Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Association between HER2 status in gastric cancer and clinicopathological features: a retrospective study using whole-tissue sections

**Version:** 0 **Date:** 25 Aug 2015

**Reviewer:** Rocco Cappellesso

**Reviewer's report:**

This is an interesting work about HER2 status in gastric cancers of a Brazilian population that tries to clarify the role of ethnicity in the different rate of HER2 positivity worldwide reported in literature. The topic is well presented and the methods and the results are clearly described. However, I have some major concerns:

- The percentage of HER2 positive cases in the present Brazilian series are in line with a recent large European series (Cappellesso R et al. Hum Pathol. 2015 May;46(5):665-72) but lower than a Japanese cohort of patients (Matsusaka S et al. Gastric Cancer. 2015. Epub ahead of print). However, I disagree with the explanation of the authors that such difference is due to "the lower frequency of tumors arising at the gastroesophageal junction in comparison with distal gastric carcinomas in Brazilian patients". Indeed, the evidences from both these papers sustain the lack of difference between the prossimal and distal gastric cancers. The authors should deal more in depth with this topic.

- In addition to ethnicity, also a short comment about differences in dietary habits should be added.

Minor concerns:

- There are some typos.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

Quality of written English
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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None to declare.

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