Reviewer's report

Title: In-vivo visualisation of the anatomical structures related to the acupuncture points Dai mai and Shen mai by MRI. A single-case pilot study.

Version: 4 Date: 13 September 2006

Reviewer: P J White

Reviewer's report:

General

This paper is very much improved from the last draft. It is much clearer, less ambiguous and flows well. The text largely stays on track with regard to the question under investigation. The addition of the flow chart greatly aids understanding. My only other additional comment on the current text is that the last paragraph of the discussion should be deleted. Whilst investigation of this particular point might be of great interest to the authors, this information has little relevance to the aims of the paper i.e. "to test the feasibility of a combined TCM and technological approach for the in-vivo characterisation of acupuncture point localisation using state of the art MRI imaging."

Finally, I would like to point out that I am aware that the references I provided do not deal with MRI imaging of the acupuncture point. They do however deal with attempts by other researchers to identify the anatomical nature of acupuncture points. The authors had previously stated that that there was little information on the anatomical nature of acupuncture points, these references are examples of such studies. The background could therefore be improved by a discussion of the current evidence and the fact that alternative methods have thus far failed to provide definitive answers. The use of MRI in vivo might represent a step forward in this search for answers.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)