

Gong Lik (Forward Energy)

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Gong Lik is generally translated as Forward Energy or Forward Press and is a well known energetic used in many of the Martial Arts but how it is used and executed varies between the different individual Arts.

Primarily the main role of Gong Lik is to strengthen the arm positions by generating additional power by cleverly exploiting the principles of force vectors and muscle mechanics. As a result we can apply more power from a neutral position than we could otherwise.

In the footwork of some kung fu systems as in the case of Ancestors the objective is to maintain forward (Intent) steps with the result that any steps backward would be non deliberate. Intentionally stepping back would result in a break or at the very least a disruption in Gong Lik. As such in order to maintain a constant forward pressure, resistance is redirected without lifting the power.

Gong Lik can be expressed in two ways and can be categorised as either Linear or Neutral (Non Linear) with each method having its own specific purpose and advantages.

The Linear method involves a 50/50 simultaneous combination of Forward Intent and Forward Energy. So for example when engaging in Rolling Hands in a Chi Sau scenario, there will be a continuous forward motion of the arms and body into the target such that if the opponent suddenly removes resistance it would increase the speed and effectiveness of your attacks. This type of use gives rise to the famous Kung Fu expression "Hand comes, detain; hand goes, follow; hand lost, spring forwards".

The second method can be described as Neutral or Non Linear and involves only Forward Intent. This results in the hands gaining additional power which do not shoot forward if the resistance is taken away. When using this method it is always harder to read the energies of the arms as they will give the impression of forward energy when in fact there is

only intent. This allows for more flexibility and control when reacting to sudden changes of non linear movements. This type of use gives rise to the famous Kung Fu expression “Enemy doesn’t move, I don’t move, enemy moves I move first”

Finally and most importantly both types of Gong Lik methods allows for the combination of Fau Lik (Floating) and Chum Lik (Downward Pressing) and in each case the effectiveness lies in how skilfully both of the above are combined and applied in real application.