

January 07, 2014

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed the edited manuscript in Word format (file name: 6837-review.doc). Given the huge modification of the manuscript requested by the referees, we were unable to highlight all the changes made in the text. A marked-up version of the paper is available, if necessary. We have added a new author (ET), who helped in the revision.

Title: The enigmatic origin of HBV: An ancient travelling companion or a recent encounter?

Authors: Gianguglielmo Zehender, Erika Ebranati , Elena Gabanelli, Chiara Sorrentino, Alessandra Lo Presti, Elisabetta Tanzi, Massimo Ciccozzi, Massimo Galli.

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Gastroenterology*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 6837

We would like to thank the three reviewers for their valuable suggestions.
The manuscript has been improved according to the suggestions of reviewers:

1 Format has been updated

2 Revision has been made according to the suggestions of the reviewers:

(1) We have done our best to shorten the manuscript without impoverishing its content; it is now about 30% shorter than it was.

(2) We have added brief reference to the subgenotypes in the Abstract.

(3) The Core Tip has been changed as suggested by Reviewer #1 observation.

(4) As requested by Reviewers #1 and #2, the Introduction has been shortened by deleting the unnecessary information concerning the HBV replication cycle.

(5) The repetitions concerning the phylogenetic methods have been deleted throughout the manuscript and, as requested by Reviewers #1 and #2, the descriptions of previous published papers have been reduced to the essential.

(6) The Conclusion section has been changed, and we hope the final message is now more intelligible.

(7) The number of references has been reduced by about 20%, and they have been revised.

(8) The presentation of the figures and tables is now more homogeneous.

(9) Reference numbers have been added to Table 2 as requested by Reviewers #1 and #2.

(10) The manuscript has been revised by a mother-tongue English teacher.

(11) There were no overlapping legends in the original Figure 2; they were probably due to the conversion of the .pdf file.

3 References and typesetting were corrected

Thank you again for publishing our manuscript in the *World Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gianguglielmo Zehender', followed by a stylized flourish.

Gianguglielmo Zehender, PhD, Assistant Professor,
L. Sacco Department of Biomedical and Clinical Sciences,
University of Milan,
Via GB Grassi 74, 20157 Milano, Italy.
Telephone: +39-02-50319770; Fax: +39-02-50319768
E-mail: gianguglielmo.zehender@unimi.it