

# **Thermal Imagery Using Moxibustion Shows the Existence of the Jinglou**

**By Attilio D'Alberto**

Recent research conducted by Schlebusch, Maric-Oehler and Popp (2005) is a major breakthrough in the long standing 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. They were however, 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, Maric-Oehler and Popp (2005) 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 suggests 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, Maric-Oehler and Popp (2005) study, which notes that living matter, including the Jinglou, are in a permanently electronically excited state.

It was interesting to note in the Schlebusch, Maric-Oehler and Popp (2005) study that the whole length of the meridian was stimulated and that heat could be observed along the entire channel. Also interestingly, was 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 Schlebusch, Maric-Oehler and Popp (2005) study and observe if the same results can be successfully replicated. Unfortunately, as the exact list of acupuncture points used in the study were not given along with 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.

### **Biography**

Attilio D'Alberto graduated from a program jointly run at Middlesex University and Beijing University of TCM with a BSc (Hons) in Traditional Chinese Medicine (Middlesex University) and a MD (Beijing University). He currently practices in various busy clinics in London. Correspondence: [www.attiliodalberto.com/contact.php](http://www.attiliodalberto.com/contact.php)

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