Liu Jin Sheng
Skill of Catch and Hold

Shanghai, 1936
Liu Jin Sheng

CHIN NA FA: Skill of Catch and Hold

Shanghai, 1936

FREE TRIAL VERSION
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Synopsis of the Book

The book “CHIN NA FA”¹ was written by Liu Jin Sheng in collaboration with Zhao Jiang. The first edition of the book was issued in July of 1936 as a manual for the police academy of Zhejiang province. The book was printed by the publishing house Shan Wu in Shanghai. The book includes author’s portrait, Zhao Jiang’s preface (he is also known as Long Wen), introduction and description of the techniques CHIN NA with photos and detailed explanations. The techniques described can be conventionally grouped into eight parts. The first part is head holds². The second part is neck holds. The third part is shoulders holds. The fourth part is front, side and back holds. The fifth side is torso and stomach holds. The sixth part is hand and wrist holds. The seventh part is fingers holds. The eighth part is genitals and legs holds. Great attention is also paid to counter-actions if the enemy tries to carry out some attacking action.

The author of the book, Liu Jin Sheng, was born in the province of Shandong. In his preface he writes: “In my childhood my grandfather (my mother’s father) gave me an ancient manuscript book. I drilled during three years using pictures of the book and at that time I did not become aware of the true value of that book. Then I happened to learn under the guidance of the famous

Editor’s notes:

² The term “Hold” is used in this text as the most adequate translation of the hieroglyph “NA”; however, as mentioned above, the hieroglyph has a wider range of meaning. In this text it means not only a lock as such; it also means subsequent technical actions.
master of the North Wang Zi Ping\(^3\) as well as over twenty other great masters. I drilled in various kinds of Martial Arts during more than twenty years. With certain experience behind me, I can say that the ancient manuscript preserved by my grandfather is priceless heritage of our National Martial Art.”

Techniques of CHIN NA include a wide set of various movements: press and blows on vulnerable points, grappling, strangling, throws and so on. That set of movements (impacts on the enemy) allows to realize the following methods: “Separation (tearing) of muscles and sinews” (FENG JING), “Dislocating (breaking out) of bones and joints” (YU GU), “Suffocation” (BI QI) and “Impacting on points” (DIAN XUE). Also, those methods must be used skillfully, not just with brute force. Both army and police always attached great importance to this art.

The introduction to the book says: “Initially this skill had several names: FENG JING FA – “The technique of separation (breaking) of muscles and sinews”; DI TANG FA – “Methods of combat when lying on the ground”; YU GU FA – “The technique of dislocation (breaking out) of bones and joints” and CHIN NA FA – “The technique of catch and hold.” At present the name CHIN NA FA has predominantly become established. Totally, there are 72 methods. The ancient manuscript calls this skill DI SHA SHOU – “Devil’s Hand.” Specialists in WU SHU say there are 36 “big” and 72 “small” points on a human body. 36 positions, 72 positions and 108 positions (techniques) are also marked out in CHIN NA FA. That traditional division has been maintained till now since long time when our ancestors created the theory of

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**Editor’s notes:**

\(^3\) Wang Zi Ping (1881-1973) nicknamed Yon An, a Muslim from the town of Cangzhou in the province of Hebei. Was of a family of WU SHU masters. Trained from his childhood under the guidance of elder relatives. Later learnt HUA QUAN from Sha Bao Xing and Ma Yun Long, then CHA QUAN from Yang Hong Xu. In 1928, after foundation of the “Central Institute of National Martial Art” in Nanking, became the dean of the Shaolin faculty. One of outstanding masters of the XX century.
CHIN NA on the basis of the conception 36 TIAN GANG⁴ and 72 DI SHA⁵. But actually, that is only a tribute to tradition that has no great practical significance.

72 DI SHA - Spirits of 72 Stars

Editor’s notes:

⁴ TIAN GANG (from TIAN, "the sky" and GANG, "Constellation of the Great Bear") 36 kind Spirits of the Great Bear in Chinese people's mythology.

⁵ DI SHA (from DI, "earth" and SHA, "ill influence of Spirits"), Spirits of 72 stars in Chinese people's mythology who exert bad influence. DI SHA oppose to 36 Spirits of the Great Bear who are called TIAN GANG (see above). According to that system DI SHA, though they are Spirits of stars, are considered to be incarnation of evil forces of the Earth.
Preface by Zhao Jiang

Liu Jin Sheng xiansheng\(^6\) learnt the martial art in the province of Shandong. He moved to the province of Zhejiang six years ago\(^7\). He has disciples all over the province. However, he lives a modest life, at his leisure time he exchanges views with his colleagues in the martial art. Long Wen is responsible for training the police of this province and realizes that policemen in their struggle against criminals can not conform to requirements without acquiring the martial art. Each time when we touch that topic to find quite quick as well as effective training methods, Liu xiansheng surely puts to the forefront CHIN NA. Our Martial Art (WU SHU) can cause body injuries to people, it is difficult to learn this art and reach perfection. When WU SHU is used, body damages are often done to people, but policemen are the people who protect public order. The best of all is to use method CHIN NA in order to subdue people instead of inflicting body damages to them. A good effect can be obtained with proper explanation and training. Now those who are responsible for public order will get this book to study it and use the art of CHIN NA in society’s interests. It is for this purpose that we publish the book by Liu xiansheng.

Zhao Long Wen
March, 25-th of the Chinese Republic (1936)

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Editor’s notes:

\(^6\) Xiansheng, a polite addressing to educated people, especially to older persons and teachers, in China, like Mr. or Sir in Britain.

\(^7\) We wish to remind you that the book was published in 1936.
Preface by Liu Jin Sheng

Recently those who talk of military science mainly pay attention to various armaments of three branches of the armed forces (land forces, navy force and air force) and did not pay any attention to the national Martial Art (GUO SHU) inherent in China. After the defeat of I-He-Tuan followers\(^8\) during the Qing dynasty\(^9\), many believed that all who learnt WU SHU...
were bandits. WU SHU was held in bad repute because I-He-Tuan followers drilled in it. That’s why people started to despise the national martial art. Because of it men of matchless mastery in WU SHU are not in hurry to reveal their skill. Some of them even went for “knights of the road.” As a consequence the Chinese nation was labeled as a “sick nation” and foreigners oppress us for a few decades.

During several decades after Meiji Isin\textsuperscript{10} Japan, our eastern neighbor, joined the ranks of leading world powers. Many think that it had happened as a result of imitation of Europe and West but they do not know that long before Meiji Ising the Japanese cultivated the spirit of samurais and Yamato\textsuperscript{11}. Studies in so called “samurai spirit” showed that it originated in our country. During the Ming\textsuperscript{12} dynasty some Chinese Chen Yuan Yun sailed to Japan and brought with him two kinds of the Chinese national martial art, in one of them grappling and throws prevailed. He taught local inhabitants who tried very hard and diligently acquired this skill. The Japanese government encouraged that activity and supported its development by all means. Finally, this kind of martial art was named Jujitsu and later Judo; it spread all over the country. The Japanese people educated in that atmosphere was becoming brave and militant.

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**Editor’s notes:**

\textsuperscript{10} MEIJI ISIN (means renovation, restoration of Meiji in Japanese), the revolution of 1867 - 1868 in Japan. It overthrew the power of seguns from the house of Tokugava and restored the power of emperors. The government headed by Mutsukhito (emperor Meiji) came to power, it took a path of social and economic reforms.

\textsuperscript{11} YAMATO, a union of tribes in Japan in 3-4 centuries. On the base of this union the Japanese state was founded. The expression “Yamato spirit” became a synonym of the “Japanese spirit”.

\textsuperscript{12} The Ming dynasty ruled in China since 1368 till 1644.
Therefore, if we speak about the salvation of our Motherland, first of all we have to advocate our national martial art to keep up people’s spirit. Although recently the central authorities following instructions of the prime-minister encourage exercises in national martial arts and both in the center and in provinces palaces of national martial art were founded, but besides wrestling, only two schools, Shaolin and Wudan, were noticeably spread. Also, individual training (mastering of forms, or TAO) is prevailed in those institutions but the applied aspect of techniques learnt is ignored. Therefore, if a man who has been exercising, say, even for twenty or thirty years and who engages a western boxer or a Japanese judo wrestler, will be surely defeated. Striving for nice-looking movements without practical use and absence of fighting spirit are at the bottom of it. In this way we shall lose little by little all the heritage of our ancestors who brilliantly used all methods and techniques in a combat. Now foreigners say with a touch of irony that the Chinese martial art is nothing else but a dance with energetic movements. Our ancestors knew how to drill by twos, one against another, and alone. They were able to employ various techniques one after another in a fight, attacking continuously the enemy so that he had no time to defend himself, nothing to say about fighting back. That is why such well-known generals of the Ming dynasty as Qi Jiguang, Yu Dayou and others encouraged a practical approach to training and rejected all showy and perfunctory things. They made a glorious mark in the history.

Today sciences develop, all branches of knowledge improve from day to day. Only our national martial art does not make any progress, moreover, it loses its secret methods, as our ancestors revealed their secrets very seldom. It is very pity. In my childhood my grandfather Fang Chen Xun gave me an ancient manuscript book. I drilled during three years using pictures of the book. At that time I did not become aware of the true value of that book. Then
I happened to learn under the guidance of Wang Zi Ping\textsuperscript{13}, a famous master of the North, as well as over twenty other great masters. I drilled various kinds of Martial Arts during more than twenty years. With certain experience behind me, I can say that the ancient manuscript preserved by my grandfather is, indeed, priceless heritage of our National Martial Art. That’s why I decided to publish this book for those who are sincerely eager to learn our national martial art.

Liu Jin Sheng
The Police Academy of Zhejiang province
1-st of May of the 24-th year of the Chinese Republic (1935).

\textsuperscript{13} Wang Zi Ping (1881-1973) nicknamed Yon An, a Muslim from the town of Cangzhou in the province of Hebei. Was of a family of WU SHU masters, trained from his childhood under the guidance of older relatives. Later learnt HUA QUAN from Sha Bao Xing and Ma Yun Long, then CHA QUAN from Yang Hong Xiu. In 1928, after foundation of the Central Institute of National Martial Art in Nanking, became the dean of the Shaolin faculty. One of outstanding masters of the XX century.
Explanations and Instructions

At first this art (skill) had several names: FENG JING FA – “The technique of separation (tearing) of muscles and sinews”; DI TANG FA – “Methods of combat when lying on the ground”; YU GU FA – “The technique of dislocating (breaking out) of bones and joints” and CHIN NA FA – “The technique of catch and hold.” At present the name CHIN NA FA has predominantly become established. Totally, there are 72 methods. The ancient manuscript calls this skill DI SHA SHOU – “Devil’s Hand.” This secret technique perfectly suits both for self-defense and defense of Motherland. It is essential for training military men and policemen.

A very detailed description is supplied to each technique and method expounded in the book. The language is very simple in order everything to be understandable at first sight. All has been done to increase training efficiency at most.

This technique is exclusively designed for practical employment, not for decoration and show. When drilling alone, it is difficult to understand its wisdom to the end and catch all nuances. It is necessary to have sparring practice, really to oppose each other. Pain must be felt if touched, but too great effort must not be applied, otherwise a body damage – sprained muscles and sinews, bone fractures and etc. can be caused. It is as far as training sessions are concerned. However, you get quite another thing when it is a matter of life and death.

Each man who needs to master an effective system of self-defense, whoever he may be – civilian, military man or member of police, must have this book. It is necessary to systematically drill as shown in the photos and explained in
the text. In the course of time everything will turn out all right. When you suddenly encounter an enemy and you have no firearms with you, you have to enter a hand-to-hand fight. If you mastered this skill (GONG FU), you will be able to win.

Moreover, having mastered this technique, you can sway the destiny of the enemy. If you are in command of this technique, you can kill your enemy, cause unbearable pain, tear his muscles and sinews, break his bones or make him unconscious for some time and completely disable him to resist.

When a criminal, being arrested, resists and shouts, a method of “temporary death” can be employed\textsuperscript{14}. Or it is possible to grasp a certain part of his body and in such a way make him follow the escort. Then he can be “animated” again or his fixed extremity can be released. The duration of being in such a state must not exceed two hours.

Even a woman or a physically weak man who mastered this technique can curb a strong enemy. This technique demands deftness and skill, not brute force. It is necessary to train oneself daily to make the body flexible and nimble, but “hardness” must be hidden inside this “softness.”

The men who perfect themselves in the Martial Art must drill methods of impacts on acupuncture points (DIAN XUE), blows (DA), grappling (NA), throws (SHUAI). Those four kinds of combat skillfully combined will mean matchless mastery. Depending on a situation, you can employ all four kinds of combat conduct, in that case even if you encounter a physically very strong enemy, you will win all the same. But to attain it, you must train yourself very seriously, be persistent and persevering.

\textbf{Editor’s notes:}

\textsuperscript{14} It implies that the enemy will be brought in unconscious state.
When men fight, they usually grapple each other. Under such conditions the employment of CHIN NA technique gives the best effect. It is necessary to pay special attention to it.

This method is very artful and effective. For a long time it was not passed (to other people) and was almost lost. Now we publish this rarity and pass the priceless Art to our compatriots as a gift.

People in our country know that the national martial art includes impact on points, grappling, throws, and blows. This book wholly deals with grappling (NA). Books on three other aspects of martial arts are being prepared for publication.

The book contains 99 photos. For the sake of better understanding complicated movements are disrupted into several parts and several photos, for example, photo 1, 2, 3 show intermediate phases of one continuous movement. The explanatory text is given for two opposing sides who are named “A” and “B”. In case of a collective training session in the army or the police one rank acts as “A”, another as “B”.

When encountering an enemy, you must demonstrate courage, strength, mastery, and skill. You must act by surprise, move swiftly, in that case you will win. The most important thing is not to lose heart. If you lost heart, you will lose everything.
Part I

TOU BU NA FA

Head Grips
During the period of dynasty MING and later in the beginning of dynasty QING\textsuperscript{15} people’s hair was laid in a knot. At that time methods of seizing by hair considered in paragraph one and two were used rather often: really, if somebody strongly seizes by the hair near the roots, it is difficult to get free. Modern people also have hair but it is not laid in a knot. Therefore, if one’s hair is rather long, the enemy can seize the hair near the roots at once, and if the hair is short, it is not always possible to do, at any rate, a seizure will be not so strong. It should be taken into consideration when using those methods and make required corrections. However, the technique of effecting on an enemy’s wrist which makes a grip mainly remains the same.

A long time ago everybody had long hair, that’s why the book contains such paragraphs. At our time living conditions have changed, everybody is closely cropped or has his hair cut short, one is not able of seizing by the hair. This manuscript was written in ancient times and we decided to leave as it is, without deleting anything.

\textbf{Paragraph 1} \textbf{QIAN ZHUA FA:} Seizure by the hair from the front (variant 1).

This method is employed if the enemy standing in front of you seized you by the hair on the top of your head.

\textbf{Editor’s notes:}
\textsuperscript{15} The Ming dynasty ruled in China since 1368 till 1644, then the power passed to the Qing dynasty that ruled until Xinhai Revolution of 1911.
Explanations

B(A) has seized A(B) from the front with his right (left) hand by the hair. A(B) must quickly cover the enemy’s hand that is making a seizure with both palms, press it to his head and pull it back with force. At the same time the torso and the head must move back\textsuperscript{16} so that the enemy’s arm making a seizure by the hair will straighten in the elbow joint but its wrist will remain slightly bent\textsuperscript{17}. At that instant it is necessary abruptly draw (bend) forward with the whole body, press as strong as possible with the head and the hands (on an enemy’s hand) a little bit to the right (left) and downward. It is necessary to abruptly press with palms\textsuperscript{18} on the enemy’s hand at the point which lies one CUN\textsuperscript{19} below the wrist on its outer side. A fracture of the wrist will occur. Photo 1 – “Seizure by the hair from the front” (variant 1).

Editor’s notes:

\textsuperscript{16} For that purpose “A” must make a small step backward and slightly bend back in his waist.
\textsuperscript{17} For that purpose it is necessary to lower the chin to the breast.
\textsuperscript{18} “To chop” in the original text.
\textsuperscript{19} 1 CUN = 3.3 cm.
Paragraph 2 QIAN ZHUA FA: Seizure by the hair from the front (variant 2).

This method is not a vital one for the people of today with their hair shortly cut or with a shaven head like that one of the author of this book.

This method is employed when the enemy, as in the first case, standing in the front, seized you by the hair on the top of your head.

![Photo 2 – “Seizure by the hair from the front” (variant 2).](image)

Explanations

As in the first case, B(A) has seized A(B) with his right (left) hand by the hair. It is necessary to cover the hand of the enemy with the right (left) palm and tightly press it to your head, the middle finger being thrust under his palm. At the same time you seize with the left (right) hand the enemy’s arm
from above 2 or 3 CUNs\textsuperscript{20} above the wrist, move the body and the head back so that his arm is straightened in the elbow joint and the wrist a little bit bent. At that instant it is necessary to stoop down abruptly, at the same time the left (right) leg makes a step forward, the left (right) elbow pressing on the enemy’s arm from above downward and forward. This movement must be fast and strong, in that case a wrist fracture will occur. Photo 2 – “Seizure by the hair from the front” (variant 2).

\textbf{Paragraph 3} HOU ZHUA FA: Seizure by the hair from behind.

\textit{This method is very effective but when it is employed, it is necessary to take into account difference in height and build. Let’s consider a case when a man, small and relatively weak from physical point of view, encountered an enemy who is a head taller and substantially stronger. In this case the small weak man, even if he takes the position shown in photo 3, can not overpower the enemy. Here some additional actions are required, for instance, it is possible to deliver an elbow blow on his ribs or stoop and strike at his genitalia. After that action the above method can be successfully used.}

This method is used if the enemy standing behind seized you by the hair on the back of your head.

\textbf{Editor’s notes:}

\textsuperscript{20} 6.6 – 9.9 cm.
Explanations

B(A), standing behind the back of A(B), has seized his hair with the right (left) hand. A(B) must quickly cover the enemy’s hand with his right (left) palm, press it to the back of his head with force and slightly move with his whole torso to the right (left), pulling the enemy with himself, and at the same time he must turn to the left (right) by 90 degrees. It is necessary “to prop up”, from below upward, the tip of the enemy’s elbow with the left (right) palm and at the same time to bend the body to the right (left) to have the enemy’s caught arm straightened in the elbow joint and the head slightly tossed back to turn the enemy’s caught arm with the elbow down. Press on the enemy’s elbow joint against its natural bend with the left (right) arm from below upward, that will make the enemy draw himself up and stand on tiptoe. If a movement is made abruptly and with sufficient effort, a fracture of the elbow joint will occur. Photo 3 – “Seizure by the hair from behind.”
DUAN DENG: Clasping a lamp.

It is very effective, though relatively dangerous (for your opponent) method. After becoming unconscious from violent pain the enemy goes into a coma, a man, being in this state for a long time, can die. Therefore, it is necessary to know methods which can help him to go out of that state. To employ that method effectively, one must have strong arms, specially trained fingers, otherwise it will be to no purpose. When executing that method the second arm performs an auxiliary function.

This method is applicable to an enemy in any position - standing, sitting or lying one.

Explanations

A(B) seizes the lobe of the left (right) ear of the enemy with his right (left) thumb and forefinger, his right (left) middle finger presses with force on the tendon below the ear and a little bit above protruding bone (angle) of the lower jaw where the point of “muscle numbness” lies. It is necessary to press inward and
a little upward. At the same time you must seize the right (left) part of the enemy’s head above the temple with your left (right) hand and press to the right (left) and downward with force. Press at the same time with both hands to squeeze the enemy's head as strong as possible. If everything has been done properly, the enemy’s body grows numb immediately and he will become unconscious from violent pain. It needs long drilling to make fingers strong, otherwise it is difficult to get required effect. Photo 4 – “Clasping a lamp.”

**Paragraph 5** ZHUA LIAN: Seizing by the face.

*Photo 5 shows how to seize the enemy’s hand properly: it is necessary to seize and squeeze his thumb with your little finger and the fourth finger and press his hand to your chest with your palm. Grip and control of the enemy’s thumb is a key to effective employment of this method. After execution of protective actions it is necessary to counter-attack without delay, otherwise there is a risk of exposing your head to a blow.*

**Point QU CHI:**

This method is employed when the enemy is downright in front of you and he is pushing you on your breast or seizing your clothes.

**Editor’s notes:**

*Training methods for fingers are described in detail in the book Jin Jing Zhong. Training Methods of 72 Arts of Shaolin. (Tanjin, 1934). You can order this e-book [here >>].*
Explanations

B(A) reaches out his right (left) arm with the aim to push or seize by the clothes on the breast of A(B). A(B) must immediately cover the hand of the B(A) with his left (right) hand, slightly “draw in” his chest, shift backward a little with the whole torso, and tightly press the enemy’s hand to his breast.

Concurrently with that movement of the right (left) hand deliver fast and strong blow from above downward to the region of the point QU CHI that lies on the side of elbow bent, which will cause reflex bending of the enemy’s arm. You use it and immediately approach the enemy, at that the right (left) hand moves forward and upward without stopping and seizes the enemy by the face: the thumb props up against the bridge of the nose from its right (left) side and the other four fingers press with force on the tendon under the left (right) ear, a little bit above the protruding angle of the lower jaw in the region of the point of “muscle numbness”. Pressing must be done with force, in that case all muscles of the enemy will numb and he will not be able to move an arm or leg. Actions must be well coordinated and fast when using this method. Photo 5 – “Seizing by the face.”
ZHAI KUI: Taking off the helmet.

When you employ this method, it is necessary to act resolutely and fast, otherwise the enemy can break away.

The method is used when the enemy tries to wring your neck.

Explanations

A(B) seizes B(A) by the hair on the back of the enemy’s head with his right (left) hand, concurrently he props up against his chin on the left side with the left (right) hand, at that the elbow of the right (left) arm of the A(B) in a bent position must prop up against the enemy’s chest below the armpit to form a lever for the right (left) arm. The right (left) hand pulls the hair seized at the back of the head toward itself and downward and the left (right) hand pushes the enemy’s chin from itself and upward. When you execute the method, you must tightly lean with your right (left) side against the left (right) side of the enemy body as to his left (right) arm to remain behind your back. It is to avoid such possible enemy’s counteractions as a seizure and pressing your genitalia. It is the first phase of the method “Taking off the helmet”, photo 6.

Photo 6 – “Taking off the helmet”, first phase.
It is a very important moment: it is possible to avoid a grip and carry out a countermeasure only at the very beginning of actions of the enemy when he has not applied all his force yet.

The second phase

Let’s consider further a possible countermeasure against the method “Taking off the helmet”. Let us assume that B(A) tries to employ the method “Taking off the helmet” against A(B) but he has not applied the utmost effort yet. A(B) must instantly bring his right (left) arm back, cover the hand that seized him by the hair and firmly press it to the back of his head. Simultaneously it is necessary to move the body a little bit back by bending in the waist, squat partly to lower the left (right) shoulder to the level of the right (left) elbow of the enemy’s arm which seized the hair, push that elbow with your shoulder to the right (left), then “prop up” (the elbow) upward. In the course of those actions the body will turn to the right (left) by 180 degrees. Due to it the arm of the enemy that pushes the chin loses its force, as the head turns to the pushing side. It is necessary to pull with the right (left) arm to the right (left) and downward with force. At the same time you should “prop up” (the
enemy’s elbow) with your left (right) shoulder and elbow upward, the whole body will also rise a little up. Those actions will result in a fracture of the elbow joint of the enemy. **It is the second phase of the method “Taking off the helmet”, photo 7.**

If you failed to break the elbow, it is necessary to proceed immediately to the third phase of this method, as described below.

*Explanations to photo 8: As mentioned above, advantage in body height and strength is an important factor that must be always taken into account. In photo 8 one of opponents is significantly taller and he can use this advantage. If he turns to the right and at the same time pushes off the elbow that “props up” his right arm with his left palm, he will be able to avoid a grip and get free himself. Besides, he will find himself behind the back of his enemy and will be able to use that position for taking countermeasures.*

**The third phase**

Let’s consider a possible continuation of the second phase of the method: A(B) turns to the right (left) with the aim of “propping up” with the shoulder the enemy’s arm that is held. At that moment B(A) started to counteract with the aim to get free himself from the grip. A(B) must push upward with the left elbow with a concurrent...
abrupt turn of the whole body to the right (left) as to remain to be back to back with the enemy. At that the right (left) hand of the A(B) must firmly hold the enemy’s hand that seized him by the hair, the head and the whole body must be bent down. In that position it is extremely difficult for the enemy to get himself free. The left arm, if necessary, intensifies actions of the right arm by catching the enemy’s held arm near the wrist. Make a strong pull forward and downward and a fracture of the elbow joint will occur. It is the third phase of the method “Taking off the helmet”, photo 8.
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