Reviewer's report

**Title:** Evaluation of the intraoperative specimens of the thoracic and abdominal aorta

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 31 March 2013

**Reviewer:** Sanjay A Pai

**Reviewer's report:**

This is a revised manuscript of a paper which was probably submitted in an incomplete format earlier. Those deficiencies have largely been addressed and the data presented here is interesting and useful: that of the various aetiologies and pathology of aortic excised specimens. That atherosclerosis is an important cause of dissection over the age of 65 years is a particularly important finding.

The comments raised by the other referee are relevant and have been addressed [ but see below ]

**Major - None**

**Minor -**

I would suggest that reference 8 [Nesi et al ] be written correctly [ the bibliography in the manuscript ascribes it only to Nesi ]. Also, while authors have mentioned in the covering letter, the logic for using 65 years as the cut-off point (Nesi et al'a paper), they have not mentioned it in the text.

It is important that they do so: most readers would wonder why this particular figure was chosen as the cut-off; by using the appropriate reference, the authors can make it clear to readers.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

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

**Declaration of competing interests:**

None