

Sharing of Knowledge: The Pragmatism of Hangeul Creation as Concealed in *Shinchoonshi*

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Abstract: *Shinchoonshi* is the longest-maintained Coterie in the 60s. Moreover, it is the Coterie founded by poets who debuted through writing contests, Shinchunmoonnye by newspapers, and it reflected the vivid flow and change of the literacy geography of Korea in the 60s. Most of all, the Coterie is the evidence of the Hangeul Generation's emergence and the concealed utterance of Hangeul Consciousness visualized on it. The compilation of *Shinchoonshi* 13th transformed into horizontal writing and the exclusive use of Hangeul. Shin Se-Hun, the new editor and Hangeul Generation, led the Coterie under the critical acceptance of the national policy of the exclusive use of Hangeul. It is pragmatism. Just as the invention of Hangeul aimed to solve the difficulties arising from the difference between sounds and letters and to share knowledge based on Hangeul, *Shinchoonshi* also chose to experience the aesthetics through Hangeul. Finally, this study contradicts the research so far that Hangeul Consciousness germinated only in the literacy magazine, Ppurigipeunnamu (뿌리깊은나무) in 1976. In addition, the strategic choice of horizontal writing and the exclusive use of Hangeul was the symbolic change of the zeitgeist in the 60s literacy, confirming that *Shinchoonshi* was seeking a new literary subject against the current literacy cycles.

Keywords: *Shinchoonshi*, The Exclusive Use of Hangeul, Hangeul Consciousness, Pragmatism, Horizontal Writing, Zeitgeist, Hangeul Generation

1. Introduction

During the 60s in Korea, freedom and Coterie occupied symbolic meaning. After the Independence of Korea and the Korean War, Korea suffered historic suffocation of poverty and division. Crossing through the political vortex of 4·19 and 5·16 in the 60s, the epochal thesis of “freedom” and the movement to seek the “identity of Korean literature” was condensed into the exploration of the classics and “Hangeul Consciousness.” This was a continuous trend after the Independence of Korea in 1945. It was only possible in the 60s that it was somewhat out of the Korean War's trauma so that it could be detected in the literary arena through deep exploration. In particular, this also led to the smooth change from the existing literary circles that grew up learning Japanese in the Japanese Colonial Period to the Hangeul Generation, who grew up learning Hangeul after the Independence of Korea. This dynamic of historical and literary exploration made the 60s the sprout of the Hangeul

Generation's zeitgeist. Moreover, *Shinchoonshi* was the reflection in Hangeul Consciousness by Coterie. [1]

1.1. The Hangeul Consciousness

It was December 25, 1443, that Sejong the great promulgated the *Hunminjeongeum* (訓民正音), which was the booklet with the principles of Hangeul. According to the original notation method of bibliographic materials, it is written as Sejong the Great instead of the existing notation system, king Sejong in this article. In the preface to *Hunminjeongeum*, he declared the reason for creating the Hangeul that sounds and letters did not perfectly match, so it became a semantic problem when recorded. Therefore, he attempted to solve the difference in meanings and promulgated the Hangeul. It was considered the “practical aspect, pragmatism.”

Moreover, Sejong the Great tried to create Hangeul to write down Korean sounds ideally. Furthermore, he tried to overcome the semantic limitation caused by recording using

Chinese characters: Korean is a language in which ending and post-positions play an important role rather than the word order. Later, Princess Jeung-Ui (貞懿) also solved the difficulties of *Donggukjeongun* (東國正韻: the book that summarized the correct phonology of Chinese characters) style pronunciation in produced sounds. Finally, Sejong the Great, Princess Jeung-Ui, and other young scholars experimented with the Hangeul's utility in the *Seogbosangjeol* (釋譜詳節: book based on Buddha's biography in Hangeul) and *Worincheonggangjigok* (月印千江之曲: a book containing songs praising the merits of Buddha). [2]

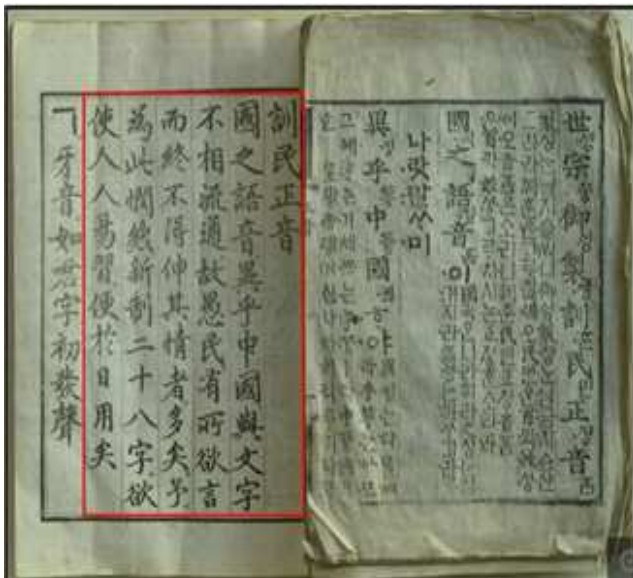


Figure 1. Hunminjeongeum (訓民正音) [3].

It was the main discussion about who created Hangeul on the subject of the creation. According to Figure 1, we can verify the aim of Hangeul Creation: “Chinese and Korean are different from each other, and the meaning does not work (國之語音, 異乎中國, 與文字, 不相流通).” Sejong the Great's sole invention became orthodoxy through bibliographic materials these days. [4] He was aware of the need for phonetic characters that could better reflect authentic sounds, as stated in the preface of *Hunminjeongeum*. Therefore, he tried to solve the limitations that the *Donggukjeongun* style pronunciation to denote original sounds. Also, Hangeul is a phonetic character that anyone can quickly learn and communicate. In short, the motivation for its creation was the practical aspect of relieving the inconvenience caused by the difference between writing (letter) and language (sound).

1.2. Media and Shinchoonshi

The Coterie, *Shinchoonshi*, was the fruition created by Sinchunmunye (新春文藝), the annual spring writing contest by the newspaper. Therefore, a brief exploration of Sinchunmunye's historical development makes it possible to understand the fierce literary discourse surrounding the existing literary circles and the Hangeul Generation in the

literary arena of the 60s. In detail, “Sinchunmunye” was first used in the *Maeilsinbo* (Maeil Daily Newspaper) in 1919. However, “Shinchun (新春)” was already used in the sense of the feast since the Korean Dynasty era (918-1392). [5]

The *Maeilsinbo* used “Shinchun” to mean the New Year or hope. “Sinchunmunye” replaced it with “hopeful literature for New Year” in 1912 and became synonymous with a writing contest in 1919. Since then, the *Dongailbo* (Donga Daily Newspaper), the *Chosunilbo* (Chosun Daily Newspaper), and the *Hangugilbo* (Hangug Daily Newspaper) have held writing contests since 1955. In short, Sinchunmoonnye became an official process and the place for the debut of the 60's literary aspirants. Most importantly, the newspaper led the writing competition. In those days, newspapers were the only media and institutions transmitting political, cultural, and economic information. Therefore, their new literary currency is bound to be sensitive to the realities of that era. [6] Moreover, they were closely associated with the newspapers that had become their conduit and supporters. Many newcomers made a living in the media line, such as newspapers, publishers, or magazines. Born in this background, *Shinchoonshi* had no choice but to react sensitively to the times. By becoming a deity through official debuts by the famous newspapers, they could have a defiant status in the established literacy geography.

In detail, Shin Se-Hun, who belonged to the Hangeul Generation in the *Shinchoonshi*, was responsible for editing and forcing the compilation's transformation in the *Shinchoonshi* 13th. Their homogeneous strategy also made them react sensitively to the current national policy or political situation. And it was driven by the influence of the media, where they debuted.

1.3. Coterie, Shinchoonshi

The poets of each newspaper, Sinchunmoonnye, came together. Therefore, we agreed to write poems on the Coterie, and as proclaimed in the headline, we took the first step in the name of *ShinChoonShi*. We are grateful for the hard work of Park, I-Do, for welcoming the edit. (Gi) (Hong, Yun-Gi, 1963, 42) [7].

ShinChoonShi is the Coterie published the first issue on April 1, 1963. The 13 poets who came to the official debut through the “Sinchunmunye” participated as the founders. They needed to publish Coterie, *ShinChoonShi*, to overcome the reality of the paper shortage to publish their poems. [8] It was the primary purpose of Coterie's founding. Unlike other literary magazines or Coterie, it started with lyrics without a Preface that committed école or their identity.

Significantly, *ShinChoonShi* was the longest-lasting Coterie in the 60s. Also, the newcomers evolved the Hangeul Generation's Hangeul Consciousness to the compilation of *ShinChoonshi*. As the creative poet's driver, the “Hangeul Consciousness,” the mediator of the poems, is bound to be critical.

In particular, Hangeul Consciousness is the evidence of the efforts to reflect zeitgeist in the Coterie compilation. Moreover, it was embedded in horizontal writing and sharing

aesthetic experiences in Hangeul. For details, the 60s was when the scientific, systematic research achievements of the mother language and studies accumulated after the Independence of Korea. Indeed, the Hangeul Consciousness of the Hangeul Generation realized the urgent necessity to share the aesthetic experience in Hangeul. So, they embodied new literary trials in the Coterie, considered a mountain trail in the 60s.

Without a Preface, they published the Coterie only with poems and recorded “graffiti” or the editor’s comments. Searching for their identity or orientation of theirs in the Coterie, this article could track the école through the only page called “graffiti” and other editors’ comments. As mentioned earlier, *ShinChoonShi* began to reflect Hangeul Consciousness on the pages in earnest from the 13th (published on May 15, 1968), when Shin Se-Hun was in charge of editing.

1.4. The Problem Is What Was the Strategic Principle of *Shinchoonshi*

This article focuses on the meaning of the transformation of the Coterie’s compilation and what the purpose was to reflect Hangeul Consciousness in *Shinchoonshi*. The exclusive use of Hangeul and horizontal writing reflected the awareness of the 60s: Hangeul was a poetry tool and the object of esthetic experiences. Simultaneously, it shared its vein with the fundamental spirit of Sejong the great’s Hangeul Creation. Sejong the Great created Hangeul because of the practical spirit of sharing knowledge through it.

So far, there are countless studies on Hangeul, starting with the analysis of Hangeul’s founders and research on the purpose of its creation. However, no analysis of the Hangeul Consciousness and its zeitgeist symbolized by Hangeul in connection with literacy magazines or Coterie in the 60s except for Yu, Chang-Min, and Lee, Soo-Kyung. [9]

Yu, Chang-Min noted that the identity of *Shinchoonshi* should be understood from the perspective of the 60s Generation. Going on a step further, Lee, Soo-Kyung, mentioned that Coterie reflected the Hangeul Generation’s identity driven by their debuts based on the “medium of the newspaper.” They headed for a generational peculiarity regarding novel poetic expression and resistance to the existing literary circles. Based on that, we will examine the Hangeul Consciousness manifested in the Coterie compilation through bibliographic materials. That is the sharing of knowledge based on pragmatism, which is the essential spirit of the Hangeul creation. [10]

In this article, we will explore the *Shinchoonshi* and other bibliographic materials to trace how the exclusive use of Hangeul and horizontal writing was the key strategy of *Shinchoonshi*’s Hangeul Generation based on “pragmatism.” That is also a new counter-argument to the previous study that *PpurigiPeunnamu* (뿌리깊은나무) was the first magazine to express the Hangeul Consciousness and to make horizontal writing take root in 1976. [11]

2. An Overview of the Background of the Hangeul Consciousness in *Shinchoonshi*: Focused on the History of the Exclusive Use of Hangeul

Korean history and culture were restored with the medium of “Hangeul” in the 60s. Simultaneously the literary circles were trying to reconstruct the national literature through the exploration of classics and the literary creation with the medium of “Hangeul.” Ironically, the national policy of “the Exclusive Use of Hangeul” was not achieved. Furthermore, the condition of the literary circles in the 60s was political tension between the existing literature circles, who wanted to keep the cultural heritage and the hegemony, and the Hangeul Generation, emerging anew.

The Exclusive Use of the Hangeul Movement, which started as soon as the Independence of Korea, aimed to eradicate the last vestiges of colonial legacy. However, the government’s intervention in that movement became the unexpected driving force behind the new political centripetal point for the Exclusive Use of the Hangeul. In liquidating the remnants of Japan, the Korean Language Society started a national language class (1945.9.11.-9.24), and the students became the main pillars and began the implementation meeting of the abolition of the Chinese characters. On December 8, 1945, a group of people from all walks of life gathered to announce the abolition of the Chinese characters (Han-Mun) and the use of horizontal writing. On October 9, 1948, in the presence of many members of the National Assembly, government officials, and students, The Exclusive Use of the Hangul Law was promulgated (Law No. 6). However, in effect, the Chinese characters and Hangeul were used interchangeably.

Regarding the Literature Ministry’s documents on November 6, 1965, the government-led exclusive use of the Hangeul appropriation carried out under the grand thesis of liquidating the remnants of the colonial legacy was unsuccessful. In addition, many scholars and famous figures have pointed out the problem of its state-led movement. Remarkably, they opposed the Exclusive Use of Hangeul to clarify its meaning in literary and academic fields, even though it is helpful in everyday life. Even though there was a supplement to convey the exclusive use of Hangeul, Chinese characters could be used together, but it was not practiced.

According to the National Archives data, in January 1958, an Exclusive Use of the Hangeul Code of Practice was implemented, requiring government offices to write all documents in Korean. The Park, Jeong-Hui’s government, which came to power on May 16, 1961, began work on converting the current law to Hangeul in 1962 and 1963. [13]

It explains why the conservatism of the intellectual class attributed to the failure of the exclusive use of Hangeul. So did the intellectuals of the Joseon Dynasty, who held important posts in the government. The ability to read Chinese characters, Han-Mun, was considered the criterion of knowledge and power. That was why the intellectual class

in Joseon Dynasty was also profoundly concerned and severely opposed to the creation of Hangeul and Sejong the Great.

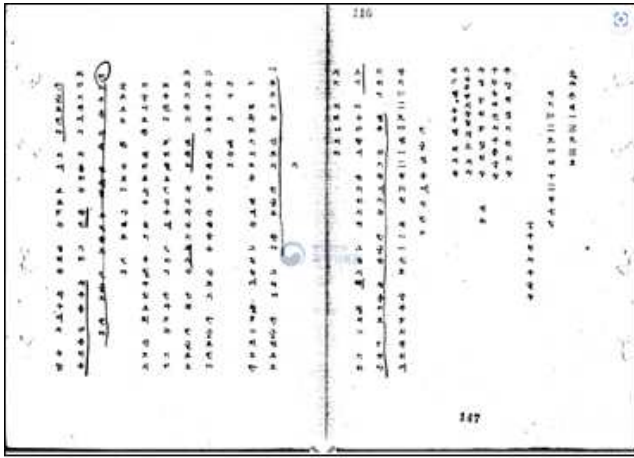


Figure 2. Document for the exclusive use of Hangeul [12].

Thus, academics and social leaders monopolized the knowledge written in Han-Mun. Indeed, Han-Mun was hard-to-learn for ordinary people. Those who opposed the creation of Hangeul in the Joseon Dynasty were in common with the intellectuals in the 60s. Was not their desire for the monopoly of knowledge and its power maintained? Furthermore, another decisive reason for opposing the exclusive use of Hangeul was due to a state-led policy.

Sharing knowledge played a prominent role in supporting the exclusive use of Hangeul. Unfortunately, this state-led exclusive use of Hangeul has not been effective in practice due to the opposition of the Bar Association and intellectuals such as professors. The Bar Association resisted the state-led decentralization of Hangeul by issuing a statement stating that the appropriation of Hangeul violated the people's fundamental rights. [14]

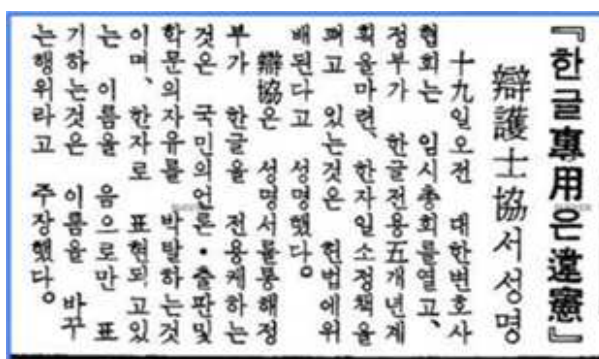


Figure 3. The manifesto of the Bar Association.

3. The Strategy of *Shinchoonshi*: The Hangeul Consciousness

The Exclusive Use of the Hangeul Movement, which the Korean Language Society led to liquidate the trace of Japan after the Independence of Korea, faced fierce opposition as

the government intervened. It resulted from the conflict between the greater good and the political desires surrounding that movement. In the background of that conflict, *Shinchoonshi*, who had begun their creative writings through the compilation of the *Coterie*, silently projected horizontal writing and the exclusive use of the Hangeul rooted in Hangeul Consciousness. Furthermore, they paid attention to current affairs, such as the Vietnam War. As mentioned above, *Shinchoonshi* was very sensitive to the political issue. Those were *Coterie*'s unique identity and reflected their debut in a writing contest, *Sinchunmunye*, sponsored by the newspapers.

Notably, the exclusive use of the Hangeul and horizontal writing were another strategy for them to express their identity as the Hangeul Generation. In other words, they wanted to share their aesthetic experiences by using Hangeul. Simultaneously, that was the driving force to get the hegemony of the literary circles by sharing esthetic experiences as the pragmatism of Sejong the Great. Sejong the Great created the Hangeul to share knowledge with ordinary people. Moreover, it could work the breakaway of power from the ruling clique who fully understood the Chinese characters. This strategy worked in the same way as the *Shinchoonshi*, who also revealed a solid desire for the supremacy of literary circles by generalizing the Hangeul Consciousness.

3.1. The Innovation of the *Coterie* Compilation: *Shinchoonshi* vol. 13

The above Figure 4 and Figure 5 clearly show the change in *Coterie*'s compilation. The *Shinchoonshi* 12th was published on January 25, 1967, and the *Shinchoonshi* 13th was published on May 15, 1968. The most significant difference between them was horizontal writing. The missionary Jon Ross used the first horizontal writing, "Beginners of the Korean Language," in 1877. After then, horizontal writing subsequently established itself in its contemporary style through the complex works of Ju Si-Kyung and the Hangeul Society. [15]

Specifically, discussing horizontal writing as scientific and practical has yielded many significant results from various papers. Horizontal writing is not as efficient or readable as vertical writing. Therefore, horizontal writing began when a missionary took his native language writing method, horizontal writing, and described the Korean language in it rather than being more efficient or scientific than vertical writing. In addition, the origin of Ju, Si-Kyung's modern consciousness was Japan and the West. We guess that he began to write Hangeul horizontally by taking Western horizontal writing. However, his recognition that language is the bowl for Korean thought made him devote himself to exploring and preserving the Pure Korean Language. In short, he and the Korean Language Society declared the necessity of horizontal writing and the exclusive use of Hangeul to reconstruct the identity of Korean. Along with its movement, it was developed into the current Hangeul horizontal writing.

On the other hand, *Shinchoonshi*'s transformation, *Coterie*

compilation from commercialized vertical writing to horizontal writing, was closely related to the Hangeul Consciousness of the Hangeul Generation in the 60s. In other words, it is the aspect of “pragmatism” based on the science inherent in Hangeul. To explain the principle of the creation of Hangeul, it is a geometric letter made of dots and lines and a letter modeled after the shape of the pronunciation organ in phonetics. Hangeul is also a scientific letter created by observing and applying phenomena. [4]

Therefore, the spirit of applied science dissolved in this Hangeul was able to meet with the future-oriented practical value of sharing knowledge through “Hangeul.” This explains why *Shinchoonshi* chose horizontal writing and exclusive use of Hangeul in *Shinchoonshi* 13th. It was also a concealed strategy already ignited through “graffiti.” This was the evidence of why *Shinchoonshi* declared to be ready for a full-fledged attack onwards to the literary circles in the 14th editorial comments. Furthermore, their maintenance is nothing more than the Coterie strategy centered on the Hangeul generation’s reflection in the 60s: sharing the exclusive use of Hangeul, the horizontal writing, and the aesthetic experience of Hangeul’s pursuit to show their self-identity.

Kang, In-Sep was one of the members of the Coterie and referred to it as “Consciousness and Intellectual Language” in his article, and *Shinchoonshi*’s poems reflected the critical perception of reality and the manipulation of the Korean language. Also, Lee, Geun-Bae thanked his involvement in *Shinchoonshi* for his status. In short, Coterie’s members could embody and find out their characteristics in *Shinchoonshi*. [1] Finally, these references answer why *Shinchoonshi* chose to dedicate the exclusive use of Hangeul and horizontal writing in the period of debate surrounding the exclusive use of Hangeul.



Figure 4. Vol. 12.

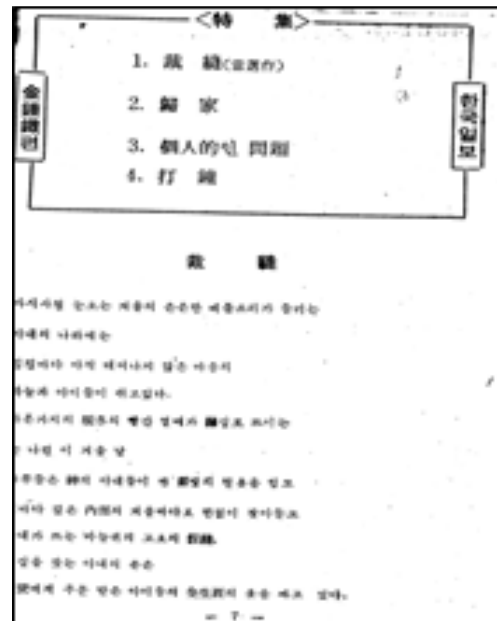


Figure 5. Vol. 13.

3.2. The Strategic Grounds for the Transformation of the Coterie Compilation

Shin Se-Hun, a new editor, started transforming the Coterie compilation with exclusive use of Hangeul and horizontal writing in march 1968. what were the meanings of implementing actively in *Shinchoonshi*?

The first is a reaction to the sensitivities of the era regarding their background that they made their debuts as Sinchunmunye, sponsored by newspapers. Moreover, most earned their bread as journalists, reporters, or editors in the publishing company. Also, the social condition in the 60s was under several government censors. Therefore, all publications had to follow strict government guidelines, and they had no choice but to sympathize with the national policy: the Exclusive Use of Hangeul Policy.

The second is a reflection of the Hangeul Generation's Hangeul Consciousness. Shin Se-Hun was a poet who started his career in *Chosunilbo* Sinchunmunye. Moreover, his poetry world rooted in the classics and reflected a reality with a critical view. He participated in the Vietnam war and watched the reality of the war, the deconstruction of humanity. He could not find any justification for killing. Also, he was a poet who sang the indigenous sentiments of Koreans through a series of “Samiingok (思美人曲),” which was the stereotyped love song, especially for the king. [1]

Above all, the main driver was the Hangeul Consciousness of the Hangeul Generation. Also, they felt more urgently the need for aesthetic practice using the medium of “Hangeul” than the existing literacy circles.

Therefore, it was natural for *Shinchoonshi* to realize that the Hangeul Generation’s identity only could be achieved through the exclusive use of Hangeul and horizontal writing.

Those explain that poetic trajectory rooted in tradition and critical realism transformed the Coterie compilation to the exclusive use of Hangeul and horizontal writing. Furthermore,

When we recall that modernism began with the accusation of civilization, the awareness of language, and the illumination of the problem of human beings losing meaning in civilization, it is clear that the poet's poems were based on the perception of language and reflected the modernistic philosophy of that era. In addition, the incarnation of traditional beauty embodied in traditional rhythms is also a unique characteristic property of *Shinchoonshi*. In short, this series of poetry reviews reiterated that *Shinchoonshi* had carried out an endless search for a methodology of how modern poetry could gain poetic depth using the medium of Hangeul.

4. Conclusion

From a modern literary standpoint, exploring classics and traditions inherited in the 60s was a more inclusive discourse than any other era. There were different perspectives and validity of the various actors in politics, culture, and literature surrounding the exclusive use of Hangeul.

Shinchoonshi 13th occupies the difference between the perspective in the 60s and other eras regarding the meaning of horizontal writing and the exclusive use of Hangeul. The Coterie, *Shinchoonshi*, is long-lasting in the 60s. Thus, as we have seen, it could be a living trace as long as it reflected the flow and changes of the 60s literature. It was indeed the zeitgeist of the 60s that *Shinchoonshi* implemented horizontal writing and exclusive use of Hangeul in their pages. It meant the Hangeul Generation's emergence was the new subject in the 60s literacy circles. Also, their growth on the ground of it was the achievement of the 60s zeitgeist.

As we had tracked earlier, the new subject in 60s literacy circles made the official debut through the Shinchunmoonnye and grew through its coterie. Those made it possible for them to deeply embed the critical perception of reality. In addition, the fact that implemented Hangeul Consciousness in the Coterie compilation in the 13th symbolized Hangeul Consciousness's sprout. Also, the new Generation's zeitgeist was something in common with the spirit of Hangeul: sharing knowledge using it. That is pragmatism, the same as the essential spirit of the Hangeul creation of Sejong the Great. He created Hangeul to solve the difficulty in communication due to the difference between language and writing. Sharing knowledge through Hangeul instead of the hard-to-learn medium of Chinese characters is the practical perspective of Sejong the Great: pragmatism.

The significance of this article is as follows. *Shinchoonshi* also chose horizontal writing and the exclusive use of Hangeul for sharing critical world awareness and aesthetic experience through Hangeul. Moreover, the Hangeul Generation, who had to resist the current literary cycles and try to seize the supremacy of the field of literature, strategically built horizontal writing and the poem's creation using the "medium of Hangeul" from the 13th.

Also, this article offers concrete shreds of evidence to call for the revision of existing studies: the literacy magazine, *Ppurigipeunnamu* (뿌리깊은나무) in 1976, attempted

horizontal writing, and the exclusive use of Hangeul. Also, this article could provide a cornerstone for how Hangeul Consciousness was born out of *Shinchoonshi* in the early 60s.

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