

Thermal Imagery Using Moxibustion Shows the Existence of the Jinglou

Attilio D'Alberty, BSc (Hons) | DIGITAL EXCLUSIVE

Recent research conducted by Schlebusch, Maric-Oehler and Popp (2005) is a major breakthrough in the longstanding hunt for the existence of the *jinglou*. Previous research studies concentrated their efforts on finding the meridian system using acupuncture. None were able to conclusively prove that the *jinglou* existed. However, they were able to prove that particular acupuncture points stimulated areas of the body, including the brain, and that the areas surrounding the acupuncture points had significantly different skin resistances. The new study by Schlebusch, et al. observed thermal imagery changes within the body when moxibustion is applied against particular acupuncture points. No symptoms were intended to be treated during the study, and no symptom pattern analysis was conducted before, during or after the study; only changes in the meridians themselves were observed during the application of moxibustion.

Various studies have suggested that acupuncture illicit an electrical response within the body. Research by Becker (cited in Gerber 2000) found that the DC (direct current) electrical-control system tended to transmit information by slowly varying the electrical charge or voltage of glial cell membranes. Becker suggested that the meridians are electrical conductors that carried an injury message to the brain, which responded by sending back the appropriate level of direct current to stimulate healing in the troubled area. The idea that acupuncture responds and initiates electrical reaction has been further supported in the Schlebusch, et al. study, which notes that living matter, including the *jinglou*, is in a permanently electronically excited state.

It was interesting to note in the Schlebusch, et al. study that the whole length of the meridian was stimulated and that heat could be observed along the entire channel. Also of note was that, as one meridian was stimulated, its paired meridian was also affected. In the study, the Stomach and Spleen were both stimulated separately; both showed a response at the same time. This fits with the *Nei Jing* theory of paired organs amongst the zangfu. However, when an acupuncture point was stimulated on the Urinary Bladder, it was not noted if its paired organ, the Kidney, was stimulated. The question of whether the collaterals were equally stimulated by moxibustion was not mentioned in the study and still remains unclear.

As this new theory of proving the existence of the *jinglou* using moxibustion and thermal imagery has been put forward, it is up to other researchers to duplicate the Schlebusch, et al. study and observe if the same results can be successfully replicated. Unfortunately, as the exact list of acupuncture points used in the study was not given, along with the make and brand of moxa stick used, some degree of variability exists. In addition, no qualified acupuncturist was mentioned in the study. This again can cause a degree of variability, as only a qualified acupuncturist should illicit a response from an acupuncture point using moxibustion. It was also not mentioned which acupuncture reference texts the researchers used to identify the particular acupuncture points used in the study. Clearer uses of TCM reference texts, a concise list of acupuncture points stimulated, and qualified acupuncturists should be used in further studies.

It is still unclear how researchers can observe, analyse and measure the *jinglou* using acupuncture.

Recent research by Jiang, et al. (2004) in South Korea has shown the possible anatomical existence of the *jinglou*. Further quality research is needed to explore this exciting area of research.

References

- Gerber R. *Vibrational Medicine for the 21st Century*. Santa Fe: Bear & Company, 2000.
- Jiang X, Lee C, Choi C, Baik K, Soh K, Kim H, Shin H, Soh K, Cheun B. Threadlike bundle of tubules running inside blood vessels: New anatomical structure. Unpublished, 2004.
- Schlebusch K, Maric-Oehler W, Popp F. Biophotonics in the infrared spectral range reveal acupuncture meridian structure of the body. *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* 2005;11(1):171-173.