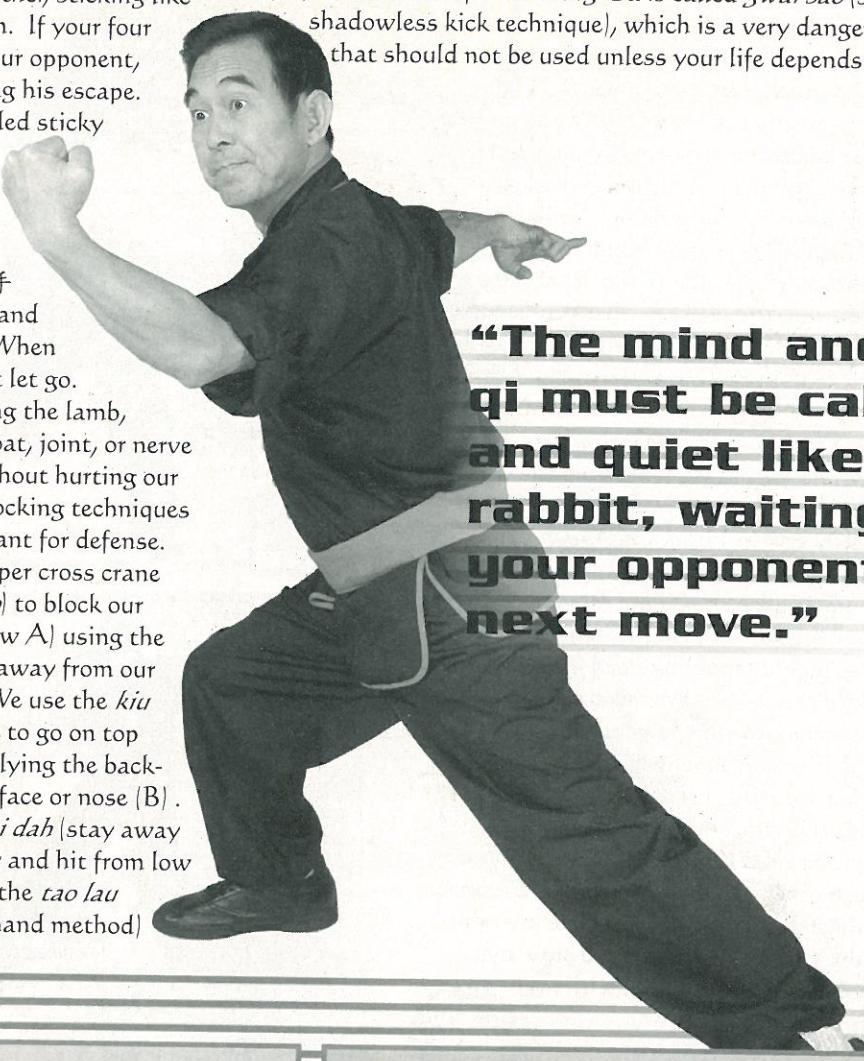
for locking, the *bong sao* 膀手

for sticking to the opponent and the snake hand for coiling. When we grab something, we don't let go.

Like the hungry tiger catching the lamb, we catch our opponent's throat, joint, or nerve point, finishing the fight without hurting our opponent. This is why the locking techniques in Hung Ga are very important for defense.

In defense we can use the upper cross crane wing (open-hand *sup gee sao*) to block our opponent's hand bridge (below A) using the side-facing *bong sao* to stay away from our opponent's powerful force. We use the *kiu loy kiu seurn go*, making sure to go on top of the opponent's bridge, applying the back-whipping hand to attack the face or nose (B). We can also use the *lei kiu fei dah* (stay away from the opponent's force, fly and hit from low to high) escaping method, or the *tao lau sao faht* 偷漏手法 (stealing hand method)

demonstrated by the *hoi daih lau yuet* 海底捞月 technique (catching the moon on the sea bottom) (C). After hitting the groin, we continue using the *hak fu tao sum* 黑虎偷心 (black tiger steals the heart technique) to hit the heart with the tiger's palm (D). This technique in Hung Ga is called *gwai sao* (similar to the shadowless kick technique), which is a very dangerous move that should not be used unless your life depends on it.



"The mind and qi must be calm and quiet like the rabbit, waiting for your opponent's next move."

4 Sticky coiling ging application.



A.

B.



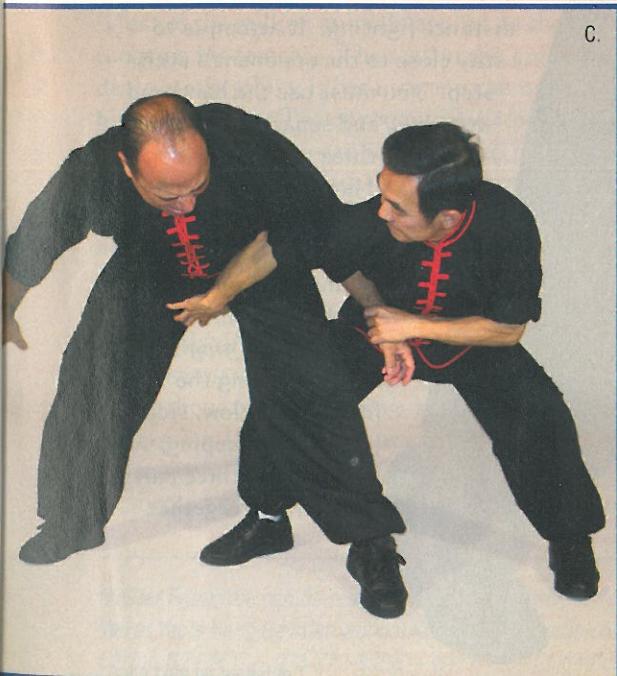
Sensing Ging (Gok Ging 覺勁)

Sensing *ging* is divided into two parts. One is to feel yourself, knowing how much power you possess, your skill level and also knowing your own limitations. Second is to sense others — their size, skill level and flexibility. Sensing is also used before you touch. Looking, smelling and taste, as well as sensing fear from your opponent, fall under this category. For these two *gings* you have to study yourself first, others second. To feel yourself means to know yourself; to feel others is to know your opponent, taking all these things into account. When training sensing *ging* we have to train the *chi chin ging* (sticky coiling *ging*). The mind and *qi* must be calm and quiet like the rabbit, waiting for your opponent's next move. This *ging* uses the soft against hard philosophy. If practiced for a long time, you acquire the sensing *ging*. If practiced often, using soft against hard, it will allow you to feel your whole body moving with the circle, making you comfortable with using the sticky *ging*, together with the

rotating *ging*. This allows us to "sense" how much force your opponent has, and his intentions. When we can do this we will have *baak jin, baak sing* 百戰百勝: one hundred battles, one hundred wins.

The Ging of the Tiger

Tiger shape *ging* should be fierce like fire, as if fighting for your life. When practicing, swell up the throat and show your teeth. Open your mouth like a lion, eyes concentrating like a unicorn while using sound to force the *qi* to send energy. Banging your feet on the ground makes a strong surprise attack that shocks people, showing violent and fierce intention. Yelling produces more power. The tiger mostly uses hard against hard. It also borrows the opponent's power, when blocking hard with soft, staying away. When striking, you must be extremely strong, hard, and solid. When absorbing the attack, use soft. Be very cautious in using the kick. Thirty percent of kicks are false: "no limp, no kick, no touching, no kick".



C.



D.

Tao Ging 抖勁

In *tao* (shaking) *ging*, rotating *ging* must be used left and right quickly. You can use waist or waist turning separately. When sticking to your opponent and doing *bong sao*, you can spring out by combining spring and shaking *ging*.

the body like a spring. When exploding outward, the upper limbs use spring, shaking or whipping *ging*, high to low, concurrently rotating the hand, one side to the other, combined with sound, creating the *faht ging* making connection. Your body must also use the sink, float, swallow, and spitting method.

The Crane's Ging Method

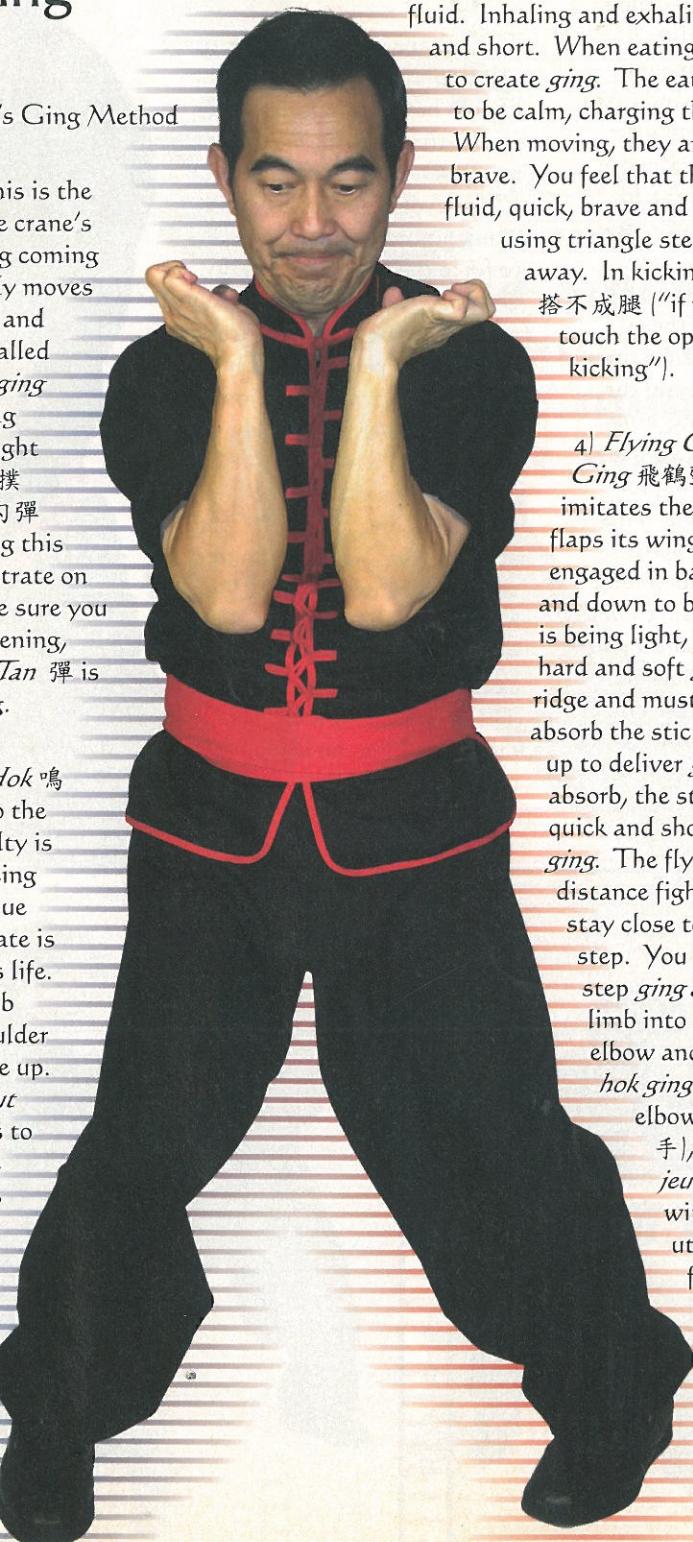
The Four Shapes of the Crane's Ging Method

1) *Jung Hok Ging* 宗鶴勁 - This is the "dialect" (base language) of the crane's *ging*. Think of a swimming dog coming out of the water. Its whole body moves left and right, rotates, springs, and shakes the water off. This is called spring and shaking *ging* (*jung ging* 宗勁). The spring *ging* of Hung Ga's back and forth, left and right techniques are the *pok yik sao* 撲翼手, snapping, *ngau tan toi* 勾彈腳 and ginger fist. When doing this technique, make sure to concentrate on the target. When hitting, make sure you reach your target; and when opening, open and close like lightning. *Tan* 彈 is springing and *tao* 抖 is shaking.

2) *Vocal Crane Ging* (*Meng Hok* 鳴鶴) - Voice is very important to the vocal crane method. Its specialty is using sound to send the *qi*, forcing the *ging* to the fighting technique (*faht ging* 發勁). Its mental state is as if fighting valiantly for one's life. The crane uses many upper limb techniques. The body and shoulder must sink, the elbow must close up. The body must be *hom hong but bui* 含胸拔背. The step needs to be very solid, toes rooted to the ground. When doing *faht ging*, it must come from the bottom (root) of the foot and the *qi* must sink to the *dan tien*. The waist, leg and hand techniques must combine and make connection. Cranes commonly charge the *ging*. They close their wings and wait to strike, packing the *ging* close to

3) *Eating Crane Ging* (*Sik Hok Ging* 食鶴勁) - This method mostly uses the fingers in the form of pecking and eating. The action is light, smooth, fast and fluid. Inhaling and exhaling is extremely quick and short. When eating, they also use the sound to create *ging*. The eating crane *ging* needs to be calm, charging the genetic *qi* (*ho hei*). When moving, they are very quick, violent and brave. You feel that they are very calm, solid, fluid, quick, brave and violent. They favor using triangle step to the side, staying away. In kicking, *mo dap but sun toi* 無搭不成腿 ("if your hand cannot grab/touch the opponent, it will not be kicking").

4) *Flying Crane Ging* (*Fei Hok Ging* 飛鶴勁) - This method imitates the way a crane snaps and flaps its wings up and down when engaged in battle. Cranes move up and down to block. Their specialty is being light, not wobbly, combining hard and soft *ging*. They use the hand ridge and must get power to the end to absorb the sticking *ging* while charging up to deliver *ging*. When trying to absorb, the strike must be on offense, quick and short. This is flying crane *ging*. The flying crane is for close-distance fighting. It attempts to stay close to the opponent's every step. You must use the hand and step *ging* and separate the upper limb into three parts: shoulder, elbow and hand. Hung Ga's *fei hok ging* techniques are: flying elbow (*bok yok sao* 撲翼手), crane wing and *bing jeurng* 鞭掌 (crane wing with whipping *ging*). To utilize whipping the wing from high to low, side to side, or snapping, you need the three parts working together.



Continued on next page.

Gum Gong Ging 金剛勁

This *ging* comes from the *Sil Lum* book *Sil Lum Boon Yeerk Bo Law Mat Ging* 少林般若波羅密經, meaning the hard and sharp which destroys everything. To attain *gum gong ging*, you need to know all the previous *ging*'s, combined with hard and soft *ging*, as well as extensive training. The *gum gong ging* is the highest level of Hung Ga.

"The soft with the hard is the real soft; the hard with the soft is the real hard. The hard and soft combined is complete."

If using *gum gong ging*, first use sticking and rotating *ging*, causing your opponent to lose direction. Find the best opportunity to strike back with any of the *gings*, combined with whatever other techniques the situation calls for. When exploding the *ging*, the outside shape of your body must be soft and weak but the inside must be very strong and hard. When doing kicking *ging*, it comes from the spine. Any time you kick, don't wait. Kick with speed and conviction. Kicking or other *gings* require that you first charge and close before use. For the best chance to strike, don't wait; if the time is right, do it. If you don't, you will not subdue your opponent; your opponent will subdue you. For survival in the wild, the eagle or crane can subdue creatures in the air as well as small creatures on the ground. They are victorious because they correctly use sudden *ging*, and they can calm and control themselves, waiting for the chance to strike. Our saying is, "One hundred birds, they are the best in the air." The eagle or crane is as majestic in the air as the lions or tigers are on the ground. Any of the hundred birds fear the eagle's majesty; when the lion or tiger is fighting, it is the same — violent and strong. Most of the million animals are not as the tiger. They run from his ferocity. The reason the *gum gong ging* can destroy everything is because you can never see it. It hides its power. The opponent never knows it is coming until too late. If we can imitate that, no one will know us and we will know everyone: one hundred battles, one hundred wins. Hung Ga has many hand techniques and *gings*, such as the twelve bridges. Each one of the twelve bridges has a different *ging*. No matter what type of Hung Ga *ging*, its foundation lies within the previously discussed *ging* methods. Every style of Chinese martial arts has its own special *ging* method: "One thousand exchanging and a million absorbs." In training all *gings*, you need to practice hard and extensively. You will need a good and experienced Sifu to succeed. ☺

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