

History of Hung Ga

Southern Kung Fu

Hung Ga 洪家 (Fist of the Hung) is the most famous of the 5 Southern Styles; Hung Ga, Lau Ga 劉家, Choi Ga 蔡家, Lei Ga 李家 and Mok Ga 莫家. These five styles, all having strong roots in Southern Fukien Shaolin 福建少林寺 kung fu, making up the major kung fu systems of Ling Lam 嶺南 (an area) in China. It is a common mistake that “Ga 家” refers to family or a family style, however Ga or sometimes Pai 派 actually is a southern term meaning system, where as in the north “Mun 門” is typically used. Hung Ga has been developed for over 200 years and become a representative style of southern kung fu.

Luk Ah Choi 陸亞采 (1745–1825)

Hung Ga 洪家, meaning Hung Boxing was developed at the Southern Shaolin Temple in Fujian (built in 1399), founded by Luk Ah Choi 陸亞采 (1745–1825). Luk’s parents were killed when he was young leaving him to live with his abusive uncle. When Luk could not stand the conditions any longer he ran away from home, and eventually came across a kung fu master named Lei Baak Fu 李白虎 who trained him in the northern style called Fa Keun 花拳. Later, that teacher introduced Luk for further training at the Fujian Shaolin Temple, a place known for producing skilled kung fu fighters through their extremely hard training. When he arrived he learned from Ji Sin 至善, who became known as one of the 5 Elders of Southern Shaolin 南少林五祖. Ji Sin took him as a layman disciple and worked with him closely to develop his martial skills.

Luk trained diligently under Ji Sin, for many years until the Ching government raided and destroyed the temple, seeing it as a threat offering training and asylum to revolutionaries. Ji Sin and other teachers fled the temple and eventually created a new Shaolin at the 9 Lotus Mountain 九蓮山少林寺 in Putian 莆田市, that unfortunately had a short history. Before parting with his teacher, Luk was recommended by Ji Sin to seek out and take up further study with his classmate Hung Hei 洪熙 (1745–1825), who had departed prior and was already teaching elsewhere. Mistaken thought of

as the founder of Hung Ga due to his name, Hung Hei (also called Hung Hei Goon) was actually the teacher of Lei Jou Fun 李祖寬, the founder of his own system called Hung Keun Fut Jeung 洪拳佛掌, better known as Hung Fut Pai 洪佛派. After some training with Hung, Luk returned to his home of Guangdong 廣東省. Being a revolutionary he belonged to the anti-Ching secret society called Hung Mun 洪門, which was the inspiration for the name Hung.

Wong Fei Hung 黃飛鴻 (1847-1925)

Hung Ga was then passed down from generation to generation until it reached a practitioner named **Wong Fei Hung 黃飛鴻** (1847-1925). Wong was born in Saichiu Village 喜雀, in Guangdong Province's Lam Hoi district 南海區, and learned Hung Ga from his father **Wong Kei Ying 黃麒英** (1815-1886), who was a member of the elite undisputed fighters of Guangdong (became known as "Canton" in English) called "10 Tigers of Canton 廣東十虎".

Wong during his lifetime earned an excellent reputation for his skill of kung fu and knowledge of Chinese Medicine. He was said to be an honest and righteous person of high moral character, who due to his prowess in kung fu was regularly challenged and always willing to prove his skill... and never lost a fight. He taught thousands of students during his lifetime, and also became famous for his excellent Lion Dance and his medical clinic named Bou Ji Lum 寶芝林. Wong Fei Hung re-developed the Hung Ga system and expanded it in great depth to the condition it is known today.

Modern Hung Ga

Hung Ga was originally a style of short bridge-hands and narrow stances called "Duen Kiu Haap Ma 短橋狹馬", indicative of its Fukien Shaolin 福建少林寺 origin. From childhood Wong Fei Hung learned his family's kung fu of Hung Ga from his father Wong Kei Ying, who also traveled with his son introducing him to many masters and **methods for a deeper knowledge**. During his lifetime and extensive travels, Wong Fei Hung met and often exchanged with many of the most legendary fighters in southern China. Of

these many masters he met, three particular individuals are historically relevant to mention: