



## Rethinking life in the time of Covid-19

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The Yangzi River is called the sorrow of China. There are many descriptions of him in folklore. Due to my stay in China, I once had the good fortune to pass by Yangzi. But I could not feel his sadness. But I have become part of China's new tragedy of 2020. The color of sorrow is blue, as is the color of pain. The sorrow of the new China is Coronavirus.

Preparations for the festival were underway in Beijing, the capital of China. All educational institutions and offices and courts were closed just before the spring festival. Many Chinese and foreigners leave China to spend holidays and spring festivals. During this time many tourists visit China. Beijing is a silent city at this time. Lots of people move to their own cities. We are used to seeing the look of Dhaka during Eid.

The third week of January, suddenly a notice comes! And the Chinese social media

started fighting in that chat. The new virus has hit the city of Wuhan. I didn't know what to do. First of all, I talk to my foreign friends. Then I talk to those who are familiar with me. Meanwhile, preparing for the festival, its color fades.

The whole time in Corona, two things kept me most alive. Those are friendship and social communication. No one in my dormitory was my country mate. But the whole time I was like family with other country friends and neighbors. Even those who lived outside the dormitory such as a Russian friend named "John," who rented a room off campus, would bring me coffee and food. He was not allowed to enter my dormitory so he would stand at the other side of the fence and talked with me. Even he postponed his hangout because I can't join now. As well as another Chinese friend "Qiwei," who is a professor at SIAS University in Zhengzhou. She always takes care of me. Every week she video called me and boosting my hope. She said a Chinese proverb that-'Tóng zhōu gòngjì, shǒu wàng xiāngzhù' which means we have to help each other because we are in the same boat of trouble. I'm in Beijing. I am constantly watching Wuhan's events and a name floating in my head was "Eliza." She is my cousin's friend who has helped me a lot since I came to China. I tried to know about her condition in our chat. One day she called me and said – they are ok but in total lockdown. She showed me some videos on her phone where roads are totally empty.

On January 26, two of my Brazilian friends left the country. I also went to say goodbye at the airport that day because of the deep friendship. In a pandemic, saying goodbye

to good friends is like to commit suicide. It seems to me like a hallucination now. I saw many foreigners leave Beijing that day. The funny thing is when they went to immigration, after checking their body temperature they were asking if they had traveled to Wuhan in the last two months. I stood by and watched. My friend replied, "Yes, I went." Then take them to the inner desk. I found out later that one of his teachers had a wedding in Wuhan. They are now healthy in Brazil. Their teachers are also not infected.

One thing that surprised me at the time of Corona is the awareness of my family. Before Corona, I used to talk to my family once a week. But when Corona started, my family would call me three or four times a week. My mother used to share with me all the important information of the day. Her main medium was mass media. In fact, my mother is not a person who cares about the media or global issues. But because I was in China at the time of Corona, she began to keep the world informed about her interests, especially in China. In fact, the whole credit goes to the mass media. The mass media is playing a wide-ranging role in this 21st-century epidemic. Information can save people's lives. Because this is the journalism that challenges the misinformation of the state authority and makes people aware. The media, which has become a place of trust for countless people like my mother, can prevent the spread of the epidemic.

One of my German friend named "Sarah" was hospitalized last month. She had

two emergency operations. I am deeply shocked because I feel so emotionally painful to be sick at the time of corona. She texted me at the end of the operation. I forget about Corona and pay attention to her words. Even in her illness, she wants to know how my day is going in Beijing. I shared with her one of the characters in Paulo Coelho's book, *Veronica Decides to Die*, whose name also Silke. In this book, a quote is very suitable for my friend, "Sarah," "it's best to accept life as it really is and not as I imagined it to be". I feel my friend, "Sarah" with the "Sarah" of the book. The interesting thing is that I have met her only once at Dubai airport last year. We sit in the same row. Her words give me a lot of vitality. Her statement again reminds me that the tension of friendship is much more than an epidemic. She wants to walk the streets of Munich again and wants to impress people with his beautiful smile. Corona has explained to us that money power or greed is useless, only the affection and love survive.

Editor's Note: All names used within this entry are pseudonyms in order to protect the identities of those involved.

