



# Response to the letter by Meng-jun Zhan et al. regarding the paper “A technical report from the Italian SARS-CoV-2 outbreak. Postmortem sampling and autopsy investigation in cases of suspected or probable COVID-19”

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We have carefully read the letter sent by Zhan et al. [1], regarding our paper [2].

First of all, we thank you for recognizing the importance and practical usefulness of our paper.

In reference to the sentence that has been highlighted and which you have asked us to change, we believe that this request is the result of an incomplete understanding, perhaps dictated by an incorrect understanding of the English language, which has led the authors to write this letter.

Our sentence, in fact, is: “*SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome-coronavirus-2) is a coronavirus responsible for COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) which resulted in a cluster of cases of pneumonia that originated in China around 31 December 2019 and has subsequently spread across the globe*” [2].

Although the authors have stated that we “*claim that COVID-19 originated in China*” the paper actually states that “*a cluster of cases of pneumonia originated in China around 31 December 2019*”, a fact which is not in dispute. We also do not mention Wuhan. Our paper also states that coronavirus is responsible for COVID-19, another fact that is not in dispute [3–5].

We believe that when an author sends a letter to the Editor, it is first necessary for that author to fully understand the meaning of what they have read, otherwise we might believe that it is just a way for them to try to publish their own modest and unscientific point of view [6].

## References

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