

**WATER ELEMENT:****Urinary Bladder Points III** (from: Davis, 2000)**BL-24** (*qì hǎi shū*)氣 *qì*: qi海 *hǎi*: sea俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

氣海俞

*Sea-of-Qi Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior inferior trunk in the lumbar region, 1.5 cun lateral to Du Mai. The point is located lateral to the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of 3rd lumbar vertebra.

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the lumbar region.

**Functions:** Regulates and tonifies Qi and Blood; strengthens the lumbar and knees; removes obstructions from the Channel.

**Indications:** Lumbar pain; irregular menstruation; dysmenorrhoea; functional uterine bleeding; abdominal pain and distension; borborygmos; constipation; asthma; paralysis of the lower limbs.

**Supplementary Indications:** Hemorrhoids and fistulae; chronic and acute low back pain.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Despite its evocative name 'Sea of Qi Shu', Qihai Shu BL-24 is credited with no tonifying or qi regulating properties, and in clinical practice is mostly used (especially when tender) in the treatment of lumbar pain.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

• Lumbar pain: Qihai Shu BL-24, Shenshu BL-23 and Zhonglushu BL-29 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-25** (*dà cháng shū*)大 *dà*: large腸 *cháng*: intestine俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

大腸俞

*Large Intestine Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior trunk in the lumbar region. The point is located 1.5 cun lateral to the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of the 4th lumbar vertebra. This is 1.5 cun lateral to DU-3 (Yao Yang Guan). It is approximately level with the superior border of the iliac crest.

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the Large Intestine Fu.

**Functions:** Frees and regulates the Large Intestine, Small intestine and Stomach; rectifies Qi and transforms Stagnation; benefits the lower back and knees; removes obstructions from the Channel; relieves fullness and swelling.

**Indications:** Abdominal pain, fullness or distension; rumbling intestines; borborygmi; enteritis; diarrhea; dysentery; constipation; acute or chronic lumbar pain; low back pain or sprain; pain in the sacro-iliac joint; sciatica; muscular atrophy, pain, numbness or motor impairment of the lower limbs; chronic disorders of the Large Intestine.

**Supplementary Indications:** Rumbling intestines and abdominal distension; intestinal Bi diarrhea; difficult ingestion; 'cutting' pain in the umbilical region; emaciation despite large food intake; urinary

retention; constipation; gripping pain in the lower abdomen; difficult or painful defecation or urination.

### **DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Dachangshu BL-25 is the back-shu point of the Large Intestine, where the qi of the Large Intestine emanates from the interior to the body surface. It is an important point to regulate the function of the Large Intestine fu, and its application is very broad.

When the Spleen is deficient or suffers from dampness, there may be loose stools, diarrhoea, undigested food in the stool, blood in the stools, borborygmus and inability to gain weight despite eating copiously. In combination with points that tonify the Spleen and Stomach, Dachangshu BL-25 is an important point to firm and tonify the intestines. When there is stagnation (of qi, blood, damp-heat, toxic heat etc.) in the intestinal region, there will be distention, pain, cutting pain, fullness, constipation, intestinal abscess etc. In combination with other suitable points, Dachangshu BL-25 is able to regulate qi and dissipate stagnation. When the central qi is deficient, or when damp-heat sinks downwards, there may be prolapse of the rectum. Dachangshu BL-25 is a valuable adjacent point used in the treatment of this disorder, in combination with points such as Baihui DU-20 and Chengqiang DU-1, as well as points which treat the underlying disharmony.

Finally Dachangshu BL-25 is an important local point in the treatment of lumbar pain, and like many points of the lower lumbar region is also indicated for painful obstruction and atrophy disorder of the lower limbs.

### **CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Cold or damp (dong) diarrhoea with undigested food: Dachangshu BL-25 and Shenshu BL-23 (Supplementing Life).
- Undigested food (in the stool): Dachangshu BL-25, Liangmen ST-21, Zusanli ST-36, Sanyinjiao SP-6, Xiawan REN-10, Sanjiaoshu BL-22 and Xuanshu DU-5 (Supplementing Life).
- Incontinence of faeces: Dachangshu BL-25 and Guanyuan REN-4 (Great Compendium).
- Borborygmus: Dachangshu BL-25, Taibai SP-3, Gongsun SP-4 and Sanjiaoshu BL-22 (Supplementing Life).
- Prolapse of the rectum: Dachangshu BL-25, Baihui DU-20, Changqiang DU-1, Jianjing GB-21, Hegu L.I.-4 and Qichong ST-30 (Compilation).
- Prolapse of the rectum in children: Dachangshu BL-25, Baihui DU-20 and Changqiang DU-1 (Great Compendium).
- Pain of intestinal abscess: Dachangshu BL-25, Xiangshu ST-43 and Taibai SP-3 (Great Compendium).
- Difficult ingestion with desire to drink fluids: Dachangshu BL-25 and Zhourong SP-20 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

**BL-26** (*guān yuán shū*)關 *guān*: pass, gate元 *yuán*: origin, source俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

關元俞

*Origin Pass Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior inferior trunk in the lumbosacral region, 1.5 cun lateral to Du Mai. The point is located lateral to the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of 5th lumbar vertebra.

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the lumbar region.

**Functions:** Frees the Channels and quickens the Connecting Vessels; eliminates Wind and dissipates Cold; regulates the lower Jiao; transforms Damp Stagnation; strengthens the lower back and knees; removes obstructions from the Channel.

**Indications:** Abdominal distension; diarrhea; thirst; (chronic) lumbar pain; sciatica; chronic enteritis; cystitis; anemia; diabetes; chronic peritonitis; enuresis; dysuria; frequent urination; nocturia.

**Supplementary Indications:** Emaciation and thirst; frequent, difficult or painful urination; low back pain; concretions, conglomerations or abdominal masses with pain; abdominal distension due to Deficiency; enuresis; Wind conditions.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Guanyuanshu BL-26, due to its proximity to the fifth lumbar vertebra, is much used in the treatment of lumbar pain. Various classics of Chinese medicine have specified the use of this point in the treatment of 'wind-taxation' lumbar pain, i.e. lumbar pain due to attack and injury by exterior pathogenic factors which lodge in the back and over time lead to deficiency. This is a common development of back pain due to painful obstruction and reflects the fact that not only can Kidney deficiency lead to weakness of the back and hence invasion of exterior pathogens, but also that prolonged retention of pathogenic factors, especially when the bones are injured, can weaken the Kidneys. Thus Standards of Patterns and Treatment said "[In back ache] wind, damp, cold, heat, sprain, blood stasis, stagnation of qi accumulations are all the manifestation; the root is always Kidney deficiency", whilst the Essential Questions stated "In chronic bone painful obstruction where the pathogenic factor repeatedly attacks, it will reach and reside in the Kidneys". The action of Guanyuanshu BL-26 on lumbar pain however, is so valuable that in clinical practice it may be used for any pattern, not solely deficiency, and it is one of the points that should be palpated, and needled if tender, in all cases of backache.

The tonifying action of Guanyuanshu BL-26 is implied in its name 'Gate of the Source [Qi] Shu [Point]'. It is further indicated for such deficiency disorders as wasting and thirsting disorder, deficiency distention, diarrhoea and various urinary disorders, all characterised by deficiency of the Kidneys.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Wind-taxation lumbar pain: Guanyuanshu BL-26 and Panguangshu BL-28 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-27 (*xiǎo cháng shū*)**小 *xiǎo*: small腸 *cháng*: intestine俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

## 小腸俞

*Small Intestine Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior medial aspect of the iliac bone (in the superior fibres of gluteus maximus muscle which cover this) at the level of the 1st (superior) posterior sacral foramen (BL-31, Shang Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the midline (Du Mai).

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the Small Intestine Fu.

**Functions:** Regulates the Small Intestine, promoting separation of the clear and turbid; transforms Stagnation and accumulations; eliminates Damp and cools Heat; regulates the Urinary Bladder.

**Indications:** Nocturnal seminal emission; hematuria; enuresis; low back pain; lower abdominal pain and distension; borborygmi; enteritis; diarrhoea; dysentery; mucus in the stools; constipation; pain in the sacroiliac joint; leukorrhoea; diseases of the sacroiliac region; sciatica; peritonitis; pelvic inflammatory diseases; cloudy urine; dysuria; burning on urination.

**Supplementary Indications:** Hemorrhoids; hernia; incontinence; dark-colored urine; blood in the urine; dry mouth; emaciation and thirst; colic; vaginal discharge; swelling of the feet; vexation.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Xiaochangshu BL-27 is the back-shu point of the Small Intestine fu, where the qi of the Small Intestine emanates from the interior to the body surface. According to Introduction to Medicine by Li Ting of the Ming dynasty "The Small Intestine separates the pure from the turbid; the water enters the upper opening of the Bladder and the dregs enter the upper opening of the Large Intestine". This quotation emphasises the role of the Small Intestine as an intermediary between the Stomach which 'rots and ripens' solid and liquid food, and the Large Intestine and Bladder which eliminate solid and liquid waste respectively. It is the Small Intestine which controls this process of separating the pure from the turbid. Although Xiaochangshu BL-27 is the back-shu point of the Small Intestine fu, therefore, its clinical action extends both to the Large Intestine and the Bladder.

In intestinal disorders it primarily drains turbid dampness and clears damp-heat and can be used in the treatment of diarrhoea, dysenteric disorder and blood and mucus in the stools due to this aetiology. Xiaochangshu BL-27 may also be used for constipation, and for haemorrhoids and accompanying pain.

In disorders of the Bladder it also drains dampness and damp-heat and clears heat transmitted from the Heart (interiorly-exteriorly coupled with the Small Intestine), being indicated in the treatment of dark yellow urine, enuresis, retention of urine, blood in the urine and agitation of the Heart. Following the principle that dampness and damp-heat may be drained from the body via urination, Xiaochangshu BL-27 is also indicated for damp-heat affecting other portions of the lower jiao with symptoms such as leucorrhoea and seminal emission. If damp-heat sinks to the lower limbs there may be swelling of the feet.

Finally, Xiaochangshu BL-27 may be used in the treatment of the pattern of Small Intestine qi pain. This form of painful shan disorder which may arise due to improper diet, stagnation of Liver qi

or exposure to cold, leads to obstruction in the circulation of qi in the Small Intestine. Its characteristic symptoms are lower abdominal pain or testicular pain that may radiate to the lumbar region.

### CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Difficult urination and defecation, dribbling and retention of urine: Xiaochangshu BL-27 and Changqiang DU-1 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Dark urine: Xiaochangshu BL-27, Panguangshu BL-28, Wangu SI-4, Baihuanshu BL-30 and Yanggang BL-48 (Supplementing Life).
- Dark urine: Xiaochangshu BL-27, Yanggang BL-48, Wangu GB-12 and Baihuanshu BL-30 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Borborygmus, abdominal distention and watery diarrhoea: Xiaochangshu BL-27, Sanjiaoshu BL-22, Xialiao BL-34, Yishe BL-49 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Shan disorder with lumbar pain: Xiaochangshu BL-27, Zhonglushu BL-29 and Baihuanshu BL-30 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

**BL-28** (*páng guāng shū*)  
膀胱 *páng guāng*: urinary bladder  
俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

膀胱俞

*Bladder Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior aspect of the buttocks (in gluteus maximus muscle) at the level of the 2nd posterior sacral foramen (BL-32, Ci Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the midline (Du Mai). This is immediately inferior and lateral to the posterior superior iliac spine. BL-53 (Bao Huang) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-28 (Pang Guang Shu), 3 cun from the posterior midline.

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the Urinary Bladder Fu.

**Functions:** Regulates the Urinary Bladder; opens the Water passages of the lower Liao; resolves Damp; benefits the lumbar; dispels Wind Damp; eliminates Stagnation, clears Heat and stops pain; supplements Yuan Qi.

**Indications:** Urinary retention; enuresis; dysuria; urinary urgency or frequency; cloudy urine; painful or burning urination; diarrhea; constipation; weakness, stiffness or pain of the lumbo-sacral region; sciatica; diabetes; urogenital diseases generally.

**Supplementary Indications:** Wind Patterns; Deficiency conditions; sperm in the urine; loss of sperm; incontinence; hard binds, accumulations, gatherings and lumps of the lower abdomen; genital pain, sores or swelling; turbid urine; difficult micturition with dark-coloured urine; Cold and weakness in the knee and lower leg; abdominal fullness; evacuation difficulty; Cold and hypertonicity of the lower leg preventing flexion and extension; Deficient Qi; female conglomerations and gatherings; untransformed digestate in the stool due to Spleen Deficiency.

### DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Panguangshu BL-28 is the back-shu point of the Bladder fu, where the qi of the Bladder emanates from the interior to the body surface. Its principal action is to drain damp-heat excess from the Bladder and genital system.

Bladder damp-heat may be due to:

- i. invasion of exterior pathogenic factors (damp-heat or cold-damp which transforms to heat), especially as a result of inadequate clothing or sitting on damp ground;
- ii. excessive consumption of foods that generate damp-heat (spicy, greasy, sweet, alcohol etc.);
- iii. Heart fire which transmits downwards via the Small Intestine to the Bladder;
- iv. Liver damp-heat which pours downwards to the Bladder; or
- v. excessive sexual activity or inadequate hygiene.

Bladder damp-heat typically manifests as painful, difficult, hesitant and frequent urination with scanty dark flow. As the Bladder back-shu point, Panguangshu BL-28 has a direct action on the Bladder fu and is not only a vital point to drain Bladder damp-heat but is more widely used for any kind of urinary disorder.

The use of Panguangshu BL-28 is not confined to the Bladder however. It is an important treatment principle of Chinese medicine that damp-heat anywhere in the body, and most especially in the lower jiao, is best eliminated by draining via urination.

Panguangshu BL-28, by its action of promoting urination, is therefore indicated for damp-heat affecting:

- i. the intestinal region giving rise to diarrhoea, and
- ii. the genital region giving rise to such symptoms as swelling and pain of the external genitals, genital ulceration and damp itching, swelling and pain of the vagina, etc.

A second important action of Panguangshu BL-28 is in the treatment of a variety of disorders of the lumbar region, sacrum, buttocks, and coccyx as well as the lower limbs, and it may equally be used for excess or deficient disorders of these regions. It is classically indicated for the treatment of 'wind-taxation' lumbar pain (for a fuller discussion see Guanyuanshu BL-26), as well as for weakness of the leg and knee, seminal emission and diminished qi. These indications reflect the fact that as the back-shu point of the Bladder, Panguangshu BL-28 has some action of strengthening the Kidneys. As far as excess disorders of the lumbar region and legs are concerned, it is especially indicated for back pain, atrophy disorder and heaviness of the legs due to damp-heat. Finally Panguangshu BL-28 is able to resolve stagnation in the lower abdomen (abdominal pain, difficult defecation, constipation, abdominal fullness) and to resolve abdominal (jia ju) masses in women as well as hard abdominal (ji ju) masses.

#### **CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Enuresis: Panguangshu BL-28, Tongli HE-5, Dadun LIV-1, Jimen SP-11, Taichong LIV-3, Weizhong BL-40 and Shenmen HE-7 (Supplementing Life).
- Dark urine: Panguangshu BL-28, Wangu GB-12, Xiaochangshu BL-27 and Baihuanshu BL-30 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Dark urine: Panguangshu BL-28, Taixi KID-3, Yingu KID-10, Shenshu BL-23, Qihai REN-6 and Guanyuan REN-4 (Great Compendium).
- Spleen deficiency with undigested food (in the stool): Panguangshu BL-28 and Pishu BL-20 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Difficulty in defecation with abdominal pain: Panguangshu BL-28 and Shiguan KID-18 (Supplementing Life).

- Prolapse of the rectum: Pangguangshu BL-28, Shenque REN-8 and Baihui DU-20 (Compilation).
- Wind-taxation lumbar pain: Pangguangshu BL-28 and Guanyuanshu BL-26 (Supplementing Life).
- Stiffness and pain of the lumbar region: Pangguangshu BL-28, Xiaochangshu BL-27, Weizhong BL-40, Yaoshu DU-2 and Yongquan KID-1 (Great Compendium).

**BL-29** (*zhōng lǚ shū*)中 *zhōng*: center, middle脊 *lǚ*: backbone; muscles parallel to the backbone俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

## 中 脊 俞

*Central Backbone Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior aspect of the buttocks (in the medial fibres of gluteus maximus muscle) at the level of the 3rd posterior sacral foramen (BL-33, Zhong Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the midline - Du Mai. This is inferior and lateral to the posterior superior iliac spine.

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the sacral region.

**Functions:** Strengthens the lumbar spine; warms Yang and dissipates Cold.

**Indications:** Dysentery; enteritis; hernia; pain and stiffness of the lumbar or sacral region; sciatica.

**Supplementary Indications:** Intestinal Cold and stiffness; thirst from Kidney Deficiency; absence of sweating; lateral costal pain; abdominal distension.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Dysenteric disorder: Hegu L.I.-4 and Zusanli ST-36; if severe add Zhonglushu BL-29 (Song of Points).
- Lumbar pain: Zhonglushu BL-29, Shenshu BL-23 and Qihai BL-24 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-30** (*bái huán shū*)白 *bái*: white環 *huán*: a ring, a bracelet; to encircle俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

## 白 環 俞

*White Ring Shu*

**Location:** On the posterior aspect of the buttocks (in medial fibres of gluteus maximus muscle) at the level of the 4th (inferior) posterior sacral foramen (BL-34, Xia Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the midline - Du Mai. BL-54 (Zhi Bian) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-30 (Bai Huan Shu), 3 cun from the posterior midline.

**Features & Categories:** back Associated-Shu, Transporting point of the perineal region.

**Functions:** Warms Yang and regulates menstruation; frees the Channels and rectifies the lower Jiao.

**Indications:** Nocturnal seminal emission; enuresis; irregular menstruation; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; endometritis; painful hernia; pain in the lower back and hip joint; pain in the lumbo-sacral area; Cold and pain of the lower back; dysuria; constipation; tenesmus; rectal or anal prolapse; sciatica; disorders of the anus; faecal incontinence; sequelae of infantile paralysis; chronic inflammation of pelvic organs.

**Supplementary Indications:** Difficult or painful urination or defecation; urinary retention; constipation; colic; Deficient Heat Stagnation; acute pain in the lumbar region; debility of the lower limb; excess uterine bleeding.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Baihuanshu BL-30 is primarily used as a local point to activate the circulation of qi and treat pain of the lumbar region and sacrum, pain of the lumbar region and hip, and especially pain of the coccyx. In common with many points located on the sacrum (see Ciliao BL-32) Baihuanshu BL-30 is also able to regulate the function of the uterus and genito-urinary system. It is specifically indicated for stopping leakage in the form of seminal emission and nocturnal emission, leucorrhoea and white turbid urine.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Back pain extending to the lumbar region: Baihuanshu BL-30 and Weizhong BL-40 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Lumbar pain due to Kidney deficiency: Baihuanshu BL-30, Shenshu BL-23, Weizhong BL-40 and Taixi KID-3 (Great Compendium).
- Red and white leucorrhoea: Baihuanshu BL-30, Daimai GB-26, Guanyuan REN-4, Qihai REN-6, Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Jianshi P-5 (Great Compendium).

**BL-31 (*shàng liáo*)**

上 *shàng*: up, upper, upward; to rise

髎 *liáo*: bone-hole

上 髎

*Upper Bone-Hole*

**Location:** On the posterior sacrum, approximately midway between the upper border of the posterior superior iliac spine and Du Mai (the posterior midline). The point is located in the 1st (superior) posterior sacral foramen. BL-27 (Xiao Chang Shu) is lateral to this point, 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline.

**Features & Categories:** Intersection point of the Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang on the Urinary Bladder Channel.

**Functions:** Frees the Channels and quickens the Connecting Vessels; regulates the lower Jiao; strengthens the lumbar and lower limbs; nourishes the Kidneys.

**Indications:** Diseases of the lumbo-sacral joint; lumbar pain or weakness; sciatica; lower abdominal pain; irregular or painful menstruation; vaginal protrusion; uterine prolapse; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; infertility; orchitis; impotence; nocturnal seminal emission; prostatitis; peritonitis; difficult or painful defecation or urination; constipation; dysuria; prolapse of anus; induction of labour; paralysis of lower limb; sequelae of infantile paralysis.

**Supplementary Indications:** Genital itch; red and white vaginal discharge; turbid urine; retching due to rebellious Qi; nosebleed; infertility; malarial fever and chills.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Refer Ciliao BL-32.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Difficult urination and defecation: moxa the eight liao (Shangliao BL-31, Ciliao BL-32, Zhongliao BL-33 and Xialiao BL-34 bilaterally) with one hundred cones (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Febrile disease with absence of sweating: Shangliao BL-31 and Kongzui LU-6 (Systematic Classic).

**BL-32 (cì liáo)**

次 cì: second; next in a sequence

髖 liáo: bone-hole

## 次髖

**Second Bone-Hole**

**Location:** On the posterior sacrum, in the 2nd posterior sacral foramen. This is slightly inferior and medial to the posterior superior iliac spine. BL-28 (Pang Guang Shu) is on the same level as BL-32 (Ci Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline (Du Mai). BL-53 (Bao Huang) is also on the same level, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai.

**Functions:** Frees the Channels and rectifies Qi; quickens the Blood and relieves pain; regulates menstruation and treats vaginal discharge; regulates the lower Jiao; strengthens the lumbar and lower limbs.

**Indications:** Lumbar pain or weakness; irregular or painful menstruation; uterine prolapse; dysmenorrhoea; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; induction of labour; infertility; hernia; diseases of the lumbo-sacral region; sciatica; loss of locomotive ability of lower limbs; paralysis of lower limb; peritonitis; lower abdominal pain; enuresis; dysuria; orchitis; impotence; nocturnal seminal emission; prostatitis; prolapse of anus; sequelae of infantile paralysis; muscular atrophy, pain, numbness or motor impairment of the lower limbs.

**Supplementary Indications:** Turbid urine; reduced sensitivity from the lumbar to the feet; rumbling intestines and diarrhea; hardness and distension below the heart.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

The points Shangliao BL-31, Cilio BL-32, Zhongliao BL-33 and Xialiao BL-34 are often considered as a group and are known as Baliao (Eight Crevices). In terms of their actions and indications they are very similar, sharing the common characteristics of regulating various disorders of the lower jiao, specifically:

- i. The urinary system. Cilio BL-32 and to a lesser extent Zhongliao BL-33 are the strongest in their action on the urinary system, being indicated for such disorders as painful urinary dysfunction, retention of urine, difficult urination, enuresis etc.
- ii. The intestines. All four points treat difficult defecation, whilst Xialiao BL-34 has the widest action on the intestines, being indicated in the Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion for "borborygmus and diarrhoea, internal injury by damp and cold, blood in the stool,
- iii. Gynaecological disorders such as dysmenorrhoea, infertility, irregular menstruation and leucorrhoea as well as disorders of the genitals for which Xialiao BL-34 is the strongest (swelling and pain, incessant green leucorrhoea with vaginal pain, pain of the testicles);
- iv. Invigorating the flow of qi and blood in the channels and collaterals of the local area and lower limbs, with Cilio BL-32 and Zhongliao BL-33 having the strongest action in their ability to treat disorders such as lumbar pain, sacral pain, atrophy disorder and painful obstruction of the lower limbs etc.

Zhongliao BL-33 is indicated for "the five taxations, the seven injuries and the six extremes", all forms of extreme exhaustion (refer commentary BL-23). This underlines a further aspect of the actions of the eight liao as a whole, which is to benefit, warm, firm and supplement the Kidneys,

having amongst their indications impotence, infertility, seminal emission and incessant white leucorrhoea. All eight liao are specifically indicated for difficulty in urination and/or defecation. Kidney deficiency is an important underlying pattern for this disorder, which is frequently seen in elderly and weak patients. Sun Si-miao, for example, in the Thousand Ducat Formulas prescribed moxibustion at all eight liao for difficult urination and defecation.

In clinical practice, Ciliao BL-32 is the most commonly used of the four points, having the most wide-ranging indications. It is frequently used in the treatment of dysmenorrhoea which radiates to the sacral area, as well as for back pain during labour. To relieve labour pain, needling Ciliao BL-32 is often combined with electro-acupuncture. For this purpose the handle of the needle may be bent to 90 degrees and taped to the skin, allowing the woman to lie on her back.

#### CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Difficult urination and defecation: moxa the eight liao (Shangliao BL-31, Ciliao BL-32, Zhongliao BL-33 and Xialiao BL-34 bilaterally) with one hundred cones (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Infertility: Ciliao BL-32, Yongquan KID-1 and Shangqiu SP-5 (Supplementing Life).
- Pain of the lumbar region and aversion to cold: Ciliao BL-32, Baohuang BL-53 and Chengjin BL-56 (Supplementing Life).
- Rigidity of the lumbar spine with inability to turn: Ciliao BL-32 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Supplementing Life).
- Sciatica: Ciliao BL-32, Chengfu BL-36, Zhibian BL-54, Weizhong BL-40 and Kunlun BL-60.

## BL-33 (*zhōng liáo*)

中 *zhōng*: center, middle

髎 *liáo*: bone-hole

中 髎

*Central Bone-Hole*

**Location:** On the posterior sacrum, in the 3rd posterior sacral foramen. BL-29 (Zhong Lu Shu) is on the same level as BL-33 (Zhong Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline (Du Mai).

**Functions:** Frees the Channels and quickens the Blood; dissipates Cold and relieves pain; regulates menstruation and treats vaginal discharge; regulates the lower Jiao; strengthens the lumbar and lower limbs.

**Indications:** Irregular or painful menstruation; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; lower abdominal pain; induction of labour; lumbar pain or weakness; diseases of the lumbo-sacral region; sciatica; urinary retention; constipation; diarrhoea; paralysis of lower limb; peritonitis; orchitis; dysuria; impotence; nocturnal seminal emission; prolapse of anus; sequelae of infantile paralysis; disorders of the Urinary Bladder.

**Supplementary Indications:** Red and white vaginal discharge; turbid urine; abdominal distension and diarrhea; Deficient conditions and emotional imbalance.

#### DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Refer Ciliao BL-32.

## CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Difficulty in defecation: Zhongliao BL-33, Shimen REN-5, Chengshan BL-57, Taichong LIV-3, Zhongwan REN-12, Taixi KID-3, Dazhong KID-4 and Chengjin BL-56 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Dribbling urination: Zhongliao BL-33, Weiyang BL-39 and Zhishi BL-52 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-34** (*xià liáo*)下 *xià*: lower, below髎 *liáo*: bone-hole

下 髎

*Lower Bone-Hole*

**Location:** On the posterior sacrum, in the 4th (inferior) posterior sacral foramen. BL-30 (Bai Huan Shu) is on the same level as BL-34 (Xia Liao), 1.5 cun lateral to the posterior midline (Du Mai). BL-54 (Zhi Bian) is also on the same level, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai.

**Features & Categories:** Intersection point of the Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang on the Urinary Bladder Channel.

**Functions:** Frees the stools and urine; frees the Channels and relieves pain; regulates the lower Jiao; strengthens the lumbar and lower limbs.

**Indications:** Lower abdominal pain; irregular or painful menstruation; leukorrhoea; constipation; urinary retention; lumbar pain; peritonitis; orchitis; dysuria; impotence; nocturnal seminal emission; prolapse of anus; sequelae of infantile paralysis; disorders of the Urinary Bladder.

**Supplementary Indications:** Rumbling intestines; diarrhea; evacuation of blood with the stool; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; Cold hernia; pain and itching in the genitals.

## DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Refer Ciliao BL-32.

## CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Borborygmus, abdominal distention and watery diarrhoea: Xialiao BL-34, Sanjiaoshu BL-22, Xiaochangshu BL-27, Yishe BL-49 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

**BL-35** (*huì yáng*)會 *huì*: to meet陽 *yáng*: yang, the complement of yin

會 陽

*Meeting of Yang*

**Location:** At the inferior end of the vertebral column, 5 fen lateral to the caudal tip of the coccyx. This is 5 fen lateral to Du Mai.

**Functions:** Clears and discharges Damp Heat in the lower Jiao.

**Indications:** Vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; impotence; enteritis; dysentery; blood in the stools or urine; hemorrhoids; diarrhea; gynaecological disorders.

**Supplementary Indications:** Menstrual lumbar pain; painful Cold and stiffness in the abdomen; intestinal Bi; genital sweating; leg pain.

## CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Cold abdomen: Huiyang BL-35 and Lougu SP-7 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-36 (*chéng fú*)**

承 *chéng*: to hold, to carry; to receive;  
to bear responsibility

扶 *fú*: support, aid, assist

承扶

*Support*

**Location:** On the posterior proximal thigh, at the midpoint of the transverse gluteal fold. The point is best located with the patient prone. Deep needling may reach the ischial tuberosity.

**Functions:** Soothes the Sinews and quickens the Connecting Vessels.

**Indications:** Hemorrhoids; pain in lumbar, sacral, gluteal and femoral regions; sciatica; paralysis of the lower limbs; constipation; painful urination; muscular atrophy, pain, numbness or motor impairment of the lower limb.

**Supplementary Indications:** Chronic hemorrhoids, with swelling of the buttocks; low back pain radiating down the back of the thigh; urinary retention; genital pain; difficulty with defecation.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Chengfu BL-36 is much used for pain radiating down the Bladder channel from the lumbar region and buttock. It is especially indicated for pain of the buttocks and sciatic pain that is aggravated by sitting. Its secondary application is as an adjacent point in the treatment of haemorrhoids.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Difficult urination and seminal emission: Chengfu BL-36, Lougu SP-7, Zhongji REN-3, Ligou LIV-5 and Zhiyin BL-67 (Supplementing Life).
- Haemorrhoids, swelling of the axilla: Chengfu BL-36, Chengjin BL-56, Weizhong BL-40 and Yanggu SI-5 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Sciatica: Chengfu BL-36, Ciliao BL-32, Zhibian BL-54, Weizhong BL-40 and Kunlun BL-60.

**BL-37 (*yīn mén*)**

殷 *yīn*: abundant, great, many; center, exactly  
門 *mén*: door, gate

殷門

*Gate of Abundance*

**Location:** On the posterior thigh, 6 cun inferior to the midpoint of the transverse gluteal fold (BL-36, Cheng Fu) on a line to BL-40 (Wei Zhong). The proportional distance between these points is 14 cun. BL-37 (Yin Men) is located 1 cun proximal to the midpoint between BL-36 (Cheng Fu) and BL-40 (Wei Zhong). On a thigh with good muscle definition a depression may be found between the medial and lateral hamstring muscles.

**Functions:** Strengthens the lumbar spine; soothes the Sinews and quickens the Connecting Vessels; relieves pain.

**Indications:** Pain in the lumbar and posterior thigh; pain in the lower back; herniated disc; sciatica; loss of locomotive ability of the lower limbs; paralysis; occipital headache; hemiplegia; muscular atrophy, pain, numbness or motor impairment of the lower limb.

**Supplementary Indications:** Diarrhea with blood in the stool; swelling or distension of the lateral thigh; low back pain inhibiting flexion and extension.

## DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

The point Yinmen BL-37 is frequently found to be tender on palpation in patients with sciatica, and is therefore commonly needled in the treatment of this condition. It is especially used when more proximal points such as Huantiao GB-30 or Zhibian BL-54 fail to elicit propagated sensation extending down the leg.

## CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Lumbar pain with inability to bend and extend: Yinmen BL-37, Weiyang BL-39, Taibai SP-3, Yinlingquan SP-9 and Xingjian LIV-2 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Sciatica: Yinmen BL-37, Dachangshu BL-25, Huantiao GB-30, Chengshan BL-57, Feiyang BL-58 and Sanyinjiao SP-6.

**BL-38** (*fú xī*)

浮 *fú*: superficial, unsubstantial; to float  
 郄 *xī*: cleft, crevice

浮郄

*Superficial Cleft*

**Location:** Posterior to the knee on the lateral border of the popliteal fossa. The point is located 1 cun directly superior to BL-39 (Wei Yang), and medial to the tendon of biceps femoris muscle. Locate with the knee slightly flexed.

**Functions:** Soothes the Sinews and quickens the Connecting Vessels; quickens the Blood and relieves pain; clears and frees the lower Jiao.

**Indications:** Acute gastroenteritis; cystitis; constipation; numbness of the gluteal and femoral regions; hypertonicity of popliteal Sinews; paralysis of lateral aspect of lower limb.

**Supplementary Indications:** Small Intestine Heat; Large Intestine Stagnation; tension in the lateral thigh.

## CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Heat of the lower abdomen and hard stools: Fuxi BL-38 and Zhongzhu KID-15 (Great Compendium).

**BL-39** (*wěi yáng*)

委 *wěi*: crooked, bent; to bow under a burden  
 陽 *yáng*: yang, the complement of yin

委陽

*Bend Yang*

**Location:** Posterior to the knee at the lateral end of the transverse popliteal crease. The point is located immediately medial to the tendon of biceps femoris muscle. This is lateral to BL-40 (Wei Zhong). KID-10 (Yin Gu) is at the medial end of the transverse popliteal crease. Locate with the knee slightly flexed.

**Features & Categories:** lower Sea, Uniting-He point of the San Jiao Channel; Intersection point of the San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang on the Urinary Bladder Channel.

**Functions:** Benefits the San Jiao and regulates the Water passages; stimulates the transformation and excretion of Fluids in the lower Jiao; frees the Channels, quickens the Connecting Vessels and relieves pain; benefits the Urinary Bladder.

**Indications:** Stiffness and pain of the lumbar; lower abdominal distension and fullness; urinary retention; enuresis; constipation; cystitis; edema; edema of the ankles; dysuria; burning on urination; urinary incontinence; nephritis; pain and hypertonicity (cramp) of the leg and foot; spasm of (lateral head of) gastrocnemius muscle; chyle in the urine.

**Supplementary Indications:** Axillary swelling; hemorrhoids; hypertonicity of the knee.

#### **DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

The Spiritual Pivot states "The he-sea points treat the internal fu". The three yang channels of the upper limb (Sanjiao, Large Intestine and Small Intestine) each have a he-sea point on their respective channel (Tianjing SJ-10, Quchi L.I.-11 and Xiaohai SI-8). It is evident however, when one examines the indications for each of these points, that they have relatively little action on their related fu. This is not unexpected in view of the fact that whilst the channels are on the upper limb, in the case of the intestines, their associated fu are in the lower jiao. The same chapter of the Spiritual Pivot then goes on to rectify this contradiction by designating a lower he-sea point on the lower limb for each of the yang channels of the arm (Weiyang BL-39, Shangjuxu ST-37 and Xiajuxu ST-39 respectively).

Weiyang BL-39, as the lower he-sea point of the Sanjiao, has a specific action on the treatment of urinary disorders. The Spiritual Pivot emphasises the close relationship between the Sanjiao, the Kidneys and the Bladder, and states that there is a direct link between Weiyang BL-39 and the Bladder fu. According to the Essential Questions "The Sanjiao is the official in charge of drainage and controls the water passages", whilst the Ming dynasty classic Introduction to Medicine elaborated as follows "The lower jiao dominates moving and draining the urine and faeces, and at the right time discharging them ... therefore it is said the lower jiao is like a drain". The Spiritual Pivot says of Weiyang BL-39 "When excess there is retention of urine; when deficient there is enuresis; [when there is] enuresis, then reinforce, [when there is] retention then reduce" and "In diseases of the Sanjiao [there will be] fullness of the abdomen, hardness of the lower abdomen with inability to urinate causing extreme anguish, water will overflow and give rise to oedema and abdominal distention ... select Weiyang BL-39". As the lower he-sea point of the Sanjiao on the Bladder channel, Weiyang BL-39 specifically acts on the qi transforming action of the Bladder (ultimately controlled by the Kidneys) and hence is an important point in the treatment of retention of urine or difficult urination as well as enuresis.

An interesting classical indication for this point is axillary pain and swelling. This may be explained either by the pathway of the Bladder sinew channel, or more pertinently as a symptom of the Sanjiao channel.

#### **CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Hardness and pain in the lower abdomen that radiates to the genitals with inability to urinate: Weiyang BL-39, Shimen REN-5 and Yinjiao REN-7 (Supplementing Life).
- Dribbling urination: Weiyang BL-39, Zhishi BL-52 and Zhongliao BL-33 (Supplementing Life).
- Involuntary erection with difficult urination: Weiyang BL-39, Yingu KID-10, Dadun LIV-1, Qimen LIV-14 and Weizhong BL-40 (Supplementing Life).
- Swelling of the axilla: Weiyang BL-39 and Tianchi P-1 (One Hundred Symptoms).

- Swelling of the axilla: Weiyang BL-39, Tianchi P-1, Shenmai BL-62, Diwuhui GB-42, Yangfu GB-38 and Zulinqi GB-41 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Lumbar pain with inability to bend and extend: Weiyang BL-39, Yinmen BL-37, Taibai SP-3, Yinlingquan SP-9 and Xingjian LIV-2 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

## BL-40 (*wěi zhōng*)

委 *wěi*: crooked, bent; to bow under a burden

中 *zhōng*: center, middle

委 中

*Bend Middle*

**Location:** Posterior to the knee at the midpoint of the transverse popliteal crease. The point is located midway between the tendon of biceps femoris muscle laterally, and the tendons of semitendinosus and semimembranosus muscles medially. This is midway between BL-39 (Wei Yang) and KID-10 (Yin Gu). These points are readily located with the knee slightly flexed.

**Features & Categories:** Earth, Sea, Uniting-He point of the Urinary Bladder Channel. Regional Command point of the lumbar region and back. A Heavenly Star point of Ma Dan-Yang.

**Functions:** Clears the Blood and drains Heat; cools Blood and eliminates Blood Stagnation; soothes the Sinews and frees the Connecting Vessels; dispels Wind Damp; benefits the lumbar and knees; removes obstructions from the Channel.

**Indications:** Heat exhaustion; (acute) lumbar pain or stiffness; sciatica; inhibited movement of the hip joint; hypertonicity or contracture of the popliteal Sinews; arthritis of the knee; loss of locomotive ability of the lower limbs; paralysis of the lower limb; spasm of gastrocnemius muscle; general disorders of the knee; hemiplegia; acute gastroenteritis; abdominal pain; vomiting and diarrhea; nocturnal seminal emission; impotence; dysuria; burning on urination; fever; delerium; red skin rash; muscular atrophy, pain, numbness or motor impairment of the lower limb.

**Supplementary Indications:** Absence of sweating in Heat disease; chronic nosebleed; Yin Deficiency and night sweating; Wind Damp loss of locomotive ability; cholera with gripping cardio-abdominal pain; skin Heat lesions; carbuncle; aching among the lower teeth; throat disorders; coma due to stroke; seizures; tidal fevers; 'twisting' pain in the chest and abdomen.

### DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Weizhong BL-40 is the lower he-sea point of the Bladder channel and has long been considered one of the most important of the acupuncture points. According to Ma Dan-yang the great physician of the Jin dynasty, Weizhong BL-40 is one of the 'eleven heavenly star points', indicated for "lumbar pain with inability to straighten up, severe lumbar pain that radiates up the back with pain and stiffness of the sinews and bones, wind painful obstruction that frequently recurs, and difficulty in stretching and bending the knee". The Ming dynasty author Gao Wu in the Glorious Anthology of Acupuncture and Moxibustion included it among his 'four command points' with a special action in the treatment of lumbar pain. Sun Si-miao in the Thousand Ducat Formulas says of Weizhong BL-40 "pain of the lumbar region and spine that almost reaches the head; in any case of heaviness and pain of the lumbar region and leg, bleed this point".

Weizhong BL-40 is equally effective for acute or chronic lumbar pain, whatever the aetiology, and for sciatic pain radiating down the Bladder channel, and is an important point for atrophy disorder and

painful obstruction of the lower limb. In the case of acute lumbar sprain, Weizhong BL-40 may either be needled, or bled by the following method. The region of Weizhong BL-40 is examined (on the affected side if the sprain is unilateral and on both sides if bilateral). If dark and engorged blood vessels are seen at or around this point, the patient is asked to stand (resting their hands on the couch), the blood vessels are slapped to further engorge them and promote the flow of blood, then wiped with alcohol and quickly pricked to induce bleeding.

Weizhong BL-40 is also an important local point in the treatment of knee disorders, whether the location of the discomfort is at the back or the front of the knee, and needling at this point allows deep insertion into the joint.

An alternative name for Weizhong BL-40 used in a number of classics is Xue Xi, (Blood Xi-Cleft). According to the Spiritual Pivot "taiyang channel is abundant in blood and limited in qi ... [it is thus suitable to] prick to bleed taiyang and drain blood ...". This not only explains the powerful effect of bleeding Weizhong BL-40 to move blood stasis in acute lumbar sprain, but also its ability to cool the blood in cases of nosebleed and a variety of skin disorders, in which case the point may also be bled. Interestingly, one of the other two channels abundant in blood and limited in qi according to the Spiritual Pivot is the jueyin channel, and this may help to explain certain similarities between Weizhong BL-40 and Quze P-3, the he-sea point of the Pericardium jueyin channel. Both points (located in the flexure of the lower and upper limb respectively) are bled to clear heat from the blood level and are used in the treatment of summer-heat stroke, sudden turmoil disorder with heat of the four limbs, ceaseless thirst, vomiting and diarrhoea. As far as Weizhong BL-40 is concerned, not only is it indicated for fever due to summer-heat, but also for febrile disease with absence of sweating, injury by cold with heat of the four limbs, alternating chills and fever and malaria.

The Spiritual Pivot states "When the disease is at the yang within yang (skin), needle the he-sea points of the yang channels". Whilst this is not a universally applicable principle, it is Quchi L.I.-11 and Weizhong BL-40, the he-sea points of the Large Intestine and Bladder channels, which are two of the most important points in the treatment of skin diseases. Weizhong BL-40 is indicated for erysipelas (cinnabar toxin), eczema and urticaria.

Relatively few points on the Bladder channel treat their related Bladder fu, notably Panguangshu BL-28 (the back-shu point of the Bladder), Shenshu BL-23 (the backshu point of the Kidneys), Weiyang BL-39 (the lower he-sea point of the Sanjiao) and points adjacent to the bladder on the lower back. Weizhong BL-40 itself is indicated for a variety of urinary disorders characterised by enuresis, difficult urination, dark urination, and distention and pain of the hypogastrium, and this may in part be explained by its close proximity to Weiyang BL-39.

The Bladder divergent channel separates from its primary channel at the popliteal fossa and ascends to wind around the anus. Weizhong BL-40 is indicated and included in classical combinations for the treatment of haemorrhoids, often in combination with Chengshan BL-57 which is considered the primary distal point for this purpose.

Finally, according to the Essential Questions Weizhong BL-40 is one of the 'eight points for draining heat from the extremities' (although in fact only seven are listed) namely Yunmen LU-2, Jianyu L.I.-15, Weizhong BL-40 and Yaoshu DU-2.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Pain of the lumbar region and leg: Weizhong BL-40 and Renzhong DU-26 (Great Compendium).
  - Pain of the lumbar spine: Weizhong BL-40 and Fuliu KID-7 (Great Compendium).
  - Lumbar pain due to Kidney deficiency: Weizhong BL-40, Shenshu BL-23, Taixi KID-3 and Baihuanshu BL-30 (Great Compendium).
  - Lumbar pain: Weizhong BL-40, Huantiao GB-30; if the pain radiates up the back add Kunlun BL-60 (Song of Points).
  - Pain of the legs and lumbar region: Weizhong BL-40, Yinshi ST-33, Huantiao GB-30, Fengshi GB-31, Kunlun BL-60, Chengshan BL-57 and Shenmai BL-62 (Great Compendium).
  - Lumbar pain with difficulty in moving: Weizhong BL-40, Fengshi GB-31 and Xingjian LIV-2 (Glorious Anthology).
  - Stiffness and pain of the lumbar region: Weizhong BL-40, Yaoshu DU-2, Yongquan KID-1, Xiaochangshu BL-27 and Pangguangshu BL-28 (Great Compendium).
  - Back pain extending to the lumbar region: Weizhong BL-40 and Baihuanshu BL-30 (One Hundred Symptoms).
  - Pain of the lumbar region and lateral costal region due to sprain: Weizhong BL-40, Renzhong DU-26 and Chize LU-5 ... afterwards needle Kunlun BL-60, Shugu BL-65, Zhigou SJ-6 and Yanglingquan GB-34 (Great Compendium).
  - Pain of the shoulder and back: Weizhong BL-40, Fengmen BL-12, Jianjing GB-21, Zhongzhu SJ-3, Zhigou SJ-6, Houxi SI-3 and Wangu SI-4 (Great Compendium).
  - Pain of the chest and lateral costal region: Weizhong BL-40 [bleed] and Zhigou SJ-6 [reduce left Zhigou SJ-6 for right-sided pain and vice-versa] (Classic of the Jade Dragon).
  - Wind damp painful obstruction: Weizhong BL-40 and Xialian L.I.-8 (Supplementing Life).
  - Feebleness of the legs: Weizhong BL-40, Zusanli ST-36 and Chengshan BL-57 (Great Compendium).
  - Redness, swelling and pain of the knees: Weizhong BL-40, Xiguan LIV-7, Yinshi ST-33 and Zusanli ST-36 (Great Compendium).
  - The five types of haemorrhoids: Weizhong BL-40, Chengshan BL-57, Feiyang BL-58, Yangfu GB-38, Fuliu KID-7, Taichong LIV-3, Xiashi GB-43, Qihai REN-6, Huiyin REN-1 and Changqiang DU-1 (Great Compendium).
  - Haemorrhoids, swelling of the axilla: Weizhong BL-40, Chengjin BL-56, Chengfu BL-36 and Yanggu SI-5 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
  - Enuresis: Weizhong BL-40, Guanmen ST-22 and Shenmen HE-7 (Systematic Classic).
  - Ceaseless nosebleed: Weizhong BL-40 and Chengjiang REN-24 (Systematic Classic).
  - Severe and incessant nosebleed: Weizhong BL-40 and Yinbai SP-1 (Supplementing Lip).
-

**BL-10 (tiān zhù)**

天 tiān: celestial, of the heavens; sky; Nature; heaven  
 注 zhù: pillar

天柱

***Celestial Pillar***

**Location:** On the posterior superior aspect of the neck, 1.3 cun lateral to DU-15 (Ya Men). The point is located in the lateral fibres of trapezius muscle, or deeper, semispinalis capitus muscle. DU-15 (Ya Men) is in the midline, 5 fen superior to the posterior hairline, in the depression immediately superior to the spinous process of the 2nd cervical vertebra (axis).

**BL-41 (fù fēn)**

附 fù: attach, append  
 分 fēn: to part, a part

附分

***Attached Branch***

**Location:** On the superior dorsal aspect of the trunk, 3 cun lateral to the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of the 2nd thoracic vertebra (lateral to the midline - Du Mai). The point lies just medial to the vertebral (medial) border of the scapula. BL-12 (Feng Men) is located 1.5 cun medial to BL-41 (Fu Fen).

**Features & Categories:** Intersection point of the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang on the Urinary Bladder Channel.

**Functions:** Eliminates Wind and dissipates Cold; soothes the Sinews and quickens the Connecting Vessels.

**Indications:** Hypertonicity of the shoulder and back; stiffness, soreness or pain of the shoulder, neck or back; numbness of the elbow and arm.

**Supplementary Indications:** Insensitivity of the elbow and arm; Wind.

**BL-42 (pò hù)**

魄 pò: soul, spirit  
 戶 hù: door

魄戶

***Po Door***

**Location:** On the posterior superior trunk, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai point DU-12 (Shen Zhu). DU-12 (Shen Zhu) is located on the posterior midline in the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of the 3rd thoracic vertebra. BL-42 (Po Hu) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-13 (Fei Shu).

**Features & Categories:** Related to the spiritual qualities of the Metal Element - Po, corporeal soul, instinct, animal spirit.

**Functions:** Stimulates the dispersal and descending functions of Lung Qi; calms dyspnea and resolves cough; regulates Qi and clears Heat; subdues rebellious Qi.

**Indications:** Cough; bronchitis; pleurisy; asthma; atelectasis; pulmonary tuberculosis; coughing or spitting blood; weakness of the chest; stiffness of the neck; pain in the shoulder and back; sadness, grief, worry, anxiety or melancholy.

**Supplementary Indications:** Retching and vomiting with vexation and Fullness; Deficient conditions; Yin Deficient tidal fever.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Pohu BL-42 is located on the outer portion of the Bladder channel on the back at the level of Feishu BL-13, the back-shu point of the Lung. The name of this point (Door of the Corporeal Soul) suggests that it is effective in treating disorders of the corporeal soul (po) and emotional disorders related to Lung disharmony. In fact, with the exception of 'three corpse possession disorder', the classical indications of this point predominantly reflect its use in nourishing and tonifying the Lung. 'Three corpse possession disorder' is a Daoist concept that refers to some form of 'possession' and is divided into 'upper corpse' which attacks the eyes, 'middle corpse' which attacks the five zang, and 'lower corpse' which attacks human life itself.

The predominant clinical picture expressed by the classical indications for this point is one of severe exhaustion of the Lung. It is indicated for Lung atrophy, Lung consumption, deficiency-taxation, taxation cough with heat in the body, etc. In its ability to strengthen the Lung at the deepest level it is similar to Gaohuangshu BL-43, although less renowned.

According to the Essential Questions the five outer Bladder points level with the five zang back-shu points (i.e. Pohu BL-42, Shentang BL-44, Hunmen BL-47, Yishe BL-49 and Zhishi BL-52) drain heat from the five zang, an action shared by the back-shu points of the five zang.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Consumption: Pohu BL-42 and Gaohuangshu BL-43 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Cough with rebellious qi, dyspnoea, vomiting of foam and clenched teeth: Pohu BL-42, Futu L.I.-18, Tianrong SI-17, Lianquan REN-23, Qishe ST-11 and Yixi BL-45 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Inability to turn the neck: Pohu BL-42 and Jianjing GB-21 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-43 (gāo huāng shū)**

膏 *gāo*: area below the heart

育 *huāng*: membrane just above the diaphragm

俞 *shū*: acupuncture point

膏 育 俞

*Gao Huang Shu*

**Location:** Between the scapulae on the posterior aspect of the trunk, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai. The point is located 3 cun lateral to the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of the 4th thoracic vertebra. BL-43 (Gao Huang Shu) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-14 (Jue Yin Shu).

**Features & Categories:** Related to Gao Huang - 'between the Heart and the diaphragm'.

Considered to be the location of chronic and incurable disease.

**Functions:** Benefits the Lung (especially Yin) and fortifies the Spleen; tonifies Qi; strengthens Deficient conditions; stabilizes the Heart and benefits the Kidneys; nourishes Jing and supports Yuan Qi; stops cough and calms dyspnea.

**Indications:** Pulmonary tuberculosis; cough; bronchitis; asthma; pleurisy; coughing or spitting blood; night sweats; poor memory; lack of sexual interest; nocturnal seminal emission; gastric pain; vomiting; abdominal distension; constipation; untransformed digestate in the stool; neurasthenia; debility due to chronic or prolonged illness; pain in the lumbar region.

**Supplementary Indications:** Esophageal constriction; Deficient Stomach and Spleen; absent-mindedness; back pain; pain along the spine; Wind conditions; Deficient conditions generally; emotional frailty.

#### **DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

The name 'Gaohuang' can be translated as 'Vital Region'. This concept, implying one of the deepest and most fundamental regions of the body, is first mentioned in Master Zuo-jiu's Tradition of the Spring and Autumn Annals (580 BCE), one of the earliest textual references to acupuncture. The Prince of Jin who was gravely ill sent for the famous Doctor Yi Huan. After examining the patient, Doctor Huan declared that the disease had settled in the gaohuang region (between the Heart and the diaphragm) and hence "it cannot be purged, it cannot be reached (by needling), herbs will not penetrate it, there is nothing to be done".

Gaohuangshu BL-43 was comprehensively discussed in a text called Method of Moxibustion at Gaohuangshu by Zhuang Zhuo in 1128. Zhuang was inspired to write this book after being cured of various diseases, including malaria and beriberi, by three hundred moxa cones burnt on Gaohuangshu BL-43. He measured the location of Gaohuangshu BL-43 on people of various body builds and gave diagrams and specific instructions for locating the point.

In discussing this point, Sun Si-miao in the Thousand Ducat Formulas simply states "Gaohuangshu BL-43, there is no [disorder] that it cannot treat" and "once moxibustion is completed, it causes a person's yang qi to be healthy and full".

Many classical texts say that Gaohuangshu BL-43 is contraindicated to needling and emphasise its treatment by moxibustion, for example the Illustrated Classic of Acupuncture Points on the Bronze Man recommends the application of a hundred or even as many as three hundred moxa cones to Gaohuangshu BL-43. Early texts, however, stress that after moxibustion at Gaohuangshu BL-43, moxibustion should also be applied to points below the umbilicus, e.g. Qihai REN-6 and Guanyuan REN-4, in order to conduct downwards the heat thus generated.

Careful examination of the classical indications of this point demonstrate its actions on the Lung, Heart, Kidneys, Spleen and Stomach. Like Feishu BL-13 and Pohu BL-42, it is able to treat severe deficiency (especially of the yin) of the Lung, and is indicated for consumption, cough, coughing of blood, steaming bone disorder, night sweating and emaciation. By both nourishing and calming the Heart it is applicable in the treatment of poor memory, pounding of the Heart, insomnia and phlegm-fire mania. Acting on the Kidneys, it is able to treat seminal emission, with or without dreams, and impotence. By strengthening the middle jiao it is able to treat feebleness and deficiency of the Spleen and Stomach, undigested food in the stool and weariness of the four limbs.

So great was the tonifying action of Gaohuangshu BL-43 considered to be, that it was said to strengthen the original qi and treat every kind of deficiency, the five types of taxation and the seven injuries (refer commentary BL-23).

Finally, it is interesting to note that Gaohuangshu BL-43 was also indicated for 'phlegm diseases' and Sun Si-miao in his Supplement to the Thousand Ducat Formulas says it "stops phlegm in chronic disease". The importance of phlegm as a pathological factor in difficult and chronic diseases is long

documented and is reflected in such sayings as "The hundred diseases all pertain to phlegm", "Strange diseases often involve phlegm" and "There is no place that phlegm cannot reach".

### CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- The hundred syndromes of deficiency-taxation: moxa Gaohuangshu BL-43, Huanmen (M-BW-6) and the Four Flowers [Geshu BL-17 and Danshu BL-19] (Compilation).
- Consumption: Gaohuangshu BL-43 and Pohu BL-42 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Spontaneous sweating: moxa Gaohuangshu BL-43, Dazhui DU-14 and Fuliu KID-7 (Divine Moxibustion).
- Poor memory: Gaohuangshu BL-43, Shendao DU-11, Youmen KID-21 and Lieque LU-7 (Supplementing Life).

## BL-44 (*shén táng*)

神 *shén*: spirit

堂 *táng*: hall, main room of a house; temple, memorial

神堂

*Spirit Hall*

**Location:** On the posterior trunk, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai point DU-11 (Shen Dao). DU-11 (Shen Dao) is located on the posterior midline in the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of the 5th thoracic vertebra. BL-44 (Shen Tang) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-15 (Xin Shu).

**Features & Categories:** Related to the spiritual qualities of the Fire Element - Shen, divine spirit, overall spirit.

**Functions:** Opens the chest and rectifies Qi; resolves cough and stabilizes dyspnea; soothes the Sinews and quickens the Connecting Vessels; calms the Shen.

**Indications:** Asthma; palpitations; cardiac pain; cough; bronchitis; thoracic oppression; stuffy chest; intercostal neuralgia; pain and stiffness of the back; heart disease; anxiety; insomnia; depression; emotional or psychological problems related to the Heart.

**Supplementary Indications:** Fullness in the chest and abdomen.

### DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Despite the compelling name of this point (Hall of the Spirit) and the fact that Shentang BL-44 lies on the outer Bladder channel at the level of Xinshu BL-15, the back-shu point of the Heart, there are no apparent references in any of the important classics of acupuncture to the use of this point for the treatment of emotional or psychological disorders.

According to the Essential Questions the five outer Bladder points level with the five zang back-shu points (i.e. Pohu BL-42, Shentang BL-44, Hunmen BL-47, Yishe BL-49 and Zhishi BL-52) drain heat from the five zang, an action shared by the back-shu points of the five zang.

### CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

Oesophageal constriction: Shentang BL-44 and Zhongfeng LIV4 (Supplementing Life).

**BL-45 (yì xī)**

讙 yì: a sighing, laughing sound

諝 xī: a sighing, laughing sound

讙 諝

*Yi Xi*

**Location:** On the posterior trunk, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai point DU-10 (Ling Tai). DU-10 (Ling Tai) is located on the posterior midline in the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of the 6th thoracic vertebra. BL-45 (Yi Xi) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-16 (Du Shu).

**Functions:** Resolves the Exterior and clears Heat; disperses Lung Qi; rectifies Qi; frees the Channels and quickens the Connecting Vessels.

**Indications:** Cough; asthma; pericarditis; intercostal neuralgia; hiccoughs; belching; shoulder and back pain.

**Supplementary Indications:** Lower rib pain associated with lower abdominal pain and distension; visual dizziness; chest pain associated with pain on the inner side of the shoulder and arm; malaria, Heat disease.

**DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY**

Yixi BL-45 is level with Dushu BL-16 which is listed in some classical texts as the back-shu point of the Governing vessel. Whilst Dushu BL-16 has few indications which reflect disorder of the Governing vessel, some of the indications of Yixi BL-45, for example visual dizziness, eye pain, nosebleed, malaria, headache and chest pain radiating to the lumbar region, may be understood in this way.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Abdominal fullness: Yixi BL-45 and Zusanli ST-36 (Supplementing Life).
- Cough with rebellious qi, dyspnoea, vomiting of foam and clenched teeth: Yixi BL-45, Futu L.I.-18, Tianrong SI-17, Lianquan REN-23, Pohu BL-42 and Qishe ST-11 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Swelling of the face: first needle Yixi BL-45, then Tianyou SJ-16 and Fengchi GB-20 (Systematic Classic).
- Visual dizziness: Yixi BL-45, Shenting DU-24, Shangxing DU-23, Yongquan KID-1, Yuji LU-10 and Dadu SP-2 (Supplementing Life).
- Contraction and cold of the shoulder and back, with pain of the inner aspect of the scapula: Yixi BL-45, Chize LU-5, Geshu BL-17 and Jinmen BL-63 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

**BL-46 (gé guān)**

隔 gé: diaphragm

關 guān: pass, gate

膈 關

*Diaphragm Pass*

**Location:** On the posterior aspect of the trunk, 3 cun lateral to Du Mai point DU-9 (Zhi Yang). DU-9 (Zhi Yang) is located on the midline in the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of 7th thoracic vertebra. BL-46 (Ge Guan) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-17 (Ge Shu).

**Functions:** Fortifies the Spleen and eliminates Damp; harmonizes the Stomach and moves Stagnation; soothes the Sinews and quickens the Connecting Vessels.

**Indications:** Difficult ingestion; vomiting; belching; hiccough; spasm of the esophagus; gastric haemorrhage; intercostal neuralgia; pain and stiffness of the back.

**Supplementary Indications:** Blood disorders; yellow urine; body pain.

#### DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Geguan BL-46 (Diaphragm Gate) is level with Geshu BL-17 (Diaphragm Shu) the hui-meeting point of blood. Like Geshu BL-17, Geguan BL-46 has an important action on harmonising the diaphragm which lies between the upper and middle jiao and is able to resolve stagnation of qi in the upper jiao (fullness and oppression of the chest and diaphragm, sighing) and descend Stomach qi in the middle jiao (vomiting, difficult ingestion, belching).

#### CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Aversion to cold in the back and stiffness of the spine with difficulty in bending: Geguan BL-46, Zhibian BL-54 and Jinggu BL-64 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

## BL-47 (*hún mén*)

魂 *hún*: soul, spirit

門 *mén*: gate, door

魂門

*Hun Gate*

**Location:** On the posterior trunk 3 cun lateral to Du Mai point DU-8 (Jin Suo). DU-8 (Jin Suo) is located on the midline in the depression immediately inferior to the spinous process of 9th thoracic vertebra. BL-47 (Hun Men) is 1.5 cun lateral to BL-18 (Gan Shu).

**Features & Categories:** Related to the spiritual qualities of the Wood Element - H'un, ethereal soul.

**Functions:** Frees the Liver and rectifies Qi; strengthens the Spleen and harmonizes the Stomach; frees and regulates Bowel Qi; steadies, centres and focuses the H'un.

**Indications:** Pain in the chest and lateral costal (hypochondriac) region; pleurisy; pleuritis; backache; back pain; vomiting; stomach pain; diarrhea; neurasthenia; depression; frustration; irritability; resentment; Liver and Gall Bladder diseases.

**Supplementary Indications:** Difficult ingestion; rumbling intestines and diarrhea; dark-colored urine; irregular defecation; hypertonicity of the Sinews and bone pain.

#### DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Hunmen BL-47 is level with Ganshu BL-18, the back-shu point of the Liver. The Liver stores the ethereal soul (hun), but despite its striking name (Gate of the Ethereal Soul), psychological and emotional indications for this point are notable by their absence in major classical texts. Hunmen BL-47 does, however, have some action on regulating the Liver qi and soothing the sinews, and is indicated for fullness and distention of the chest and lateral costal region, contraction of the sinews, and bone and joint pain of the whole body. It is also able to regulate the middle jiao, treating disharmony of both the Spleen (diarrhoea, borborygmus) and Stomach (difficult ingestion, vomiting). According to the Essential Questions, the five outer Bladder points level with the five zang

back-shu points (i.e. Pohu BL-42, Shentang BL-44, Hunmen BL-47, Yishe BL-49 and Zhishi BL-52) drain heat from the five zang, an action shared by the back-shu points of the five zang.

**CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS**

- Chest pain: Hunmen BL-47, Feishu BL-13, Yunmen LU-2, Zhongfu LU-1, Yinbai SP-1, Qimen LIV-14 and Daling P-7 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Cold Stomach with difficulty in digesting food: Hunmen BL-47 and Weishu BL-21 (One Hundred Symptoms).