Reviewer's report

**Title:** Oxaliplatin treatment enhances the metastatic potential of residual cancer in a nude mouse model of human hepatocellular carcinoma and is attenuated by Songyou Yin

**Version:** 2 **Date:** 28 January 2010

**Reviewer:** Delong Liu

**Reviewer's report:**

This paper described a very interesting and important phenomenon: residual cancer cells after chemotherapy show more malignant potential. The authors have done thorough and extensive experiments using their well established nude mice model system to clearly document this phenomenon in oxaliplatin-pretreated HCC cells of different metastasis potential. The authors used sufficient number of mice which is very impressive. What is more exciting is that the authors further showed that a Chinese herb composite SYY can abrogate the aggressive malignant potential of those pre-treated oxaliplatin-resistant cells.

**Minor revisions:**

1. After oxaliplatin treatment, the residual cells are the ones that are resistant, and are selected out as more malignant. Therefore, these residual cells have more metastasis potential. Authors have attempted to illustrate the mechanism. However, Oxaliplatin does not enhance metastasis per se. Therefore, the title and conclusion seem to be misleading, implying that oxaliplatin caused the enhanced metastasis potential. I suggest that the title of the paper be changed to:

   Oxaliplatin-resistant hepatocellular carcinoma have increased metastatic potential in a nude mice model and are sensitive to Songyou Yin

2. The discussion on this should also be modified accordingly

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

'I declare that I have no competing interests'