Ling Shu Acupuncture

Introduction

《Ling Shu》 or 《Miraculous Pivot》 also named 《Zhen Jing》 or 《Jiu Zhen》 is <Huangdi Neijing> combined with 《Su Wen》 in a single volume.

However, 《Ling Shu》 itself covers Meridians, acupuncture points, and acupuncture techniques comprehensively and in great detail; thus 《Ling Shu》 has laid a solid foundation for clinical acupuncture theory. Since the advent of 《Ling Shu》, many authors had contributed important interpretation of the original text for others to understand. Some of these famous authors included Dr. Yang Shangshan (AD 618) and Dr. Wang Bing (AD 660) in the early days, and later followed by Dr. Zhang Jiebin (AD 1368), Dr. Ma Shi (AD 1368), and Dr. Zhang Zhicong (AD 1688).

However, due to the complexity and the depth of the original 《Ling Shu》 text, there were great discrepancies among the interpretations from different authors. This caused much confusion for the beginning students of Acupuncture in trying to understand the text of 《Ling Shu》, and this confusion made the practice of 《Ling Shu》 in a clinical setting impossible. In fact, in these past 2000 years, the research done on 《Ling Shu》 centered purely on the theoretical side; the application of 《Ling Shu》 in a clinical environment was virtually non-existent.

This book, 《Ling Shu Acupuncture》, is the first of its kind to present acupuncture theory from the clinical viewpoint by connecting the contents of both volumes of 《Huangdi Neijing》 (Ling Shu and Su Wen). 《Ling Shu Acupuncture》 has reorganized the acupuncture theories of both volumes of 《Huangdi Neijing》 under different subject discussions.

These subjects include how to differentiate the dysfunctions of Meridians based on pulse diagnosis and clinical symptoms. How to differentiate the imbalance of Yin/Yang by pulse diagnosis? How many acupuncture points will be selected? What is the frequency of treatment for the dysfunctions of different Meridians? What is the general and specific function of acupuncture points? What are the groups of acupuncture points that can be applied for the dysfunctions of Zang-Fu organs only? What is the proper depth of puncturing according to the different seasons of the year? What is the proper timing for removing the needle? What are the meanings of “arrival of Qi” and “obtaining Qi (De-qi)” ? How to observe the result of sedation or reinforcement objectively? What is forbidden in acupuncture, and the harms that can occur in case of acupuncture malpractice?
These subjects will enable the acupuncturist to clearly understand the crux of the theory and will ultimately enable the acupuncturist to utilize the theory in diagnosis and treatment of patients under a practical, clinical setting.

The acupuncturist is thus led properly in utilize this theory into clinical practice. In doing so, the acupuncturist can comprehend the deepest meaning and achieve the highest level in the realm of Acupuncture. This will empower the acupuncturist with faith and love for this ancient medical procedure.

〈Ling Shu Acupuncture〉 is also the first of its kind to cover over 2000 years of Acupuncture history in its comprehensively detailed discussion and analysis of acupuncture classic books and modern acupuncture theories written after the publication of 〈Ling Shu〉. These discussions are conducted based on the contents of 〈Ling Shu〉 itself.

The discussions include the theory of the Eight Extraordinary Meridians, and the Mother and Son Points from 〈Nanjing〉 or 〈Eight-One Difficult Problems〉; the theory of Back-Shu and Front-Mu points from the 〈Canon of Pulse Diagnosis〉; the theory of Five Shu points of Hand-Shaoyin, and the Xi-Cleft points from 〈Systematic Acupuncture and Moxibustion〉; the theory of the Eight Confluent points from the 〈Guide of Acupuncture Canon〉; the theory of the Extraordinary points from 〈One Thousand Important Herb Formulas〉 and etc.; and the modern day theory of head acupuncture, ear acupuncture, electro-acupuncture.

From these discussions, one can see that Acupuncture has deviated from the original principle of 〈Ling Shu〉, and has been conducted through wrong theories throughout the years. The result is the poor practice of Acupuncture since.

In order to accurately convey the ideal of the original text of 〈Ling Shu〉, 〈Ling Shu Acupuncture〉 has painstakingly pursued three methods in delivering the meaning of the original text to the reader.

First, in the analysis of the original text, 〈Ling Shu Acupuncture〉 utilizes the text before, the text after, and the central idea of the chapter in conjunction with the related text of the other chapters to explain the section of the text in question so as to reach the goal of using 〈Ling Shu〉 to explain 〈Ling Shu〉.

For example, to explain “Qi-arrival” in 〈Ling Shu Chapter 1〉 by using 〈Ling Shu Chapter 3〉; “Qi-arrival refers to yin-yang balance after successful application of the reinforcing or reducing acupuncture technique which balance imbalanced yin and yang, it is time to remove the needle.”

Secondly, 〈Ling Shu Acupuncture〉 is based on the principle of the theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine when it comes to the different interpretations of 〈Ling Shu〉 authored before.
the needle. “Ying” and “Sui” is the best time to apply the reinforcing or reducing technique in treatment.

Comments: The comments explain and reveal the meaning of the original text in detail with references to clinical practice; this is the most important part of the book, 《Ling Shu Acupuncture》.

For example, the comment for 《Su Wen Chapter 24》: Most acupuncturists are familiar with the theory of internally-externally related Meridians. Yet few realize the clinical significance of it. Firstly, the relationship of internally-externally related Meridians only happens within two specific Meridians. For example, Foot-Taiyang internally-externally relates with Foot-Shaoyin. Foot-Taiyang does not relate with any other Yin Meridians except for Foot-Shaoyin. In other words, Foot-Taiyang and Foot-Shaoyin should be balanced in a healthy man. If one of these two Meridians is in an excess or deficient condition, it will result in an imbalance of the two meridians. This is the Yin/Yang theory of Meridians.
In 《Ling Shu Chapter 9》, it states “Reinforce Foot-Shaoyin and reduce Foot-Taiyang when the pulse of Renying is three times stronger than Cunkou.” It means we should reinforce Foot-Shaoyin and reduce Foot-Taiyang at the same time when there is a dysfunction in one of the two Meridians. Because, if one of these Meridians dysfunctions, the other one also will be affected due to their Yin/Yang relationship. Therefore, reinforcing and reducing applies on the internally-externally related Meridians only.
This principle of acupuncture treatment not only applies for Meridian dysfunction, but also for Zang-Fu organ dysfunctions. In 《Su Wen Chapter 22》, it was stated “When there is sickness of Liver ... treat Foot-Jueyin and Foot-Shaoyang by acupuncture.”
Secondly, the Foot-Taiyang Meridian on the left side is internally-externally related with Foot-Shaoyin Meridian on the left side only, not with the right one.
Though the internal pathway of both sides of the Meridian is the same, the external pathway is different, and they are connected by Meridians and their collaterals. For example, the circulation of Foot-Taiyang Meridian on the left side ends at the lateral aspect of the tip of the little toe, and goes to sole to connect with the Foot-Shaoyin Meridian on the same side. The collateral of the Foot-Taiyang Meridian on the left side branches out from Foot-Taiyang Meridian on the left side and goes to Foot-Shaoyin on the left as well.”

Appendix: These sections discuss the transformation of the theory of Acupuncture after 《Ling Shu》 and covers all the new acupuncture theories from other classic acupuncture books as well as modern acupuncture books.

For example, Appendix 4 discusses the changes to the classification and indication of acupoint after 《Ling Shu》 in the following three
First stage starts from the 《Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and Moxibustion》 (AD 250) to 《Illustrated Manual on the Points for Acupuncture and Moxibustion on a New Bronze Figure》 (AD 1027) 《Exposition of the Fourteen Meridians》 (AD 1341)...; Second stage is in the Ming Dynasty (AD 1368 to 1644), many acupuncture books published were recorded clinical experiences of some acupuncturists only...; Third stage is in most textbooks today; all the acupoints have been classified into three categories: The regular points which relate with the Meridians, Ashi points, and extraordinary points...” From the above discussion, one could see how the acupuncture practices have deviated from the 《Huangdi Neijing》 for the past two thousand years.