Summary of Chapter 33 of the Líng Shū

Hải Lùn – On the (four) seas

**Paragraph 1**

Huang Dì wants to know more about the four seas and the twelve channels and how the body corresponds with the four seas.

Qí Bó explains: The twelve channels flow to all directions but finally converge into the four seas (east, west, south, north).

In the human body: sea of marrow, sea of blood, sea of energy, sea of water and grain (suí hǎi, xuè hǎi, qì hǎi, shuǐ gǔ zhī hǎi)

**Paragraph 2**

Huang Dì: "You have coordinated the human body with heaven, earth and the four seas. Are there more correspondences?"

Qí Bó: When one knows explicitly the locations of Yīn and Yáng, exterior (biǎo), interior (lǐ), Xing and Shu points, he will be able to determine the four seas.

**Paragraph 3**

Important acu-points of the four seas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sea</th>
<th>Upper acu-point</th>
<th>Lower acu-point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water and grain (Stomach)</td>
<td>Qichōng (气冲) ST-30</td>
<td>Sānlǐ (三里) ST-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood (Chōng Mai = sea of 12 channels and of Xuè)</td>
<td>Dàzhù (大杼) BL-11</td>
<td>Shàngjùxū (上巨虚) ST-37, Xiàjùxū (下巨虚) ST-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrow (brain)</td>
<td>Bāihuí (百会) DU-20</td>
<td>Fēngfǔ (风府) DU-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the Sea of Energy (Dànzhōng/Shānzhōng REN-17): Yāmēn (哑门) DU-15, Dàzhuī (大椎) DU-14, Rénying (人迎) ST-9.

Note: On Sea of Xuè: Despite this passage it is worth noting that such indications (the ones listed in paragraph 4) are not found in subsequent discussions of these three points.
Sea of Xuè

BL-11
Benefits the bones and joints. Expels pathogenic factors and firms the exterior. Regulates Lung-Qi and alleviates cough.

ST-37

ST-39
ST-37
Moves Small Intestine Qi and transforms stagnation. Regulates and harmonises the intestines and clears damp-heat. Activates channel and alleviates pain.

Sea of Qi

ST-9

DU-14

DU-15
Benefits the tongue and treats muteness. Eliminates Wind. Benefits neck and spine.

REN-17
**Sea of Water & Grain**

- **ST-30**
  - Regulates Qi in the lower jiao.
  - Regulates the Penetrating Vessel (Chong Mai).
  - Subdues running piglet Qi.

- **ST-36**
  - Harmonises the Stomach.
  - Fortifies the Spleen and resolves Dampness.
  - Supports correct Qi and fosters original Qi.
  - Tonifies Qi and nourishes Xue and Yin.
  - Clears Fire and calms the Shen.
  - Activates channel and alleviates pain.
  - Revives the Yang and restores consciousness.

**Sea of Marrow**

- **DU-20**
  - Pacifies Wind and subdues Yang.
  - Raises Yang and counters prolapse.
  - Benefits the head and sense organs.
  - Nourishes sea of marrow.
  - Benefits the brain and calms the Shen.

- **DU-16**
  - Eliminates Wind.
  - Nourishes the sea of marrow.
  - Benefits head and neck.
  - Calms the Shen.
Paragraph 4

The viability of the four seas in the human body will be prosperous when one treats in a way that is agreeable with the physiological laws. When one treats against it, it will cause decline.

It will benefit the body when one knows how to recuperate the four seas, otherwise it will injure the body.

Paragraph 5

"What are the adverse and agreeable conditions of the four seas?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sea</th>
<th>when having a surplus (excess)</th>
<th>when it is insufficient (deficiency)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qi</td>
<td>It shows the evil energy is overabundant. Fullness (of breath) in chest*, rapid respiration, red complexion*.</td>
<td>Shortness of breath*, dislike of speaking***.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xuè</td>
<td>Due to plenitiness of Xuè and overabundance of Qi. Patient has sensation as if the body were big, has no disease but is having a melancholic mood.</td>
<td>Body feels small and light. Mood of taking things too hard, but has no disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and grain</td>
<td>Abdominal fullness.</td>
<td>Hunger with inability to eat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrow</td>
<td>One feels light and vigorous in the body; one can endure unusually hard work.</td>
<td>Brain feels like turning, tinnitus, sore legs, dizziness, impairment of vision, indolence and desire to sleep. **</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
* Maciocia [5: 235] writes: "... symptoms of breathlessness, fullness of the chest and red face are symptoms of Lung-Qi rebelling upwards."
** Maciocia [5: 235] writes: "... are also symptoms of Kidney deficiency."
*** Maciocia [5: 236] writes: "... is a Lung-deficiency symptom."

Paragraph 6

"But how to treat it?"

One must know how the upper and lower acu-points are connected to the four seas and adjust by invigorating the Xuū condition, and purging the Shī condition.
Addition

Wiseman [4: 19] writes: Ancestral qi (zōng qì): Ancestral qi gathers in the chest in the area known as the "sea of qi" (qì hǎi) or "chest center" (dàn zhōng).

Bibliography