

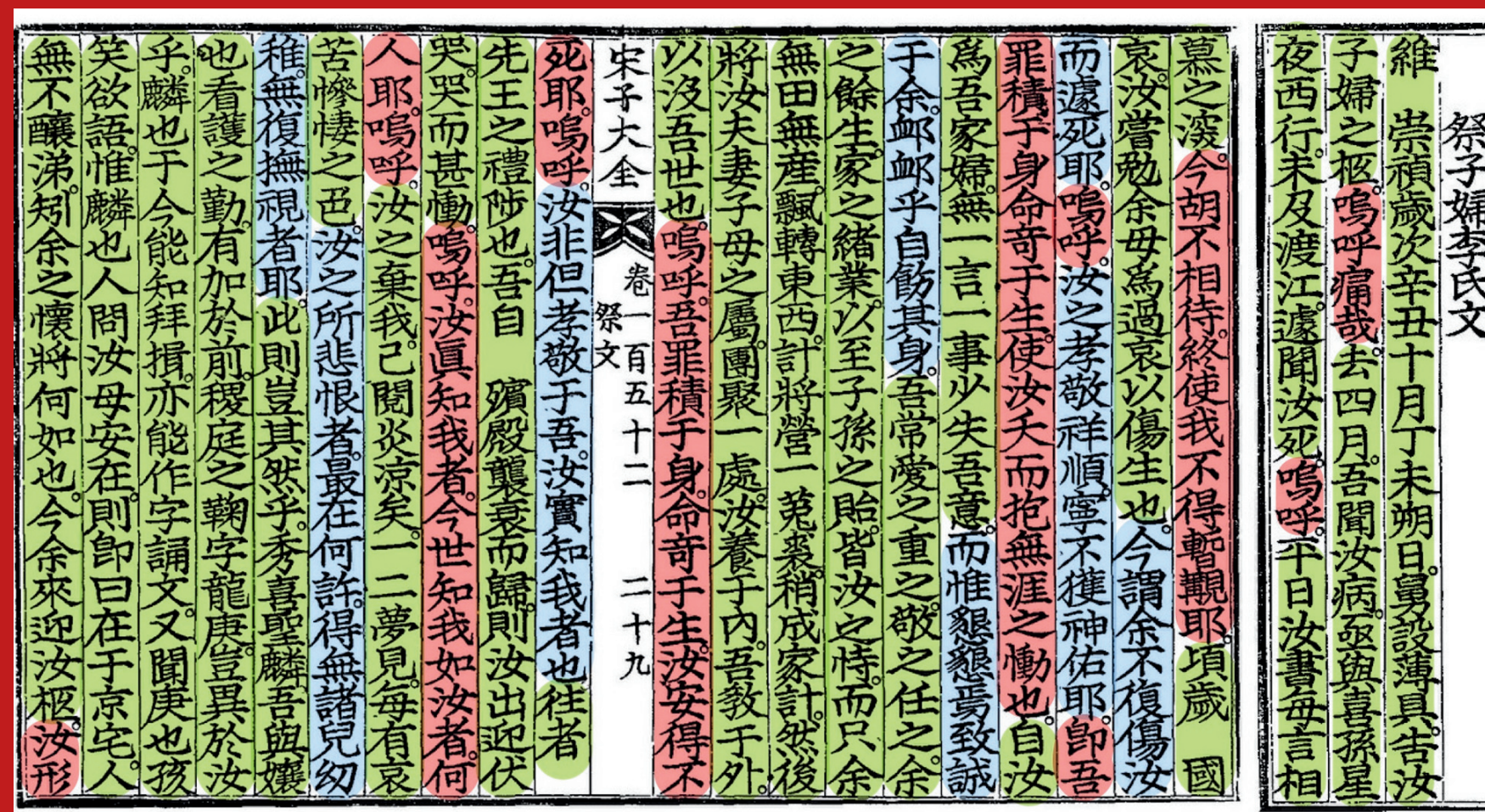
Speaking of Life to/about the Dead: Character and Subject Constitution in Korean Mourning Ritual Texts of the 16th–18th Centuries

C03 (Strand “Narrating Life”)

Summary

Funerary orations (*chemun* 祭文), a Sinic genre widely employed by Korean Confucian literati of the Chosŏn period, typically interweave lament, eulogy of the deceased, and narrative parts. In studying these narrations, the subproject pursues two aims with two interconnected approaches:

- analysing communicative function, it asks about constitution of self and personhood.
- analysing literary techniques, it queries the genre's contribution to a premodern Korean literary toolbox for character configuration



Song Siyŏl (1607-1689), “Chemun for my daughter-in-law, Mrs Yi”, 1661

Topical CONTRIBUTIONS to the CRC

- Narrative elements in non-narrative genres (→ e.g. A03, A04, B05, B06).
- Literary character configuration (Strand C), also beyond individual texts (→ A05, C01).
- Overlays between oral and written literary spheres, ritual, dialogue (→ C05, B04).

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Korean Studies

A03 Krause
A04 Morenz
A05 Setzer-Mori

B03 Gunsenheimer
B05 Ruggemeier
B06 Schwermann

Sources

- Core corpus: around 40 *chemun* selected from three authors representing a broad range of Late Chosŏn intellectual traditions.
- Ancillary corpora allowing comparison with:
 - *chemun* by authors with special interest in narrativity.
 - narrative techniques in other biographical genres.
 - techniques of character configuration in fictional narrative.

Methods

Close reading of the core corpus:

- Themes of narration.
- Textual structures and the specific place of narration.
- Narrative modes, also as clue for implied audience.
- Narrative techniques.

Comparison within and beyond the genre:

- Recurring patterns of character delineation.
- Typology of narrative techniques.

Computational methods as need arises, e.g. corpus linguistic methods.