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DR. YANG, JWING-MING

# Tai Chi Chin Na

THE SEIZING ART OF TAI CHI CHUAN

One of the people  
who have “**made the  
greatest impact on  
martial arts in the  
past 100 years.**”

—*Inside Kung-Fu Magazine*



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## Foreword by Grandmaster Li, Mao-Ching

The origin of *taiji* (太極) is misty and turbid; we call it *wuji* (無極) (no extremity). When it is extremely calm, it appears condensed and peaceful externally. However, concealed within it there exists both *yin* (陰) and *yang* (陽). These two, yin and yang, mutually transport, vary, advance, and withdraw. Consequently, there is neither void nor defect. The name we give to this hidden movement of yin and yang is “taiji.”

Application of this theory to two-person taiji pushing hands practice reveals the same twin virtues of yin and yang. You and your partner mutually harmonize and coordinate with each other, and thereby improve both your own and each other’s health. Taiji is used not only for defensive purposes. It says in the *Yi Jing*, or *Book of Changes* (易經), that “the [hidden] beginning of the misty origin [i.e., wuji] is called taiji. From the nourishment of the two poles [i.e., yin and yang], ten thousand objects were born.”<sup>1</sup>

The word “taiji” was first seen in the *Yi Jing*. Though the word “taiji” was also mentioned in the *Han Book*, it recognized that this word originated from the *Yi Jing*. In the *Yi Jing*, it says, “Taiji is the key which dominates the generations and variations. [It] is the mother of the million objects between heaven and earth. [If we] trace the beginning of the world, it is certain that it originated from this—the sole misty qi.” It also says, “Taiji, the master of the qi, is the order [i.e., rule] and the great foundation of the generations and variations is the origin of the sole qi. Therefore, it is called ‘the grand ultimate.’ Fu Xi saw taiji as the dawn of the day. It is the mother of the beginning. The origin of the million [objects] and the source of the sole qi, therefore, is called ‘grand ultimate,’ [which is] able to generate, originate, and transport without stop.”<sup>2, 3</sup>

It is said, “Knowing the origin, it is easy to figure out the root. Consequently, it is easy to explore the branches and leaves.”<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the ultimate holy man (Confucius) said, “The gentleman keeps the origin. When the origin is firmly established, the Dao can then be begotten.”<sup>5</sup> This is to encourage people. It means that the importance of education is in its origin. Taiji is the mother of the million objects between heaven and earth. This origin from taiji begets countless generations. All of these vary from the sole qi. That is why heaven and earth also reside within taiji and are able to move ceaselessly. The birth of taiji is the origin of the beginning. When this origin is applied to humanity, it is called original qi.

The million objects originated from original qi. It then derived into yin and yang, and followed with the four natural variations of the seasons. From this, we can see that qi is the mother of the million objects. Therefore, when a human wishes to strengthen the body, he must first regulate the qi. If the qi is smooth and uniform, then the foundation of health can be established. This is the real meaning of variation in taiji.

Among the five internal yin organs in the human body, the kidneys acquire the prebirth qi. This prebirth qi is also called original qi or the real qi. The stomach area (middle *dan tian*) stores the postbirth qi. In order to establish smooth and uniform qi, a healthy condition of the kidneys and stomach is the main goal of qigong practice.

Externally, you should train the fist techniques, and internally you should cultivate and regulate the qi to nourish life. When qi is circulated smoothly, then the muscles/tendons (physical body) will be comfortable and the blood circulation can be free. Naturally, hundreds of sicknesses will not occur.

When we apply taiji into the origins of humanity, it is like a miniature heaven and earth. Before it is discriminated, it is calmness. Once it is divided, then yin and yang are discriminated (i.e., male and female). When this yin and yang are manifest in this world, the four seasons are derived and the five elements of qi are generated. These five qi are metal, wood, water, fire, and dust. When these five qi are applied to humanity, they correspond to the lungs, liver, kidneys, heart, and spleen, which are the five yin internal organs. These five qi can also be applied to the east, west, south, north, and center.

The five elements have natural patterns of mutual generation and conquest following yin and yang theory. From the patterns of the five elements and the theory of yin and yang, millions of lives are derived and endure. When these patterns and theories are applied to the human body, it can become very strong. Among all of the Chinese martial arts, taijiquan holds the first place, for it carries these five patterns and yin and yang theory. Therefore, a taijiquan practitioner's ability to reach a profound level depends on how much he is able to ponder and understand the above theory.

When taijiquan is practiced, it is as soft as the falling leaves blown by autumn wind. But internally, it is storing the yang and can assume shape as a sharp sword that is able to cut the vine and branches easily. The theory is simple, because you must know how to be relaxed, and then be able to tense at the correct instant. When you are relaxed, your mind is calm, neutral, and empty, until you feel you are transparent and invisible. It is like clouds at dawn or dusk, peaceful, calm, and utterly still. Once the stored jing is manifested, it is like a hurricane whirlwind, fast and powerful.

If a taijiquan practitioner understands the theory of yin and yang, and the mutual relations of the five elements, then he can be calm and round. He can also be strong internally, and manifest strength externally. Naturally, the means of reaching this goal are through ceaseless study and practice.

When taijiquan is applied externally, it is manifested into the four fighting categories: kicking (*ti*, 踢), striking (*da*, 打), wrestling (*shuai*, 摔), and seize and control (*na*, 拿). This book will introduce the applications of qin na in taijiquan.

The two words "qin na" were first used by the Zejiang Police Academy before World War II, in 1937. At that time, the principal of this academy, Mr. Zhao, Long-wen (趙龍文) was known as an excellent scholar. He was also a lover and promoter of the Chinese

martial arts. At that time, all of the students, male or female, were required to learn and practice qin na, wrestling, and defense against both the dagger and the gun. The teacher was Mr. Han, Ching-tang (韓慶堂), and the assistants were Mrs. Jiang, Tang-zhu (江塘珠) and her husband. Mrs. Jiang was the daughter of a well-known retired Qing martial officer at that time. Later, Mr. Han's martial arts brother, Mr. Liu, Jin-sheng (劉錦昇), was also appointed as a coach, in order to satisfy the great demand for teaching. When they had time, they got together and mutually studied the techniques of dividing the muscle/tendon and misplacing the bone (分筋搓骨手法). If they felt less than smooth or had difficulty, they would ask for the answer from Mrs. Jiang's father. From these efforts, they compiled a complete record of the postures used both in solo practice and also in mutual matching qin na. This compilation was then named the *Police Qin Na Applications* (分筋搓骨手法), or simply *Qin Na Techniques* (擒拿術). All of this history has been recounted in Dr. Yang's book *Comprehensive Applications of Shaolin Chin Na*. I will not repeat it here. I will only conclude this foreword with some of the important points for qin na applications, and the requirements of success. This will enable you to reach a stage of "applying the techniques as you wish" (順心應手) and achieve effective control of your opponent. From my accumulation of more than fifty years of martial arts experience, I understand that a practitioner must have a firm foundation in Chinese gongfu. Only then can he unify body and hands. Under these conditions, his legs will be able to coordinate the techniques naturally and smoothly. This is the key to winning and making the techniques effective.

Qin na and taiji have close relations that cannot be separated. When qin na is applied into the eight trigrams derived from taiji, it occupies the word "thunder" (雷). This has the meaning of "thunder" in the eight trigrams. Among all taijiquan techniques, pluck (*cai*, 採), pulling (*le*, 捋), capture (*lu*, 擄), press down (*an*, 按), elbow (*zhou*, 肘), and bump (*kao*, 靠) are commonly adopted in qin na. When qin na is applied in taijiquan, the defensive theory remains the same, using the soft against the hard. The only difference is that once qin na is used to lock the opponent in position, the final control must be firm and hard. Though the result is different, the original theory remains the same.

When a practitioner learns Chinese gongfu (which implies external styles) and has a strong foundation, then he will be able to unify the hands, eyes (i.e., reaction), body (i.e., movements), techniques, and stepping (手、眼、身、法、步). This will let you reach a stage of emitting power from the hands with speed like thunder, which does not allow anyone time to cover his ears. You attack the opponent without his expectation or preparation. In addition, you will be able to maneuver your strategies and vary your plan as you wish. In this case, you will have an advantage in catching the right timing and emitting your thunder strength. But remember: Once you are delayed, you will have lost the opportunity. In taiji, it is said, "One movement, ten thousand variations."

Again, I am very happy to hear that Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming has completed this book, *Tai Chi Chin Na*, to share his knowledge with the public. I am so delighted that I have summarized the lessons and experience I have accumulated from my teacher about qin na. This can be used for your reference.

Li, Mao-Ching (李茂清)  
Research Member  
Guoshu Promoting Committee  
Republic of China  
February 15, 1995

### References

1. 易：“渾元之始，是曰太極。二象所資，萬品之所生。”（孔子家語）
2. 易註：“太極者，主生化之樞，為天地萬物之母，而溯世界之初始，則固來之，渾然一氣也。”；“太極者，氣之主宰，其生化之序，生成變化之大本，一氣之源也，故曰太極。”；“伏羲之一畫，即太極，為一體，是太初之母，萬有之宗，一氣之源，故曰太極，能生，有始，運行不息。”（伏羲）
3. Fu Xi was the Chinese emperor during the legendary period (2852–2737 BC).
4. 易經：“所謂知其源，則流易測得其本，則枝葉易探。”
5. 聖曰：“君子務本，本立而道生。”



## Foreword by Grandmaster Jou, Tsung-Hwa

After finishing this book, Master Yang, Jwing-Ming shared it with me. I feel that this book is of great quality and I would like to offer some words about it.

First of all, this book is written by a very credible author, because Dr. Yang has a very high level of education in the Chinese martial arts. Most Chinese martial artists only have a background in either theory or practice, but Dr. Yang has a solid background in both. He also has a high level of Western education, having graduated with a PhD from Purdue University. He exhibits a fervent desire to share the wonders of Chinese martial arts with westerners, and his broad background in both Eastern and Western knowledge makes him a fine teacher.

Traditional *chin na* (*qin na*) books are mostly theoretical in nature, which makes learning from them difficult and incomplete. But because Dr. Yang makes such explicit use of pictures to show the techniques of chin na step by step, this book serves very well as a self-teaching guide. Also, because of his popular YMAA schools, and his many worldwide workshops, this book makes a fine lesson accompaniment as well, especially for those who find it otherwise difficult to learn by books alone.

I am sure readers will find this chin na book informative as well as interesting.

Jou, Tsung-Hwa (周宗樺)  
(July 13, 1917–August 3, 1998)  
January 12, 1995



## Foreword by Master Liang, Shou-Yu

I am very happy to see this book, *Tai Chi Chin Na*, available in publication. This again is a great contribution made by Dr. Yang to the world martial arts society. He has constantly introduced and contributed the knowledge he has obtained from Chinese culture and from his personal intelligent study and research. This kind of spirit is precious and difficult to find.

The contents of *taijiquan* are very wide and profound. People always know that *taiji* can maintain health, strengthen the physical and qi bodies, relax the mind and spirit, cultivate an individual's personality, and regulate the emotional and wisdom minds. However, many people are not aware that it can also offer a practitioner a great foundation for self-defense. From the drills of pushing hands and taiji sparring, a practitioner is able to comprehend the keys of leading *jing* (*yin jing*, 引勁), neutralizing *jing* (*hua jing*, 化勁), coiling *jing* (*chan jing*, 纏勁), emitting *jing* (*fa jing*, 發勁), understanding *jing* (*dong jing*, 懂勁), and many other skills for using the soft against the hard.

To Chinese martial arts society, *taijiquan* is a widely accepted martial skill that can be used for health and self-defense. It contains the four required fighting skills and categories: kicking (*ti*, 踢), striking (*da*, 打), wrestling (*shuai*, 摔), and *qin na* (*na*, 拿). This book, *Tai Chi Chin Na*, introduces the correct and accurate *qin na* applications and tricks that can be used in the taiji eight basic technical patterns or *jing*: wardoff (*peng*, 棚), rollback (*lu*, 攏), press or squeeze (*ji*, 擠), press or push down (*an*, 按), pluck (*cai*, 採), rend or split (*lie*, 捌), elbow (*zhou*, 肘), and lean or press against (*kao*, 靠). This book also introduces the *qin na* applications that can be applied from the thirty-seven basic *taijiquan* movements. Although *taijiquan* develops many *qin na* skills, there has never been anyone who could compile and introduce them to the general public.

Dr. Yang has performed deep research in *qin na*. His knowledge is the widest and the most profound among those *qin na* experts whom I have known. He has written many other *qin na* books; all have been widely welcomed and appreciated. He has introduced and shared his many years of personal taiji and *qin na* experience to Western martial society. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first written book on taiji *qin na* available in the world. I deeply believe that the publication of this book will enable readers to enhance their understanding of how to apply *qin na* in *taijiquan*.

Liang, Shou-Yu (梁守渝)  
Vancouver, Canada  
December 1, 1994



## Preface by Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming

Even though *qin na* (*chin na*) has been popularly practiced in Chinese martial arts for hundreds of years, it was not until the 1982 publication of my first *qin na* book, *Shaolin Chin Na*, by Unique Publications, that these secret techniques of the Chinese martial arts were widely revealed to the Western world. Since then, this art has grown so rapidly that my book has been translated into several different languages, making its way all over the world in less than ten years.

Later, due to the tremendous number of requests, I decided to write another volume to discuss *qin na* theory and techniques in a more in-depth manner. Therefore, the second volume, *The Analysis of Shaolin Chin Na*, was published in 1987 by YMAA. It is beyond my belief that in such a short time, this art has grown so wide and popular that I have to travel to more than thirteen countries around the world at least twice a year to teach this art. I believe that the main reason for this is simply because this art can be adopted easily by almost all martial arts styles and blended into their own techniques. In addition to this, the *qin na* art has been proven to be one of the most effective defensive techniques, and it can be learned easily, even by a martial arts beginner.

From my experience teaching seminars, I realize that the hardest aspect of the art is not learning the techniques themselves, but applying those techniques to dynamic situations. Usually, a practitioner can pick up a technique easily and make it effective only when his partner is cooperative. However, as we already know, when you encounter an enemy in real life, his cooperation is unlikely. Any success in executing a technique depends on how accurate, fast, natural, and automatic your reactions are, and the only way to develop skills in these areas is to practice. For this reason, I decided to write my third *qin na* book, *Comprehensive Applications of Shaolin Chin Na*, published by YMAA, 1994, making this “seizing and controlling” art more complete.

As is well known in Chinese martial arts society, *qin na* techniques have been an integral part of every Chinese martial art style. It is not like Japanese jujitsu, which is considered a style in itself. It is my understanding that there is no known “*qin na* style” in Chinese martial arts. The reason for this is very simple. It is well known that there are four main fighting categories in every Chinese martial style. These four categories are striking by hands (*da*, 打), kicking with legs (*ti*, 踢), wrestling (*shuai*, 摔), and seize and control (*na*, 拿). It is also a fact that a substantial portion of Japanese culture was imported from China, beginning in the Chinese Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 221). It is further believed that the martial techniques that exist in Japan have been heavily influenced by the Chinese martial arts. When striking and kicking techniques passed to Japan and became karate styles, Chinese wrestling became judo, and *qin na* techniques were transformed into the art of jujitsu. Many Japanese martial artists believe that the aikido

martial arts were actually developed from the theories of Chinese *taijiquan* and qin na. From this you can see why qin na is not, in itself, considered a style in China.

There are also many qin na techniques in taijiquan. In fact, due to the emphasis on sticking and adhering techniques in taijiquan's close-range fighting strategy, qin na techniques have always been a very important part of the art. In this book, I will try my best to introduce to the reader those qin na techniques that I know can be applied into taijiquan fighting. In truth, many of these techniques actually originated in my White Crane Style. The reason that I can apply White Crane Qin Na into taijiquan easily is very simple. Taijiquan is known as a soft style and White Crane as a soft-hard style. It does not matter externally; the theory behind the soft side of White Crane remains the same as that of taijiquan. Many nonproficient Chinese martial artists believe that if taijiquan is interpreted by another style's theory or its theories have been blended with another style, then it is not pure taijiquan. They do not know that taijiquan actually originated from Shaolin styles, and therefore it was built and evolved over the same theoretical root. For example, it is well known that the first routine of Chen Style Taijiquan is called *changquan* (長拳) (long fist) and the second routine, called *pao chui* (炮捶) (cannon fist), all originated from the Shaolin Temple. In fact, from a historical perspective, those profound taiji masters of the past are all known to have learned many other different styles. For example, Sun, Lu-tang (孫祿堂), Zhang, Zhao-dong (張兆東), Wang, Shu-tian (王樹田), Han, Ching-tang (韓慶堂), and many others were all experts in many different styles. The Chinese martial arts grew and developed in the same cultural environment as the yin and yang theory. From learning different styles, you are afforded different angles of viewing the same techniques. This is the way of Dao.

Finally, you should understand one important fact: like many other Chinese martial arts, though a great portion of basic qin na techniques can simply be learned from books and videos, very often a qualified master is still necessary to lead you to a profound level. Books can offer you the theory of the techniques, while videos can offer you the continuous movements of the techniques. However, neither of these two can offer you the correct feeling of the locking and a clear concept of how an angle is set up. Because of this, if you are sincere in becoming a proficient qin na expert, you should also participate in seminars offered by qualified qin na masters. Very often, only a few minutes in a qin na seminar can solve the confusion and questions that might have taken you months or even years to figure out.

Other than merely reading this book, an interested reader should refer to the book *Shaolin Chin Na*, published by Unique Publications, as well as *Analysis of Shaolin Chin Na* and *Comprehensive Applications of Shaolin Chin Na*, published by YMAA. These three books will help you build a firm foundation, both in theory and in routine practice. In addition, these three books—especially the second one—will teach you how to train the power required for qin na techniques and the theory and methods of how to treat com-

mon injuries. In the appendix of the second volume, some secret herbal prescriptions for injuries, taught to me by my White Crane master, are also included. In order to avoid replication, we will not repeat these subjects in this volume.

In this volume, you may notice that all of the Chinese pronunciations are spelled according to the Pinyin system. The reason for this is simply that the Pinyin system has become more popular than any other system in the last fifteen years. It is believed that this system will become the most common and popular system in the next few decades.

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming (楊俊敏)

January, 1995





# Chapter 1: General Concepts

## 1-1. Introduction

*Taijiquan* (太極拳) was originally developed for combat in ancient times. Its fighting theory is to use the soft against the hard, and to use the round to neutralize the straight or square. In order to achieve this goal, the body must be soft and the movements must be smooth and natural. Taijiquan also emphasizes the cultivation of *qi* (氣), or internal energy. The concentrated mind leads the qi to circulate in the body. Because of this, taijiquan can be used for maintaining health and improving longevity.

Because of its effectiveness, since the 1940s, taijiquan has become publicly accepted as one of the best *qigong* (氣功) practices for health. Unfortunately, due to the overemphasis of its health aspects, the essence of taijiquan's creation—martial applications—has gradually been ignored. It is very upsetting to see that, even in modern China, most taijiquan practitioners do not understand this martial essence of taijiquan. Naturally, they do not understand martial power (*jing*, 勁) and the theory of using the mind to lead the qi to energize muscular power to its maximum. Consequently, the martial applications of each movement have begun to slowly disappear.

In order to make the art of taijiquan complete, I believe that it is our obligation to again study its martial applications. Only from this study will we be able to recover its lost essence and find the root of its creation. Only then can its health benefits be completely comprehended. In this book, one type of taijiquan martial applications, *qin na* (擒拿), will be introduced to you. I hope that through this introduction, general taijiquan practitioners will be inspired and encouraged to discuss and find the real essence of their art.

### What is Qin Na?

“Qin” (擒) in Chinese means “to seize or catch,” in the way an eagle seizes a rabbit or a policeman “catches a murderer” (*qin xiong*, 擒兇). “Na” (拿) means “to hold and control.” Therefore, qin na can be translated as “seize and control.”

Generally speaking, in order to have effective and efficient fighting capability, almost all Chinese martial styles include four categories of techniques. The first category is composed of the techniques of striking, punching, pushing, pressing, etc. The second category is using the leg to kick, sweep, step, or trip. In these techniques, contact time between you and your opponent must be very short, and the power for attacking is usually explosive

and harmful. The third category is called wrestling (*shuai jiao*, 摔跤), and it contains the skills of destroying the opponent's root and balance, consequently throwing him down. Often these techniques are mixed with the leg's sweeping or tripping, and the body's swinging or even throwing. The last category is qin na, containing grabbing techniques that specialize in controlling or locking the opponent's joints, muscles, or tendons.

However, you should understand an important fact. In a combat situation, the above three categories are often applied together, and cannot really be separated. For example, while one of your hands is grabbing and controlling your opponent, the other hand is used to strike a vital cavity. Another example of this is that often you use grabbing to lock your opponent's joints while throwing him down for further attack. Because of this, sometimes it is very difficult to discriminate clearly between techniques in a real situation. As a matter of fact, many Chinese martial artists believe that since there are many other non-grabbing techniques, such as pressing or striking the cavities or nerves, which can make the opponent numb in part of the body (or even render him unconscious), thereby providing control of the opponent, these techniques should also be recognized as qin na. You can see that, as long as the techniques are able to immobilize an opponent, it does not matter if the cause is a joint lock, numbness, or unconsciousness—all of them can be classified as qin na.

In summary, grabbing qin na techniques control and lock the opponent's joints or muscles/tendons so he cannot move, thus neutralizing his fighting ability. Pressing qin na techniques are used to numb the opponent's limbs, causing him to lose consciousness, or even die. Pressing qin na is usually applied to the qi cavities to disrupt normal qi circulation to the organs or the brain. Pressing techniques are also frequently used on nerve endings to cause extreme pain and unconsciousness. Qin na striking techniques are applied to vital points, and can be very deadly. Cavities on the qi channels can be attacked, or certain vital areas struck to rupture arteries. All of these techniques serve to “seize and control” the opponent. Therefore, qin na techniques can be generally categorized as follows:<sup>1</sup>

1. Dividing the muscle/tendon (*fen jin*, 分筋)
2. Misplacing the bone (*cuo gu*, 錯骨)
3. Sealing the breath (*bi qi*, 閉氣)
4. Pressing a vein/artery (*dian mai*, 點脈) or sealing or blocking the vein/artery (*duan mai*, 斷脈)<sup>2</sup>
5. Cavity press (*dian xue*, 點穴) or pressing a primary qi channel (*dian mai*, 點脈)<sup>3</sup>

Within these categories, *fen jin* also includes grabbing the muscle/tendon (*zhua jin*, 抓筋), and *dian xue* also includes grabbing or pressing the cavities (*na xue*, 拿穴).

Generally, dividing the muscle/tendon, misplacing the bone, and some techniques of sealing the breath are relatively easy to learn, and the theory behind them is easy to understand. They usually require only muscular strength and practice to make the control effective. When these same techniques are used to break bones or injure joints or tendons, you usually need to use martial power (jing, 勁). (For a discussion of jing, see the author's book *Tai Chi Theory and Martial Power*, published by YMAA.) Sealing the vein/artery and pressing the cavities require detailed knowledge of the location and depth of the cavities, the timing of the qi circulation, development of mind (yi, 意), internal energy (qi, 氣), martial power (jing, 勁), and special hand forms and techniques. This usually requires formal instruction by a qualified master, not only because the knowledge is deep, but also because most of the techniques are learned from sensing and feeling. Many of the techniques can easily cause death, and for this reason a master will normally only pass down this knowledge to students who are moral and trustworthy.

### **Qin Na in Chinese Martial Arts**

Nobody can tell exactly when qin na was first used. It probably began the first time one person grabbed another with the intention of controlling him. Grabbing the opponent's limbs or weapon is one of the most basic and instinctive means of immobilizing him or controlling his actions.

Because of their practicality, qin na techniques have been trained right along with other fighting techniques since the beginning of Chinese martial arts, many thousands of years ago. Although no system has sprung up that practices only qin na, almost every martial style has qin na mixed in with its other techniques. Even in Japan, Korea, and other Oriental countries that have been significantly influenced by Chinese culture, the indigenous martial styles have qin na techniques mixed in to some degree.

Generally speaking, since martial styles in southern China specialize in hand techniques and close-range fighting, they tend to have better-developed qin na techniques, and they tend to rely more upon them than do the northern styles. Also, because southern martial styles emphasize hand conditioning more than the northern styles, they tend to use more muscles for grabbing and cavity press. Southern styles' emphasis on short-range fighting causes them to train more for sticking and adhering. The techniques are usually applied with a circular motion, which can set up the opponent for a qin na control without his feeling the preparation. Footwork is also considered a very important part of qin na training for a southern martial artist. Remember that these statements are only generalizations; there are northern styles that also emphasize these things.

In Chinese internal styles, such as *taiji* (太極) and *liu he ba fa* (六合八法), neutralization is usually done with a circular motion, and so the qin na techniques tend to be smooth and round. Often the opponent will be controlled before he realizes that a

technique is being applied. In coordination with circular stepping, circular qin na can be used to pull the opponent's root and throw him away.

Japanese jujitsu and aikido are based on the same principles as qin na and taiji. Since these countries were significantly influenced by Chinese culture, it seems probable that Chinese qin na also influenced their indigenous martial arts.

Since fundamental qin na techniques can be used to seize and control a criminal without injuring or killing him, they have been an important part of training for constables, government officers, and modern policemen. Around AD 527, the Shaolin Temple (少林寺) became heavily involved in the martial arts. Since many nonlethal qin na techniques are very effective, the martial artists at the temple extensively researched, developed, and trained them. In the late Qing dynasty (清朝) in the nineteenth century, Shaolin techniques were taught to people in the general population, and qin na techniques were passed down along with the different martial styles that were developed in the Shaolin Temple. Many qin na techniques were also developed for use with weapons specially designed to seize the opponent's weapon. If your opponent is disarmed, he is automatically in a disadvantageous situation. For example, the hook of the hook sword and the hand guard of a *chai* (*sai*) (釵) were designed for this purpose.

## 1-2. Qin Na Categories and Theory

Although qin na techniques from one gongfu style may seem quite different from the techniques of another style, the theories and principles of application remain the same. These theories and principles form the root of all qin na techniques. If you adhere to these roots, your qin na will continue to grow and improve, but if you ignore these roots, your qin na will always remain undeveloped. In this section we will discuss these general theories and principles.

Before we discuss each qin na category, you should understand that there is no technique that is perfect for all situations. What you do depends upon what your opponent does, and since your opponent will not stand still and just let you control him, you must be able to adapt your qin na to fit the circumstances. Like all martial arts techniques, your qin na must respond to and follow the situation; techniques must be skillful, alive, fast, and powerful. You should further understand that qin na must take the opponent by surprise. In grabbing qin na you have to grasp your opponent's body, and so if your opponent is aware of your intention, it will be extremely difficult for you to successfully apply the technique. In such a case you may be obliged to use a cavity strike qin na instead of a grabbing technique.

It is usually much easier to strike the opponent than to control him. Subduing an opponent through a qin na controlling technique is a way to show mercy to someone

you do not want to injure. To successfully apply a grabbing qin na, you often need to fake or strike the opponent first to set him up for your controlling technique. For example, you can use a punch to cause your opponent to block, and when he blocks, you quickly grab his hand and use qin na to control him. Alternatively, you might kick his shin first to draw his attention to his leg, and immediately grab his hand and control him.

As mentioned, there are five categories of qin na:

1. Dividing the muscle/tendon or grabbing the muscle/tendon (fen jin or zhua jin, 分筋 / 抓筋)
2. Misplacing the bone (cuo gu, 錯骨)
3. Sealing the breath (bi qi, 閉氣)
4. Vein/artery press or sealing the vein/artery (dian mai or duan mai, 點脈 / 斷脈)
5. Pressing primary qi channel or cavity press (dian mai or dian xue, 點脈 / 點穴)

This book will discuss all of these categories in detail except the last two, which will be discussed only on an introductory level because they require an in-depth understanding of qi circulation, acupuncture, and specialized training techniques.

One additional point needs to be mentioned here. Very often qin na techniques make use of principles from several categories at once. For example, many techniques simultaneously use the principles of dividing the muscle/tendon and misplacing the bone.

### **1. Fen Jin or Zhua Jin (分筋 / 抓筋) (Dividing the Muscle/Tendon or Grabbing the Muscle/Tendon)**

“Fen” (分) in Chinese means “to divide,” “zhua” (抓) means “to grab,” and “jin” (筋) means “tendon, sinew, or muscle.” Fen jin or zhua jin qin na refers to techniques that tear apart the opponent’s muscles or tendons. Muscles contain nerves and many qi branch channels, so when you tear a muscle or tendon, not only do you cause sensations of pain to travel to the brain, but you also directly or indirectly affect the qi and interfere with the normal functioning of the organs. If the pain is great enough, it can disturb the qi and seriously damage the organs, and in extreme cases can even cause death. For this reason, when you are in extreme pain, your brain may “give the order” for you to pass out. Once you are unconscious, the qi circulation will significantly decrease, which will limit damage to the organs and perhaps save your life.

Fen jin qin na uses two main methods to divide the muscle/tendon. One method is to twist the opponent’s joint and then bend. Twisting the joint also twists the muscles/tendons. If you bend the joint at the same time, you can tear the tendons off the bone.

The second method is to split and tear the muscle/tendon apart without twisting. The most common place to do this is the fingers.



Method 1: Twist the joint.



Then bend the fingers.



Method 2: Split and tear the muscle/  
tendon without twisting.

Grabbing the muscle/tendon (zhua jin) relies upon the strength of the fingers to grab, press, and then pull the opponent's large muscles or tendons. This causes pain by overextending the muscles and tendons. Common targets for zhua jin qin na are the tendon on the shoulder, under the armpit, on the neck, and on the sides of the waist. Zhua jin qin na is used particularly by the Eagle Claw and Tiger Claw Styles. Although zhua jin is usually classified with fen jin qin na, many Chinese martial artists separate the two categories because the principle used to divide the muscle/tendon is different.



Grabbing the muscle/tendon at the shoulder.



Grabbing the muscle/tendon at the armpit front side.



Grabbing the muscle/tendon at the armpit rear side.



Grabbing the muscle/tendon at the neck.

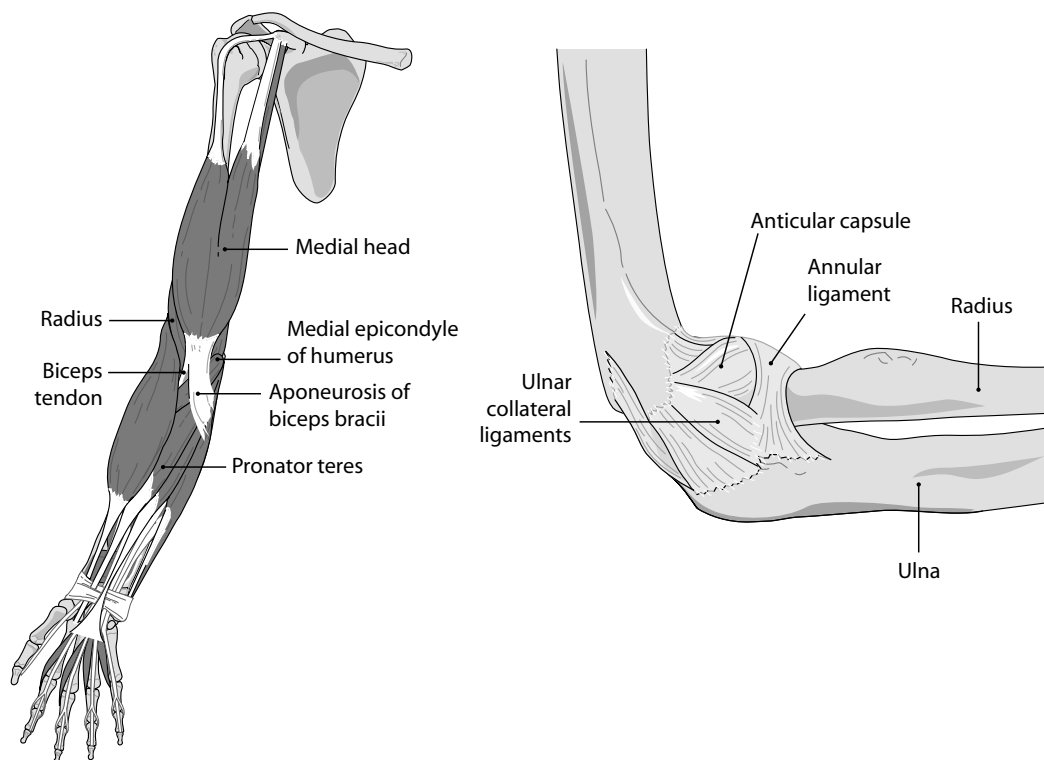


Grabbing the muscle/tendon at the side of the waist.

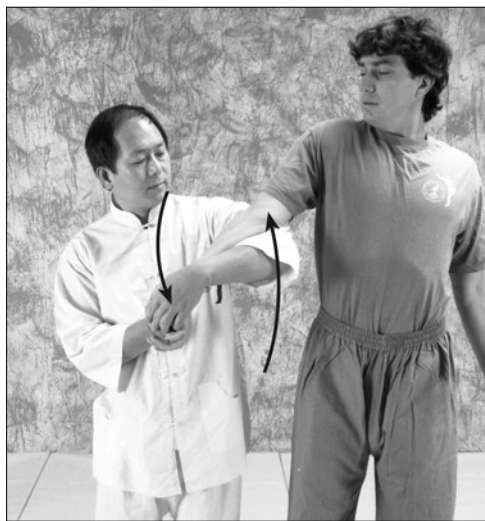


## 2. Cuo Gu (錯骨) (Misplacing the Bone)

“Cuo” (錯) means “wrong, disorder, or to place wrongly,” and “gu” (骨) means “bone.” Cuo gu, therefore, are qin na techniques that put bones in the wrong positions. These techniques are usually applied to the joints. If you examine the structure of a joint, you will see that the bones are connected to each other by ligaments, and the muscles around and over the joints are connected to the bones by tendons. When a joint is bent backward or twisted and bent in the abnormal direction, it can cause extreme pain, the ligament can be torn off the bone, and the bones can be pulled apart. Strictly speaking, it is very difficult to use dividing the muscle/tendon and misplacing the bone techniques separately. When one is used, generally the other one is simultaneously applied.



Structure of the joint.



A joint bent backward.



A joint bent and twisted.

### 3. Bi Qi (閉氣) (Sealing the Breath)

“Bi” (閉) in Chinese means “to close, seal, or shut,” and “qi” (氣) (more specifically *kong qi*, 空氣) means “air.”<sup>4</sup> Bi qi is the technique of preventing the opponent from inhaling, thereby causing him to pass out. There are three categories of bi qi, which differ in their approach to sealing.



Direct sealing by grabbing the throat.

Attacking this area causes the muscles around the windpipe to contract and close the windpipe.

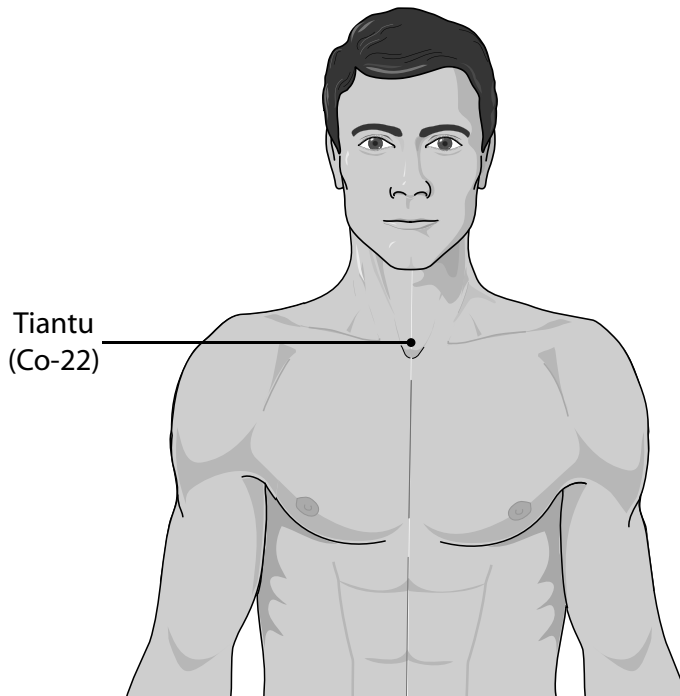
The first category is the direct sealing of the windpipe. You can grab your opponent's throat with your fingers, or compress his throat with your arm, and prevent him from inhaling. Alternatively, you can use your fingers to press or strike the *tiantu* cavity (Co-22, 天突) on the base of his throat to stop him from inhaling.



Direct sealing by compressing the throat.



Striking the tiantu cavity.



Tiantu cavity (Co-22).

The second category of bi qi is striking the muscles that surround the lungs. Because of the protection the ribs afford, it is very difficult to strike the muscles around the lungs directly. However, some of these muscles extend beyond the ribs. When they are attacked, they contract in pain and compress the lungs, preventing inhalation. Two muscle groups in the stomach are commonly used in this way.

### 5-3. Qin Na and Cavity Press in Taiji Postures

The first posture, taiji beginning (*taiji qi shi*, 太極起勢), does not have actual combat applications. The purpose of this posture is to coordinate the mind, leading the qi to the lower dan tian. Therefore, often this posture is also called “sink qi to dan tian” (*qi chen dan tian*, 氣沈丹田). It is a preparatory movement that can bring the mind to your center and sink the qi firmly to the lower dan tian.

In addition, there are no combat applications for the last movement of taijiquan. This posture is commonly named “returning the taiji to its origin” (*taiji huan yuan*, 太極還原) or “lead the qi to return to its origin” (*yin qi gui yuan*, 引氣歸原). From the name, you can see that after practicing the entire taiji sequence, this posture is used to return the qi to its origin—the lower dan tian.

#### 1. Grasp Sparrow’s Tail (Lan Qiu Wei, 攬雀尾)

##### A. Grasp Sparrow’s Tail, Right (Lan Qiu Wei, You, 右)

##### Movements



##### Analysis:

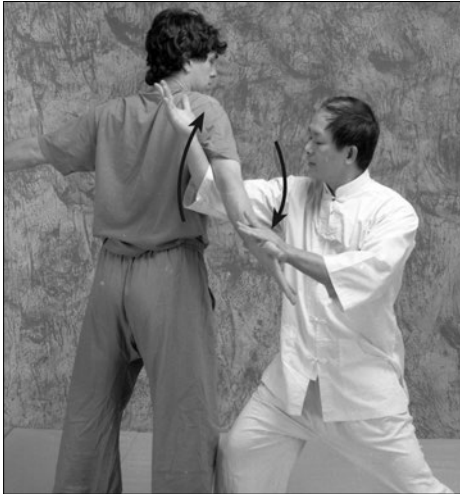
This is an action of peng. The right arm is used as peng to neutralize the oncoming attack upward, and the left hand is used to support the right arm to enhance its neutralizing strength.

Turn your body to your right and move your right hand up with your left hand, slightly touching the middle portion of your right forearm.

## Qin Na

### Technique #1. Use Wardoff Upward against Opponent's Elbow (Shang Peng Di Zhou, 上棚敵肘)

*Shang peng di zhou* is a technique that uses the movements of grasp sparrow's tail, right posture. In this technique, your left hand is used to pluck (cai, 採) your opponent's wrist while your right arm uses wardoff upward to lock his elbow.



Your left hand is used to pluck your opponent's wrist while your right arm uses wardoff upward to lock his elbow.

### Technique #2. Backward Upward Turning (Hou Shang Fan, 後上翻)

*Hou shang fan* is a technique that uses the movements of grasp sparrow's tail posture.



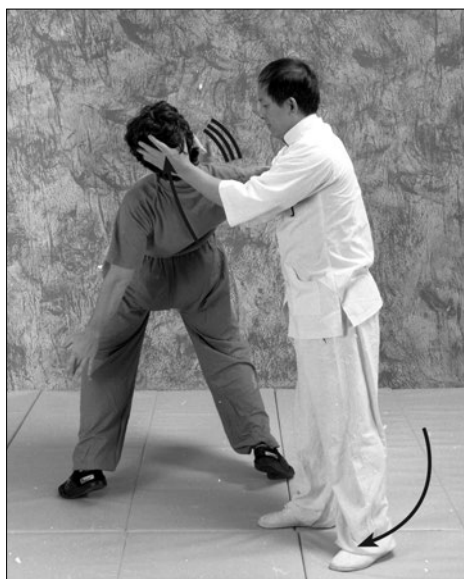
Situation: Your opponent attacks. First, use your right forearm wardoff against the opponent's attack, upward and to your right.



Immediately step your right leg to his right, and use your left hand to grab his right wrist while circling your right elbow until it reaches his elbow.



Finally, twist his wrist with your left hand while lifting his elbow upward with your right elbow.



Alternative application: You may step your left leg behind him, and lock his right arm with your right hand and chest area while using your left arm to push the upper part of his head forward.



### Technique #3. Small Elbow Wrap (Xiao Chan Zhou, 小纏肘)

Xiao chan zhou is a technique that uses the movements of grasp sparrow's tail posture.



Situation: Your opponent attacks with his right hand. First, use your right forearm for an upward wardoff of your opponent's right hand attack.



Next, step your left leg to the front of his right leg, and hook and grab his right wrist with your right hand while placing your left forearm upward against his elbow.



Then bow forward, using the leverage of your left forearm and right hand to bend his arm, and then circle forward.



Finally, pull his body to your front while sweeping your left leg backward to make him fall.

#### Technique #4. Arm Wraps around the Dragon's Neck (Bi Chan Long Jing, 臂纏龍頸)

Bi chan long jing is a technique that uses the grasp sparrow's tail posture.



Situation: Your opponent uses a right hand attack. First, use your right forearm for an upward wardoff of your opponent's right hand attack.



Next, immediately hook your right hand down and grab his right wrist, and step your left leg behind his right leg while using your left forearm to push his neck backward.



Finally, lock his right arm with your chest and right hand while circling your left arm around his neck to lock him up.

From the above four examples, you can see that there are limited techniques that can be used directly from this posture. However, you will not be surprised to learn that this posture was originally designed to neutralize the opponent's attack or to set up and create an opportunity for the following technique.



**Cavity Press or Strike:**



When you use your right arm wardoff against the oncoming attack, you have exposed many of your opponent's cavities under his right arm.



This will offer you a great opportunity for the following attacks.

**Cavity name**

Jiquan (H-1, 極泉)  
 Qimen (Li-14, 期門)  
 Riyue (GB-24, 日月)

**Hand form(s)**

Sword secret  
 Phoenix eye fist  
 Phoenix eye fist

**Possible results**

Cause heart attack  
 Seal the breath and shock the liver  
 Seal the breath and shock the liver



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## About the Author

### Yang, Jwing-Ming, PhD (楊俊敏博士)

Dr. Yang, Jwing-Ming was born on August 11, 1946, in Xinzhu Xian (新竹縣), Taiwan (台灣), Republic of China (中華民國). He started his *wushu* (武術) (*gongfu* or *kung fu*, 功夫) training at the age of fifteen under Shaolin White Crane (Shaolin Bai He, 少林白鶴) Master, Cheng, Gin-Gsao (曾金灶). Master Cheng originally learned Taizuquan (太祖拳) from his grandfather when he was a child. When Master Cheng was fifteen years old, he started learning White Crane from Master Jin, Shao-Feng (金紹峰) and followed him for twenty-three years until Master Jin's death.



In thirteen years of study (1961–1974) under Master Cheng, Dr. Yang became an expert in the White Crane style of Chinese martial arts, which includes both the use of bare hand and various weapons, such as saber, staff, spear, trident, two short rods, and many other weapons. With the same master, he also studied White Crane Qigong (氣功), *qin na* or *chin na* (擒拿), *tui na* (推拿), and *dian xue* massages (點穴按摩) and herbal treatment.

At sixteen, Dr. Yang began the study of Yang Style Taijiquan (楊氏太極拳) under Master Kao Tao (高濤). He later continued his study of *taijiquan* under Master Li, Mao-Ching (李茂清), and also practiced with Mr. Wilson Chen (陳威伸), in Taipei (台北). Master Li learned his taijiquan from the well-known Master Han, Ching-Tang (韓慶堂), and Mr. Chen learned his taijiquan from Master Chang, Xiang-San (張詳三). From this further practice, Dr. Yang was able to master the *taiji* bare hand sequence, pushing hands, the two-man fighting sequence, taiji sword, taiji saber, and taiji qigong.

When Dr. Yang was eighteen years old, he entered Tamkang College (淡江學院) in Taipei Xian to study physics. In college, he began the study of traditional Shaolin Long Fist (*Changquan* or *Chang Chuan*, 少林長拳) with Master Li, Mao-Ching at the Tamkang College Guoshu Club (淡江國術社), 1964–1968, and eventually became an assistant instructor under Master Li. In 1971, he completed his MS degree in physics at the National Taiwan University (台灣大學) and then served in the Chinese Air Force

from 1971 to 1972. In the service, Dr. Yang taught physics at the Junior Academy of the Chinese Air Force (空軍幼校) while also teaching wushu. After being honorably discharged in 1972, he returned to Tamkang College to teach physics and resumed study under Master Li, Mao-Ching. From Master Li, Dr. Yang learned Northern style wushu, which includes both bare hand and kicking techniques, and numerous weapons.

In 1974, Dr. Yang came to the United States to study mechanical engineering at Purdue University. At the request of a few students, Dr. Yang began to teach gongfu (kung fu), which resulted in the establishment of the Purdue University Chinese Kung Fu Research Club in the spring of 1975. While at Purdue, Dr. Yang also taught college-credit courses in taijiquan. In May of 1978, he was awarded a PhD in mechanical engineering by Purdue.

In 1980, Dr. Yang moved to Houston to work for Texas Instruments. While in Houston, he founded Yang's Shaolin Kung Fu Academy, which was eventually taken over by his disciple, Mr. Jeffery Bolt, after Dr. Yang moved to Boston in 1982. Dr. Yang founded Yang's Martial Arts Academy in Boston on October 1, 1982.

In January of 1984, he gave up his engineering career to devote more time to research, writing, and teaching. In March of 1986, he purchased property in the Jamaica Plain area of Boston to be used as the headquarters of the new organization, Yang's Martial Arts Association (YMAA). The organization expanded to become a division of Yang's Oriental Arts Association, Inc. (YOAA).

In 2008, Dr. Yang began the nonprofit YMAA California Retreat Center. This training facility in rural California is where selected students enroll in a five-year residency to learn Chinese martial arts.

Dr. Yang has been involved in traditional Chinese wushu since 1961, studying Shaolin White Crane (*Bai He*), Shaolin Long Fist (*Changquan*), and taijiquan under several different masters. He has taught for more than forty-six years: seven years in Taiwan, five years at Purdue University, two years in Houston, twenty-six years in Boston, and six years at the YMAA California Retreat Center. He has taught seminars all around the world, sharing his knowledge of Chinese martial arts and qigong in Argentina, Austria, Barbados, Botswana, Belgium, Bermuda, Brazil, Canada, China, Chile, England, Egypt, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Iceland, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, and Venezuela.

Since 1986, YMAA has become an international organization, which currently includes more than fifty schools located in Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Chile, France, Hungary, Iran, Ireland, Italy, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Venezuela, and the United States.

Many of Dr. Yang's books and videos have been translated into languages, such as French, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Czech, Bulgarian, Russian, German, and Hungarian.

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