

# *Research on the Boxing Thoughts and Technical Characteristics of Jining Sun Bin Boxing*

Jingwei Wang<sup>1,2</sup>, Donghui Tan<sup>1,\*</sup>, Simeng Chen<sup>2</sup>, Qin Hu<sup>2</sup>, Jiaqi Cao<sup>2</sup>, Kai Luo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*School of Science, Jiangxi University of Science and Technology, Ganzhou, Jiangxi, China*

<sup>2</sup>*Jiangxi Hongzhou Vocational College, Fengcheng, Jiangxi, China*

*\*Corresponding author*

**Keywords:** Jining sun bin boxing, boxing thought, characteristics of technical attack

**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to explore the boxing thoughts and technical characteristics of Jining Sun Bin Boxing. Firstly, it introduces the origin and development history of Sun Bin Boxing and its inheritance in Jining area. Then it analyzes Sun Bin's boxing thoughts, including the core concepts of "overcoming hardness with softness", "combining reality with reality", "combining inside and outside". In the aspect of attack characteristics, this paper classifies and describes the basic skills, moves and routines of Sun Bin Boxing in detail, and analyzes and discusses them in combination with practical exercises. This paper believes that Sun Bin's boxing thoughts and technical characteristics reflect the wisdom of ancient military strategy, and emphasize the principle of "subduing the hard with softness and winning with cleverness", which has unique theoretical and practical value. In modern society, the study and promotion of Sun Bin Boxing can improve people's physical quality and enhance their self-defense ability, and also help to inherit and carry forward Chinese martial arts culture.

## 1. Introduction

Jining Sun Bin Boxing is a unique traditional boxing technique in Shandong Province that originated from Sun Bin, a military strategist during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. After years of development and inheritance, it has become a national intangible cultural heritage project in Shandong Province. Both boxing thought and technique characteristics of Jining Sun Bin Boxing have unique performances, so it is of important theoretical and practical value to conduct research on them[1].

First of all, as an intangible cultural heritage project in Shandong Province, Jining Sun Bin Boxing has a long history that can be traced back to Sun Bin during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods. It can be studied the ways and means of its inheritance history and methods in order to better protect and inherit this traditional boxing technique culture.[2].

Secondly, Jining Sun Bin boxing paid attention to both attack and defence with diversified moves, flexible coordination, high accuracy, and strong actual combat. Its unique technique characteristics are of important reference significance for martial arts lovers and actual combat fighters[3,4].

Lastly, learning about Jining Sun Bin boxing can also help develop martial arts.

With the changing of the times, martial arts are also continuously developing and evolving. The study of Jining Sun Bin Boxing can better help to explore its unique technique characteristics and boxing thoughts, providing new ideas and directions for the development of martial arts.

## **2. The Boxing Thoughts of Jining Sun Bin Boxing**

### **2.1. The Educational Ideology of "Education without Discrimination"**

As a form of martial arts, Sun Bin Boxing emphasizes not only the teaching of technical skills but also the education of people's healthy, upward, brave, and tenacious spirits. Its boxing thoughts include the educational ideology of "education without discrimination", which emphasizes the equal right of everyone to education. Regardless of differences in background, gender, age, and other aspects, everyone should have the same opportunity to learn and improve themselves.

This thought also has a profound origin and foundation in Chinese traditional culture. For example, the education advocated by Confucius is "undifferentiated education", that is, regardless of the noble, rich, or poor, as long as they have the heart to learn and talent, they should get the opportunity to receive education.

### **2.2. The Patriotic Thought of Taking State Affairs as one's own Duty**

The Sun Bin's boxing thoughts also emphasize the patriotic thought of taking state affairs as one's own duty. Sun Bin boxing is not only reflected in the martial arts practice but is also reflected in the practical action. Sun Bin had participated in many wars and made important contributions to the country. He put forward many war strategies, such as "win by a nonregular way", "all is fair in war", "roundabout interception," and so on. These strategies were widely used in actual wars by military strategists. Secondly, in the modern inheritance, Mingzhai Yang inherited Sun Bin's boxing from Qingdao folk and then devoted himself to anti-Japanese action, fully demonstrating the patriotic thought in the inheritance of Sun Bin Boxing.

### **2.3. The Philosophical Thoughts in Chinese Traditional Culture**

Sun Bin's boxing thoughts are also heavily influenced by traditional Chinese philosophical ideas. Sun Bin, the founder of Sun Bin boxing, once said: "Between heaven and earth, everything is the same. With the manner of a gentleman, he is the commander of all things. This sentence echoes the Confucian thoughts of "Nature and Man in One." Sun Bin applied it to boxing, which means that in the process of boxing, the unity of body, mind, and spirit is needed to achieve a state of physical and mental integration.

### **2.4. The Modern Thought of Realistic Science Interpretation**

In the modern scientific interpretation, the boxing thought of Sun Bin Boxing embodies the scientific spirit and the modern way of thinking and has a strong modernity and perspectiveness. Modern science believes that every part of the body has a specific physiological structure and function, and each kind of movement has its own specific role and significance. Therefore, scientific training and practice can not only improve the quality of the body but also have a positive impact on the physiological and psychological aspects of the whole person. In addition, in the interpretation of modern science, Sun Bin's boxing thought also reflects the strong modern significance. Modern people are faced with various challenges and opportunities, and they need to have certain comprehensive qualities and comprehensive abilities.

Sun Bin's boxing thoughts emphasis comprehensive training and diversified development and pays attention to the balance and coordination of body and mind so that people can better adapt to the needs and changes of modern society.

### 3. Jining Sun Bin Boxing Technical Characteristics

#### 3.1. Basic Hands Technique

As one of the traditional Chinese martial arts, Sun Bin Boxing has rich and diverse hand techniques, among which vital point attacking is the main characteristic, while other auxiliary techniques include jumping, bouncing, grasping, picking, drilling, beating, pulling, splitting, copying, chopping, cutting, swinging, sealing, stabbing, and smashing. And leg techniques include instep kicking, bumping, leg driving, sole kicking, stomping, hanging kicking, kneeling, intercepting kicking, and the laming step. Sun Bin Boxing emphasizes the use of techniques such as twisting, wringing, and spiral winding, with curves as the main trend, seeking straightness in the curve and seeking curvature in the straight, in order to maximize the use of strength. In addition, Sun Bin boxing also pays attention to "three forces converge into one", that is, two arms and one leg having concurrent strength, emphasizing the coordination of attack and defence. In the fight, Sun Bin Boxing advocates facing the enemy sideways, so as to better avoid the opponent's attack and be more conducive to exerting force[5].

#### 3.2. Basic Footwork

Sun Bin Boxing also has unique basic footwork: moving with lifted heels, waddling, and limping. These two kinds of footwork play an important role in actual combat and can improve the mobility and adaptability of boxers. Moving with lifted heels is one of the main footwork techniques of Sun Bin Boxing. It is characterized by the landing of the sole of the foot on the ground and the heel rising slightly from the ground. It can swing flexibly on the ground and has strong stability. The act of lifting his heels allows the boxer to break through the opponent's defenses and get into striking distance more easily.

#### 3.3. Basic Gongs

Sun Bin Boxing has a vast and profound connotation, with a total of 365 hands made up of four frames, namely the mother frame of 32 hands (as in Figure 1), the small frame of 64 hands, the large frame of 96 hands, the middle frame of 173 hands (the middle frame hits the secret nine plates of eight sides), and Sun Bin Boxing sparring and Sun Bin crutch. The different ways to practise the four frames show how this martial art is used in real life. In terms of combat strategy, Sun Bin Boxing adopts the ten words tips of empty, swindle, feint, reality, shake, quick, clever, soft, and small, showing the characteristics of being consistent with military thoughts. Thus, it can be seen that in order to achieve success in Sun Bin boxing, one must have a certain understanding of military thoughts [6].

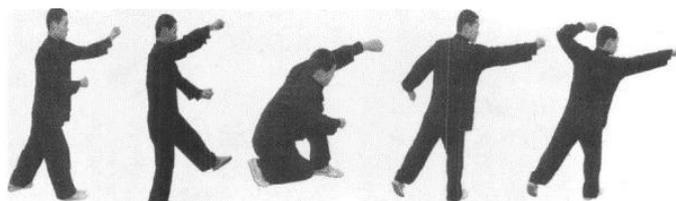


Figure 1: 23-27th Hand of Sun Bin's Fist Manual Master Stand in 32 Hands

Sun Bin Boxing has a unique style, strong striking skills, and an emphasis on practicality. Fist techniques are mainly in the form of combinations, with each hand being used only once. Three hundred and sixty hands can be connected to each other in series and used as a combo. The punching pays attention to twisting, wringing, and spiral winding strength, punching with spinned arms and in a curving move, seeking straightness in the curves, attacking in the defence, defending in the attack. The technique is particular about "three forces converge into one," using the force from two arms and one leg together.

Strategically, the principle of "circle, angle, line, and point" is to use Sun Bin's step to move left and right, walk in an arc and circle without stopping, and always keep turning sideways against the enemy, seizing the position and angle of view to benefit selves but not the enemy; win at one touch and hit; and confuse the opponents with actions of truth and falsehood, virtual and real. The drill requires "internal and external consistency and similarity in form and meaning". The main hands include jumping, bouncing, grasping, picking, drilling, beating, pulling, splitting, copying, chopping, cutting, swinging, sealing, stabbing, and smashing.[7-9]. Main footwork styles are shambling, moving with lifted heels, waddling, and limping. The main leg techniques are instep kicking, bumping, leg driving, sole kicking, stomping, hanging kicking, kneeling, intercepting kicking, and laming step.

### 3.4. Sun Bin Boxing Main Routine Actions

#### 3.4.1. Long-Sleeved Fist

Practising the "three parts of arms" emphasizes loosening the shoulders and shaking the wrists and releasing the force like an ape's arm. In the past, people commonly wore long gowns or short shirts with large sleeves, most of which had loose sleeves. When practising "Sun Bin Fist", if the sleeve is released, the practitioner will feel the force penetrating the "sleeve tip" and make a sound of tearing cloth and silk. If wearing clothes that increase the length of the sleeves, the boxer will be more able to exercise overall strength, and more suitable for use in performances or applications, making them more powerful and majestic.

#### 3.4.2. Elephant Trunk Fist



Figure 2: Demonstration of Elephant Trunk Fist

Sun Bin Boxing techniques are primarily based on vital points attacking, which is precise and merciless, and is one of its most distinguishing features [10]. "Elephant Trunk Fist" is a basic technique in Sun Bin Boxing, named after the solid and prominent fist shape in which the middle finger's middle segment bone" clenches like the elephant trunk, as shown in Figure 2.

In Sun Bin Boxing, it is very important to learn "Elephant Trunk Fist". By practising this fist position, the boxer can better understand the essence of the point method of "seeking meridians and points", and improve the accuracy and fierceness of hitting skills.

### 3.4.3 Corrugated Palm



Figure 3: Corrugated Palm Presentation

"Corrugated palm" is a hand technique in Sun Bin Boxing, named after the rows of tiles paved with tiles on the roof. This is a special kind of hand technique with the palm facing upward, which mainly uses four fingers together while the thumb is bent, like holding up a space, and the palm is raised like a ridge, as shown in Figure 3, so it is called "Corrugated Palm".

In practical use, the Corrugated Palm is a common technique in Sun Bin Boxing [11]. It is characterized by a slightly convex palm, fingers together, slightly raised palm edges, and a certain degree of aggressiveness. It is often used to capture and twist the wrist, phalanges, and other joints of an opponent.

### 3.4.4. Sun Bin Step



Figure 4: Sun Bin Step Demonstration

"Sun Bin Step" is a unique style of footwork in Sun Bin Boxing. Its image feature is that two thighs are hidden between the crotches, one knee presses against the inner side of the other knee, and both feet form a "T" shape, forming a triangle with a stable centre, as shown in Figure 4. This type of footwork is extremely rare in the martial arts circle, and there is no school's first position that uses this type of footwork. The uniqueness of this step lies in its stability. Most traditional steps involve standing firmly on one leg, which can result in a lack of stability in the centre of gravity of the body. However, in "Sun Bin Step," two legs work together to make a very low and stable triangle. This greatly improves the body's balance and makes it easier to use different attack and defence techniques.

## 4. Conclusion

Jining Sun Bin Boxing is a traditional martial art with a profound history and rich cultural connotations.

Its unique boxing techniques and technical characteristics are significantly valuable in practise and culture. The technical strikings of traditional martial arts originated from the survival strategies, lifestyles, and long-term social practices of our wise ancestors. The formation of each boxing sort in China has undergone a long and winding development process, and the disappearance of each traditional boxing sort is also the disappearance of a traditional culture. Through summary and analysis, it can be concluded that Jining Sun Bin Boxing contains profound boxing thoughts and technical characteristics.

## References

- [1] Liu, Z.J. (2013). *Famous General Sun Bin of the Warring States and the Establishment of "Sun Bin Boxing"*. *Lantai World* (33):147-148.
- [2] Li, C.Y., Cao, Z. M & Zhou, J. M. (2009). *Talk about "Sun Bin Boxing"*. *Chunqiu Birmonthly* (02):54-55.
- [3] Wang, D. (2012). *The master of boxers: The "Wulin Instructor" who rules the roost in Qingdao Port - Exploring the Inheritance of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage "Sun Bin Boxing"*. *Openings* (05):42-43.
- [4] Wang, Y. (2011). *Sun Bin Boxing and Qingdao martial arts culture inheritance*. *Inheritance & Innovation* (27):62-63
- [5] Shi, M. (2009). *Sun Bin Boxing in 32 hands (part two)*. *Wudang Martial Arts* (04):11-13.
- [6] Lan, C.L. (2010). *Xiantang Meng and Sun Bin Boxing*. *Wudang Martial Arts* (02):08-12.
- [7] Peng, G.F. (2018). *A comparative study on the martial arts sources of Qilu*. *Shandong Normal University*.
- [8] Li, X. (2017). *Comment on the content and contribution of the Book "Tang Hands and Chinese Boxing Techniques"*. *Sichuan Sports Science* 36(1):103-106.
- [9] Zhang, S.H., Ma, C. & Liu, Y.W. (2018). *An Analysis of the expressive forms of "Strength" in Wushu Boxing*. *Wushu Studies* (4):69-71.
- [10] Zhao, J.H. (2019). *Research on Kinematics of Traditional Chinese Boxing Routine*. *Tianjin University of Sport*.
- [11] Liu, Y.D. & Liu, Z.H. (2020). *The development trend and thinking of the innovation of contemporary Wushu boxing technique*. *Sports Culture Guide* 5(6):118-121.