



Paths beyond Domination

The Walk of Life:

Centre, Circles, Power &
Blending

in Bagua and Tai Chi

This Workshop

The Series / background

The role of martial arts

The role of internal
martial arts

Primer on internal power

Use of visualization

Flow & relationship



A Few Questions...Personal



1st Week: can you feel chi-energy?

The role of breathing

Attention: present moment

Where does power come from?

**How do you learn this stuff? How practical is it?
For what?**

**– Relationship between Mental/internal and
physical/external**

...between consciousness and repetition

...between forms and principles

Questions: Social

The role of conflict in life

What negative aspects of MA need to be left behind?

- our stories of struggle in practice and mastery.



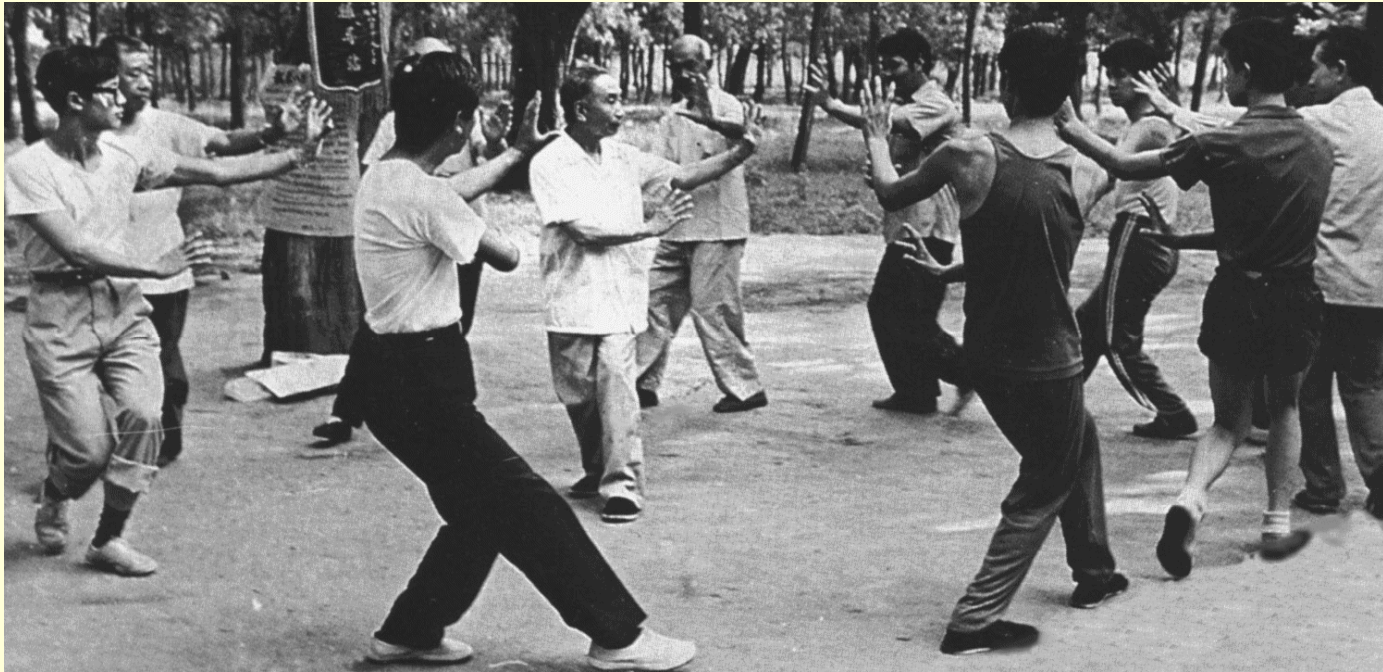
The role of tradition in martial arts:

dual role of knowledge & repression

What is needed to tap these potentials & develop the arts?

- education
- the economy

Go Round : Introductions



Who are you?

Done any Martial Arts?

Special interest? Burning question?

The Martial Arts

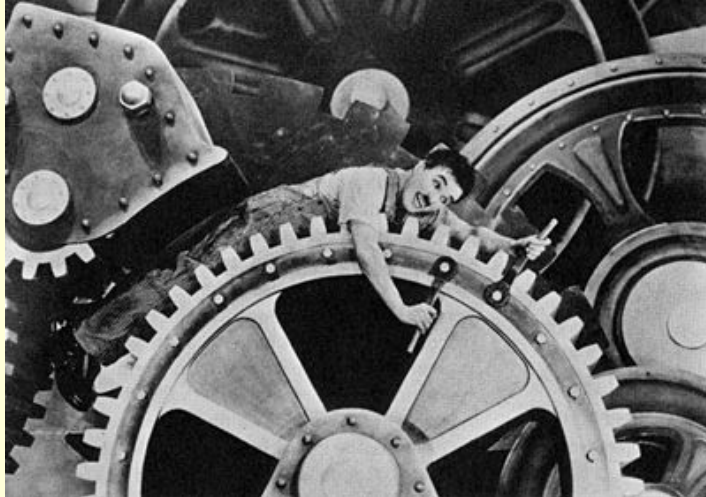


**Roots in hunting /
gathering cultures:
500,000 years (?)**



**Redefinition in
Civilization, class
society, patriarchy:
5,000 years (?)**

Civilization, The Megamachine & the Male Character-Structure:



Work (cog-labour)

War



Civilization / Patriarchy:

The Age of
Conflict?

...*or*

The Age of Domination

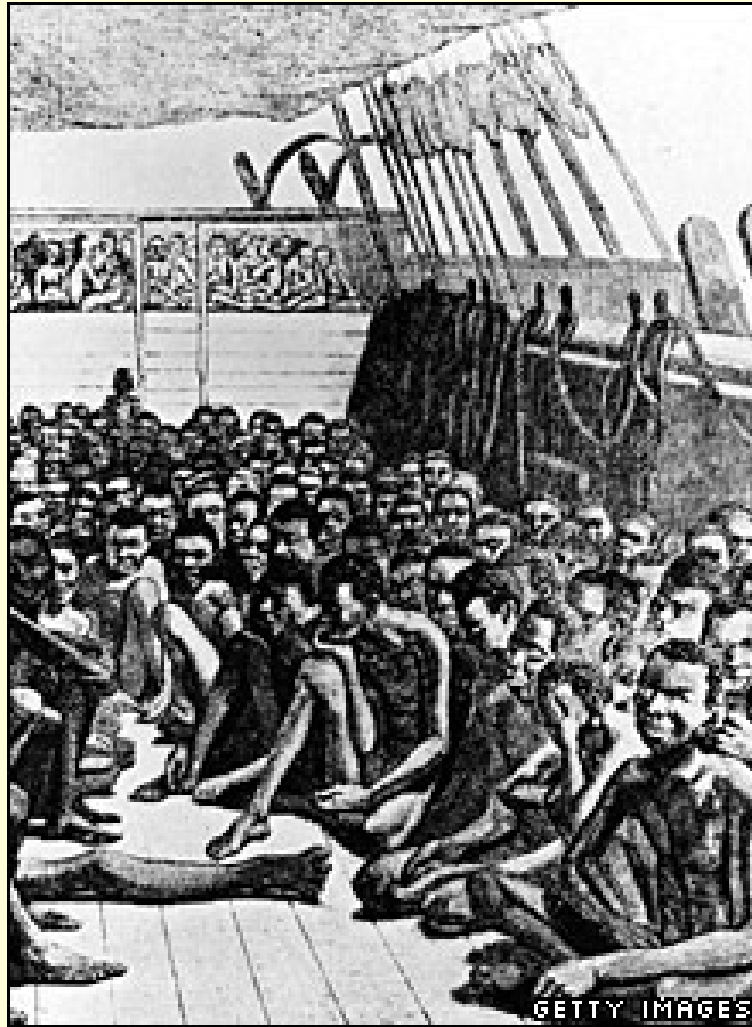


Domination



ALL OF THEM- WITCHES!

Domination



Domination



Homestead Strike, 1892

Domination



Domination



Domination



Domination



**3 Gorges Dam
(Burtynsky)**

Domination



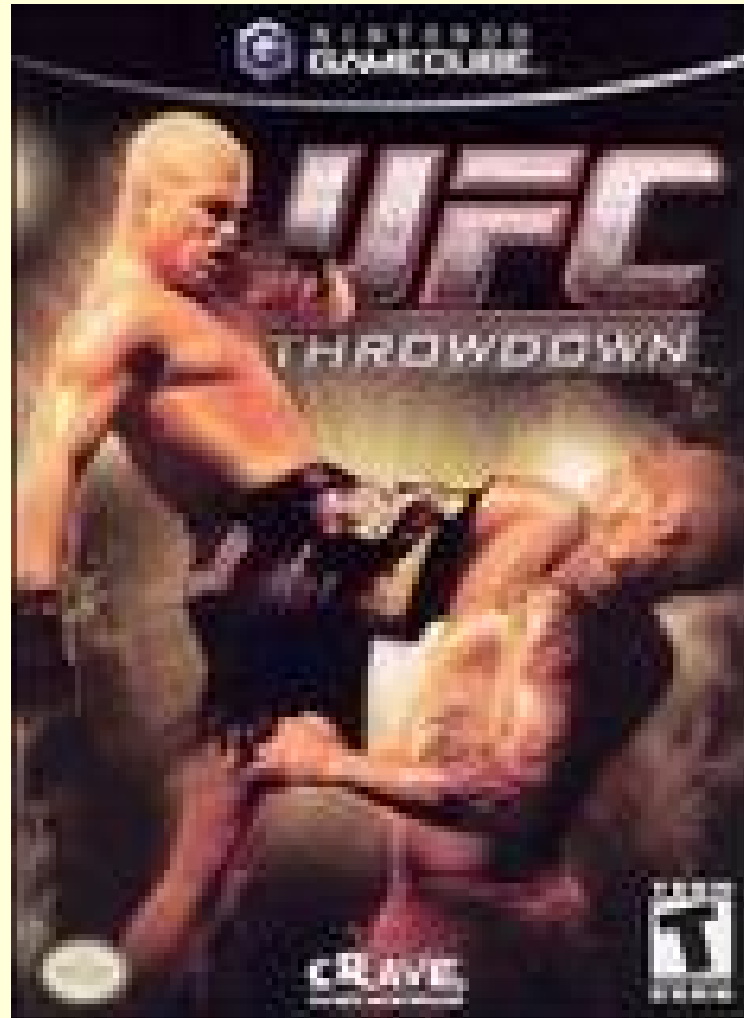
Domination



Domination



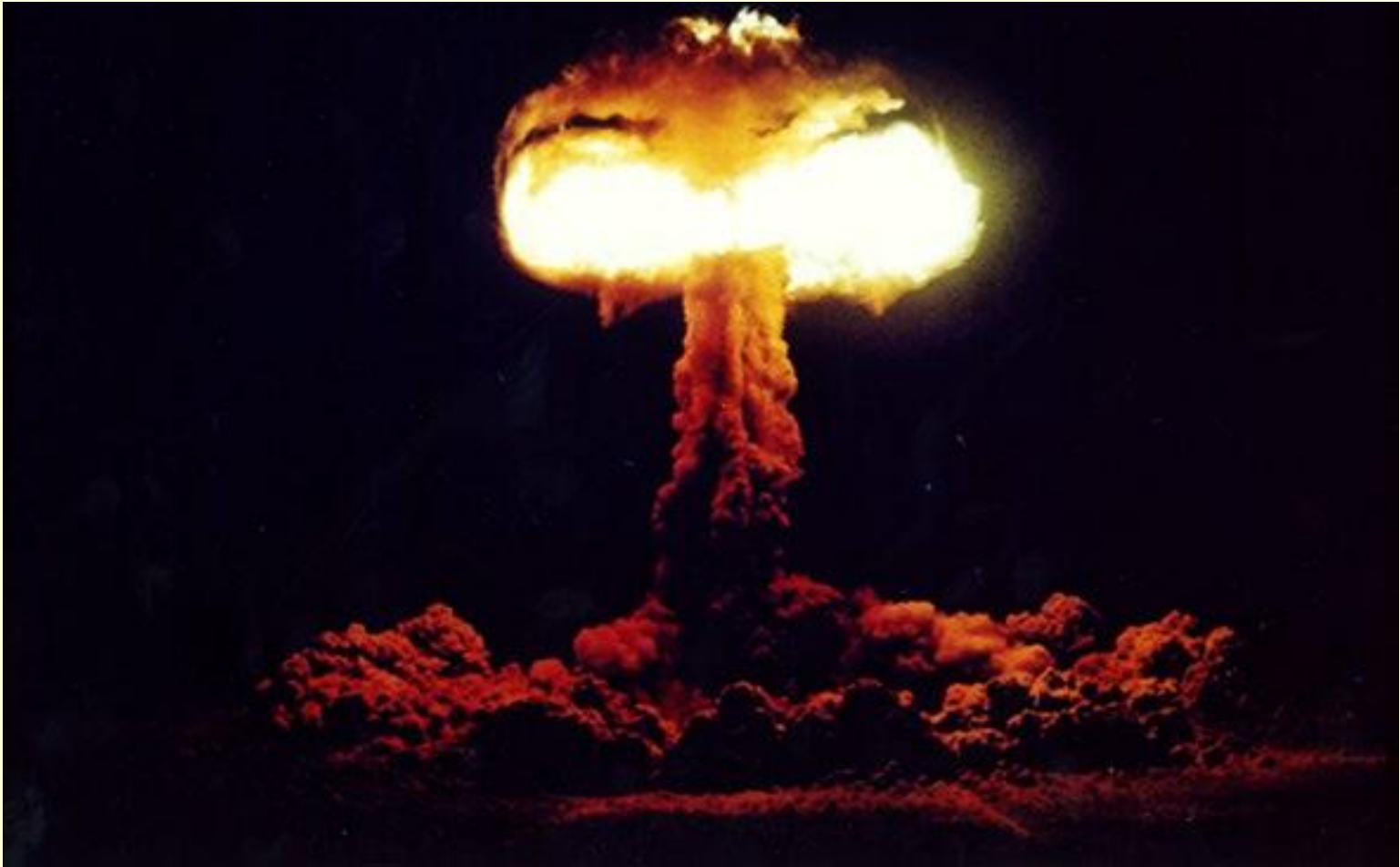
Domination



Basic question:

Is Domination now
a counterproductive strategy?

The limits of Domination-1



The limits of Domination-2



Gendered Identities Propping up the Fordist Waste Economy

Cold War mobilization



Suburbanization

1960s /70s: Troubles in North American Macho Land



John Wayne gets butt
kicked in Vietnam

Wage/job rollbacks in
industry

The rise of women,
minorities, and
countercultural images of
androgeny.

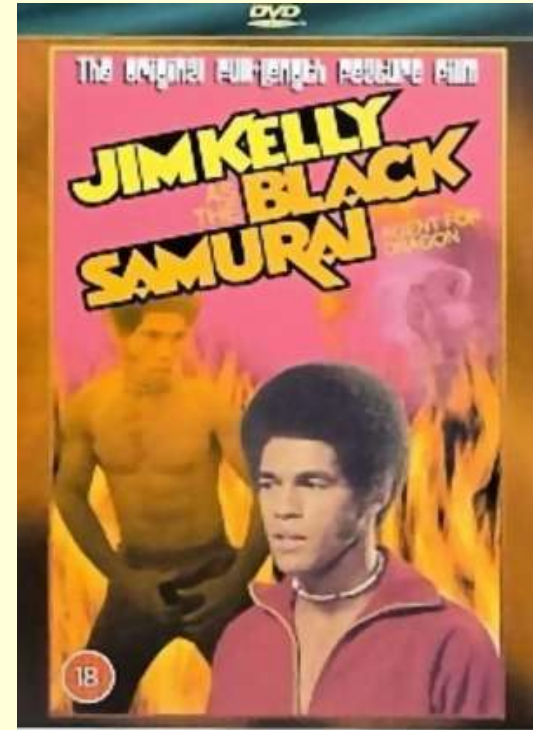


The Renovation of Macho:

new more artsy & hip images of domination



Asian



Afro-American

21st Century Renovation:
Cannon Fodder for our Time:
the New Brutalism



Spencer Platt / Get



Questions:

**Are the Martial Arts
simply tools of
domination?**



**Is there an essence of
Martial Arts that can
help us evolve beyond
Domination?**



Contemporary Attitudes toward Martial Arts



How does beating people up rate as a spiritual endeavour?



Is fighting proficiency the single central criteria of Martial Arts integrity?

The Essential Developmental Concern of Martial Arts:



How to deal
with Conflict

Developmental Traditions within the Martial Arts

The Internal:

...is both the alternative to, and the
'inner core' of, external Martial Arts

--conceptualization of *Neijia*

All disciplines as Microcosms

Relationship to Death

Conflict as part of Life

"When you focus,
it is easy to excel ..."

Sun Lutang

THE
masters
002 collection

Human Development: the Mystical Perspective



Waking up to a deeper, more inclusive
Self

Higher levels of Reality can be *directly
perceived*, not simply believed

Evolution as Remembering & Return to
Source

Union and human nature: the Reed
flute

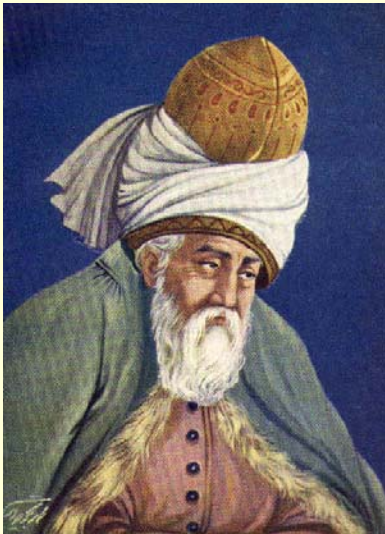
Dying to ego: full acceptance of
Reality

Keys to Transcendence: awareness
and balance of yin & yang



Spirituality & Martial Arts:

Conflict, Union & Purpose:



The Inner Jihad

"All that is other than the
true 'I' must be slain."

Rumi

The Draw toward Union



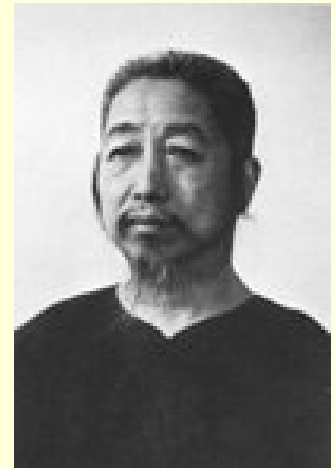
Unconscious/compulsive:
Destroy the Other



Conscious:
Become the Other

The Internal Arts Path to Union

- Martial arts as a **Laboratory** for applying life principles
- Being Whole: Attaining the Whole *through the play* of the Separate—the *yin* and *yang*
- Acting from one's Centre
- Sensing other Centres
- Opening to Flow
- Accepting Reality



Self-Awareness



Subtlety of sensation:
use of the Mind

Key to *Whole Body
Power*

Attention and
persistence/practice

Relationship



Putting oneself in an advantageous position

A new balance between *competition & cooperation*

Attunement and blending

Achieving control by giving up control



The Complete Martial Artist



(S)he who is fully tuned in to forces flowing around and through her, while rooted in her unique centre.

The Problem of Method

Traditional focus on
technique and
structure

Opportunities to work on
principles via direct
work with mind,
intention and
visualization

How is the posture or
movement supposed to
feel like?

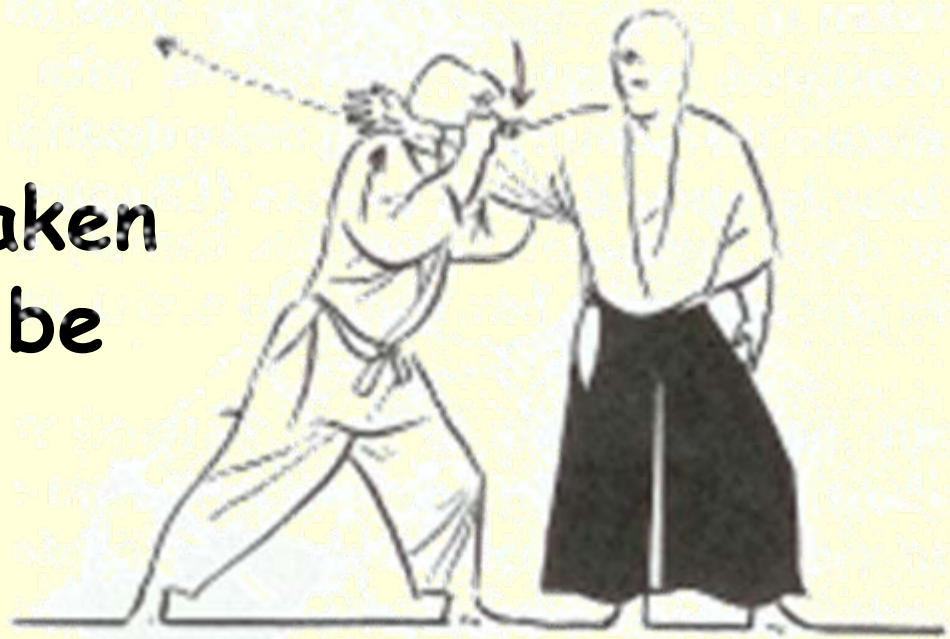
Achieving the proper
alignment by feel



A Taste of *Whole Body Power*

The Unbendable Arm

Every position taken
in IMA should be
“unbendable”



Zhan Zhuang:

Don't just do something,
Stand there!



Radical form of qigong:
fastest way to develop
Whole Body Power.

Present in many systems;
most associated with
Yiquan (I Chuan)

Understanding Standing

Mind as Movie Screen

Standing: Clearing the Screen,
Returning to Source

Field Consciousness: sensing the
Big Picture

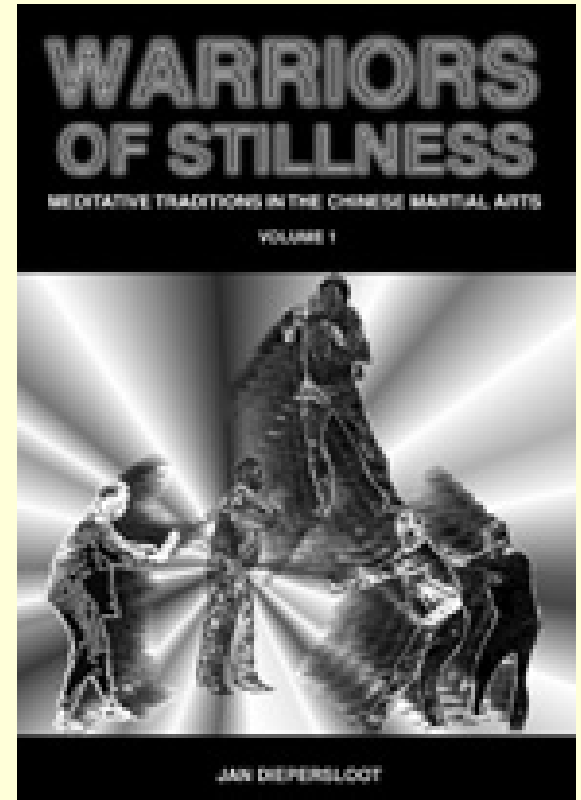
Body as Teacher: tuning in to
natural alignments, dissolving
blockages

Creating Engrams

Learning about Intention

Experiencing Whole Body Power

Powerful Healing



The Power of Mind

**Engrams and
effortlessness**

Imagining as Doing

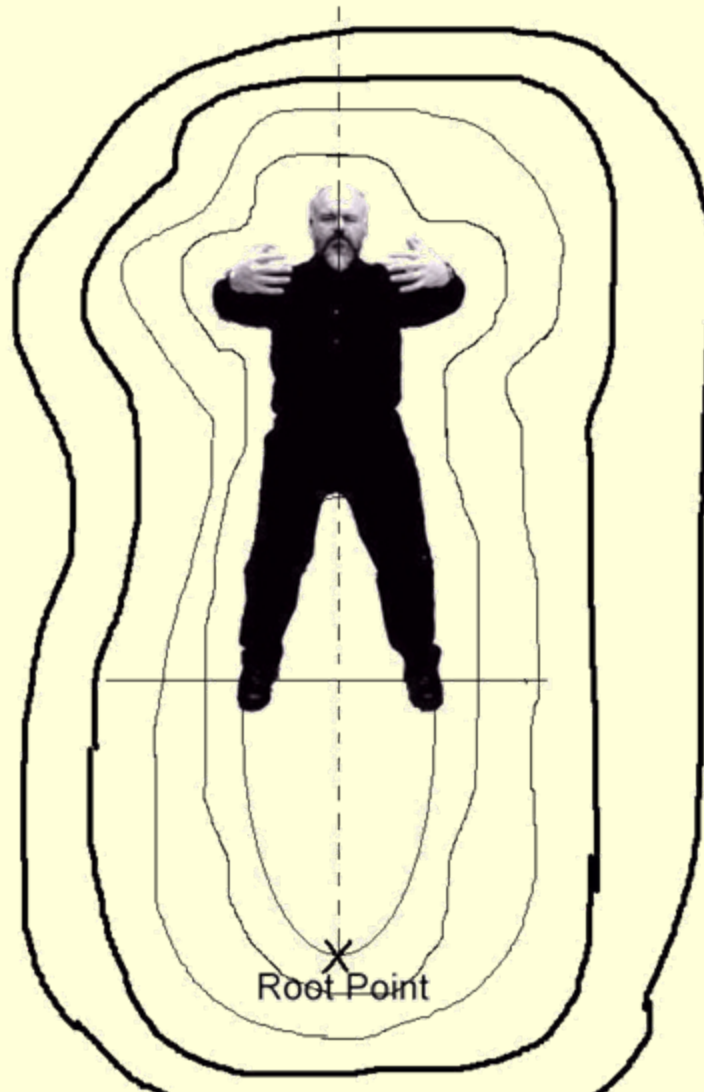
- **Exercising the Mind**
- **Feeling while
watching**

**Super-efficiency or
higher energy?**

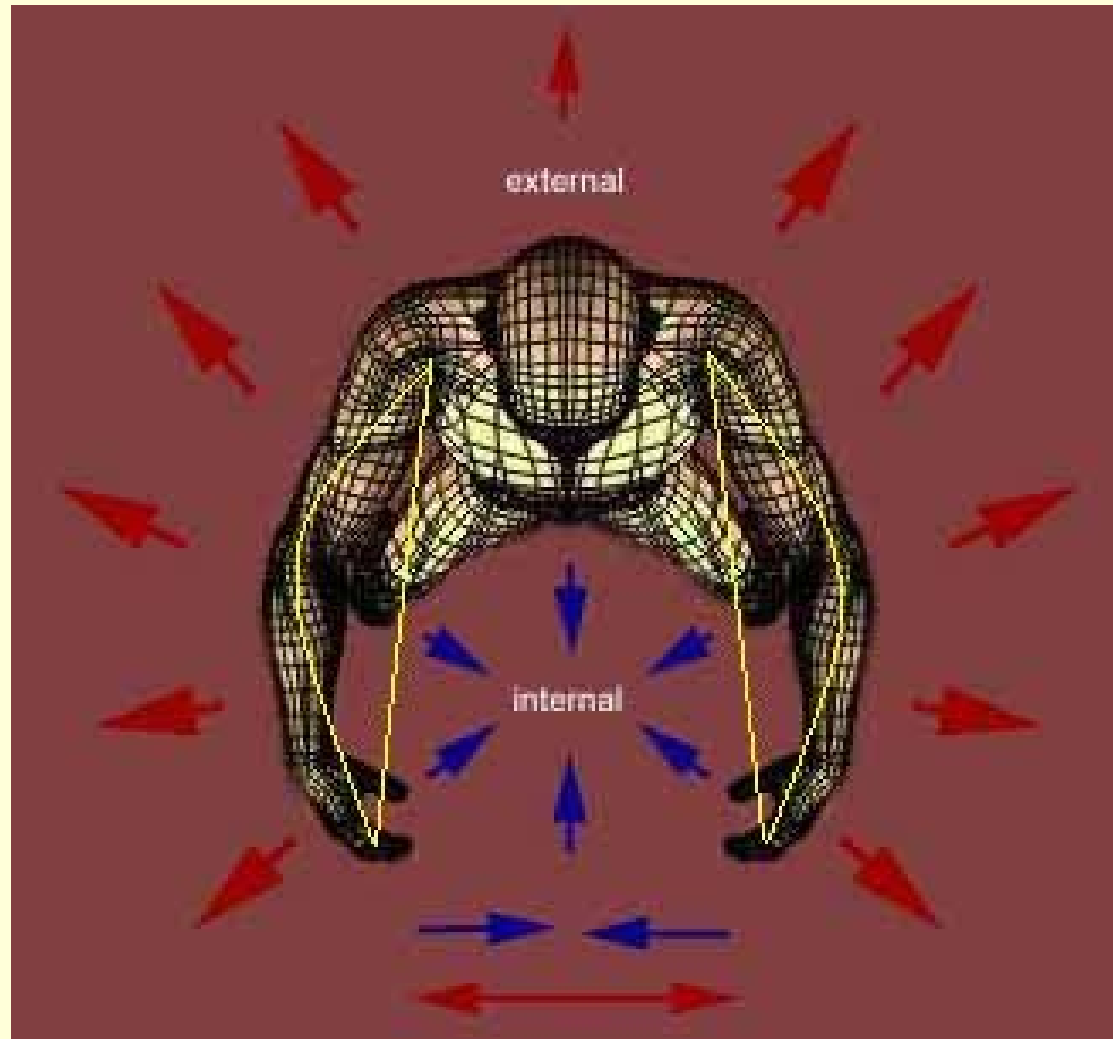
Empty Force?



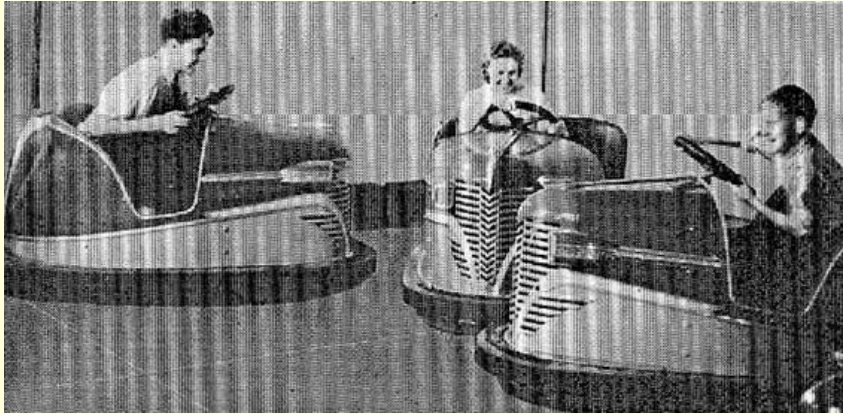
Centre Line & the Sphere



The Bow & the Bubble



Peng



Inflationary strategy:

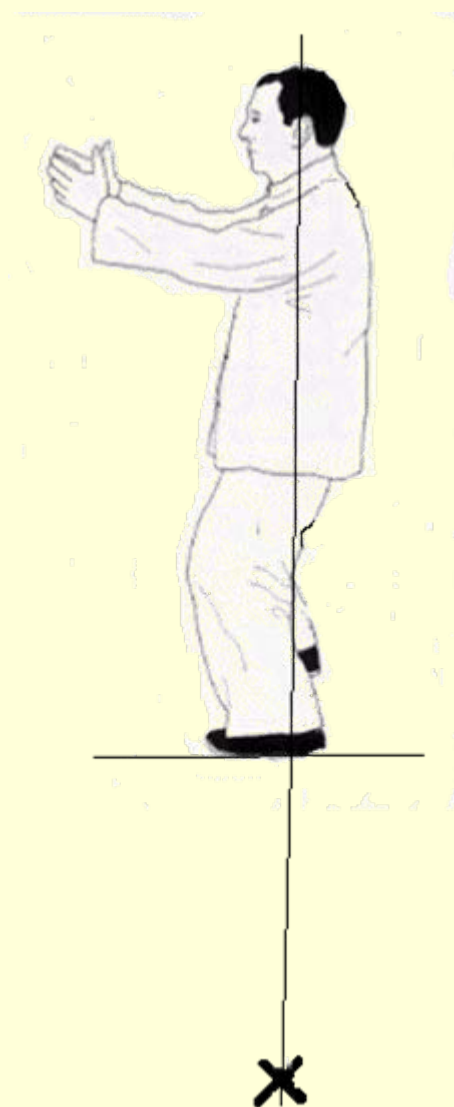
“he blowed up real good!”

A complement to
continuity



Standing I

- Identify with the *Centreline* first
- Don't break sensing at the floor; feel the lower sphere and the *Root Point* deep under the surface.
- Let your limbs flow within the sphere; find the *Path* for energy-flow; let the body "assign" muscles and support
- Mentally *pump up* the balloon/sphere: focus on it, not on points of tension



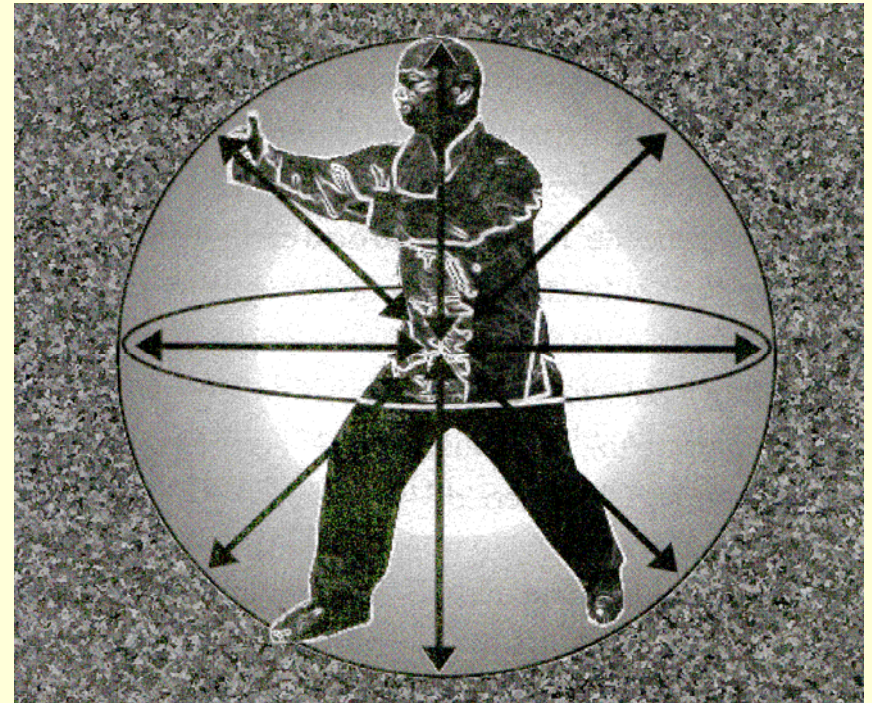
Standing II



- Connect the hands (mentally) to help feel the upper sphere
- Equality of feeling in the sphere : don't *localize* attention
- Become heavy by lightening up; *Soft Eyes* vision; peripheral sensing / *field consciousness*
- Feel as if suspended in water

Exercising the Mind

- **Visualization #1:** turn the whole body into super-dense bone or stone
- **Visualization #2:** pump up the sphere, starting from centreline to fill the entire room and the cosmos—and then gradually deflate it. Repeat. At first slowly.



Stillness in Movement

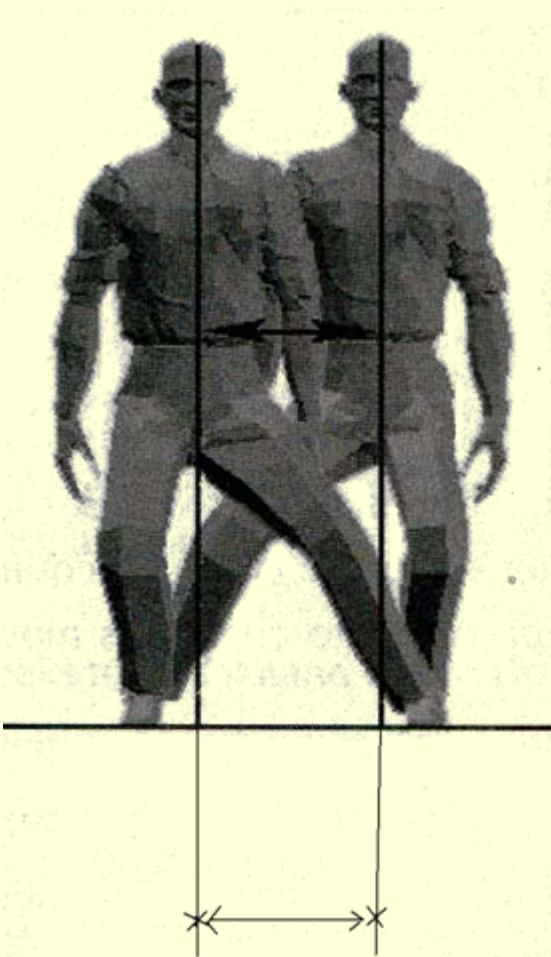
3 Dimensions of Movement

1. **Rotating** around the Centreline
2. **Shifting** the Centreline: the 'Gondola'
3. **Sliding vertically** on the Centreline

Feel lower sphere, Root Point, and weight of ballast water →→→→



Stillness in Movement-2



Shifting

- Keep focused on the Centreline as you shift it from left to right sides (facing front)
- Focus on Root Point below shifting horizontally.
- Pump energy around bottom of lower sphere to shift.

Stillness in Movement-3



Whole body strength:
Image of moving
through water, mud,
molasses, or peanut
butter

Strength exerted in
waves and *pulses*

Pulse energy through the
legs around the Lower
Sphere.

Feel the ballast water
below.

Stillness in Movement-4

"The body is like a floating cloud. In push-hands the hands are not needed. The whole body is a hand and the hand is not a hand."

Cheng Man Ching

Strikes: the water balloon

Sliding the arm on
tracks

Rotating around joints



Framing / Posture-testing

Biofeedback for your partner

Rigidity essential for feedback

Let the *Testee* determine the weight

Also one of the best sensitivity learning tools for the *Tester*



Forces to Test

Emptiness / inflation /
alignment /
connection to earth

Folding / unfolding

Mind leads body



Have a Ball doing the Internal Arts!

Taiji / Tai Chi:
The Bouncing Ball



Bagua / Pa Kua:
The Spinning Ball

Xingyi / Hsing-I:
The Cannonball



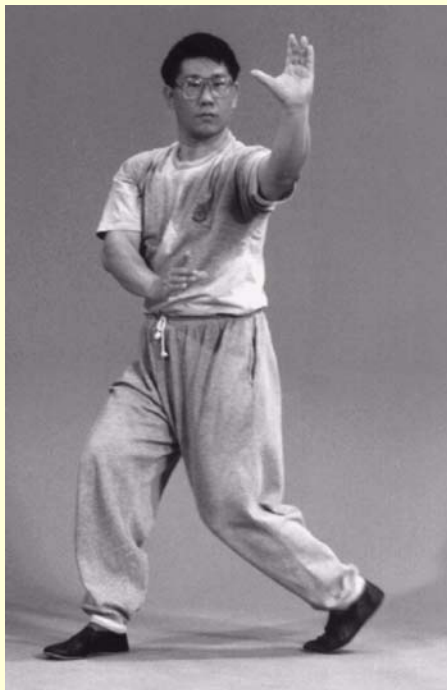
Ba gua zhang: 8 Trigrams Palm

The art of Constant Change

A system of Principles

The Moving Root

Multiple Opponents



Surprising changes of direction

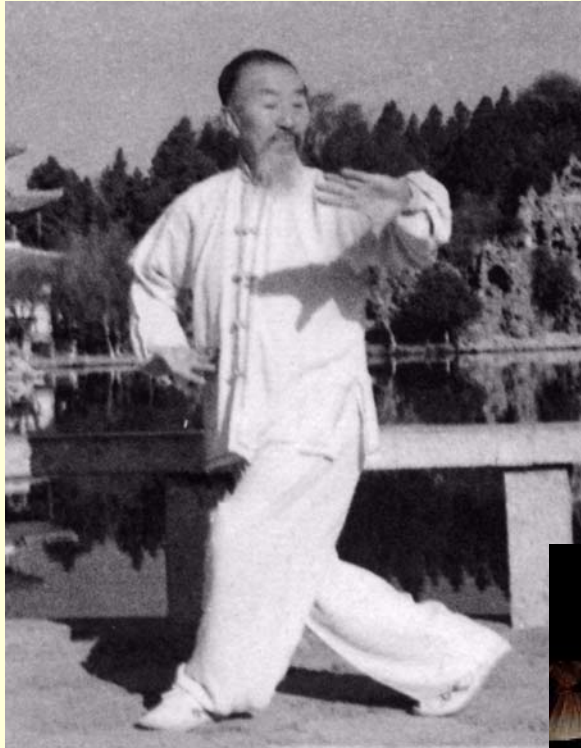
Swimming Body / Dragon Body

Central Practice: Circle-walking

Use of the Palm



Walking the Circle



Unending Continuity
Baqua's Zhan Zhuang:
Walking Meditation
8 Mother Palms
The Energy & Mind-
space of the
Circle.



**“The fundamental condition of our
existence is to revolve.” Rumi**

Finding Your Groove

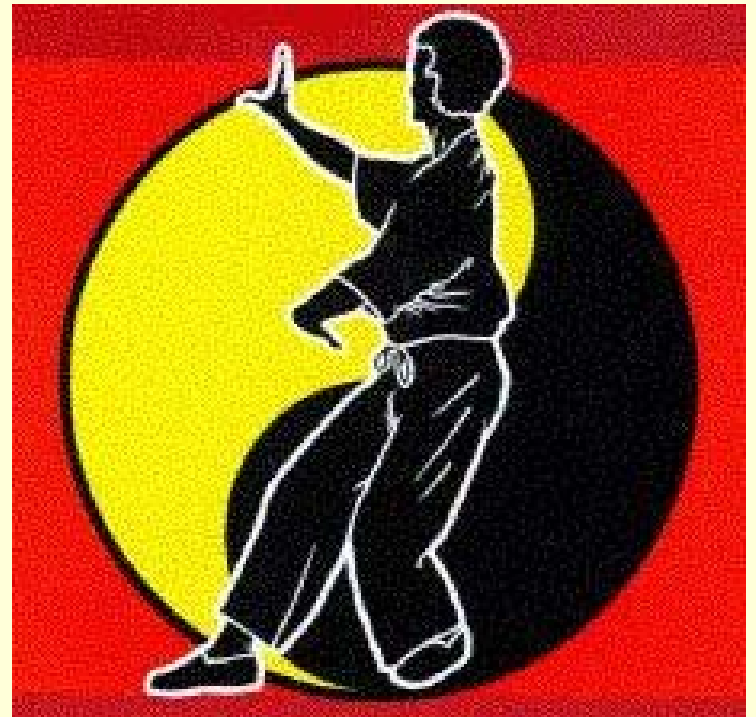
Every move flows into
the next seamlessly

No beginning or end

Stop/starts all circle
internally

Body moves as if in
ready-made grooves

Never break
awareness of your
spheres



Walking On

Small Steps

Rolling Step

Snake / mud-walking

2 Centres:
inside/outside

Push hands

Bumping cars in
Traffic
(avoid direct hits)

Ball and Wedge



The End

