

# Embracing the Absolute: Spleen-21 and Heart-1

by Lonny Jarrett, LAc

As our perspective on life evolves, our understanding of the significance of acupuncture point function also evolves. I've written about SP-21 and HE-1 at length as an exit/entry point combination in my book, *The Clinical Practice of Chinese Medicine*. Here I elaborate about these two points from a cosmological and spiritual perspective that is more in line with my current view.

In the Worsely Five-Element tradition, we consider that the circulation of qi begins at HE-1 and ends at SP-21. So this particular exit/entry combination is unique because it represents both the source and the extremity in the circulation of qi. The character *ji* in HE-1, *jiquan* (Utmost Source), is the same character used in *tai ji quan*. In the name of the exercise *jiquan* means ultimate fist, but in the name of HE-1, *jiquan* (*quan* is a homophone, a different character with the same pronunciation) means "utmost source".

## Heart 1

The term *taiji* refers to the undifferentiated and unified state of the universe at the moment it enters into the stream of existence, an absolute and undivided state of total integrity. In this sense, HE-1 represents the emergence of something from nothing, like the sun rising out of the ocean ("let there be light"). While KI-1 may be considered to be the source of infinite potential, HE-1 is the source of the creative stream. The motivation of HE-1 is that "YES!" at the source of creation as it emerges from the void and fuels all subsequent development in time.

HE-1 is the source of intention. In the higher states of spiritual realization it may be revealed that the entire universe exists in just one point in space and within one ever-present moment. This is the absolute nature of HE-1. From the perspective of HE-1, nothing could be more interesting than the manifestation of ever increasing higher orders of potential. From the perspective of potential, there is a universe of untold possibility to create and HE-1 represents the unending explosion of that unbridled passion to create the future.

This total positivity is never touched or daunted by anything that happens to us

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during life. This fire has absolutely no interest in the past and is only ever concerned with realizing a more wholesome future right now. HE-1 represents an explosion of such positivity that it burns away all doubt, cynicism, and victimization and all awareness of a separate self that is trapped by time. In fact, it is so very positive that it is difficult for us to bear because it absolutely challenges everything that is relative within us. To embrace this creative fire may be likened to staring into the sun and going blind. Such intensity literally erases us, leaving only itself.

## Spleen-21

Spleen-21 is the last point in the circulation of qi from the perspective of the Chinese clock. Spleen-21 is the great *luo* point sending collaterals all around the torso in a motherly embrace. The point's name, *dabao* (Great Enveloping) points to this imagery, with the character *bao* depicting a fetus in the womb. Hence, these collaterals represent the distribution of nourishment to all parts of creation. While HE-1 can be considered the initial explosion at the launch of a rocket, the very source of fire, SP-21 may be conceived as the apex of that rocket's trajectory as it expands in space like fireworks streaming around us in all directions. The collaterals of SP-21 represent the material universe or the "10,000 things" as the Daoists would say. In this regard, spiritual revelation may reveal that both space and time are infinite.

To the conditioned postmodern human being, freedom means having options. It means being able to do what one wants to do, when one wants to do it, regardless of the consequences and without accountability to, or judgment from, others. In dysfunction, the spleen may selfishly indulge in the pursuit of its own endless appetite. This represents a subversion of its task of managing the transportation and distribution of nourishment. In this sense, SP-21 can address the endless and

ungratifying pursuit of one's cravings through the lost art of renunciation. Enduring fullness comes from embracing the whole as one, and as one's self.

## The Combination of SP-21 and HE-1

The flow of qi from SP-21 to HE-1 represents a return to the absolute simplicity of having no options whatsoever other than embracing the single-pointed desire of the heart itself. And this is always a passionate embrace of the truth that sets us free.

In this context, HE-1 is the source of the creative impulse joined to the realization of creation having come to full fruition as embodied by SP-21. In the instant that manifestation reaches a state of completion and fullness (SP-21), qi flows back to its source (HE-1) to transcend form and embrace a pure source of motivation. Hence, there is a continual interpenetration and simultaneous presence of the one (HE-1) and the many (SP-21). From this perspective we can understand the relationship between autonomy and communion, the many coming together as the one. The perspective of spiritual realization is the razor's edge between all apparent dualities. From the perspective of this point combination, we may perceive that the universe exists as both a single point *and* extends infinitely. It may also be revealed that there is only ever this one moment *and* that time is limitless.

HE-1 empowers us to take responsibility for creation itself: "It is I who said YES to creation and the development of the universe is my responsibility." And it is SP-21 that represents the fruition of the path: "There is nothing to do but give and when I do, keeping nothing for myself, I am one with the source."

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