Please note that this file has been altered to make a PDF for download and is not exactly the same as the book. The pinyin has been removed due to problems matching old files with new programs. The book has pinyin pronunciation for every name and many terms. The book also is formatted with one diagram per page, centered with a border just like the original. This excerpt is intended to give you an idea of the quality of translation only.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Shove with the palm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Thrust in the palm</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. White ape removes a branch</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bind the body up completely</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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5. Intercept the leg 26
6. Cleverly knock over the silver vase 30
7. Double changeover palm 33
8. Turn around and suddenly charge in 40
9. Left and right sloping legs 45
10. Cleverly carry the flower basket over your arm 51
11. Search the belly with the palm 57
12. Great-grandfather goes fishing 63
13. Tease the hidden cannon on the move 67
14. Lift and pour the golden brazier 72
15. Roll the arms and thump 76
16. Draw out the body to poke the ribs 80
17. Golden hook hooks the ring 84
18. Golden pheasant shakes its wings 88
19. Embrace in both hands 93
20. Golden cicada sheds its skin 96
21. Pluck, pound, restrain and hit 102
22. Carry a barbarian over your back 107
23. Arrows like a string of pearls 113
24. Advance, angle the body and double thrust with

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Shrug the shoulders and search the belly with the palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Turn around, slice the ribs with the palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Skillfully break the chains coiling around the waist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Flip the body Arhat palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Drift along in a boat with the current</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Kick over the mourning cap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Advance, charge in with the palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Lead the sheep along at your ease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Snake form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Chisel in with the leg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Author’s Preface

Martial arts are a way to train the body. Techniques are relatively few, though, when compared to the inexhaustible principles of this way. Those who train martial arts must refine their essence 精 to transform their energy/power 氣, in order for this energy to transform their spirit 神. They view mastery 功 as the ability to use this internal energy and hold as a goal its constant flow without impediment, so seek out techniques that enable their acquired qi 後天 to supplement their original qi 先天. The storage of the original qi is of primary importance, and enables the kidneys’ fluid (jing) to be sufficient. To train this, breathe the pure air 清氣 in through the nose and take it straight to the belly 氣海. From the belly it absorbs into the tailbone 尾闾 then turns in the midriff 腰間 to store in the kidneys 腎 which are in the body core. Then it goes up the governing vessels 督脈 to the brain 丸宮 and returns through the nasal passage to connect by the tongue, which draws the kidney qi so that it descends. When it descends to the abdomen it solidifies and enters the cinnabar field 丹田. This is the requirement for a complete cycle 週天.

All martial arts regard internal energy 內氣 as the root and outer power 外勁 as proficiency 功. To train to be accomplished you must train every day over a long period without a break so that your qi becomes full. The ancients said, “When heaven (the head) becomes clear and the earth (body) becomes serene, then man has
“one spirit.” Those who train for a long time gain the ingenious spirit of heaven and earth – they are naturally agile, they are completely centered and this shows in their form. They can extend and contract agilely, use a perfect balance of hard and soft, enter and withdraw as needed, be as unhurried or quick as they desire. The perfect subtleties of their techniques are all naturally acquired.

I loved martial arts since I was young, so I learned from master Zhou Xiang 周祥. As an apprentice I learned the true tradition of baguazhang with morals. Although I learned from a famous master, training is the result of personal work, so my skills are not above ordinary. Now I have written “Baguazhang Applications” with its 360 detailed drawings to set down the hard won knowledge of past generations before it is lost. I wrote this book so that the true skills are not lost to future generations.

It is my pleasure to openly present this book to those who love martial arts wherever they are, and whatever style they do.

Yan Dehua
閔德華
Wuqing county, Hebei province
March, 1936

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White ape removes a branch

白猿搬枝

I strike at my opponent's chest with my right hand. He quickly sucks in his chest.

My opponent grabs and pulls my right wrist with his right hand and pulls my elbow joint with his left hand.
I quickly stab 插 my right hand down.

I twist 摸 my arm to the outside.

And turn the hand over to face up. At the same time I advance my left foot, hooking in, and drop my weight down. I then lift 托 his arm with my left hand and raise my right foot.

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I turn to steal his place. My opponent’s right elbow is now conveniently on my left shoulder.

I use my left hand to move his wrist and use the power of my body core. He must fly over my head from behind me to fall in front of me.

Please take note that in this exchange I am in black pants and my opponent is in grey pants.

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The thirtieth application is called kick over the mourning cap

倒踢紫金冠

I strike my opponent’s right shoulder with my left palm. He grabs my left wrist with his left hand and lifts my elbow with his right hand.

He twists his body left and steps the right foot forward so that I am caught (ready for a joint lock). I quickly hook my left foot in, twist my body to the right and lift my right leg.

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I raise my head and neck and bow my back
折腰 to
kick my
right leg up
into his
abdomen.

Please note for this technique and previous
techniques which attack the groin – do not under
any circumstances kick anyone other than a real
enemy in the groin. Respect for ethics is the root of
a good martial artist. To brutalize someone to serve
one’s own ego – to keep hitting someone without
giving face – is the mark of a ruffian.
Please note in this exchange I am in black pants and my
opponent is in grey pants.