

# Transformation in the Bible

## — Jonah's Transformation in Chapter 2

### Through the Bakhtin's Lens of Authoring —

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## 1. Introduction

My own experience in reading Jonah's narrative in Ch. 2 is an interesting one. Every time I read the book of Jonah, I found myself out of breath, as if my heart had been torn into pieces. I did not understand why, until I tried to distance myself from the text. This is why Jonah's suffering, as shown in his prayer, reminds me of my own past sufferings of loss. I went through my loss of a loved one, and it was an experience so bitter that I even contemplated suicide. It was the only time I had such thoughts in my life. To console myself, I withdrew to Catholic retreats. It is there that I heard of the sufferings of others and realized how significant the problem of suffering is to other Christians as well. Since then, I have struggled to understand the meaning of suffering in relation to God. By and large, by the grace of God, this struggle has transformed my

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understanding of myself, others and God. Concerning this experience, the following questions arise:

*What happens to Jonah in the belly of the fish? How is Jonah changed inside and outside the fish?* It is evident that Jonah is transformed in Ch. 2, considering that Jonah disobeys God's command in Ch. 1 but later obeys it in Ch. 3. In Ch. 1 Jonah flees from God when he hears God's command to declare doom upon Nineveh. Yet Jonah complies with God's wish to report the message of God to Nineveh. Although God's two orders in Ch. 1 and 3 are the same to Jonah, he responds to them differently. It follows from this that Jonah must have experienced something significant enough to change his attitude toward God.

This paper aims to prove that the suffering of Jonah spiritually transforms him in Ch. 2; Jonah experiences spiritual transformation through suffering. Jonah suffers from fear of death in the belly of the fish. Further, in this exposure to mortal death, he also experiences the absence of God in his life (2:5). Jonah realizes anew who God is and this understanding has changed from the creator of cosmos (1:9) to the God of salvation (2:10). As mentioned above, Jonah himself is also transformed from a disobedient prophet to an obedient one in Ch. 2. It is when he suffers in the waters of death that he is spiritually transformed in his understanding of God and himself.

My reading of the book of Jonah may be a journey in the quest of meanings. Through the reading, we make not only the text but ourselves meaningful; the reading of text is a process of "construction of meaning".<sup>1)</sup> To give the text meaning, we must interpret the text, and thus here I interpret the book of Jonah as sacred scripture. The major concern of interpreting the Bible as Scripture is "a transformative process of personal and communal engagement with the biblical text."<sup>2)</sup> A transformative reading of the Bible attempts to transform the understanding of God,

1) Barbara Green, *Jonah's Journey* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 1.

2) Sandra M. Schneiders, "Biblical Spirituality," *Interpretation* 56 (2002), 136.

human beings and the relation between the two. At the same time, such a reading must be meaningful for both the person and “the believing community” in which he or she shares with the faith.

Such an approach, Sandra Schneiders holds, includes an historical, literary, and readerly approach to the Bible.<sup>3)</sup> She claims that a transformative reading requires “original meanings from the past” of the sacred text, “textual meanings” and “implications for the present”.<sup>4)</sup> A transformative interpretation means neither thrusting all the thoughts into the text, nor setting the text in the court of history. Rather, a transformative reading lets the text be and addresses the reader of its own accord from all perspectives, historical, literary and readerly.<sup>5)</sup>

To perform my transformative reading, I will make use of Bakhtin’s concept of authoring, which I assume to be one of the best terms to explain spiritual transformation. According to Bakhtin, authoring is the process of constructing or drawing of self and others, including human beings and God.<sup>6)</sup> Through the theory of authoring, we can easily acknowledge the transformation in the understanding of God and human beings. Therefore the analysis of Jonah’s transformation in terms of authoring will be of great use as it clarifies the alteration in Jonah’s understanding of God and himself in Ch. 2 (as compared to Ch. 1 and 3).

Then I will develop the concept of authoring into that of re-authoring in the history of translation of the book of Jonah. Jonah as text has its own history. In particular, Jonah has many versions of translations throughout history. Historical differences among these bring about other differences, linguistic, cultural, social, philosophical and religious. Assuming that translation is another creation, we can conclude that a translator draws the

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<sup>3)</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>4)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6)</sup> See Barbara Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship: An Introduction*. (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 33-57. In the next chapter, I will explain the meaning of authoring in some detail.

hero and characters differently from the source text in the translator's horizon; translators re-author the text based on their horizons. In particular, diverse translators re-author Jonah's transformation differently while translating from his or her horizon, just like an author. The fact that the re-authorings of translators are founded on their horizons implies that a reader's "re-authoring or co-authoring" can also be different, depending on what horizon they have.

Finally I will try to clearly set forth how I, as a reader, co-author Jonah's transformation from my horizon. A reader sees the text from his or her horizon, reconstructing the hero and characters from a different angle than that set by the original author. Taking into account that my horizon influences my co-authoring of Jonah, it is now necessary for me to explain in what horizon I am thus situated. My horizon is that I am a Christian in understanding the sacred text. Even though Jonah was written before Christianity appeared in history, I, as a Christian, understand God in terms of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the trinity. Before handling Jonah's transformation, let us look at Bakhtin's authoring.

## 2. Authoring of Jonah

### 2.1. Bakhtin's Authoring

Authoring can be grasped in the three aspects of self, other and art. First, all human beings author both their lives and themselves; we have a relationship with our objectified selves. Authoring is founded on the distinction between the self and other.<sup>7)</sup> This is applicable even in the relationship between us and our selves. Bakhtin calls this exotopy, i.e., outsidedness. As Green puts it, "outsidedness is prerequisite for authoring."<sup>8)</sup>

<sup>7)</sup> Barbara Green, *How Are the Mighty Fallen?* (New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 166.

<sup>8)</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.

According to Bakhtin, the authoring of the self is composed of three stages: *I-for-myself*, *I-for-the-other*; *the-other-for-me*.<sup>9)</sup> I see myself and the other, seeing how the other looks at me. I, as an author, give form to myself and the other alike, just as an author gives form to a hero.<sup>10)</sup> Here I consider the authoring of the self as constructing the self.<sup>11)</sup> To illustrate, *I-for-myself* is the self-portrait, while *I-for-the-other* is the portrait of the other. *The-other-for-me* is my portrait mirrored by the other. I project myself into the space of the other deeply and return to my own space, integrating what I have perceived.<sup>12)</sup> Authorings of the self and other are closely connected with each other. So I am drawing myself while portraying the other, and I am portraying the other while drawing me. The shaping of the other can be said to be necessary for me to form myself. Green defines the authoring of the self as “a dialogue between my internally felt self (my image of myself) and the self-assessment that others hand me (including both how they size me up and how I see them).”<sup>13)</sup>

Second, we are authoring others, that is, “constructing of others”<sup>14)</sup>. Just as we perceive what others think we are, they perceive what we think they are, as well. The latter results from our authoring of others, while the former comes from our being authored by them. While we are authoring others, we are being authored by them at the same time.

Authoring happens dialogically between me and others in that we are authoring and being authored. Dialogism indicates that an utterance is

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<sup>9)</sup> *Idem.*, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship*, 34.

<sup>10)</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays* by M. M. Bakhtin, with a foreword by M. Holoquist ed., M. Holoquist and V. Liapunov. trans., Liapunov (Austin: University of Texas, 1990), XXX.

<sup>11)</sup> Green understands the authoring of the other as the constructing of the other. I infer from this that the authoring of the self can be regarded as the constructing of the self. Consult *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>12)</sup> Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship*, 34

<sup>13)</sup> *Ibid.*, I compare the authoring of the self to a dialogue between a self-portrait and portrait. It is in balancing what I think I look like and what I think the other thinks I look like that I realize who I am.

<sup>14)</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

“double-voiced” or “double-worded”, addressing and being addressed.<sup>15)</sup> To author is not uni-directional but bi-directional between one person and the other. Authoring does not intend to control the authored, and thus the reason authoring always exists reciprocally between the two poles.

Third, an artist may author his or her own art. In some aspects, the authoring of a hero is a representation of the author himself or herself in the text.<sup>16)</sup> “To express himself, the author must objectify himself.”<sup>17)</sup> This means an authored hero might be an alter ego of the author.<sup>18)</sup> The fundamental relationship between an author and a hero is not homological but rather dialogical, in that an author is in dialogue with a hero situated outside the author. “A hero is a subject as well as an object of authorial creativity.”<sup>19)</sup> A created hero is polyphonic in that a hero is not passively manipulated, but rather independently active. An authored hero is free from the monological control of author.

As noted above, the possibilities of the process of authoring, whether of others or a hero, is founded on the fact that human beings are mutually situated outside and over against other beings.<sup>20)</sup> For Bakhtin, this outsideness or extopy implies the “surplus of seeing”<sup>21)</sup>. No one can see “the world behind his back.” It is only others who can see the places I cannot see myself. I can see what you cannot see and vice versa. “The surplus of seeing” is useful in making it possible for us to fill in the horizon of another human being in our own horizon.<sup>22)</sup> We shall next

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15) Ibid.

16) Giovanni Palmiere, Milan, ““The Author” according to Bakhtin... And Bakhtin the Author” in *The Contexts Of Bakhtin : Philosophy, Authorship, Aesthetics*, ed. David Shepherd, (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1998), 46-47.

17) Ibid., 46.

18) Green, *Mikhail Bakhtin and Biblical Scholarship*, 37.

19) Ibid., 38.

20) Bakhtin, *Art and Answerability: Early Philosophical Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, 22.

21) Ibid., 25.

22) Ibid.

observe how the authoring process can be applied to Jonah's transformation.

## 2.2. Jonah's authoring of God and Himself in His Prayer

In order to find "textual meanings", I shall analyze Jonah's construction of God in Ch. 2, employing the literary term of authoring by Bakhtin. As already mentioned, the concept of authoring will be very useful in explaining Jonah's transformation. Jonah suffers from the threat of death, which motivates him to remember his relationship with God and change his understanding of God. Through the otherness of God, Jonah becomes aware of who God is and who he himself is. Based on the relation between the self and other, the process of authoring will clearly explain how Jonah is spiritually transformed in his suffering of the fear of mortal danger. Even though Jonah was cast into the sea by sailors (1:15), he attributes his crisis in the sea to God (2:4). In 2:4, Jonah acknowledges that it is God that "cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas" (2:4). As George M. Landes puts it, the sailors may be understood as "the human instruments which execute the divine will."<sup>23</sup>) From this we can infer that Jonah's distress is God's punishment of Jonah. Jonah in his predicament initially draws God as a punisher of his disobedience to God's command. Simultaneously he constructs himself as a reproacher against God's punishment.

Jonah constructs himself as drowning and facing mortal danger in the water. So Jonah uses many death images of water in his prayer. As a Hebrew poem usually gradually intensifies the phases of plight, so does Jonah.<sup>24</sup>) He describes the waters of death in what follows: "the flood surrounds him" (2:3); "all waves and your billows passed over him" (2:3);

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<sup>23</sup>) George M. Landes, "The Kerygma of the Book of John," *Interpretation* 21 (1967) 24.

<sup>24</sup>) Jack M Sasson. *Jonah: A New Translation with Introduction, Commentary and Interpretations*. (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 171.

“the waters closed in over him” (2:6); “the deep surrounded him” (2:6); “weeds were wrapped around his head at the roots of the mountains” (2:7); “I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever” (2:7). In 2:4, 6, Jonah portrays the water dashing to him, to his neck, and even to his head. In 2:7, Jonah depicts him eventually descending to the netherworld. Jonah repeatedly describes the water descending downward into the sea like the flood and the deep in 2: 4, 6.<sup>25)</sup> The motif of descent, claims James S. Ackerman, is intended to “cover the entire range of human suffering, sense of weakness and isolation”.<sup>26)</sup>

In his experience of the danger of drowning, Jonah’s authoring of God is altered from a punisher of his act (2:4) to the ground of being, or a life-giver (2:5). Jonah experiences a distance from God, which can be understood as death, bearing in mind that “death means radical separation from God, a sense of being bereft of divine presence, deprived of the power and effective help of the divine Being”.<sup>27)</sup> Jonah recognizes the absence of God as death<sup>28)</sup>. At the same time, Jonah becomes aware of the sight of God which is in contrast with the absence of God.<sup>29)</sup> The presence of God is to be represented in the phrase, “your holy temple.”<sup>30)</sup> Jonah considers the presence of God as equal to life; Jonah begins to author God as the source of life.

25) Jonathan Magonet, *Form and Meaning: Studies in Literary Technique in the Book of Jonah* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 40.

26) James S. Ackerman, “Satire and Symbolism in the Song of Jonah.” In Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson, eds., *Traditions in Transformation: Turning Points in Biblical Faith*. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1981), 226.

27) Landes, “The Kerygma of the Book of John”, 25.

28) The meaning of death is not only physical but also spiritual. Primarily the waters of death are threatening to him. Furthermore Jonah recognizes that the separation from God ultimately refers to a spiritual death as deadly as a physical death for the faithful. See Terence E. Fretheim. *The Message of Jonah: A Theological Commentary*, (Augsburg: Publishing House, 1977), Ch 7.

29) Sasson, *A New Translation with Introduction, Commentary and Interpretations*, 181.

30) Duane L. Christensen. “The Song of Jonah: A Metrical Analysis” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104 (1985) 227.



While constructing God as the source of life, Jonah draws himself as a petitioner to God for life (2:5). He petitions God to look again upon God's holy temple (2:5), pleading for God to become his ground being once again. Recalling the past in which God answered his request, Jonah implores God to hear his groaning voice(2:3). In 2:3, 5, Jonah constructs him as a supplicant for his life.

Jonah draws God as his savior from the clutches of death in 2:7. Here Jonah prominently contrasts the motif of the descent and of ascent, and distress and deliverance.<sup>31)</sup> The motif of the ascent culminates in 2:8 with Jonah's prayer coming to God, into His holy temple.<sup>32)</sup> Through the stark contrast between the motifs of descent and ascent, Jonah rhetorically draws God as the ground of his salvation.

Eventually Jonah authors God as merciful (2:9). The merciful God is drawn in stark opposition to a punitive God (2:4). Deeply moved by the mercy of God, Jonah praises God "in the voice of thanksgiving" (2:9) and proclaims that "Deliverance belongs to the Lord" (2:10). This declaration demonstrates the ultimate authoring of Jonah of God. Jonah becomes convinced that it is God who delivers him from his suffering of mortal danger in the belly of the fish. Finally God appoints the fish to vomit Jonah out upon dry land.

As well, Jonah authors himself a pledger who will fulfill his promise with God. Remembering that he is a disobedient prophet of God, we can see that he changes his attitude toward his role as a prophet. He makes a promise with God to do whatever he vows to God; he will fulfill his responsibility as a prophet, although he may disagree with God's command. His re-awareness of his duty as a prophet, we can guess, makes him follow his second mission from God.

By means of the process of Jonah's authoring, I have shown that Jonah

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<sup>31)</sup> Michael L. Barre. "Jonah 2,9 and the Structure of Jonah's Prayer," *Biblica* 72 (1991) : 246.

<sup>32)</sup> *Ibid.*, 244.

is transformed in Ch. 2. In the midst of the suffering of mortal danger, Jonah imputes his distress to God. Jonah initially draws God as being punitive for his disobedience to the first command of God. Near death, Jonah's authoring of God suddenly changes. The meaning of death is enhanced from a physical death to a spiritual one. Jonah experiences the absence of God as being equal to death and God's presence as life itself. In this regard, Jonah depicts God as the ground of his life. Moreover, Jonah authors God as merciful, not punitive. At last Jonah confesses that God is the cause of human deliverance. Jonah's first authoring of God as a punisher stands starkly opposite to his final authoring of God as a merciful deliverer. Through the transition of Jonah's authoring of God, we observe that Jonah is transformed in the understanding of God. For now, we should remember that it is the suffering of Jonah that motivates him to construct God anew.

Simultaneously we can simply understand that his authoring of himself changes from disobedient to obedient. Jonah at first constructs himself as a sufferer and reproacher against God in the water. Overwhelmed by the terror of death, he changes his mind. He petitions God to reconcile himself with God. After a certain rescue from the danger in the water, he radically changes his self-portrait to a prophet. Promising with God to do whatever he vows, Jonah regains his self-image of a true prophet to be faithful to this role.

### 3. Re-authorings of Translators

In the quest of the "original meanings from the past," I will explore the re-authorings of translators throughout history. The concept of re-authoring helps us to understand how their distinct horizons differently affect translators' re-authoring the same text, especially Jonah's transformation in his prayer. This will also show how polyphonic the text is and that

different versions of translation are dialogical. Since each translation version has its own horizon, each has its “surplus of seeing” which other versions do not have. The “surplus of seeing” will give rise to the “surplus of meaning” which makes the text more meaningful.

Among extant different translations, I will focus on the Masoretic Text, Septuagint and Vulgate because of their distinctions from one another.<sup>33)</sup> The Hebrew text we will employ is traced back to the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.<sup>34)</sup> The Septuagint stems from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.<sup>35)</sup> The Vulgate was written between 390-405 A.D.<sup>36)</sup> Comparing the three translation versions, we will view some changes among them. The first change is that the expressions of the LXX and V are more personal than the MT. The second is that the LXX is less certain as to God’s salvation than MT, while the V is sometimes sure or other times unsure. Jonah’s assurance of deliverance in the V relies on whether the V is conscious of Jesus Christ while translating.<sup>37)</sup> The V is totally distinct from the MT and LXX in that the V is aware of the existence of Jesus Christ.

The different re-authorings between the LXX and V comes from the different historical horizons. The historical backgrounds of the LXX and V are different - the former was written in the pre-Christian era by the Jewish Diaspora, the latter in the early-Christian era by a Christian. It follows from this that the Jews in the Diaspora are not certain of God’s salvation, while the early Christians are. Let us see how differently other translators re-author Jonah.

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33) I will abbreviate Masoretic Text, Septuagint, and Vulgate as MT, LXX and V respectively.

34) Phillis Tribble, “Studies in the Book of Jonah,” (Ph. D. diss. University of Columbia, 1963), 5.

35) *Ibid.*, 7.

36) *Ibid.*, 8.

37) See Jerome, *Commentaire sur Jonas* (Les Editions du Derf: Paris, 1985) Reading Jerome’s commentary on Jonah, we can easily see that Jerome draws Jonah as being certain of salvation in the translation in the case where Jerome is aware of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, Jerome portrays Jonah as uncertain of the rescue in the other case.

קראתי מצרה לי אל־יהוה וַיִּעֲנֵנִי 2:3

מבטן שאול שנעתי שמעת קולי

(I called to the LORD out of my distress, and he answered me out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice.<sup>38)</sup>

In 3a, ἐβόησα ἐν θλίψει μου πρὸς κύριον τὸν θεόν μου (“I cried to the Lord, my God out of distress”). LXX re-authors the relationship between God and Jonah more personally than the MT, adding the expression τὸν θεόν μου (“my God”) to πρὸς κύριον (“to the Lord”).<sup>39)</sup> In particular, the insertion of the 1<sup>st</sup> person genitive in the original phrase enhances the personal relation between God and Jonah. Considering that Jonah cries out in his plight, the LXX translator reconstructs Jonah as more desperately dependent upon God. The V is faithful to MT, saying *clamavi de tribulatione mea ad Dominum* (“I called to the Lord in my distress”). That is, V re-authors Jonah in the same way the MT authors him.

ואני אמרתי נגרשתי מנגד עיניך 2:5

אך אסתר להביט אל־היכל קדשך

Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight I shall certainly look again upon your holy temple?'

While the V in 5b re-authors Jonah as certain of his rescue equally with the MT, the LXX does not so differently from the MT. The translation of the particle אך... makes the difference. The particle אך... may have three functions in 5b; temporal (“no sooner, just as”); emphatic/assertive (“truly,

<sup>38)</sup> I will mainly follow the English translation of New Revised Standard Version (1989).

<sup>39)</sup> Larry Perkins, “The Septuagint of Jonah: Aspects of Literary Analysis applied to Biblical Translation,” *Bulletin of The International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies* 20 (1987) 48.

surely”); restrictive/adversative (“nevertheless”).<sup>40</sup> Considering Jonah’s hopeless situation, the meaning of  $\text{וְאַף}$  Jack M. Sasson affirms, is “truly,” or “nevertheless.”<sup>41</sup> The V also takes the word, *veumtamen* (“nevertheless”). On the other hand the LXX modified  $\text{וְאַף}$  from an assertive or adversative particle to a question particle. The Greek,  $\alpha\pi\alpha$  has the meaning of a question which is somewhat rhetorical.

In short, Jonah in the V is re-authored as certain of the effects of his prayer, while in the LXX is not so.<sup>42</sup> In his commentary on Jonah, Jerome explains why he re-authors Jonah as confident of his prayer. Jerome understands the relation between the Father and the Son in the following: *sicut templum Patris Filius est, ita templum Filii Pater*<sup>43</sup> (“the Son is the temple of the Father, so the Father is the temple of the Son.”) The reason Jerome expresses this confident phrase, I believe, is that he is conscious of Jesus Christ as the temple of God. On the other hand, the Jewish translators of the LXX in the Diaspora were not so certain of God’s salvation because it was a time of despair.

2:7 לקצבו הרים ירדתי הארץ ברתיקה בשער לעולם

ותעל משחת הני יהנה אלהי

at the roots of the mountains. I went  
down to the land whose bars closed upon  
me forever; yet you brought up my life  
from the Pit, O LORD my God.

Both the LXX and V In 7b re-author Jonah as unsure of his rescue. The Hebrew phrase, *ותעל משחת הני יהנה אלהי* (“you brought up my life the Pit, O Lord my God) has been greatly altered in texts other than the MT.

40) Jack M. Sasson, *Jonah: A new Translation with Introduction, Commentary and Interpretations*, (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 179.

41) *Ibid.*, 179.

42) Perkins, 49.

43) Jerome, *Commentaire sur Jona*, 238.

In the LXX, this phrase is totally changed. Instead of the subject Lord in the MT, the subject in the LXX is φθορά ζωής μου (“corruption of my life”) and the assertion in the MT is modified into the 3<sup>rd</sup> person construction, saying ἀναβήτω φθορά ζωής μου κύριε ὁ θεός μου (“And let the corruption of my life ascend, O Lord my God”).<sup>44)</sup> The V, on the other hand, changes the tense in the MT from the consecutive imperfect to the future: *sublevabis de corruptione vitam meam* (“you will bring up my life from the corruption, O Lord my God”). The changes of tense mean that Jonah in the V is not so confident as he is in the MT. In the LXX and V, Jonah’s assertion that God has brought him up from the pit in the MT is lessened or altered into a hope that God will do so in the future.<sup>45)</sup>

2:8 בַּהֲתַעֲמָה עָלַי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־הַתְּהוֹמָה וְזָכַרְתִּי

וַתָּבוֹא אֵלַי תְּפִלָּתִי אֶל־הַיְכָל קֹדֶשְׁךָ

As my life was ebbing away, I remembered the LORD; and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.

As in 7b, the LXX and V in 8b re-author Jonah as unsure of his prayer’s outcome. The writer of the MT declares that he remembered the Lord as his life perished and his prayer arrived at God into his holy temple.<sup>46)</sup> The other texts, LXX and V, follow the earlier part of this verse, but transform Jonah’s assertion into a plea to God. The LXX uses the optative, ἔλθοι, saying καὶ ἔλθοι πρὸς σέ ἡ προσευχή μου εἰς ναὸν ἁγίον σου (“and may prayer come to you into your holy temple”) Like the MT, the V uses jussive: *veniat ad te oratio mea ad templum sanctum tuum* (“may my prayer come to you into your holy temple”). The translators of the LXX and V describe that Jonah is not confident that the prayer

44) Perkins, 49.

45) Ibid., 49.

46) Ibid., 49.

reaches God but just hopes so.

2:10 וְאֲנִי בְקוֹל תּוֹדָה אֶזְבְּחֶה-לְךָ  
 אֲשֶׁר נָדַרְתִּי אֶשְׁלֶמָה  
 יְשׁוּעָתָה לַיהוָה:

But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you;  
 what I have vowed I will pay.  
 Deliverance belongs to the LORD!

In 10b appears the the most assertive confession in Jonah's prayer: לַיהוָה יְשׁוּעָה ("Deliverance belongs to the Lord!"). This confession is like a "theological dictum" in the MT.<sup>47)</sup> The MT portrays Jonah as assertive in his confession. However, this assertive phrase in the MT is transformed in the other texts. The LXX re-authors the relationship between God and Jonah more personally than the MT. The LXX uses this phrase in the following way: ὅσα ἠέξάμην ἀποδώσω σοι σωτηρίου τῷ κυρίῳ ("I will pay what I vowed to you, the Lord of deliverance").

Similarly a serious corruption appears in the V as follows: *tibi quaecumque vovi reddam pro salute Domino* ("I will pay what I vowed to the Lord for the deliverance"). In his commentary on Jonah, Jerome understands the deliverance is for all, not for Jonah alone. He says *ego autem, qui pro multorum salute deuoratus sum, in voce laudis et confessionis immolabo tibi* ("I, however, who suffered for the deliverance of many, will sacrifice to you in the voice of praise and confession").<sup>48)</sup> Such an explanation is derived from the awareness of the death of Jesus Christ. Jerome understands Jesus Christ in what follows: *quia Pascha nostrum immolatus est Christ* ("since Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed").<sup>49)</sup> Jerome in the V re-authors Jonah as dedicated to the salvation of all, just

47) Ibid., 50.

48) Jerome, *Commentaire sur Jona*, 238

49) Ibid., 256.

as Jesus Christ was. Aware of Jesus Christ, Jerome depicts the relation between God and Jonah more personally than ever.

To sum up, the LXX and V re-author Jonah differently from the MT on the basis of their historical horizons. At first, the horizon of the LXX is the Jewish Diaspora in which the *Sitz im Leben* was in despair but in pursuit of personal comfort from God. The horizon of the V is early Christianity where Jesus Christ became the center of interpretation for the Bible and gave Christians new hope and the responsibility of the salvation of all. As a result, the re-authoring of the LXX of Jonah is more uncertain and personal than the MT. The re-authoring of Jonah of the V is more certain and personal than that the LXX. What is confusing to us is that the re-authoring of the V is sometimes certain and other times uncertain. As already observed, the reason for this is that the translator of the V, Jerome, is sometimes faithful to the source text and other times to his horizon. Here we conclude that the “surplus of seeing” gives birth to the “surplus of seeing.” Assuming they, in a sense, may all be called authors, whether an original author or a translator, we find that the horizon of an author has the “surplus of seeing” the others does not have, resulting in the “surplus of meaning.” We shall now examine how different a voice the “surplus of seeing” causes a reader to have, assuming a reader may be another author.

#### 4. Co-authoring of a Reader

To search for “implications for the present,” I, as a reader, will co-author or re-construct Jonah’s transformation from my present horizon. Co-authoring requires a reader to identify the “reader’s standing point and place of orientation”.<sup>50)</sup> Therefore it is now a prerequisite for me to identify my “standing point” and orient my horizon to the text. In reading

<sup>50)</sup> Green, *How Are the Mighty Fallen?* 165.



the sacred text, my horizon is as follows: I am a Christian who believes in the “triune God revealed in Jesus Christ into whose divine life is incorporated by the gift (grace) of the Spirit”.<sup>51)</sup>

We can reconstruct Jonah as a self-negator and God as the lover of all, associating Jonah’s prayer with that of Jesus in Gethsemane. The prayer of Jesus Christ in Gethsemane is very illuminating in understanding Jonah. Jesus also undergoes the suffering of physical and spiritual death during prayer. In anticipation, Jesus is terrified by imminent death (Mt 26:38). Then Jesus experiences the conflict of his will against God’s will, which may have meant a spiritual death for him (Mt 26:39) because the clash of man with God contains possibilities of separation from God. Jesus overcomes the terror, both physical and spiritual, through the negation of the self (Mt 26: 39, 42). Self-negation is one of the teachings of the Cross. Like Jesus in Gethsemane, the cause of the suffering of Jonah derives from the conflict between God’s will and Jonah’s will. God commands Jonah to declare doom upon Nineveh but Jonah seeks to escape God (1:2, 3). In suffering mortal danger, Jonah pleads God to deliver him from death and is saved. However, Jonah’s price to pay for this deliverance is self-negation in order to carry out his answerability as a prophet. The later protest of Jonah against the salvation of Nineveh in Ch. 4 proves that Jonah negates his wish not to deliver God’s message to the people of Nineveh; Jonah learns to obey God’s will, regardless of what God requires from him.

Next we can reconstruct God as the lover of all, whoever they are. For what do Jesus and Jonah suffer, in the belly of the fish and Gethsemane, respectively? Surprisingly it is enough and the reason is the same – they both experience the suffering of mortal danger for the sake of all human beings. From the Bible we can undoubtedly learn that God loves all peoples, regardless of race, nationality, sex and age. The book of Jonah has good reason to be read for the deliverance of all. This might be

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<sup>51)</sup> Schneiders, “Biblical Spirituality”

unreasonable for the Jewish eyes on the grounds that it is not until Jesus that the concept of salvation of all appears. From my Christian perspective, it is fair to be convinced that salvation history began from the time of creation. Additionally, God is described as merciful enough to love even animals and plants as well as the people of Nineveh in the book of Jonah.

What I attempt in this section is not to follow traditional interpretations of the Bible as allegory or typology throughout church history.<sup>52)</sup> What I say is neither that there is a double meaning (superficial or deep) nor that Jonah is a type of Jesus. I merely attempt to fill in the horizon of the text through my “surplus of seeing” which the text does not offer. To do so, I first project myself into the text and experience the text from within the horizon of the text, through the process of authorizing and re-authorizing. Then, I try to reconstruct the text from within my horizon. In sum, I am co-authoring Jonah from within my horizon of being a Christian, after my projecting myself into the horizon of Jonah and experiencing Jonah from within his context. Then we can reconstruct Jonah as a self-negator following God’s will, and God as the lover of all for a Christian reader. Here Jonah’s prayer can be regarded as a prayer of self-negation in the relationship between God and man. I will connect these points with a transformative reading for the sake of Christian sufferers, especially those whose distresses might lead to suicide.

## 5. Conclusion

To understand the meanings of suffering, I have dealt with the transformation of Jonah. My writing addresses why suffering is meaningful for us. First of all, it is significant in that it gives us an opportunity to spiritually transform ourselves. So it is the case with Jonah, and as such there is no doubt that Jonah is transformed in his suffering. What does

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<sup>52)</sup> See Green, *Jonah's Journey*, Chapter 2.

Jonah's transformation mean for us? We must begin a journey to find this answer. To reach the meaning, we must interpret the text. Since I understand the book of Jonah as the sacred text, its reading means a transformative reading for my self and my faith-sharing community. A transformative interpretation motivates me to think about God and my self. Such a reading includes an historical, literary and readerly approach to the Bible and I find the concept of Bakhtian authoring best for me to do so. Thus I have tried to read Jonah in terms of authoring, re-authoring and coauthoring.

By means of authoring, I have pursued the meanings of Jonah's transformation through his suffering. I have seen how spiritual transformation has changed the understanding of God and man. Besides the author, we have learned that translators and readers participate in authoring from their horizons which are different from the original horizon. In this regard, we find that a translator and reader can be other authors.

What is the result of a transformative reading for me? To do a transformative reading, I tried to project myself into the horizon of Jonah and to sympathetically understand his suffering. Next I encountered more Jonahs than one in the history. There are other Jonahs in the LXX and V than the Jonah in the MT. These Jonahs are different with one another, depending on what horizons they have. Finally I saw the Jonahs from within my own horizon. In so doing, I found that I myself am a Jonah, as well. Through the process, I can now confess that it is my suffering that causes me to transform myself in relation with God. I also find that there are innumerable other Jonahs who are suffering in the world. I want to share my meanings from the book Jonah with them.

From hence, let me undertake a transformative reading for my faith-sharing community. I suppose that my community is the congregation of sufferers, especially those who are so miserable as to contemplate suicide. I will start with my last conclusion that Jonah is a self-negator and God is a lover of all.

As Jonah shows, a great spirit of Christianity is self-negation. Jesus Christ teaches us the way to Christianity - the spirit of the Cross. Jesus Christ is the first to fulfill self-negation in the Cross. Self-negation is an absolute obedience to God's will, forsaking one's own will; self-negation is the opposite of human will. In particular, Christians are required to give up even the will to commit suicide because it is not God's will for us to do so. Next God is merciful enough to love sufferers. As shown with Jonah, God loves the Hebrews and the people of Nineveh. He even loves animals and plants. Of course, God loves the sufferers such as Jonah. Furthermore, God gives them deliverance through God's presence equally as with Jonah. His enormous love, as proven by the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is always ready for loving us, whoever we are.

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&lt;국문요약&gt;

## Transformation in the Bible

— Jonah's Transformation in Chapter 2

Through the Bakhtin's Lens of Authoring —

임성욱

위 소논문의 목적은, 운문과 기도문의 형식으로 구성된 2장에 초점을 맞추어, 예언자로서의 요나, 소예언서로서의 요나, 그리고 독자로서의 요나의 영적인 변화를, 각기 바흐친의 authoring, re-authoring, 그리고 co-authoring의 개념을 이용하여, 탐구하는 데 있다.

먼저, 저자는 먼저 바흐친의 authoring 개념을 이용하여, 예언자로서의 요나의 변화(transformation)를 탐구하였다. 바흐친에 따르면, authoring은 자아와 타자를 구성하는 과정으로 이해될 수 있다. 요나서 2장에 나타난 요나의 기도문을 통해, 저자는 요나의 신과 자아에 대한 이해가 1, 3장과 확연히 다르게 변화되었음을 확인하였다.

다음, 저자는 바흐친의 re-authoring 개념을 중심으로, 번역의 역사에 나타난 요나서의 변화(transformation)를 추적, 비교하였다. 요나서의 번역자들은 모두 자신의 역사적 지평에 근거하여 인물로서의 요나를 새롭게 재구성(re-authoring)하였다. 여러 번역서 중에서도, 소고는 히브리 성경(Masoretic Text), 70인경(Septuagint), 그리고 불가타 성경(Vulgate)을 비교, 연구하였다. 이 과정을 통해, 저자는 시대적 배경을 달리하는 번역자에 따라 인물로서의 요나에 대한 이해가 상이하게 변화되었음을 밝혔다.

마지막으로, 저자는 바흐친의 co-authoring 개념을 사용하여, 독자의 변화(transformation)를 탐구하였다. 바흐친의 co-authoring 개념에 근거하면, 독자도 번역자와 마찬가지로 독자의 지평에 근거하여 인물로서의 요나를 재구성(co-authoring)하지 않을 수 없다. 본 저자의 지평, 즉 기독교인으로서의 지평에 근거하여, 저자는 요나를 새롭게 재구성(co-authoring)하였다.

본고는 요나서 2장에 나타난 요나, 요나서, 독자의 변화(transformation)를 통하여 성서에 나타난 영성(spirituality)을 탐구하였다.