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冤 *Yuan*! Conceptual metaphors for INJUSTICE in Chinese

Abstract: Law concerns every aspect of our lives. However, rarely do scholars investigate metaphors of law, let alone those used in Mandarin, to which smaller attention is devoted in metaphor studies if compared to English. In this study I investigated the word *yuan* 冤, a Chinese word referring to immoral and illegal deeds such as 'injustice, wrong, tort', but also 'vengeance' and 'bad luck', to find the mappings it realises. Previous approaches to Chinese moral metaphors used a source-domain oriented approach, thus finding a limited set of mappings. In this study, I devised a method (MetaCoCoTaC) of finding metaphors at the word compound and collocate level starting from a monosyllabic target-domain word, *yuan*, that enabled me to find more and new source domains for INJUSTICE, including SOUND, FOOD, MOVEMENT, and ANIMAL. The findings of this research also enable us to account for the polysemy of the word *yuan*. Moreover, discrepancies with previous studies were discovered as to the way far more predictable domains, such as VERTICALITY and OBJECT, are actually used. Finally, some unique aspects of the Chinese morphology and the Chinese logographic script that are not systematically taken into consideration in relation to metaphor research were also addressed.

Keywords: Chinese morphology, Chinese script, metaphors of law, moral metaphors, target-domain oriented approach to metaphor identification in Chinese

1 Introduction

Yuān 冤 is a Chinese word that translates into English as 'injustice', 'wrong', 'tort', and also as 'vengeance', 'enemy' and 'bad luck'.[1] It is also used to indicate false accusations and wrongful convictions, and the agony one endures when they feel wronged or falsely accused, either in or out of the court process. This *yuān* word can also be

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1 Pils 2011; Cao 2018b; Mannoni 2020.

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used when one empathises with the victim of an injustice of any kind, not necessarily a legal one. As I will show, owing to the fact that its meanings are abstract, *yuān* is a linguistic metaphor that instantiates many conceptual metaphors (CMs) which reveal how the Chinese conceive of a key legal concept such as injustice.

Graphically, the character for *yuān* is made of two components, a cover (冖) above and a rabbit (兔) below, and it graphically represents a caged rabbit. Such was the popular explanation of the character back in the second century, when Xǔ Shèn (许慎, 58–148 CE)'s etymological dictionary explained the character as follows:

[1.]   冤屈也。从兔从冖。兔在冖下, 不得走, 益屈折也。
         Yuān (冤) means *bent*. The character is made of the components 兔 (*tù*, 'rabbit/hare') and 冖 ['cover']. A rabbit is under a 冖 ['cover'] and cannot escape, and is tremendously *bent*.[2]

However, this Chinese word is not used to literally mean caged rabbits but to convey the various abstract meanings that I just mentioned. So, *what do rabbits have to do with injustice?*

In the West, rabbits and hares are complex symbols with remarkably distinct meanings, such as religious and sexual ones.[3] For instance, a stylized silhouette of a rabbit wearing a tuxedo bow tie was famously created by Playboy art director Arthur Paul[4] as a distinguishing logo for the erotic magazine. Rabbits are also sexual symbols used in rabbit-shaped sex toys.[5] Even in Western movies and cartoons, rabbits play a sex-related role, as is the case with Jessica Rabbit, the most famous sex symbol in animation of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*.[6] Quite reversely, rabbits may be a symbol for Christ's resurrection and be associated with Easter, and hence appear on Easter's eggs in the West. These uses are typical of the 'Western culture', where rabbits are *not* a symbol of justice or injustice. *Are they a symbol of justice in China?* An allegorical personification of justice is Lady Justice (*Iustitia* or *Justitia* in Latin), the goddess usually attributed with a set of scales, a sword, and sometimes a blindfold, whose representation appears in or outside many courts in the West. Comparatively, rabbits are not symbolically present in the Chinese courts. Then, *why does a rabbit appear in the character for yuān?*

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2 Xǔ Shèn 许慎 121 AD/2001, 564; my emphasis.
3 See e.g., Werness 2006: 339–340
4 See e.g., https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/art-paul-dead-playboy-logo-bunny-a8336126.html.
5 As of the time of writing this article, a search in Google with the words 'rabbit' and 'sex' or 'sex toy' retrieves various results of porn and e-commerce websites selling such rabbit-shaped gadgets for enhanced sexual pleasure (see e.g., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabbit_vibrator).
6 Zemeckis and William 1988.

Yuān has been described as a powerful word,[7] as it captures the ruler's responsibilities under whose watch a tort or an injustice occurred,[8] just like Western rights do. For instance, during the 2019–2020 Hong Kong protests against the decision of the local government to pass the Fugitive Offenders amendment bill that allows extradition to countries such as Mainland China, *yuān* was observed on a graffiti (Figure 1) in a sentence literally meaning 'deep-*yuān*-await-snow', *figuratively* meaning '[this] profound injustice has not been redressed'. The word was probably used to rebuke the government's decision to pass the bill. But *what does snow have to do with injustice?*

As a result of its implicit yet manifest defiance of the governor, the use of *yuān* has been reportedly[9] censored in China, but it continues to be used and appear on the clothing of protesters, petitioners, and victims of judicial errors, both in Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. It is part of the legal discourse of the ordinary people, which rarely is the subject of scholarly studies.

Since the unjust treatment of somebody or their wrong or false accusation are *immoral* acts with possibly serious consequences, including wrong convictions, it is reasonable to expect that the metaphors for immorality that have been identified in previous research on Chinese moral metaphors[10] are also instantiated by *yuān*. However, we will see that YUĀN[11] also challenges what we think we already know about the metaphorical system of morality in Chinese.

Figure 1: A graffiti of *yuān* in Hong Kong made during the 2019–2020 protests against the local government (courtesy picture of Prof. Paolo Magagnin; taken on December 1, 2019).

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7 Pils 2011; Cao 2018a: 65–100.
8 Pils 2011, 287-passim.
9 Pils 2011: 313.
10 E.g., Yu 2015, 2016.
11 Both concepts and metaphor formulae such as "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" are conventionally written in small caps. Owing to the polysemy of the word *yuān*, in the metaphor formulae where its meanings serve as the target domain, I use YUĀN rather than a longer string of words with its translations, such as, say, INJUSTICE-WRONG-TORT.

My aim in this paper is threefold. First, I intend to identify the CMs that *yuān*, its compound words, and the collocates of the two instantiate when it means 'injustice, wrong, tort, wrongfully or falsely accused or condemned'. This will be a bottom-up approach that is primarily based on naturally occurring linguistic data retrieved in a Chinese language corpus, ZhTenTen11 Stanford Tagger,[12] available through the Sketch Engine corpus manager.[13] In so doing, I take the theoretical perspective of Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT).[14] I will show that the metaphors that *yuān* realises are complex metaphors and I will try to identify the primary[15] metaphors and the motivation from which they originate as well as the relevant image schemas.[16] Second, I intend to compare these with the moral metaphor subsystems to which *yuān* may belong or with which it may have affinities. This will enable me to show the contribution of this article to the current understanding of Chinese moral metaphors. It will also allow for a discussion on the reasons why the findings of this study differ from the knowledge that we already have about Chinese morality from the perspective of metaphor study. Finally, in the concluding section I will show how this study raises issues that can enrich the study of Chinese metaphors and contribute to CMT studies in general.

This article has the following structure: below (Section 1.1) I provide a concise introduction to conceptual metaphors for the benefit of anyone outside metaphor studies, as well as a summary of the main findings of previous research on law and Chinese morality from a metaphor perspective; in the second section I describe the method of finding metaphor that I devised (MetaCoCoTaC) and the linguistic data I used for this study; in the third section I show the results of my search for the metaphors instantiated by *yuān*; in the fourth and final section I put my findings in connection with the state of the art, before drawing some final conclusions.

1.1 Chinese moral metaphor system

In their revolutionary book *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson[17] have shown that metaphor, a pervasive and systematic phenomenon of language, is not just an ornament of language, but a foundational and systematic structure of thought that

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12 ZhTenTen: Corpus of the Chinese Web.
13 Kilgariff et al. 2014. Access to Sketch Engine has been granted to me by the University of Verona, Italy.
14 E.g., Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff and Turner 1989; Yu 1998; Charteris-Black 2004; Stefanowitsch and Gries 2006; Semino 2008; Kövecses 2010.
15 E.g., Grady 1997a; 1997b; Lakoff and Johnson 1999.
16 E.g., Johnson 1987; Lakoff 1987.
17 Lakoff and Johnson 1980.

we need to make sense and talk about the world within and around us. This is particularly salient when complex concepts, such as abstract concepts relating to, say, health, emotions, law, morality, are talked about. For instance, life is often talked about and, notably, conceived of *as if* it were a journey: it makes sense to us that there is a start and an end, that there may be stops in between, that sometimes we move *towards* certain objectives, or that we may feel lost, just like we don't know which way to go. In other words, the concept of LIFE is conceived of in terms of that of JOURNEY. This is formalised in metaphor studies as "LIFE IS A JOURNEY". Metaphors found in language, such as "I'm at a *crossroad*" (to say that one can't make up their mind), "He *shot down* all my arguments", "Cheer *up!*" are termed linguistic metaphors, and they are said to realise or instantiate those found in our minds (e.g., "LIFE IS A JOURNEY", "ARGUMENT IS DEFENCE", and "HAPPINESS IS UP", respectively), which are termed conceptual metaphors—hence the name Conceptual Metaphor Theory. In conceptual metaphors, certain aspects of a domain (termed source domain) are mapped onto another domain (termed target domain). Source domains are generally more tangible or perceptible, intersubjectively accessible and image-rich than target domains, which are more abstract, intersubjectively inaccessible or personal, and much more poorly delineated.[18] Some metaphors are simpler and more primary than others, which are more complex.[19] Primary metaphors emerge directly from our bodily experience with the world around us. For instance, "MORE IS UP" emerges from our physical experience that whenever something increases in quantity, its level goes up. Complex metaphors are made of more primary metaphors (e.g., "ARGUMENT THEORY IS A BUILDING" is made of "LOGICAL STRUCTURE IS PHYSICAL STRUCTURE" and "PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT"[20]), and they may encapsulate cultural elements. Many metaphors, including primary metaphors, are based on image schemas, which are conventionally defined as "recurring, dynamic pattern[s] of our perceptual interactions and motor programs that give[] coherence and structure to our experience."[21] For instance, "You're *driving* me insane" is based on the FORCE image schema.[22] There is evidence in cognitive linguistics that shows how language in general, and metaphor specifically, reflects what happens in our minds.[23]

Both legal and moral concepts are abstract concepts, so they tend to be conceived of metaphorically.

Law is particularly intertwined with morality. Many deeds that the law protects can be deemed as moral, whereas those that the law prohibits and punishes may be

18 Cf. e.g., Brysbaert et al. 2014: 904 and Dancyger and Sweetser 2014, both discussed in Winter 2019.
19 E.g., Grady 1997a.
20 Kövecses 2010: 95.
21 Johnson 1987: xiv.
22 Kövecses 2010: 43.
23 E.g., Boroditsky 2001; Wilson and Gibbs 2007; Thibodeau and Boroditsky 2011.

often deemed as immoral. For instance, killing or robbing are unlawful deeds that can be regarded as immoral, whereas fairly adjudicating a case and making a truthful deposition are lawful and moral deeds. For the purpose of this study, the meanings of *yuān* and especially its paralegal acceptations such as 'injustice', 'wrong', 'tort', 'false accusation' and 'wrong condemnation' can be regarded as immoral deeds that the law punishes and aims to restore. Even vengeance, another meaning of *yuān*, is considered immoral in many cultures. In this regard, YUĀN stands at the intersection of morality and law.

Despite the key role that both law and morality play in our lives and the growing body of conceptual metaphor studies, metaphor research into these areas in languages other than English has been surprisingly scarce,[24] and comes from the output of a handful of scholars. As to law, a few studies take a conceptual metaphor perspective,[25] and, to the best of my knowledge, even fewer delve into the study of specific Chinese legal notions.[26] For instance, in his introduction to the study of metaphors, Kövecses[27] does not discuss any metaphors for legal concepts such as JUSTICE or INJUSTICE, LAWFULNESS or UNLAWFULNESS, but discusses four mappings relating to morality, namely "ETHICAL/MORAL IS UP" (and "UNETHICAL/ IMMORAL IS DOWN"[28]), "ETHICAL/MORAL IS CLEAN" (and "UNETHICAL/IMMORAL IS DIRTY"; *ibid.*), "MORALITY IS STRENGTH" (thus "BEING GOOD IS BEING UPRIGHT", "BEING BAD IS BEING LOW", "DOING EVIL IS FALLING", "EVIL IS A FORCE"[29]), and "MORALITY IS NURTURANCE" (thus "THE COMMUNITY IS A FAMILY"; "MORAL AGENTS ARE NURTURING PARENTS"; "PEOPLE NEEDING HELP ARE CHILDREN NEEDING NURTURANCE"; "MORAL ACTION IS NURTURANCE"; *ibid.*). To put moral mappings in a broader and more primary perspective, "GOOD IS RIGHT" (and hence "BAD IS LEFT"[30]) can be added to the list, owing to the fact that we regard what is moral and ethical as being inherently GOOD (for us, or for society in general).

As to the moral system in Chinese, Yu[31] has found that it consists of five pairs of visually contrastive and highly embodied[32] source domains onto which MORAL and IMMORAL are respectively mapped, namely WHITE-BLACK (thus, "MORAL IS WHITE" vs. "IMMORAL IS BLACK"), LIGHT-DARK, CLEAR-MURKY, CLEAN-DIRTY,

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24 Yu 2015: 164.
25 E.g., S. Winter 2001; Hanne and Weisberg 2018; Johnson 2007; Chiu and Chiang 2011; Danesi 2012; Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2016; Golder 2019.
26 E.g., Chiang and Chiu 2007; Zádrapa 2017; Mannoni 2020; 2021.
27 Kövecses 2010.
28 Kövecses 2010: 246.
29 Kövecses 2010: 69–70.
30 Kövecses 2010: 118.
31 Yu 2015.
32 Lakoff and Johnson 1999.

and PURE-IMPURE, which also exist in English and are widespread in many languages, if not universal. Yu found that these source concepts are not equal in status, with WHITE and BLACK being more primary than and independent from the others, and CLEAR-MURKY and PURE-IMPURE being the most complex source domains that depend on the others. Besides source concepts that are embodied in our vision, Yu[33] has found that the range of source concepts for moral metaphors in Chinese (and English as well[34]) include spatial metaphors mapping five source domains, namely HIGH-LOW (thus, "MORAL IS HIGH" vs. "IMMORAL IS LOW"), UPRIGHT-TILTED, LEVEL-UNLEVEL, STRAIGHT-CROOKED, BIG-SMALL onto MORALITY and IMMORALITY.

At the level of linguistic metaphors, Yu has shown that various words realise the mappings deriving from the above, including *zhèng* 正 ('upright, perpendicular, straight, straighten') and *zhí* 直 ('straight, vertical, upright, perpendicular, straight') versus *wāi* 歪 ('askew, tilted, inclined, slanting') and *qū* 曲 ('bent, crooked, bend, crook'), *píng* 平 ('level, flat, smooth, make even, level') versus *bù-píng* 不平 ('not level, not flat, not smooth'). No legal words were taken into consideration by Yu in his analysis of Chinese moral metaphors.

For the purpose of later discussion, it should be underlined here that Yu[35] maintains that "[i]n consistency with this conceptual mapping [i.e., "MORAL IS HIGH" versus "IMMORAL IS LOW"] is the fact that the verbs expressing changes from morality to immorality do so by mapping 'downward movements' onto such changes".[36] Among the examples of the verbs with moral negative implications that Yu cites is *chénlún* 沉沦, of which both components, *chén* and *lún*, Yu argues, mean 'to sink'—i.e., a downward movement.

In terms of schemas, Yu[37] has shown that the above spatial source domains arise from UP-DOWN (responsible for the understanding of HIGH-LOW), BALANCE (for LEVEL-UNLEVEL), PATH (for STRAIGHT-CROOKED), OBJECT (for BIG-SMALL). In relation to the "MORAL IS LEVEL" and the BALANCE scheme, Yu further notes that "balance and *equality* [...] are concepts important to an ideal harmonious society, with fair legal systems and sound moral standards."[38] This, too, is going to be discussed later on in this paper, as these concepts are to be considered in the light of the Chinese traditional culture rather than Western legal systems.

Other studies in correlated areas and in languages other than Chinese support the above findings, including, to name only a few, Cienki[39] as to the

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33 Yu 2016.
34 Yu, Wang, and He 2016.
35 Yu 2016: 110.
36 Yu 2016: 113.
37 Yu 2016.
38 Yu 2016, 110; my emphasis.
39 Cienki 1998.

STRAIGHT-CROOKED image schemas onto which GOOD and EVIL are respectively mapped, B. Winter[40] as to DOWN and DARK onto which EVIL is mapped, and the empirical research by Casasanto[41] showing the embodiment of "GOOD IS RIGHT".

MetaNet,[42] the repository of conceptual metaphors housed at the International Computer Science Institute in Berkeley, California, contains no metaphor mappings for JUSTICE and INJUSTICE, nor for WRONG, TORT, and VENGEANCE. For MORAL and IMMORAL, MetaNet has the following CMs (Table 1), some of which I just mentioned:

Table 1: Moral metaphors in MetaNet.

IMMORALITY	MORALITY
"IMMORAL IS CROOKED"	"MORAL IS STRAIGHT"
"BEING IMMORAL IS BEING LOW"	"MORALITY IS STRAIGHTNESS"
"IMMORALITY IS IMPURITY"	"MORALITY IS A STRAIGHT PATH"
"IMMORALITY IS DEGENERATION"	"MORALITY IS UPRIGHTNESS"
"IMMORALITY IS DISEASE"	"MORALITY IS PURITY"
	"MORAL ORDER IS THE NATURAL ORDER"
	"MORALITY IS STRENGTH"
	"MORALITY IS WHOLENESS"

No metaphor research that I am aware of has ever addressed the mappings of INJUSTICE, either in its legal or non-legal acceptation (but see Mannoni[43] for a metaphor study on the translations of *yuān* which shows the use of three source domains: BENT, DIRTY, and DARK). Based on the above, YUĀN, as an immoral deed, may be expected to be conceived of in terms of the source domains that scholars have discussed and that we have just seen (recapped in Table 2).

In the next section, I will show the method and the materials I used to find the source domains onto which YUĀN is mapped and the relevant mappings.

2 Method and materials

2.1 Finding metaphors in Chinese: MetaCoCoTaC

Before moving on to explain the methodological issues related to finding possible linguistic metaphors in Chinese, an existing distinction should be underlined between *finding* possible linguistic metaphors and *identifying* them. Finding possible

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40 B. Winter 2014.
41 Casasanto 2009.
42 MetaNet Metaphor Wiki.
43 Mannoni 2020.

Table 2: Source domains for immorality and morality.

Source domains for IMMORALITY	Source domains for MORALITY
DOWN	UP
DIRTY	CLEAN
LACK OF STRENGTH (thus BEING BAD IS BEING LOW, DOING EVIL IS FALLING, EVIL IS A FORCE)	STRENGTH (thus BEING GOOD IS BEING UPRIGHT, BEING BAD IS BEING LOW)
ø	NURTURANCE
LEFT	RIGHT
BLACK	WHITE
DARK	LIGHT
MURKY	CLEAR
IMPURE	PURE
LOW	HIGH
TILTED, CROOKED	UPRIGHT, STRAIGHT
UNLEVEL	LEVEL
SMALL	BIG
DEGENERATION	ø
DISEASE	HEALTH
ø	NATURAL ORDER
ø	WHOLENESS

linguistic metaphors means extracting words relating to a domain of interest (whether it be a source domain or a target domain) that *may be* metaphorical; then, ascertaining which of these extracted words are indeed metaphorical is what is generally referred to as identifying metaphors or metaphor related words (MRWs).

As to finding linguistic metaphors, there are various methods. In previous research on Chinese moral metaphors, Ning Yu and colleagues[44] used a *source-domain oriented approach* (as this is termed by Stefanowitsch[45]) in order to find metaphorical instantiations of lexical items relating to a set of source domains known *a priori*, which is not the method I used here, since in this study I didn't want to make any assumption about the source domains that could be mapped onto YUĀN in Chinese. Rather, I started with one target-domain word, *yuān*, with an eye to finding all of the *unknown* source domains that are mapped onto it as they emerge from naturally occurring linguistic data. Given that these are two opposite approaches, the second of which has been shown[46] to produce a larger and more representative inventory of mappings, this will either confirm or disprove and integrate our knowledge of the metaphorical understanding of morality.

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44 Yu 2015; 2016; Yu, Wang, and He 2016.
45 Stefanowitsch and Gries 2006: 3.
46 Stefanowitsch 2006.

As to metaphor identification in Chinese, besides word collocates, word formation (and, as will become clear from the analysis of the data, an analysis of the Chinese script) are also essential. Although it is true for any language that morphemes may provide metaphorical information about a concept (e.g., *sub*human; *über*mensch, *intro*spective, etc.), this is especially true for the Chinese language, in which, largely speaking, the difference between a monosyllabic word, such as *yuān*, and a morpheme, is practically non-existent. Indeed,

- The majority of Chinese morphemes are monosyllabic, and, largely speaking, each morpheme-syllable identifies with a character;
- Many morphemes-characters behave both as free morphemes, in that they can stand alone as words, and as bound morphemes, in that they can combine with other morphemes-characters to form other words;

As we are going to see, *yuān* belongs to this latter category, being a monosyllabic individual word and a morpheme that can combine to form other words. This aspect of the Chinese language deserves close attention, but it is not addressed by commonly adopted procedures of identifying MRWs, such as MIP[47] and its evolution MIPVU,[48] nor by an experiment on MIPVU that Wang et al.[49] conducted to test the applicability of MIPVU to Chinese. For instance, a word such as *zhòngyào* 重要 may not seem to provide any metaphorical information if looked at through its meaning of 'important'. However, the word is composed of two morphemes, i.e. *zhòng* ('heavy') and *yào* ('important'), the first of which is a free morpheme that can also occur separately as an individual word (as in *xíngli hěn zhòng* 行李很重 'This luggage is **heavy**') or combine with other morphemes/words to form other words (e.g., *qīngzhòng* 轻重 'weight'). In this *zhòngyào* example, if we look at the word through the meanings of its morphemes, we find a piece of evidence that together with other pieces shows that "IMPORTANCE IS WEIGHT" in Chinese.[50] Had we considered *zhòngyào* as a single lexical unit, as MIPVU instructs in saying that "[f]ocusing on the word as the unit of analysis is already a most challenging and complex operation", we would have neglected the mapping.

The factors that we have just seen make the notions of word and lexical unit exceptionally suspicious in Chinese, as acknowledged with specific reference to metaphor identification by Wang et al.,[51] significantly complicating automatic and human segmentation of Chinese texts, and, consequently and for my purposes here, linguistic metaphor identification.

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47 Pragglejaz Group 2007.
48 Steen et al. 2010.
49 Wang et al. 2019.
50 Yu 2017.
51 Wang et al. 2019.

Owing to these specificities of the Chinese language, I believe that finding the morphemes-words that are systematically bound to another morpheme-word of interest, such as *yuān*, and analysing them can help the researcher in identifying more metaphors. In this regard, it is noted that other metaphor scholars, such as Yu,[52] too, devote significant attention to the morphology of polysyllabic words. In this study, I further systematized and operationalised Yu's approach by prompting the corpus software to *systematically*—not arbitrarily—find such morphemes, and list them according to the strength by which they are related to the node (a termed used in corpus linguistics for the word of interest).

There are different ways of finding candidates for linguistic metaphors in a corpus. As is known, a language corpus is a collection of texts that is stored and searchable by means of software facilities developed for that purpose.[53] Corpus observation of language in use has a number of advantages over other types of analysis, such as looking words up in a dictionary or speakers' intuition about language, including the fact that it enables the researcher to consider *factual* evidence about their data and corroborate their findings with observations about frequency, word combinations and idioms in a *real* context.[54] The corpus I used, ZhTenTen11, has 1.7 billion words and includes the two written varieties of Chinese, i.e. simplified and traditional Chinese, used within and outside Mainland China, respectively.[55] A Key Word In Context (KWIC) or concordance format available in any software designed for corpus analysis allows for the keyword (the node) to be shown in the centre of a number of lines, surrounded by the words that co-occur right and left of the node. Some of these words co-occur more exclusively and/or more frequently with the node than others: these are termed *collocates*. Two trends have emerged so far in corpus-based metaphor research, these being the study of KWIC by means of concordancing, and the study of the collocates of such keywords.[56] In this study I used both of these methods to study the word *yuān* and the compound words in which it occurs, as well as the collocates of both, in their natural context.

In order to operationalise the above and find the possible linguistic metaphors that my Chinese target domain lexical unit *yuān* instantiates in such ways, I needed to exploit various facilities in Sketch Engine. The procedure I designed, recapitulated below, aims at finding possible *meta*phors at the word *c*ompound and *c*ollocate level starting from a *ta*rget-domain word in a *C*hinese corpus (MetaCoCoTaC). Although there are other Chinese metaphor studies[57] that have adopted a target-domain

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52 Yu 1998; 2016; etc.
53 Meyer 2002, in Deignan 2005.
54 Deignan 2005, 85–92.
55 ZhTenTen: Corpus of the Chinese Web.
56 E.g., Stefanowitsch 2006; Yu 2015; 2016, and Deignan 1999; Semino 2008.
57 E.g., Chung, Ahrens, and Huang 2005; Chung 2008; Chiang and Duann 2007; Chung and Huang 2010.

oriented approach, MetaCoCoTaC differs from them in a number of ways. For instance, the methods used by Chung, Ahrens and Huang[58] and Chiang and Duann[59] differ from MetaCoCoTaC in that while these scholars' methods aim at looking for target-domain words in their Chinese corpora (e.g., *shìyè* 事業 'career', *jīngjì* 經濟 'economy', and *shà* 煞 'SARS', respectively), they do not look for their compound words, nor for their collocates, whereas MetaCoCoTaC makes it possible to start from a monosyllabic Chinese target domain-word/morpheme and systematically retrieve from the corpus the word/morpheme itself in a natural context, its compound words, as well as the collocates of both the individual target domain word/morpheme and its compound words. Similarly, although Chung[60] looks for the collocates of a target domain word (i.e., *shìchǎng* 市场 'market') in her corpus, her node is disyllabic, and no attention is given to the compound words, if any, it forms. Additionally, Chung analyses the *most frequent* mappings, whereas MetaCoCoTaC focusses on the source domains of the collocates that are *most strongly* bound to the target domain word. Finally, Chung and Huang[61] propose a method of identifying metaphorical instances by ascertaining if words (e.g., 起飞 'to take off') appearing together with a target domain keyword (e.g., 经济 'economy') (as in 经济起飞 'the economy takes off') mostly occur with words (e.g., 跑道 'runway', 班机 'airliner', 飞机 'airplane') relating to a source domain (e.g., that of FLIGHT) that is unrelated to the target domain keyword of interest. This differs from MetaCoCoTaC, in that Chung and Huang propose to identify possibly metaphorical words in the first 4% of the instances of the target domain keyword retrieved in a corpus with an eye to ascertaining if these words are indeed metaphorical by following the outlined procedure, but without instructing the researcher as to how they should systematically identify these possibly metaphorical words, whereas MetaCoCoTaC aims to find both the compound words of a monosyllabic target domain word as well as the collocates of the two with an eye to finding words that are statistically proven to be bound with the target domain keyword of interest. As should be clear by now, MetaCoCoTaC may turn particularly useful for monosyllabic Chinese words that more likely than disyllabic words may form compound words.

As to metaphor identification, although I did not adopt MIP and MIPVU, similarly to these protocols, in MetaCoCoTaC I too adopted the central principle of semantic tension[62] (termed indirect meaning in MIPVU[63]), and looked for a more basic and more bodily related meaning of a morpheme in a pre-selected Chinese dictionary such as the authoritative Dictionary of Modern Chinese (Xiàndài Hànyǔ Cídiǎn

58 Chung, Ahrens, and Huang 2005.

59 Chiang and Duann 2007.

60 Chung 2008.

61 Chung and Huang 2010.

62 Charteris-Black 2004, 21.

63 Steen et al. 2010, 6.

hereinafter XHC) in order to judge whether this contrasts with the meaning of the node in the concordances.

The MetaCoCoTaC procedure can be recapitulated thus. First, in order to find the compound words of *yuān*, I selected the Concordance (KWIC) facility provided by the corpus manager, and indicated in the Query Type box of Advanced searches that I wanted the software to consider it a Character. This prompted the software to consider the input item an element contained within lexical units (a feature that can be exploited for the purpose of finding words containing a letter, or a combination of letters, in any language). So, the word "Character" in the menu has nothing to do with Chinese characters. For instance, inputting 'sex' in English retrieves results such as 'sex' itself, but also 'sexist', 'age-*sex*', 'Es*sex*', etc. Inputting **bái** 白 '**white**' in Chinese retrieves results such as *dànbái* 蛋白 'egg-**white** = albumen', *qīngbái* 清白 'clean-**white** = pure', etc. This, as I have explained, can be crucial in Chinese metaphor identification, owing to the morphology of Chinese. I so obtained 23,231 concordances containing the node either alone or in what the software considers to be word compounds—some of them being polysyllabic words, some others being in fact lexicalised phrases or idioms (Figure 2).

I then opened the Frequency facility and clicked on Word Forms in the KWIC section to prompt the software to list all the words in which the node appears as an individual word or as a component from the most to the least frequent. I kept track of these data by copying-pasting them in a spreadsheet. The search retrieved 853 compound words of *yuān*, and *yuān* itself as a self-standing word (Figure 3).

I arbitrarily set a cutoff line at an absolute frequency of 10, under which I stopped considering my data for metaphor identification. This provided me with 72 compound words.

Second, I moved on to retrieve the collocates of *yuān* and its compound words that I had just obtained. Hence, I went back to Concordances and accessed the

Figure 2: Concordances of Chinese polysyllabic words containing the node.

CONCORDANCE   Chinese Web 2011 (zhTenTen1... Q) ⓘ

Account expires in April 2022 ▾
Get more space ⊕

character 冤 • 23,231
11.03 per million tokens • 0.0011% ⓘ

Frequency   CHANGE CRITERIA   BACK TO CONCORDANCE

✓ Show relative frequency   ✓ Show percentage of concordance lines

(853 items, 23,231 total frequency)

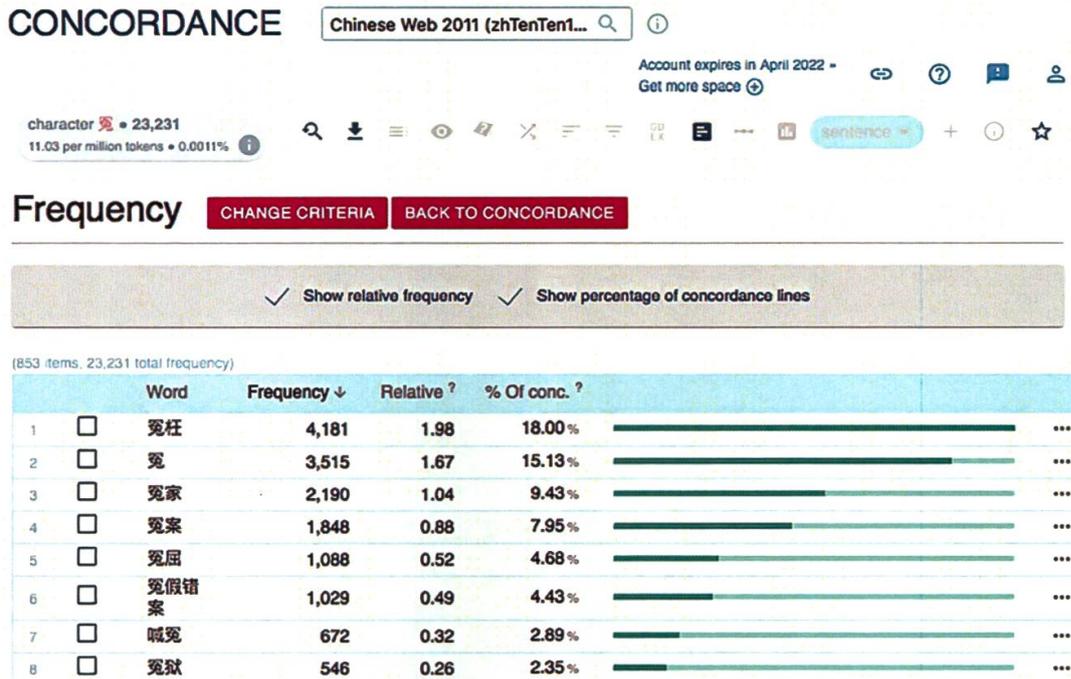|		Word	Frequency ↓	Relative ?	% Of conc. ?	
1	☐	冤枉	4,181	1.98	18.00 %	•••
2	☐	冤	3,515	1.67	15.13 %	•••
3	☐	冤家	2,190	1.04	9.43 %	•••
4	☐	冤案	1,848	0.88	7.95 %	•••
5	☐	冤屈	1,088	0.52	4.68 %	•••
6	☐	冤假错案	1,029	0.49	4.43 %	•••
7	☐	喊冤	672	0.32	2.89 %	•••
8	☐	冤狱	546	0.26	2.35 %	•••

Figure 3: Yuān and its word compounds.

Collocations feature and went to the Advanced section to set the range within which I wanted the software to retrieve the collocates, and the association measure (AM) that I wanted the software to use to carry out the search. I used logDice, an AM which "has a reasonable interpretation, scales well on a different corpus size, is stable on sub-corpora, and the values are in reasonable [pre-set] range." The theoretical maximum of logDice is 14, "in [the] case when all occurrences of X co-occur with Y and all occurrences of Y co-occur with X. Usually the value is less th[a]n 10.". Combinations with a high logDice (over 13) in English include *femme fatale, zig zag* and *coca cola*.[64] LogDice highlights exclusive combinations of a word; the higher its value, the stronger the bond between the collocate and the node. LogDice is particularly useful for lexical analysis, and it is indeed defined as "a lexicographer-friendly association score" by its inventor.[65] As to the word span (range) within which I wanted the software to search the collocates, I set a ten-word span, i.e., five words to the right and five to the left of the node. I thus obtained a list of 1,000 collocates of *yuān* and its compound words as well as information on the strength by which they are bound to the node. If, for the sake of illustration, we were to use an analogy with the English language, however risky this might be, by using, say, the word and morpheme 'sex' as the node, here we would obtain collocates such as 'male' (as in *"male sex* workers"),

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64 Gablasova, Brezina, and McEnery 2017: 164.
65 Rychlý 2008.

'intercourse' (as in "sexual *intercourse*"), and 'education' in a five words window span (as in "*education* authority to promote homo*sex*uality") (data from the BNC corpus in Sketch Engine). As can be seen, this is a far more powerful tool than just looking for the collocates of a word, since words such as 'sex' and 'sexual' are semantically connected. The more so in Chinese, where the two would be one single word-character-morpheme, but used differently. While results in English may also retrieve collocates such as "*education* in higher education institutions like Middle*sex* Polytechnic", in which the letters '-sex' appear but have nothing to do with sex really (-sex in Middlesex means Saxons), rarely would this happen in Chinese, for—remember—Chinese generally has different characters for different morphemes (that is why at first the analogy with English may seem useful for explanation, but is also risky and imprecise, and I will not pursue it any further). Similar to what I did for the analysis of compound words, I arbitrarily set a cutoff line at the hundredth collocate, having a logDice of 5.14, beyond which I did not consider the data.

Finally, in order to identify those compound words of the node and their collocates that were actually metaphorical, I checked the morphemes of which they are composed in my reference dictionary, XHC, to see if they had any basic meanings that contrasted with their meanings in context as found in the concordances. When there was such semantic tension, I marked the compound or collocate word as metaphorical. As we will see in the analysis, this step may be integrated with a study of the semantic components of the Chinese characters used for the words extracted from the corpus. For instance, the character for 'faith, trust', *xìn* 信, has been interpreted by Yu[66] as metaphorical, owing to the fact that it is composed of 'person' (亻) + 'speech, speaking' (言), meaning 'a man standing by his word'.[67]

To check the contextual meanings of the words in which or along with which the node appears in the concordances, I clicked on the Shuffle Lines function, which randomly changes the order of the concordances and avoids considering only the concordances coming from the same source. Since it is important to ensure that no metaphor is missed, I adopted the WIDLII principle of MIP and MIPVU: *When In*

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[66] Yu 2011, 140.

[67] Similarly, Huang and Xiong (2019) have integrated their study on linguistic synaesthesia in Chinese at the lexical and phrasal levels with the study of Chinese character semantic components. It should be noted that in cognitive linguistics, considering different aspects of language together, e.g., morphology, semantics, writing, etc. is not uncommon nor undesirable. This responds to the so-called Generalisation Commitment in contrast to the modularity of language upheld in formal linguistics: "Cognitive linguists typically acknowledge that it may often be useful, for practical purposes, to treat areas such as syntax, semantics and phonology as being notionally distinct. […] However, given the Generalisation Commitment, cognitive linguists disagree that the modules or subsystems of language are organised in significantly divergent ways, or indeed that distinct modules or subsystems even exist in the mind/brain." (Evans 2019, 26).

Doubt Leave It In. Of the 172 words (including compound words and collocates) that I have so retrieved, 54 were marked as metaphorical.

Finally, based on intuition, I grouped[68] all the lexical items marked as metaphorical into different semantic categories indicating different possible source domains, such as BITTER, DARK, DOWN, etc. I further grouped these into different image schemas or primary domains, such as, FOOD, SIGHT, VERTICALITY, etc. For example, in the STRAIGHT image schema category, we have *jiūzhèng* 纠正 'entangle-straight', *yuānqǔ* 冤屈 and *yuānwǎng* 冤枉 '*yuān*-bent', all triggering the semantic fields STRAIGHT and BENT. As can be seen in Appendix 1, I identified 21 source domains belonging to 8 primary categories. This makes it possible to quickly associate the linguistic metaphors of *yuān* with the source domains and the primary categories, including image schemas, onto which YUĀN is mapped.

In the next section I present the results of my study of these mappings.

3 Results: metaphors of injustice (*yuān*) in Chinese

I am going to start with a discussion of the mappings relating to one of the least studied primary categories.

3.1 SOUND: VOICING

The domain of VOICE and the more primarily one of SOUND have not been frequently addressed in metaphor studies. These domains are especially instantiated by several linguistic metaphors of *yuān* that I have identified in the corpus. There are 9 words in my data that relate to these domains. Their meanings express in various ways the *sound* that the victims of injustice or wrongful treatment metaphorically make with their *voice* when they feel wronged. For example, in [2.] we see an instance of the verb *hǎnyuān* 喊冤 ('scream-*yuān*'):

[2.]   至今, 她依然在为自己4年前的行为**喊冤** …
         She has been continuously **crying foul** [*hǎnyuān* '**scream-*yuān***'] for what
         she did four years ago …

Since it is practically impossible that somebody has been literally crying for four years, as [2.] says, there is a semantic tension between the basic meaning of *hǎn* 'to scream' and its meaning in context which makes the word metaphorical.

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68 For a similar approach, see e.g., Littlemore and Turner 2020.

Similarly, in [3.], the people in subject are not literally screaming and shouting as the verb used, *hǎnyuān jiàoqū* 喊冤叫屈 ('scream-*yuān* shout-wrongdoing[69]'), says, but they are more generally expressing their grievances:

[3.]   我们不要因为一、两个人**喊冤叫屈**, 就怀疑程序出了问题, 就叫嚷改弦易辙。

Just because one or two people **cry foul** [*hǎnyuān jiàoqū* '**scream-*yuān* shout-wrongdoing**'] does not mean we should suspect that there are flaws in the court's process and call for a dramatic change in direction.

Finally, in [4.], *míngyuān jiàoqū* (鸣冤叫屈) is used, a phrase literally meaning 'chirp/buzz-*yuān* and shout-wrongdoing'.

[4.]   吴艺珍的女儿吴芳宜在网上发文替其父**"鸣冤叫屈"**, 为其父作"无罪辩解"。

Wu Fangyi, Wu Yizhen's daughter, published an article on the internet to **"cry foul"** [*míngyuān jiàoqū* '**chirp/buzz-*yuān* shout-wrongdoing**'] on behalf of her father, and "defend when not at fault" on his behalf.

These examples show that "DENOUNCING YUĀN IS VOICING". As to [4.], it should be noted that people are not birds nor insects and cannot chirp nor buzz, although they are animals metaphorically ("PEOPLE ARE ANIMAL").[70] Thus, we can also posit the mapping "VICTIMS OF INJUSTICE ARE ANIMALS", a particular instance of "HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL" that Eggertson and Forceville[71] found in horror movies. I will discuss this mapping in the discussion section together with other aspects relating to it that emerged from my data.

But why VOICING? The domain is connected to our survival when we are at threat. We scream and, more in general, emit sounds to call for help and catch the attention of any other conspecific so that they can rescue us. We scream or cry, just like many animals do, when we are in extreme pain. Screaming largely consists of a natural and instinctive sound that we produce with our body. It is a bodily reaction grounded in our preconceptual, pre-gestalt, and physical instinct. As such, the metaphors relating to VOICING and SOUND are bodily-related, and also very primary.

3.2 FOOD: KEEPING SOMETHING IN THE MOUTH and BITTER

A domain that is triggered when injustice is talked about in Chinese is FOOD, a deeply entrenched[72] source domain. Chinese injustice appears to be *kǔ* 苦 ('bitter, sour'), a

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69 The word *jiàoqū* 'shout-wrongdoing' will be discussed under the BENT domain.

70 E.g., Kövecses 2010: 153.

71 Eggertsson and Forceville 2009.

72 Kövecses 2010, 41–42.

word instantiating a multimodal metaphor ("BAD EMOTIONS ARE BITTER") for unpleasant feelings,[73] such as depression, distress, and sorrow, commonly found in many languages (cf. e.g., 'I'm *bitter* about my divorce'). This CM is connected in my data to "EXPERIENCING INJUSTICE IS KEEPING SOMETHING IN THE MOUTH" which is realised by means of two verbs, *hán* 含 and *xián* 衔, both meaning 'keeping in the mouth', occurring in phrases such as 'keep in the mouth injustice'. [5.] and [6.] are two examples of such verbs:

[5.]   可惜他在1968年文化大革命中被迫害**含冤**而死。
It is sad that he died **wrongly accused** [*hányuān* '**keep.in.mouth-*yuān***] in 1968 during the Cultural Revolution after he had been persecuted.

[6.]   … 哥哥若是负屈**衔冤**, 被人害了 …
… if my elder brother was wronged and **suffered injustice** [*xiányuān* '**keep.in.mouth-*yuān***'], and if he was harmed …

Examples such as [7.] and [8.] specify that "YUĀN IS BITTER":

[7.]   当然, 对当事人来讲[…]寻找不同门径去**诉苦申冤**求解决的过程本身也是一种宣泄方式, …
Of course, for the parties to the proceedings, searching for ways to **make complaints** [*sùkǔ shēnyuān* '**tell-bitter explain-*yuān***'] is per se something that drains them off, …

[8.]   赵舒翘死后, 江苏士民知其**冤苦**, …
After Zhao Shuqiao died, the people of Jiangsu knew of his **injustice and suffering** [*yuānkǔ* '***yuān*-bitter**'], …

Therefore, just like food, *yuān* can be kept in the mouth and tasted. Relatedly, pain and suffering in general are described in Chinese as being bitter. Take for example the very word for pain, *tòngkǔ* 痛苦, literally 'sore-bitter', and *chīkǔ* 吃苦, literally 'eat-bitter', meaning 'to bear hardship', 'to face difficulties', *vel sim*.

3.3 SIGHT: LIGHT-DARK and CLEAN-DIRTY

My data shows that our visual experience, and thus the sense of SIGHT, is used in various CMs that *yuān* realises belonging to two couples of subdomains: those relating to LIGHT-DARK, and those relating to CLEAN-DIRTY. The reason why these two couples belong to SIGHT is that, as Yu[74] has shown, the contrastive categories of

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73 Xiong and Huang 2015.
74 Yu 2015.

CLEAN and DIRTY are related to LIGHT and DARK, and more primarily to WHITE and BLACK, and, consequently, to our visual experience in general.

With MetaCoCoTaC I found various linguistic metaphors of injustice that directly instantiate LIGHT (e.g., [9.] and [10.]), CLEAN (e.g., [11.]) and indirectly instantiate DARK and DIRTY (e.g., [11.]).

Specifically, in [9.] we see a metaphorical use of the linguistic metaphor *bái* 白 'white, light' negated by the adverb *bù* 不 'not' that indicates that when injustice is not whited, i.e., lit, it remains as it is—dark:

[9.]   吕振羽1963年蒙**不白**之冤被投入监狱, […]
        In 1963, Lü Zhenyu was imprisoned for an injustice that **hadn't been redressed** [*bù bái* **'not-lit'**] …

This mapping creates and reinforces the universal metaphorical mapping by which we conceptualise immoral and bad emotions as dark and black, and moral and good emotions as light and white. It should be noted that white is the prototypical colour for light in Chinese, as a result of the metonymy "WHITE STANDS FOR LIGHT", given that the word for white, *bái*, is also often used to mean 'light', as in the word for 'daylight', *báitiān* 白天, literally 'white-sky = lit sky'.

The domain of LIGHT in relation to *yuān* is also instantiated metonymically via the colour white by the word *xuě* 雪 'snow', which activates the metonymies "SNOW STANDS FOR WHITE" and "WHITE STANDS FOR LIGHT". In [10.] we see an example of *xuě* used in its figurative meaning of 'to redress injustice':

[10.]   而建国初期的法官采取群众路线, 深入群众中探查真相, 也有成功使重大疑难案件真相**大白**, 被冤枉的人沉冤**得雪**的经验。
        During the first years of the [People's] Republic, they chose the mass line, delving into the masses to search for the truth; it sometimes happened that the truth of significantly doubtful cases **was revealed** [*dà bái* **'hugely-whited'**], and the deep injustice of the wronged **was redressed** [*dé xuě* **'obtain-snow'**].

In this example, there are two related linguistic metaphors, i.e., *bái* 'white' and *xuě* 'snow', that map the domain of LIGHT onto UNDOING YUĀN, indirectly suggesting that "YUĀN IS DARK" and that "UNDOING YUĀN IS LIGHTING". Indeed, *dé xuě* 'obtaining snow' means 'being covered in snow' and thus 'being whited', and such metaphor is used to indicate that the truth is revealed and that injustice is undone.

It is noteworthy that, in relation to injustice, snow has a special meaning in Chinese traditional culture, as exemplified by one of the three phenomena prophesized by Dou E 窦娥, the main character in Guan Hanqing's (c. 1241–1320) most famous Chinese play titled *Dou E Yuan* 窦娥冤 (with *yuan* being the subject of this paper), commonly translated as "The Injustice to Dou E" (aka, relevantly, *Snow in*

Midsummer), in which Dou E is cruelly tortured to confess and then wrongfully convicted to death. Before being executed, she prophesizes that her innocence will be proven by three events after her death: her blood will spill on her clothes but not onto the ground; the city whose officials falsely accused her will experience famine for three years; it will *snow* heavily in the midst of summer and the snow will cover her body. Evidently, snow is used in the play as a symbol for innocence, similarly to the metaphorical use that we find in language today.

Sight is very important to our lives. Our body allows us to see the world around us, and eventually prepare to defend in case somebody or something attacks us. In pitch darkness we cannot see and we ancestrally feel more at risk, as we cannot understand what may be going on around us. So, it is natural for us to conceive of something that may put our lives at risk, such as injustice, as DARKNESS. Moreover, Yu affirms that the distinction between the categories WHITE-BLACK is based on the moral contrast between the primary metaphors relating to the two prototypical colours which is *not* only culturally connoted, but rather embodied:[75]

> It is worth noting that the contrast between "WHITE" and "BLACK" as representing the positive and the negative is not completely cultural. For instance, people would not feel comfortable living in a house with its interior painted entirely in black, but would not have the same negative feeling if the interior is painted all white, regardless of the culture to which they belong. It is common sense that black absorbs light while humans need light.[76]

Finally, in [11.] we see a linguistic metaphor, *xǐshuā* 洗刷 'wash-scrub' indirectly realising "INJUSTICE IS DIRTY":

[11.]   为了**洗刷**这种**不白**之冤, 他写了许多文章为自己辩护。
            In order to **redress** [*xǐshuā* **'wash-scrub'**] this injustice that is **not redressed** [*bù bái* **'not-white'**], he wrote many essays to defend himself.

Thus, for injustice to be redressed, it needs to be cleaned by being washed and scrubbed, suggesting that "INJUSTICE IS DIRTY". This mapping is connected to "INJUSTICE IS DARK" by the conceptual network founded in our visual experience that I have illustrated earlier.

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75 Shapiro 2014.
76 Yu 2015: 176; I would not go as far as Yu goes in saying that one would have better feeling if the interior is painted all white rather than entirely in black: in fact, a *white* room torture exists, aimed at sensory deprivation and depersonalization of the victim. Reportedly, living in a white space where there is complete light 24 h a day, with no shadow, and everything is white, including furniture, clothes, and food, deprives the victim of their senses and their personality, quickly leading them to hallucination and permanent psychological consequences (see e.g., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_torture [last accessed April 16, 2021]). In this case, light and white are not good for the victim, as opposed to the alternance of white and black/shadows and other colours.

As can be seen from the foregoing, "INJUSTICE IS DARK AND DIRTY", and for it to be undone, it needs to be LIT and CLEANED. These are, largely speaking, universal metaphors.

3.4 The event structure metaphor

One of the most important findings of the CMT is that we use conceptual metaphors in a systematic fashion. Each metaphor mapping is not self-standing, but connects to others with which it creates a system.[77] This system is hierarchical in nature, some metaphors being more independent than others. In fact, each language has many linguistic metaphors that may be governed by a smaller number of CMs, which in turn may belong to a more primary CM or a system of CMs that is superior in hierarchy.

The Event Structure Metaphor (ESM) is a major cognitive system that was first introduced by Lakoff[78] and has the following structure:

a. States are locations (bounded regions in space)
b. Changes are movements (into or out of bounded regions)
c. Causes are forces
d. Actions are self-propelled movements
e. Purposes are destinations
f. Means are paths to destinations
g. Difficulties are impediments to motion
h. Expected progress is a travel schedule; a schedule is a virtual traveller, who reaches prearranged destinations at prearranged times
i. External events are large, moving objects
j. Long-term, purposeful activities are journeys.

Lakoff[79] showed that lower mappings inherit the structure of higher mappings. Thus, for instance, the oft-cited "LOVE IS A JOURNEY" inherits the mapping of "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" and the two, as much as other CMs, belong to the ESM:

> Level 1: The Event Structure Metaphor
> Level 2: "LIFE IS A JOURNEY"
> Level 3: "LOVE IS A JOURNEY"; "A CAREER IS A JOURNEY"; etc.

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77 Lakoff 1994.
78 Lakoff 1993: 16.
79 Lakoff 1993: 19.

Yu[80] has found that "in Chinese various aspects of event structure such as states, changes, causes, actions, purposes, means, and difficulties are conceptualised metaphorically in terms of space, motion, and force, just as in English". However, based on previous literature on Chinese moral metaphors, one would not expect the ESM to play a role in the Chinese conceptualisation of INJUSTICE, as instead the metaphors I found for *yuān* do.

In this section I discuss the linguistic metaphors that realise event structure metaphors, starting from "LONG-TERM, PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITIES ARE JOURNEYS", the lowest in hierarchy.

3.4.1 Long-term, purposeful activities are journeys

The "LIFE IS A JOURNEY" metaphor has been generously discussed in literature and is a candidate to universal metaphor. It inherits the structure of "PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS" and encapsulates the cultural but widespread belief that life has to have a purpose towards which we go. In the course of the metaphorical path that the ego walks, it may *come across* difficulties.

It is against this background that we can appreciate *yuān*'s collocates *zāo* 遭 ('come across') and *zāoshòu* 遭受 ('come.across-receive'), a now lexicalised word used for periphrastic passives (e.g., 遭受冲击 'undergo an attack = to be attacked'). This Chinese word is written 辶 + 曹, with the first semantic component meaning 'walking' and the second being a phonological indication of how the character is to be pronounced. This graphical analysis of the character, along with the fact that the subject of *zāo* in the instances I could retrieve with MetaCoCoTaC is the person who endures an unjust treatment, suggests that it is the ego the one who *comes across* injustice. To use two oft-quoted examples, it is not like saying "Christmas is approaching", whereby ego stands still, and Christmas moves towards the ego, but rather like saying "We're approaching Christmas", whereby the ego moves towards the event (Christmas). In [12.] we see an instance of the metaphor "BEING YUĀN-ED IS COMING ACROSS SOMETHING AND RECEIVING IT":

[12.]   他们大多连字也不识, 没有任何政治权利可言, **遭受**冤屈也无处申诉。
The vast majority of them cannot even read, they cannot speak any political rights, and when they **suffer** [*zāoshòu* '**come.across-receive**'] injustice they are unable to get redress.

It should be highlighted at this point that the linguistic metaphor in question does not confirm the hierarchically higher mapping *External events are large, moving objects*, for which, notably, I could find no evidence in my data.

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80 Yu 1998: 9.

3.4.2 Difficulties are impediments to motion

There are various words that show that "YUĀN IS IMPEDIMENT TO MOTION", implying that "YUĀN IS DIFFICULTY", given that "DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS".[81] In Appendix 1 these words are shown under IMPEDIMENT TO MOTIONS, TIE and STRETCH. As I mentioned at the outset of this article, the very character for *yuān* has been explained as indicating a rabbit under a cage, thus being *unable to escape*. In this sense, the rabbit's motion, just like that of the victim of injustice, is impeded. Curiously, in English, one can say they have been *framed* to say they have been falsely accused, with 'frame' literally meaning 'put something in a frame'—thus making it unable to go out of it. Regardless of the accuracy of the philological explanation of the Chinese character, the concept of the impossibility to move that the character graphically suggests is reinforced linguistically. With MetaCoCoTaC I retrieved linguistic metaphors that explicitly indicate impediment to motion caused by injustice, such as *wúmén* 无门 ('have.not-door', i.e. 'having no escape, no way out; being stuck') and *yuānzhì* 冤滞 ('*yuān*-stagnant'). As [13.], [14.] and [15.] show, the victim of injustice and the very concept of injustice are metaphorically related to impossibility to move:

[13.]   我是申**冤无门**!

I wish to seek redress for my injustice but **can't** [*wúmén* **'have.not-door'**]!

[14.]   譬如, 在诉状中, 原告常用的修辞手法是指责对方 (被告) 如何 "欺人太甚" 或者"持强凌弱", 自己又是怎样蒙受 "冤抑" 而 "**伸冤无门**" 持强凌弱的。

For instance, in Statements of Claim, the rhetorical devices used by the plaintiff are intended to rebuke the defendant, as is the case with wordings such as "take undue advantage of others" or "use strength to maltreat the weak" and other phrasings stating how much the plaintiff has been "unjustly treated" and that they "are **unable** [*wúmén* **'have.not-door'**] to **redress their injustice** [*shēnyuān* **'stretch-yuān'**]".

[15.]   与此同时, 严格的考绩制度又要求官员在审理案件时无**冤滞**, 达到既无冤案又不拖延还要词讼简约目的。

At the same time, a strict system of routine check of professional performance also demanded that in trying cases, public officers created no **unrectified** wrongful cases [*yuānzhì* **'yuān-stagnant'**], thus meeting the objective of neither having wrongful cases nor delaying the court process and making it shorter.

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81 Cf. e.g., Yu 1998; Kövecses 2010: 207.

In [13.] and [14.] we see two examples in which the person who hopelessly seeks redress for their injustice is referred to as one who cannot move away from where they are. In [15.], it is injustice in general that is described as motionless: the word-morpheme *zhì* 'stagnant' appearing in *yuānzhì* is used in other words to indicate lack of motion of various kinds, such as 'to be detained' (*zhìliú* 滞留 'stagnant-remain') and 'to obstruct' (*àizhì* 碍滞 'obstruct-stagnant').

Additionally, [14.] also shows the use of another collocate of *yuān* that I retrieved with MetaCoCoTaC and that I marked as metaphorical, *shēn* (伸), which means 'to stretch wide', as in *shēnshǒu* 伸手 'to stretch one's hand'. One other word that points to the same mapping, STRETCH, that I found is *jiěyuān* 解冤 'untie-yuān', which suggests that the victim of an injustice is metaphorically tied and cannot move.

These examples show that for injustice to be undone, the person who is wrongfully treated has to move physically, moving away from where they are trapped or by stretching wide their body.

3.4.3 Changes are movements (into or out of bounded regions)

Since lower metaphors inherit the mapping of higher metaphors, the example of *shēnyuān* that we have just seen in [14.] also instantiates "UNDOING YUĀN (i.e. "CHANGING INJUSTICE INTO JUSTICE") IS MOVEMENT", in that *shēn* 'stretching wide' implies that one occupies a wider space. This draws on the metaphor "CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS",[82] and also on "GOOD IS INCREASING PHYSICAL SPACE OCCUPIED" (a mapping highlighted by Charles Forceville in his closing keynote speech at the 14th conference of the Association for Researching and Applying Metaphor [RaAM14] on June 26, 2021). One other word that I found with MetaCoCoTaC that realises the "CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS" metaphor is *píngfǎn* 平反 'balance-turn.over', which I discuss in detail under the BALANCE image schema.

3.4.4 States are locations (bounded regions in space)

Since the "STATES ARE LOCATIONS" component of the ESM is the highest in hierarchy, all the metaphors at lower levels that we have just seen inherit its organization. Besides these, I could also identify one explicit collocate of *yuān* that evokes space in relation to the victims of injustice and their attempts at complaining (e.g., *shēnsù* 申诉, *míngyuān* 鸣冤, *jiàoyuān* 叫冤) and seeking redress (*shēnyuān* 伸/申冤).

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82 Kövecses 2010: 207.

The collocate[83] is *wúchù* 无处 ('have.not-place', i.e. 'to be unable to do something'), which is found in various instances, including the following:

[16.]   但对于从事金融工作的消费者马先生而言, 却是"天大"的冤情**无处**诉。
Yet, from the perspective of Mr Ma, a consumer in charge of financial works, this is a "titanic" injustice that he **is unable to** [*wúchù* '**have.not-place**'] complain about.

[17.]   可以说, 执法不公以及民众**无处**申冤, 就是中国社会最普遍的现实问题之一。
We can say that one of the most common and actual problems of the Chinese society is that the law is enforced unfairly and the people are **unable to** [*wúchù* '**have.not-place**'] seek redress for their injustice.

The space mentioned in [16.] and [17.] is a metaphorical one, realising a mapping "TO BE UNABLE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT OR SEEK REDRESS FOR ONE'S YUĀN IS NOT FINDING A PLACE TO DO SO". This CM is a powerful one, given that, connectedly to the ESM, may make the victim of injustice feel lost and unable to find the 'place' they are looking for to have their grievances heard.

3.5 The STRAIGHT, VERTICALITY, BALANCE, and OBJECT image schemas

The Kantian-inspired theory of image schemas has been prompted inter alia by Johnson[84] and is central to the embodied-mind cognitive theory of metaphor.[85]

Here I present the last collocates and compound words that I found in the corpus in relation to *yuān* and explain them in connection to the relevant image schemas following a list of image schemas compiled by Evans and Green[86] on the basis of previous metaphor studies.

3.5.1 STRAIGHT

Among the most widespread, if not universal, moral metaphors are, as we have seen "MORAL IS STRAIGHT" versus "IMMORAL IS BENT-TILTED-CROOKED", largely

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83 In fact, the collocate that Sketch Engine retrieves is *chùsù* 处诉—not a word in Chinese. The correct collocate and the one discussed here appearing in phrasings with the wrong one is *wúchù* 无处, also retrieved by Sketch Engine beyond the cut-off line that I set.
84 Johnson 1987.
85 Cf. e.g., Gibbs 2005.
86 Evans and Green 2006: 190.

deriving from the more primary "GOOD IS STRAIGHT" and "BAD IS BENT" meta-phors. With MetaCoCoTaC, I was able to find collocates and compound words of *yuān* that reinforce these mappings, such as *jiūzhèng* 纠正 'entangle-straight' which figuratively means 'to rectify [an injustice]', *yuānqū* 冤屈 and *yuānwǎng* 冤枉 '*yuān*-bent' meaning 'injustice, wrongfully treated', *jiàoqū* 叫屈 'shout-bent' metaphori-cally meaning 'to cry foul', and *qūsǐ* 屈死 'bent-die' metaphorically meaning 'to be unjustly treated to death'. The following are some instances of these words:

[18.] 因此, 我们要严肃对待, 该判的一定要判, **冤枉**的一定要**纠正**。

Therefore, we should treat this matter seriously: the cases that need to be judged shall be judged, the **wrongful** [*yuānwǎng* '***yuān*-bent'**] ones shall be **rectified** [*jiūzhèng* **'straighten-straight'**].

[19.] 可是, 蒙受**冤屈**的人们不但没有在这里找回正义, 甚至在这里绝灭了正义之想。

Nevertheless, the people who **suffered injustice** [*yuānqū* '***yuān*-bent'**] not only did not find justice here, but here they even extinguished the very idea of what justice is.

[20.] 我们受了**冤枉**, 那[哪]里去**叫屈**?

When we are **unjustly treated** [*yuānwàng* '***yuān*-bent'**], where do we go **to cry foul** [*jiàoqū* **'call-bent'**]?

[21.] 可当年**屈死**的冤魂在哪里?

But where are the ghosts of the wrongfully treated who **died for being unjustly treated** [*qūsǐ* **'bent-die'**]?

Interestingly, in [18.] we note that the just administration of justice is contraposed to injustice and wrongful cases by means of two opposite domains: STRAIGHT on the one hand and BENT on the other. Indeed, the word *jiūzhèng* suggests that "UNDOING YUĀN IS RIGHTING IT" and that, consequently and together with the other words exemplified above in [19.], [20.] and [21.], "YUĀN IS BENT". So, while STRAIGHT is mapped onto JUSTICE, BENT is mapped onto INJUSTICE/YUĀN, which, more in general, is manifestly construed in terms of the spatial STRAIGHT image schema.

One aspect that is further worth mentioning here is that the basic meaning of *yuān* as 'bent' is also confirmed by a philological explanation that sheds some light on the rabbit component appearing in the *yuān* character, showing that the character that is used today for *yuān* is not the 'correct' one. Duàn Yùcái 段玉裁 (1735–1815), a Qing dynasty (1636–1912) philologist, in his commentary to Xǔ Shèn's (121CE) dic-tionary, the one I cited at the very beginning of the introduction section, explains that

[22.]　　冤屈也。屈、不伸也。古亦叚宛爲冤。[…]

Yuān means bent. It means to be bent and being unable to stretch. In ancient times the character *wǎn/yuān* '宛' was used in place of that for *yuān*. […]

(*Yuān* – Duàn Yùcái, 1794)

So, not only is BENT mapped onto YUĀN, but the very basic meaning of the word *yuān* was believed to be 'being bent'. Moreover, we can note that the character for *yuān* was said to have a graphical variant, i.e. '宛' now read *wǎn* and *yuān* (in order to avoid ambiguity, hereinafter I will call this character *wǎn/yuān₂*, not to be confused with *yuān*, the subject of this study). Since this *wǎn/yuān₂* character primarily meant 'winding, crooked' and 'curl',[87] as did *yuān*, this variant confirms that the basic meaning of *yuān* was 'bent'. Indeed, *wǎn/yuān₂* is the component of many other characters whose meaning is related to BENT: for instance, it appears as a semantic component in *wǎn* 挽 'to *bend* the wrist', in *wǎn* 腕 'wrist', i.e. the part of our arm that we can *bend* (this explanation of 'wrist' is from Schüssler[88]), as well as in *wǎn* 婉 'tactful', i.e. speaking in a figuratively *non-direct* and *winding* manner. The character *wǎn/yuān₂* is made of 'roof' 宀 above and 'bent' 夗 below. The reason why we can interpret this latter component (夗) not (just) as a phonetic one, but (also) a semantic component, is that it is explained as 'the *bent* shape of the body when one lies on their side' and as 'winding, zig zagging' (蜿蜒) (i.e., not straight, bent) in the *Dictionary of Variants* of the Taiwanese Ministry of Education (hereinafter DictVar),[89] it is similarly explained as 'tortuous, winding' in the XHC,[90] and finally also because it appears as a component of a quasi-homophonous character of *yuān*, i.e. 怨 *yuàn*, with which it is[91] interchangeable, as these examples show:

[23.]　　**bàoyuàn** 报怨 means 'to avenge a wrong', as does **bàoyuān** 报冤[92]

[24.]　　**jiéyuàn** 结怨 means 'to become enemy', as does **jiéyuān** 结冤[93]

This shows that BENT is mapped onto YUĀN both linguistically and at the graphical level of the *wǎn/yuān₂* variant.

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87 "弯曲,屈卷"; Chen Fuhua 2007: 1596.

88 Schüssler (2007a: 583) explains that as of around the 5th century BCE, this *wǎn/yuān* character '宛' was pronounced /*ʔwan/, and that the alveolar nasal sound /-n/ at the end of the word was an agentive suffix, i.e. 'the thing that bends'.

89 "身體側臥彎曲的樣子"; DictVar (https://dict.variants.moe.edu.tw/variants/rbt/word_attribute.rbt?quote_code=QjAwNjA4).

90 "曲折" XHC: 103.

91 Chen Fuhua 2007: 1950.

92 Association Ricci and Descléè de Brouwer 2001.

93 Association Ricci and Descléè de Brouwer 2001.

We can continue to explore another variant of *yuān* to see if we can make sense of the rabbit component.

DictVar[94] shows that *yuān* has a few non-standard variants where 兔 (read *miǎn*)—not rabbit 兔—is used, including 宀+兔 instead of 冖+兔. What is interesting about this *miǎn* component is the fact that it looks very similar to the character for rabbit, differing from it only in one dot 丶 missing from the former (兔 ≠ 兔). The Chinese were said by *Duàn Yùcái*[95] to often misuse these characters interchangeably. So, does the rabbit component or the *miǎn* component tell us anything about the source domain of YUĀN? To answer this question, we need to find out whether *miǎn* played a phonetic or semantic role in the character for *yuān*. Schüssler[96] indicates that the characters 勉, 娩 and 冕 containing *miǎn* were read /mjän/ in Middle Chinese, whereas *yuān* was read /ʔjwɐn/. So, the *miǎn* component in the variant character for *yuān* was probably not a phonetic component. Was it semantic? The word *miǎn* means 'to avoid'. If we look at semantically similar words in early Chinese, we note that there are two other words that similarly meant 'avoid', i.e. *bì* 避 and *yǒng* 縈, explained as 'out of straight line, oblique' and 'to turn, twist', respectively.[97] Therefore, *bì* and *yǒng* realise "AVOIDING IS BENDING": this makes sense from an embodiment perspective, given that to avoid something aiming at us or that we meet when walking, we need to bend our body or the trajectory we were going. Therefore, out of the three words (*miǎn*, *bì* and *yǒng*) meaning 'avoid' under scrutiny, at least two of them (*bì* and *yǒng*) draw from BENT. Is *miǎn* an exception to this "AVOIDING IS BENDING" mapping? It can't be said for sure, given that although *Le Grand Ricci Numérique* indicates that *miǎn* also means 'to incline one's head', Chén Fùhuà's *Dictionary of Classical Chinese* does not confirm this meaning. As a matter of fact, the word read *fǔ* 俛, where *miǎn* appears, means precisely 'to incline, bow the head', suggesting that *miǎn* may also have shades of the BENT source domain that other words in the area of AVOID have. Curiously, in the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) orthographic dictionary *Gānlù Zìshū* (干祿字書[98]), which served as a guideline for those who took the Imperial examination, the correct form for the *yuān* character was indicated to be the one with *miǎn*—not the one with rabbit.

Therefore, my necessarily tentative conclusion from the foregoing as to the character for *yuān* that is used today, is that the rabbit component in it is, in a sense,

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94 DictVar (https://dict.variants.moe.edu.tw/variants/rbt/word_attribute.rbt?quote_code=QTAwMzA1).

95 Miǎn 兔 – Duàn Yùcái 1794.

96 Schüssler 2007a: 384.

97 Schüssler 2007a: 159 and 578.

98 Ministry of Education of the Republic of China (中華民國教育部) 2017.

erroneous, as it was if not the variant with *miǎn*, 宀+兔, the one with *wǎn/yuān₂* 宛 that should have been standardised for being more evocative of the source domain BENT—not the one with rabbit. As Andreini underlines in Chinese textual criticism "[t]here is a very thin line separating the categories of variants and errors."[99] Indeed, one cannot postulate that just because a character is now to be regarded as the standard version among the other variants previously used in place of it, then this is the sole 'genuine' and 'orthodox' character that is worth studying.

Regardless of the above discussion on the variants of the *yuān* character that is used today, YUĀN IS BENT is also confirmed by Schüssler's philological reconstruction of the word. He maintains that *yuān* is related to *yū* 迂/紆 meaning 'to bend, deflect', already attested as '迂' in the *Shūjīng* (書經) and as '紆' in the *Zhōulǐ* (周禮) and earlier texts, similarly meaning 'bent, crooked'.[100] According to Schüssler, the attribution of such meanings to *yuān* is also shown by W. South Coblin's reconstruction,[101] who indicates that *yū* 紆 may be a cognate word of the Written Tibetan words relating to *yāo* 夭/殀. In his opinion, these *yāo* words meant 'to bend', given that the characters graphically represent a person with tilted head.[102] Schüssler[103] also indicates a number of cognates and members of the same word family for these *yāo* words, including *wǎn* 'wrist' that we have seen above, *wǎng* 枉 'crooked, bent' and, finally, *yuān*.

To recapitulate the foregoing, we have seen that not only YUĀN as a concept is today conceived of in terms of BENT, but at least one (宛) of the graphical variants of the character that is used today also does. The other variant (宀+兔) that was considered to be the correct one during the Tang dynasty is less likely to draw from BENT, but makes use of a component (兔) that was often used interchangeably with the rabbit (兔) component that is used today in the character for *yuān* (冤), suggesting that RABBITS may have nothing to do with INJUSTICE. This said, we have seen that YUĀN's chief linguistic instantiation, *yuān*, etymologically meant 'bent'.

Notwithstanding the possibility that the 'caged rabbit' version of the *yuān* character that is used today is an error, there may be reasons why this has successfully survived the test of time from its earliest attestations. These will be discussed before the end of this section, right after the analysis of the other schemas which I will now continue to illustrate is concluded.

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99 Andreini 2005: 263.
100 Schüssler 2007c: 582–683.
101 Coblin 1986: 41f.
102 Schüssler 2007b: 560.
103 Schüssler 2007a: 583.

3.5.2 VERTICALITY

In spatial image schemas, VERTICALITY plays a key role, since it reflects the way we conceive of our body. We perceive and are physically aware of the vertical asymmetry of our body. We learn this soon in our childhood: we can hop on one foot but are physically unable to make short of our head even if only for a little while; we need our feet to stand up, but not our hands or shoulders. Physically speaking, UP is not the same as DOWN. This is reflected in language.

As predicted on the basis of previous literature, MetaCoCoTaC enabled me to find various metaphors relating to VERTICALITY, and, particularly, to the UP-DOWN spatial image schemas. However, my data does not confirm that a downward movement implies a change from morality to immorality, contrarily to what previous research[104] found. Additionally, I found that "YUĀN IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER" with various levels, and that "SERIOUS YUĀN IS DEEP".

For example, in [25.] and [26.] we can see two instances of the compound word *chényuān* 沉冤, literally 'deep-*yuān*', which metaphorically means 'deeply wronged; suffer from a gross injustice; etc.':

[25.] 此外, 还有**沉冤**待雪的冤鬼, 枉死等待超生的厉鬼, 或生缘未具, 无人供奉, 终日游荡闲散的孤魂野鬼。

Besides, there are also the ghosts of those who have been **deeply wronged** [*chényuān* '**deep-yuān**'] who await redress, and the evil spirits of those who were unjustly treated and await to reincarnate, of those whose causes and conditions for existence have not been completed,[105] who have nobody who enshrines and worships for them, and the wandering souls and wild ghosts who wander idly all day long.

[26.] 所以, 这几年来, 他用手中的笔, 为社会上的弱势群体, 为**沉冤**的死者, 为遭受不公的群众说真话, 诉冤屈。

Thus, in recent years, he has used his own ink to tell the true and the unjust grievances for the most socially vulnerable, for those who had died being **deeply wronged** [*chényuān* '**deep-yuān**'], and for those who were unfairly treated.

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104 Yu 2016: 113.
105 The phrase *shēng yuán wèi jù* (生缘未具) that is translated in my example as 'the causes and conditions for existence have not been completed' is connected to the Theravada Buddhist belief that relates to *antarābhava* (Pali and Sanskrit for 'the intermediate state'), according to which, souls linger before they can reincarnate.

In terms of literal meaning, it should be noted that *chén* in *chényuān* is the same *chén* that Yu[106] discusses as evidence that a downward movement metaphorically implies immorality, as I mentioned in the introduction. Both meanings, 'deep' and 'to sink', are attested in XHC. Although *Le Grand Ricci Numérique*[107] indicates that *chén* graphically represents a person sacrificed by means of *immersion* in water—i.e., by means of a downward movement—this is not the meaning that the word has when it appears in *chényuān*. In the compound word *chényuān*, *chén* does not mean 'to sink', but it means 'deep'. To show this, I performed three tests to ascertain the meaning of *chén* when appears in *chényuān* and verify whether it means 'deep' or 'to sink'. This was key to the identification of the correct mapping, given that one thing is the mapping "YUĀN IS DEEP", quite another is *"YUĀN IS A DOWNWARD MOVEMENT", as we would expect following Yu.[108] Firstly, if *chén* were a verb meaning 'to sink', it could take post verbal markers, such as the perfective marker *le* 了 or experiential marker *guo* 过 in phrases such as **chén le yuān* 'he sunk in injustice' or **chén guo yuān* 'he has had the experience of sinking in injustice'.[109] None of these phrases appear in zhTenTen11, suggesting that *chén* is *not* used to indicate the action of sinking, so it does not imply a downward movement when used with *yuān*. Chinese informants[110] also rejected these wordings for being unnatural to them. A search of *chén* and *yuān* as individual words separated by zero to five lexical items[111] retrieved no results in my corpus either, which confirms that *yuān* is not the locative object of *chén* when it means 'to sink' (i.e., I did not find phrasings having the form 'sink in a … injustice'). I thus rejected the hypothesis of *chén* pointing to a downward movement when used with *yuān*. Reversely, if *chén* in *chényuān* means 'deep', as I think it does, one could say 'deeply wronged' *vel sim.* So, the second test I performed was searching[112] for phrasings where *chén* and *yuān* occur close together to precisely mean that. With this search I found various instances of phrases such as *yuān **chén** shuǐ dǐ* (冤沉水底), literally '*yuān-chén*-water-bottom', which means 'an injustice as **deep** as the bottom of the sea', metaphorically meaning 'deeply wronged, gross

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106 Yu 2016.

107 Association Ricci and Descléè de Brouwer 2001.

108 Yu 2016: 113.

109 It should be acknowledged that, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer, lexicalised items are not so prone to the insertion of particles. The reviewer is thanked for their observation.

110 Mrs Zhang Chao (University of Perugia) and Mr Niu Chunye (formerly at the University of Verona) are both kindly thanked for their help.

111 In order to do this search, I accessed Sketch Engine, then chose the corpus zhTenTen11, and in the CQL section of Query Type under the Concordance menu I input the string [word="沉"] []{0,5} [word="冤"] to prompt the software to retrieve instances of the two characters/words separated by one to five lexical items.

112 The search was operationalised by using the CQL string [word="冤"] []{0,5} [word="沉"].

injustice, etc.', showing that it is in the sense of *deep*—not of 'to sink'—that *chén* is used with *yuān*. Lastly, in order to confirm that *yuān* can be DEEP, in a third test I also checked[113] whether a different word for 'deep', *shēn* (深), is used to describe *yuān*. The search was successful, as it retrieved instances such as 'an injustice as **deep** as the sea' (*yuān-shēn-sì-hǎi* 冤深似海) and 'an injustice **deeper** than the sea' (*yuān-shēn-yú-hǎi* 冤深于海), which confirm the mapping of INJUSTICE onto DEEP (and hence DOWN)—but not onto SINK. These tests, and specifically the last one, rule out the hypothesis put forward by an anonymous reviewer[114] that "YUĀN IS AN OBJECT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA", possibly interpreting *chényuān* as *chénzhā* 沉渣 ('deep-dregs = sediments'). So, this shows the existence of the mapping "INJUSTICE IS DEEP". From the above, we can also note that "YUĀN IS A FLUID IN A CONTAINER", just like one can conceive of the sea as being contained by land, which has various levels, and can thus be deeper or less deep. When injustice is particularly serious, it is deep—*chén*.

We should not jump to the conclusion that DEEP, and thus DOWN always serve as the source domains for YUĀN specifically, and for IMMORALITY in general. Indeed, another compound word of *yuān* that I have found with MetaCoCoTaC, *yuānyì* (冤抑), means '*yuān*-press.down = being unjustly treated': in this word, *yì* means 'to press down' and thus indicates a *downward movement*. However, contrary to what we could predict on the basis of Yu's findings ,[115] there is no change from morality to immorality, given that *yuānyì* is used to indicate the injustice that the victim experiences, not the action done by the immoral person, as the following example clarifies:

[27.] 他在宪纲大旨七条中, 特别指出: "审判官所断之案件, 行政官不能过问, 如有**冤抑**, 得上诉于合格衙门。
In article 7 of the General Outline of the Constitution, he particularly pointed out: "In the cases decided by the judge, the administrative officer shall not intervene, if there is **injustice** [*yuānyì* '*yuān*-press.down'], [the party] can appeal to the qualified court.

It is the victim of injustice the one who is pressed down by injustice or by the perpetrator, but the status of the victim does not change from morality to immorality: if the victim changed their moral status from moral to immoral, they would no longer be a victim. So, in contrast to our current knowledge of Chinese moral metaphors, a downward movement does *not* indicate a change from MORALITY to IMMORALITY. Reversely, it can be affirmed that "BEING YUĀN-ED IS BEING PRESSED DOWN".

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113 The search was operationalised by using the CQL string [word="冤"][]{0,5}[word="深"].
114 The anonymous reviewer is thanked for their observation.
115 Yu 2016.

3.5.3 BALANCE: TWIN-PAN BALANCE

An important Chinese word that MetaCoCoTaC retrieves, mapping positive legal and quasi-legal concepts onto the BALANCE image schema is *píng* 平. In connection with *yuān*, this morpheme-word appears in *píngyuān* (平冤 'balance-*yuān* = to redress injustice') and *píngfǎn* (平反 'balance-turn.over = to redress'). In *píngyuān, píng* acts as a verb and *yuān* as its direct object; in *píngfǎn*, both *píng* and *fǎn* are verbs, so that *píngfǎn* can take compound words of *yuān* as direct objects, as the word does in [28.] and [29.]:

[28.]   他曾**平反**一些冤狱, 民间因而有《海忠介公居官公案》、《大红袍》等传说。

Since he has **rectified** [*píngfǎn* '**balance-turn.over**'] some wrongful convictions, now there are popular legends such as «The complicated legal case of the public officer Hai Zhongjie» and «Da Hongpao».

[29.]   为了**平反**一系列重大**冤案**, 耀邦同志是做了大量的工作的。

In order to **rectify** [*píngfǎn* '**balance-turn.over**'] a series of major wrongful cases comrade Yao Bang has done an enormous job.

The word *píng* has various meanings: 'level/even/flat', 'balance/equilibrium', and more figurative positive meanings such as 'peace' (as in *hépíng* 和平), 'just' and 'fair' (as in *gōngpíng* 公平).

It should be noted that since 'level/even/flat' are not preconceptual meanings, as they have poor gestalt structure within our network of meanings, the basic meaning of *píng* is 'balance/equilibrium'. As Johnson notes, "[f]irst and foremost, balancing is something we *do*".[116] The same does not go for levelness and flatness. Even when the earth was believed to be flat, flatness was an abstraction rather than an empirically observable landscape, and, surely, we do not act flatness with our body. We are unable to tell and teach how balance happens. In this sense, Johnson defines the BALANCE schema as

> consisting of force vectors (which can represent weight, as a special case) and some point or axis or plane in relation to which those forces are distributed. In every case, balance involves a symmetrical (or proportional) arrangement of forces around a point or axis. The prototypical schema can thus be represented by an axis and force vectors [...].[117]

In the case of *píng*, the axis onto which BALANCE is maintained is a horizontal one. The very Chinese word for 'horizontal' is *píng*. One other reason why 'level/even/flat'

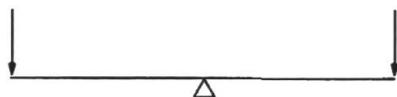116 Johnson 1987: 74.
117 Johnson 1987: 85.

draws from BALANCE, and not the other way around, is that we find it *physically* easier to maintain BALANCE on flat ground. In some cases, it is not possible at all to maintain balance when the ground is not flat: some objects may roll down if the plane is inclined, and we are unable to stand or walk at all on any plane that is especially steep. In this regard, BALANCE is preverbal, preconceptual, and also embodied, while LEVEL is not. So, it is BALANCE the image schema on which the metaphorical meanings of *píng* are based.[118] The meaning of balance/scale seems also to be encoded within the character for *píng*, as when it is used in a compound character such as *chèng* 秤 (made of the combination of 禾 and 平), the resulting character similarly means 'balance, scale', rather than 'level', 'even' or 'flat'. Additionally, the very Chinese word for 'to balance' is **pínghéng** (平衡).

Therefore, in light of the above, when *yuān* is *píng*-ed and thus redressed, it is balanced, so "YUĀN IS IMBALANCE" and "UNDOING YUĀN IS BALANCING AN IMBALANCE".

Accounting for the coexisting meanings of 'balance' and 'level/even/flat' that *píng* has enables us to further delve into the Chinese cultural specificities and explain why meanings such as 'vengeance' and 'bad luck' are also attached to *yuān*.

Figure 4 is from Johnson,[119] and is a representation of the TWIN-PAN BALANCE image schema that I believe *píng* instantiates. In the figure we can observe the two identical forces that outweigh (i.e., balance) each other. They both apply on a horizontal axis.

The figure illustrates all the meanings connected to *píng*, i.e. 'level/even/flat', 'equilibrium', 'balance'. As said, *píng* also means 'just' and 'fairness'. With regard to these meanings, Yu connects them with the other literal meaning that the word has, stressing that

Figure 4: A representation of the TWIN-PAN BALANCE image schema (from Johnson 1987: 85).

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118 Drawing from the Pragglejaz Group (2007: 3)'s instruction in MIP that the basic meaning tends to be historically older, an anonymous reviewer observed that the character for *píng* originates from 亏 'air, breath' and 八 'separation', meaning 'air passing through smoothly' and thus 'smooth tone', so such would be the basic meaning of the word. The author cannot agree with this conclusion, given that "[b]asic senses are the most concrete and human-oriented senses that can be distinguished" (Steen et al. 2010: 17). So, even though 'smooth tone' may be available to certain Mandarin Chinese native speakers (as may be only in *píngshēng* 平声 'flat tone'), this is not the most concrete and human-oriented and bodily related meaning, whereas BALANCE is, and is also a gestalt image schema. The reviewer is thanked for their observation.
119 Johnson 1987: 85.

balance and equality […] are concepts important to an ideal harmonious society, with fair legal systems and sound moral standards […] if a line or plane is 'level,' it means equality, equity, or justice to all. Conversely, if the line or plane is 'not level,' it means inequality, inequity, or injustice, which is a state in favo[u]r of some but against others.[120]

However, caution is needed so as not to interpret *píng* through the English translations and rule of law-concepts of equality and fairness to which the word can be related.

Indeed, *yuān* alters the possibility that one has to maintain balance. When balance is missing, we are unable to walk and move forward—an interpretation of the implications of *yuān* that is coherent with the other findings of this study with respect to motion. Importantly, *yuān* disrupts social as well as natural order. The two are strictly related in the Chinese culture. Remember that BALANCE consists of force vectors that represent weight applied to an axis—the horizontal one, in the case of *píng*. When *yuān* happens, it takes an equivalent force to restore justice. It is only by keeping this in mind that we can appreciate that *yuān* also means 'vengeance' and 'bad luck':[121] remember also that the city whose official falsely accused the fictional heroine Dou E experienced famine for three years. Innocent people died; an entire city suffered—not just the official who had condemned her. If we were to interpret BALANCE through the legal acceptation of equality used in many modern legal systems, as in equality of rights, we would be unable to account for Dou E's prophecies. *After all*, one may well say, *aren't the rights of innocent people infringed by Dou E's prophecies? Why do other people have to suffer and starve to death if one other person, not the entire city, has falsely condemned Dou E?* But these are questions that make more sense outside the Chinese traditional culture, and reflect a way to think of BALANCE that is not typically Chinese.

There was no word for rights in the Chinese culture up to the beginning of the past century. The Chinese concept of natural justice and order are very different to what we are used to in countries influenced by jusnaturalism. As has been noted, *yuān* invokes the traditional Chinese concept of natural justice and order.[122] In the Chinese thinking, balance, as well as natural and social order, are also connected to vengeance. In [21.] and [25.], the examples retrieved in the corpus show the linguistic existence of a popular thinking in China, that the souls of the unjustly treated become ghosts that haunt those who have to seek redress-vengeance for them (not those who treated them unjustly). In the play of Dou E, her ghost haunts her father and prompts him to seek redress for her case. Dou E's father, who in the meanwhile has become an officer, orders an investigation into her daughter's case. After the truth comes to

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120 Yu 2016: 110 and 116.
121 Pils 2011: 290.
122 See Pils 2011: 289–292.

light, redress of Dou E happens in four ways: she is proclaimed innocent; one of the three people who contributed to her wrongful conviction is exiled to a distant place; one other is dismissed and barred from entering office again; the third is sentenced to death. The heavier the injustice, the more the weight needed to outbalance it.

If an injustice happens in a Chinese court and consists in a wrongful conviction, the weight that the State deems as necessary to outweigh it consists in money compensation, as provided for by Article 32 of the *State Compensation Law* of the People's Republic of China (1995, 2012 amendment), and in case of wrongful limitation of liberty, it precisely amounts to the average daily income over the previous year, as laid down in Article 33 of the same law.

As to *fǎn* appearing in *píngfǎn*, according to my reference dictionary[123] it primarily means 'turn over' and 'opposite direction'. However, it is in the former acceptation only that the word should be intended in *píngfǎn*, given that there is a Chinese saying, *fùpén zhī yuān* (覆盆之冤), used to emphasise that one's injustice is particularly serious, which literally means 'an injustice [as serious as] a **turned over** vase'. The reason behind this 'turn over' metaphor for injustice is that when something is not reversed and is in the verse it is supposed to be, it is said to be on their *zhèng* face, with *zhèng* being the same *zhèng* that we have seen earlier meaning 'upright', onto which JUSTICE and FAIRNESS are mapped. Thus, "YUĀN IS AN OBJECT", and specifically "YUĀN IS A TURNED OVER OBJECT", therefore "UNDOING YUĀN IS PUTTING AN OBJECT UPRIGHT".

To recapitulate, in this section we have found a number of mappings for *yuān*, namely "YUĀN IS IMBALANCE", "UNDOING YUĀN IS BALANCING", "YUĀN IS A TURNED OVER OBJECT", and "UNDOING YUĀN IS PUTTING AN OBJECT UPRIGHT". I have also accounted for the different meanings of *píng* in terms of the BALANCE image schema and connected them with the Chinese concept of justice and natural order (limitedly to the purpose of my study), as well as with other meanings of *yuān* such as 'bad luck' and 'vengeance'.

3.5.4 EXISTENCE: OBJECT

The foregoing analysis also revealed the mapping "YUĀN IS AN OBJECT". The image schema OBJECT "is based on our everyday interaction with concrete objects [...] [and] generalises over what is common to objects: for example, that they have physical attributes such as colour, weight and shape, [...].".[124] The existence of this image schema emerges from other words that I have found in the corpus by using

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123 XHC: 376.
124 Evans and Green 2006: 191.

MetaCoCoTaC, such as *fùqū* 负屈 'to.carry.on.shoulder-bent = to suffer an injustice' and *tiāndà* 天大 'sky-big = huge':

[30.]   你若是**负屈**衔冤, 被人害了, 托梦与我, 兄弟替你做主报仇!
          If you're suffering a wrong [*fùqū* '**carry.on.shoulder-bent**'] and suffering an injustice, please appear in my dreams, so that I can seek revenge for you!

Since injustice can be metaphorically carried on one's shoulder, YUĀN has object-like features. This helps people make sense of what they are going through when they feel they are suffering an injustice. So, it is not surprising that when one feels the injustice they are suffering is extremely serious, they conceive of it as a BIG object [31.], which consistently with what we have seen in the earlier sections, creates bodily impediments, such as making it impossible to stand up, and/or to walk at normal speed or even to walk at all, thus impeding our motion along the path of our lives.

[31.]   这可真是**天大**的冤枉!
          This really is a **huge** [*tiāndà* 'sky-**big**'] injustice!

[32.]   虽然事后证明这是**天大**的冤屈, 但唐[某某]的一生从此被毁了。
          Although afterwards it was proved that that was a **huge** [*tiāndà* 'sky-**big**'] injustice, Mr Tang's life was ruined forever.

[33.]   [...]浙江省地方三级法院的错误判决铸成**天大**的冤案!
          The wrong judgment of the Zhejiang province Third Level Court was cast into a **huge** [*tiāndà* 'sky-**big**'] wrongful case!

Related to this is the fact that in order to redress a big injustice, a big light (*dàbái* 大白 'big-white') is figuratively needed:

[34.]   四十年沉冤, 这次**大白**了!
          This time this forty-year profound injustice has been redressed [*dàbái* '**big-white**']!

The CM these examples realise is "SERIOUS YUĀN IS A BIG OBJECT", encapsulating the commonly found CM "IMPORTANCE IS BIG". Of note here is that this metaphor and the linguistic metaphor *dà* 大 used in [31.] and [34.] meaning 'big' contrast with Yu's findings about metaphors for immorality. Basing his conclusions on wordings such as *dàdé* (大德 '**big** virtue'), *wěidà* (伟大的道德 'great-**big** moral force'), *dàrén* (大人 '**big** man', i.e. one who seeks righteousness, *yì* 义), as opposed to *réngé miǎoxiǎo* (人格渺小 'moral character tiny-**small**', i.e. of petty moral character) and *xiǎorén* (小人 '**small** person', i.e. one who seeks personal gains), Yu concludes that

"MORAL IS BIG" and "IMMORAL IS SMALL".[125] This proposition does not seem to account for the linguistic evidence I have just shown where BIG is mapped onto SERIOUS INJUSTICE, showing that "SERIOUS YUĀN IS A BIG OBJECT".

This is not an exceptional phenomenon. Various Chinese words containing the lexical item *dà* do not relate exclusively to morality, suggesting that "BIG" can be mapped both onto "MORAL" and "IMMORAL", and, in general, onto any OBJECT-like concept: for instance, there is *dàshìdàfēi* 大是大非 '**big**-to.be-**big**-to.be.not = cardinal questions of right and wrong', *dàguò* 大过 '**big**-mistake', *dànìbùdào* 大逆不道 '**big**-inversion-not-way = rebel and not be on the right moral path', *dàshǒudàjiǎo* 大手大脚 '**big**-hand-**big**-foot = wasteful person', *dàtóu* 大头 '**big**-head = wasteful person' (XHC). So, both MORALITY and IMMORALITY may be BIG.

Notably, one other word that I retrieved with MetaCoCoTaC in connection with *yuān* and the object image schema is *yuānyì* ('*yuān*-press.down') commented earlier ([27.]). There is only one *bodily* way for the moral victim of injustice to be pressed down: the object pressing them down has to be bigger than them. Human beings are unable to press down an elephant, while we can squeeze and kill an ant. This is consistent with the other findings illustrated in this section, suggesting that "YUĀN IS BIG" and the "VICTIM OF YUĀN IS SMALL". However, this finding contrasts with what previous research on Chinese moral metaphors has found, as Yu and colleagues argue that "IMMORAL IS SMALL".[126]

3.6 And no rabbit! But …

Notably, no compound word or collocate of *yuān* includes the Chinese word for rabbit, *tù*, suggesting that the rabbit component in the *yuān* character may not be linguistically related to the metaphorical meanings of the word. This is coherent with the philological and graphical analysis of the character that we have seen above.

However, it should be noted that a search for *tù* in the corpus reveals that the character has been used in the compound word *mǐ-tù* (米兔 'rice-rabbit'), a phonetic rendering of the English *me too* as used in the so-called Me Too Movement.[127] There are around fifty possible characters for the sound /tu/ in Chinese, but it is the one for rabbit that is being used for *Me Too*. This is a notable exception even within the context of phonetic loan words, as many other Chinese words use other characters read /tu/ to render the sound. For instance, "Turkey" is rendered as *Tǔěrqí*, with *tǔ* being 土 'earth'—not *tù* 'rabbit'. Similarly, a different *tù* 吐 had been commonly

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125 Yu 2016: 118–119.

126 E.g., Yu, Wang, and He 2016; Yu 2016.

127 On the Me Too movement, see e.g., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_movement.

used to render the English phrasing 'me too'—but, curiously, that was *not* chosen for the Me Too Movement.[128] Therefore, even if we accept the hypothesis suggested by an anonymous reviewer that the English word 'too' is spontaneously read in the fourth tone, *tù*, by Chinese native speakers, we are left with six Chinese characters, of which the rabbit one has been used for Me Too. Additionally, pictures portraying wrongfully convicted and the victims of sexual assaults as rabbits are available on the internet.[129] This may suggest a general tendency of human beings to conceive of themselves as animals, and, specifically, that of Chinese speakers to conceive of themselves as rabbits when they are victims of heinous acts of any sorts, be they judicial such as wrongful convictions, or extrajudicial such as sexual assault. Indeed, a mapping "VICTIMS OF INJUSTICE AND SEXUAL ASSAULTS ARE RABBITS" emerges from the graphical analysis of the *yuān* character, from the pictures retrieved from the internet (*ibid.*), and from the Chinese rendering of the Me Too Movement.

This mapping is metonymic, in that "RABBIT STANDS FOR THE HUMAN VICTIM", and is encapsulated in the metaphor system called the Great Chain of Being:[130]

God
Complex system (universe, society, […], etc.)
Humans
Animals
Plants
Complex physical objects
Inanimate objects

This system is hierarchical, so animals are in an inferior and lower position than humans. Indeed, it is the RABBIT—an animal—that is being used in place of the HUMAN VICTIM to indicate that someone in a higher position—humans—have assaulted them.

But why the rabbit? Firstly, it is to be noted that animal metaphors seem to be more effective than human metaphors in suggesting the sense of injustice, given that as Eggertsson and Forceville[131] note, the "HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL" metaphor triggers disturbing elements consisting in the misuse of the human body, happening

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128 See e.g., https://zhidao.baidu.com/question/1175723274970900979.html and other results on Google.
129 See e.g., https://read01.com/aA36APL.html#.Yrlkci2Q3OQ; https://chinadigitaltimes.net/chinese/643884.html; https://anchor.fm/zhidaoyouzhengyi/episodes/ep-eq2v7b; http://lovingsister.com/news_detail/index.php?news_id=35367; https://www.voachinese.com/a/metoo-in-china-exhibition-ny-20191008/5116335.html and https://twinnocenceproject.org/en/control-yuan-report-offers-hope-in-cheng-hsing-tse-case/ (accessed on June 27, 2022).
130 Lakoff and Turner 1989.
131 Eggertsson and Forceville 2009.

when "human beings [are used] in precisely the same way human beings treat their *non-human* counterparts", and such metaphor has been shown to be exploited in horror movies.[132] When *yuān* has strong illocutionary force is used in the first person, singular or plural.[133] Thus, graphically, 'I have been *yuān*-ed' (e.g., *wǒ hěn yuān a!* 我很冤啊!) can be intended as *You are treating me like an animal.* Following Cao's research on the illocutionary force of the word, it may be reasonable to assume that such a phrasing triggers the disturbing element to which Eggertson and Forceville refer, and thus better captures the ruler's responsibilities under whose watch a tort occurred,[134] "draw[ing] sufficient attention to one's case so that the case could be reviewed or retried, and ultimately to get redress if the case is indeed a wrongful case."[135]

Secondly, a key factor in ensuring the force of the rabbit metaphor is guaranteed by the presence of *fear* within the semantics implied by the animal. As Eggertsson and Forceville further note:

> A very natural thing for us to fear is something that has power over us – such as a being that holds higher place in the food chain. [...] It used to be the case that the human race had to fear other predators, but those days are long since gone (at least in con-temporary urban societies) and we have placed ourselves, self-assuredly, on top of the food chain. No one feeds on us anymore, so ultimately a great deal of fear comes from the idea that something unexpected can jump in and eat us.[136]

This is evident in the rabbit metaphor: rabbits are *prey* animals, and they are herbivorous. They do not eat any other animals, nor represent harm to any animals. This component is rarely used as a semantic element in Chinese characters. If we use metaphor triangulation as suggested by Larsson[137] and thus change the rabbit component with other animals, we can see this in an even clearer fashion: for instance, a 'caged snake' surely is not the same as a 'caged rabbit'—as rabbits are exclusively prey, whereas snakes may be sometimes eaten by other animals, such as eagles and hawks, but some of them are also dangerous for human beings. Importantly, rabbits are not a threat to human life. They are either supposed to be free or they may end up being caged by humans to eventually be butchered and eaten. In the Chinese culture, rabbits are associated with being *free* and *scared*, and thus *escape*, with all these meanings being metaphorically associated with rabbits in general in the Chinese culture, as characters including 'rabbit' as a semantic component, such as *yì* 逸 ('leisure, escape'), show.

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132 Eggertsson and Forceville 2009: 432; my emphasis.
133 Cao 2018a: 82–84.
134 Pils 2011: 287.
135 Cao 2018a: 84.
136 Eggertsson and Forceville 2009: 433.
137 Larsson 2014.

Thirdly, as R Sommer and B Sommer[138] argue, there is a higher tendency to use mammal-related metaphors when metaphors are drawn from the animal domain to describe human characteristics, probably because humans recognize themselves as mammals and find it easier to identify with mammals rather than with insects, fishes, etc. This alone does not entirely explain why a caged *rabbit*, instead of another mammal such as a monkey, dog, cat, or mouse, is used by the Chinese to write *yuān*. One explanation may be that rabbits in China are more common than other prey mammals. Rabbits can be easily found (and eaten) in China, and they are a prey that *only screams when in extreme pain*,[139] while for instance cats are common mammals, but they are predators, and they do voice. This may also explain why some of the collocates of *yuān* that we have seen activate VOICING to mean 'proclaim one has been treated unjustly': they may be metaphorically used to mean *give voice to silent preys*, such as rabbits are.

Finally, in relation to the "HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL" in horror movies, Eggertsson and Forceville indicate the following list of mappings:

Target domain		Source domain
HUMAN VICTIM	IS	ANIMAL
		No inherent social right to life
		Stripped of freedom and liberty
		Subjugated within a hierarchy
		Subject to imprisonment
		Subject to excessive pain, suffering
		Defenceless towards captors
		Voiceless towards society
		Object of sexual desire
		Object of entertainment
		Resource for food
		Resource for material goods
		Life and well-being depend on the will and desire of captor

(adapted from Eggertsson & Forceville [140])

We can note that a number of these features apply to the metaphorical implications of YUĀN for the victims of injustice, and to rabbits as well. Indeed, a trapped rabbit, just like someone who has been *yuān*-ed is "Stripped of freedom and liberty", "Subjugated within a hierarchy", "Subject to imprisonment", "Subject to excessive pain, suffering", "Defenceless towards captors", "Voiceless towards society", and its "Life and well-being depend on the will and desire of the captor".

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138 Sommer and Sommer 2011.
139 Fraser and Girling 2009: 74.
140 Eggertsson and Forceville 2009: 45.

It is in the light of the above analysis that we can appreciate how the rabbit component in the character for *yuān* has survived the test of time and how the rabbit is used in the context of other injustices in China.

In a nutshell, possible reasons why the caged-rabbit version of the character survived over the other 'bent' variants (i.e. 宛 and 宀+兔) is that it is much more powerful a word, owing to its direct reference to the metonymy "RABBIT STANDS FOR THE HUMAN VICTIM" and to the metaphor "HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL", while not excluding a graphical hint to the source domain BENT.

4 Discussion and conclusions

We can now discuss the findings of this study in relation to the questions with which we started.

First, as to the CMs that *yuān* realises, we have seen that it is a particularly metaphorical a word, as the following list summarising the mappings it instantiates shows:

Second, as can be seen, with respect to the metaphors that were previously found in research on Chinese law and moral systems that I recapped in Section 1.1, this study on *yuān* modifies our current knowledge. The use of the schemas and primary domains SOUND, FOOD, MOTION, OBJECT, ANIMAL was not predictable by basing it on our previous knowledge on Chinese law and moral metaphor systems, and the far more predictable source domains within the VERTICALITY and OBJECT schemas are actually used to map an immoral deed such as YUĀN both show noticeable differences with respect to previous studies.

Moreover, as can be readily deducted by looking at the target domains listed in Figure 5, a fine-grained distinction appears to be needed between the target concepts that YUĀN frames: there is a YUĀN for injustice, wrong, and tort in general, a SERIOUS YUĀN for when injustice is particularly serious, a YUĀN used as a verb to indicate when one is wronged or wrongfully or falsely accused or condemned, and a YUĀN stressing the fact that those who have been wrongly or falsely accused or wronged are victims of a heinous deed. Although the distinction between the four acceptations may sometimes be blurred and overlap, this prompts us to reconsider the form of some of the traditional metaphor formulae with which one may occasionally be satisfied. For instance, a metaphor formula of the kind "HAPPINESS IS UP" may not provide sufficient information as to *what* or *who* specifically is UP: is it HAPPINESS as a concept that is conceived of as UP? Or is it a happy person who is UP? Or both HAPPINESS and those who experience it are UP? In the case of *yuān*, we could not come to a conclusive list of metaphor formulae in the form "YUĀN IS …". A distinction was needed between, say, how the concept itself, the effect of being

(IMAGE SCHEMAS/PRIMARY DOMAINS) SOURCE DOMAINS	TARGET DOMAINS
(SOUND) VOICING	DENOUNCING YUĀN
(FOOD) BITTER KEEPING SOMETHING IN THE MOUTH	YUĀN EXPERIENCING YUĀN
(SIGHT) DARK LIGHTING DIRTY CLEAN	YUĀN UNDOING YUĀN YUĀN UNDOING YUĀN
(MOTION) COMING ACROSS SOMETHING AND RECEIVING IT IMPEDIMENT TO MOTION MOVEMENT	BEING YUĀN-ED YUĀN UNDOING YUĀN
(LOCATION) NOT FINDING A PLACE	TO BE UNABLE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT OR SEEK REDRESS FOR ONE'S YUĀN
(STRAIGHT) BENT RIGHTING PUTTING AN OBJECT UPRIGHT	YUĀN UNDOING YUĀN UNDOING YUĀN
(VERTICALITY) FLUID IN A CONTAINER DEEP PRESSED DOWN	YUĀN SERIOUS YUĀN BEING YUĀN-ED
(BALANCE) IMBALANCE BALANCING	YUĀN UNDOING YUĀN
(OBJECT) TURNED OVER OBJECT HEAVY OBJECT BIG OBJECT SMALL	YUĀN YUĀN SERIOUS YUĀN VICTIM OF YUĀN
(ANIMAL) RABBIT	VICTIM OF YUĀN

Figure 5: List of the mappings instantiated by yuān 冤.

yuān-ed, and the person who experiences it are conceived of, given that the mappings vary accordingly.

In contrast to the moral metaphors already known to exist in Chinese, this study has found that both graphically (by mean of its character) and linguistically (by means of the linguistic metaphors in which the word appears), *yuān* combines some of the metaphors for IMMORALITY with the metaphor "HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL"

that Eggertsson and Forceville[141] found limitedly to horror movies, showing that the metaphor they found is also present in the cultural world[142] of Chinese speakers. This answers one of the questions that prompted this study, *What do rabbits have to do with injustice?* The quick answer is that, at least at the graphical level, the "RABBIT STANDS FOR THE VICTIM", and that the "HUMAN VICTIM IS ANIMAL". As empirical research[143] has shown, metaphor stimulates a neuronal response in those who are exposed to it. A metaphor does not happen only in the language, but in the body, via embodied simulation. Hearing *yuān* or seeing the rabbit in pictures portraying victims of various deeds may prompt a response in the receiver who empathises with the victim and be willing to help them. This is consistent with Cao's argument[144] that *yuān* is a speech act:[145]

> the legal usage of *yuan* […] can be a speech act. It is more than just saying something, more than just stating that one is wronged. […] *Yuan* […] [is] used to perform a number of extralinguistic functions, including to proclaim one's innocence, to draw attention to one's case […] so that the case could be reviewed or retried, and ultimately to get redress[146]

By animalising—i.e., dehumanising—human beings, they become the victims of abuses. As has been proposed, "dehumanization is associated with the denial and violation of the human rights of victims, because it has an automatic dampening effect on the neural mechanisms of pain empathy that enable empathy for the pain and suffering of others."[147]

Finally, as to how this study enriches the study of Chinese metaphors and contributes to CMT studies in general, a few final remarks are warranted. As to the method of finding metaphors, we have seen that a target-domain oriented study such as the one undertaken here produces different results than source-oriented ones. Stefanowitsch and Gries[148] have noticed that the two approaches may complement each other, and the present paper is further evidence to such argument. One may also argue that target-domain oriented studies are more open to find new metaphor mappings that better integrate or even change the current knowledge about a metaphorical system, in that they do not presume the existence of any source domains. In this sense, target-domain oriented studies are more bottom-up than

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141 Eggertsson and Forceville 2009.

142 Gibbs 1999.

143 E.g., Matlock 2004.

144 Cao 2018a: 82–84.

145 Austin 1962.

146 Cao 2018a: 83–84.

147 G B Murrow and R W Murrow 2015: 337.

148 Stefanowitsch and Gries 2006: 5.

top-down, and, as has been noted, "Taking a top-down approach can allow linguistic patterns to be ignored, possibly at the expense of useful insights".[149]

In terms of where to find linguistic metaphors in Chinese, it should be clear by now that besides words and word collocates, the smallest lexical unit in the Chinese language is the syllable, *viz* the character and the morpheme, both linguistically (in terms of the meanings it has, and the words with which it occurs), and graphically (in terms of the meanings that its character components have). This feature of the Chinese language has been exploited *occasionally* in metaphor research,[150] but needs to be considered more consistently. Indeed, the components of a Chinese character may have semantic features that are part and parcel of the meanings of the concept it stands for, and of those of the morphemes and words with which it occurs. In this sense, I suggest that owing to its writing system, the Chinese language is multimodal, and far more multimodal than any alphabetic language.

The graphical analysis of the character comprises philological reconstructions and etymological meanings, which, as is known (although not widely accepted), may have traces in the contemporary use of a language. Disregarding any such analysis just because one presumes that a dead metaphor is dead, or because other languages, such as Western languages, do not necessarily need any such analysis prevents the researcher from obtaining important findings or confirming others. In this regard, our analysis in this paper has benefitted from the study of the variants of the *yuān* character. This is often done in Chinese lexicography and textual criticism, where one would find arguments of, say, *lectio facilior* versus *lectio difficilior* "as a means of recovering at least the reading intended by the scribe/editor/author of *that* version in question, if not actually the 'original' reading",[151] but is not done when Chinese metaphors are studied.

When dealing with a Chinese contemporary text, what we have in front of our eyes are characters that are *thousand*-year-old characters. These characters have been standardised relatively recently in the 19th century after other earlier attempts,[152] but this *does not mean* that the current standard version of a character is the *right, genuine, orthodox,* and *original* variant. Indeed, there may be no such 'original' character—if not the one that simply appeared earlier in time—, and its variants are in fact equally worth studying (on Chinese text criticism, see e.g., Boltz[153]). As is the case with the character for *yuān*, variants carry important semantic information—including metaphorical information.

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149 Deignan 2006: 121.
150 E.g., Yu 1998, 2009, 2011b.
151 Andreini 2005: 262.
152 Norman 1988: 58–82.
153 Boltz 2000.

Finally, we should stress the importance of the study of the linguistic metaphors not just as an instrument to access metaphors in thought, but also as utterances that, *per se*, may carry cultural information that disappears at the level of formalization in metaphor formulae. For instance, and as we have seen, thanks to the study of the linguistic metaphors of *yuān*, such as 'snow' and 'white' (*bái* and *xuě*), we were able to explain the symbols of a most famous Chinese story, *Injustice to Dou E*. Caution is needed not to interpret any such symbols through non-Chinese languages and culture: in the case of China, traditional Chinese thinking does not support the idea that restoration of justice comes at no expense for innocent people. It is against this backdrop that we have been able to account for all the meanings of *yuān*, including 'vengeance' and 'bad luck'.

Abbreviations used

CM	conceptual metaphor
CMT	conceptual metaphor theory
DictVar	Dictionary of Variants 異體字字典 by the Ministry of Education Ministry of Education of the Republic of China (2017)
MetaCoCoTaC	procedure of finding possible *meta*phors at the word *c*ompound and *co*llocate level starting from a *tar*get-domain word in a *C*hinese corpus
XHC	*Xiandai Hanyu Cidian* 现代汉语词典 [Dictionary of Modern Chinese] (2005)

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Appendix 1

List of the metaphorical collocates and compound words of yuān 冤 retrieved with MetaCoCoTaC in the zhTenTen11 corpus of Sketch Engine grouped into source domains (below categories) and primary categories (upper categories)

SOUND	FOOD		SIGHT	
VOICING	**KEEPING SOMETHING IN MOUTH**	**BITTER**	**LIGHT**	**DARK**
hǎn yuān 喊冤 scream-*yuān*	hán yuān 含冤 keep.in.mouth-yuān	yuān kǔ 冤苦 yuān-bitter	xuě yuān 雪冤 snow-yuān	méngyuān 蒙冤(者) cover-yuān-AGT
míngyuān 鸣冤 chirp/buzz-*yuān*	xián yuān 衔冤 keep.in.mouth-yuān	sù kǔ 诉苦 tell-bitter	zhāo xuě 昭雪 bright-snow	bù bái zhī yuān 不白之冤 not-white-MOD-yuān
jiào yuān 叫冤 shout-*yuān*			xuě 雪 snow	méngshòu 蒙受 cover-receive
míngyuān jiào qū 鸣冤叫屈 chirp/buzz-yuān scream-yuān			dà bái 大白 big-white	bō luàn fǎn zhèng 拨乱反正 push.aside-mix-turn.over-straight
jiào qū 叫屈 shout-bent			bái 白 white	
hǎn 喊 scream			**CLEAN**	
míng 鸣 chirp/buzz			xǐ yuān 洗冤 wash-yuān	
hū 呼 shout			xǐ shuā 洗刷 wash-scrub	
kū sù 哭诉 cry-tell			xǐ qīng 洗清 wash-clean	

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| MOTION (EGO MOVING) | EVENT STRUCTURE METAPHOR (ESM) | | |
	IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION	CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS	LOCATION
zǎo shòu 遭受 come.across-receive	wú mén 无门 have.not-door	píng fǎn 平反 balance-turn.over	wú chù 无处 have.not-place
zāo 遭 come.across	lán jiào 拦轿 block-sedan		
	yuān zhì 冤滞 yuān-stagnant		
	TIE		
	jiě yuān 解冤 untie-yuān		
	zhì zào 制造 tie-create		
	jiū zhèng 纠正 entangle-straight		
	STRETCH		
	shēn yuān 伸冤 stretch-yuān		
	shēn 伸 stretch		

| STRAIGHT | | VERTICALITY | | BALANCE | | OBJECT | |
STRAIGHT	BENT	UP	DOWN	EVEN	UNEVEN	BIG	SMALL
jiū zhèng 纠正 entangle-straight	yuānwǎng 冤枉 yuān-bent	shàng fǎng 上访 up-visit	chén yuān 沉冤 deep-yuān	píng yuān 平冤 balance-yuān	yuān jiǎ cuò àn 冤假错案 yuān-false-uneven-case	tiān dà 天大 sky-big	yuān yì 冤抑 yuān-press.down
	yuānwǎng lù 冤枉路 yuān-bent-road		yuān yì 冤抑 yuān-press.down	píng fǎn 平反 balance-turn.over	yuān cuò 冤错 yuān-uneven	dà bái 大白 big-white	yì 抑 press.down
	yuān qū 冤屈 yuān-bent		mái yuān 埋冤 bury-yuān			**WEIGHT**	
	jiào qū 叫屈 shout-bent		yì 抑 press.down			fù qū 负屈 carry.on.shoulder-bent	
	shòu qū 受屈 receive-bent		xiàn hài 陷害 fall-harm				
	wěi qū 委屈 bent-bent						
	fù qū 负屈 carry.on.shoulder-bent						
	qū sǐ 屈死 bent-die						

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