

THE CROWD, POPULISM, AND JESUS IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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## Abstract

Many countries in the world historically have undergone significant changes in their societies due to their political situation. In particular, South Korea is currently experiencing a very volatile period in its government. Huge Korean crowds brought about the impeachment of their former President, Geun Hye Park, without any violence. In the process, South Korean crowds carried candles in their hands as the symbol of peace as they protested against the President. Thus, it is known as the candle protest or candlelight struggle.

This thesis illuminates the crowd in the Gospel of John that tries to change their country through making Jesus their king, a perspective of the crowd that potentially could change their society. This thesis identifies who the crowd is in the Gospel of John, clarifies their historical background, and defines the role the crowd plays in John. It further explains how to understand the crowd in John, and discusses what Jesus means to them.

For those topics, *minjung* theology, a Korean theology of the masses, or the crowd, is used as a bridge between the crowd in John and the South Korean crowd. Although *minjung* theology was first applied on the crowd in Mark, the crowd in John can be understood as another *minjung*, extended from the crowd presented in Mark. To figure out the identity of the crowd, John's narrative about the crowd is scrutinized, and the disciples in John, including the Beloved disciple, Peter, and Judas Iscariot are also reinterpreted, since each represents a significant key to understanding the crowd in this process. Moreover, the populism and populist theory in current politics also is employed to connect the crowds of the world, especially in South Korea, and the crowd in John. This populism theory helps the reader of the Gospel of John to understand the desire of the crowd in John and the theory shows who Jesus is for the crowd and why the religious authorities killed Jesus, unlike the crowd in John. Finally, this thesis points out that the crowd in John is not essentially different from the crowds in the world today, as they try to change their society or governments in their respective countries.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible Commentary
<i>ACME</i>	<i>AMCE: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies</i>
<i>ATI</i>	<i>American Theological Inquiry</i>
BAGD	Bauer, Walter, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, and Frederick W. Danker. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature
BBC	British Broadcasting Company
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
BL	Bible and Liberation
BMW	The Bible in the Modern World
BP	The Bible and Postcolonialism
<i>BR</i>	<i>Biblical Research</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
C21	Center for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Studies
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>The Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CNBC	Consumer News and Business Channel
CNN	Cable News Network
<i>Colloq</i>	<i>Colloquium</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>CR: The New Centennial Review</i>
<i>Crit Inq</i>	<i>Critical Inquiry</i>
<i>EcR</i>	<i>Ecumenical Review</i>



EDNT	Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
<i>Fem Form</i>	<i>Feminist Formations</i>
Hermeneia	Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
HeyM	Heythrop Monographs
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JFSR</i>	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>J. Philos. Educ.</i>	<i>Journal of Philosophy of Education</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement</i>
<i>Kunapipi</i>	<i>Kunapipi: Journal of Postcolonial Writing and Culture</i>
<i>Language</i>	<i>Language: Journal of the Linguistic Society of America</i>
LNTS	The Library of New Testament Studies
<i>MELUS</i>	<i>Multiethnic Literatures of the United States</i>
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NIB	New Interpreter's Bible
New lit. Hist.	<i>New Literary History</i>

NIBCNT	New International Bible Commentary on the New Testament
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>Phoenix: Journal of the Classical Association of Canada</i>
Pelican	The Pelican New Testament Commentaries
<i>PMLA</i>	<i>Publications of Modern Language Association</i>
RBS	Resources for Biblical Study
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
Semeia	Semeia Studies
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>SocAnim</i>	<i>Society and Animals</i>
<i>SozW</i>	<i>Soziale Welt</i>
SP	Sacra Pagina
<i>Stud. World Christ.</i>	<i>Studies in World Christianity</i>
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TTC	Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquia
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The parable of the feeding of the five thousand people is one of few stories that the four gospels of the New Testament have in common. Each story provides the number of the persons in the crowd and that event must have been sufficiently striking to the authors of the four gospels that they felt it important to include the number in the narrative. There are some records about what Jesus had done in the story. According to each gospel, Jesus healed some people among the crowd (Mt. 14:14, Lk. 9:11), taught them all (Mk.6:34, Lk. 9:11), and also fed them all (Mk. 6:41, Mt. 14:19, Lk. 9:16, Jn.6:11) and the crowd was enthusiastic about following Jesus (Mk. 6:33, Mt. 14:13, Lk. 9:11). However, there is one distinctive aspect in the story of the feeding of the five thousand people in the Gospel of John. In Jn. 6:15 (NRSV), we read, “When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.” In this verse, there are three significant meanings and they generate several questions as a congregation reflects on them, especially among Korean people who may experience a comparable situation to the event reflected in that verse.

The first meaning is that John shows the purpose of the crowd that gathered and came to Jesus, whereas the Synoptics do not articulate the purpose of the crowd. John reveals that the purpose of the crowd is to enthrone Jesus as their king (6:15). This purpose is obviously political. If not, would it be possible to gather a mass of people in a place without a specific purpose? Recently, a similar case occurred in South Korea in which huge waves of people, people of all ages, gathered together in the center of the city

of Seoul, the capital of South Korea. From October 2016, huge number of people had gathered in protest with candles in South Korea against the Government. It became known as “the candle protest.” The first protest recorded thirty thousand people on the 30th of October 2016.<sup>1</sup> Following that evening, the accumulated total number of participants was about seventeen million people as the protest continued until the 4th of March 2017.<sup>2</sup> As a result of these candle protests, the crowds were successful in bringing about the impeachment of President Geun Hye Park, the previous President of South Korea. The crowd started to gather voluntarily without any headquarters, crying out their demands to the politicians, and pressured politicians and their parties. Truly, the crowd in Korea became the protagonists of change in this historic event. Actually, this candle protest was not the first attempt to change South Korean society. There have been several protests of resistance in South Korea. A representative resistance is the “June Struggle” in 1987. While the candle protest was ignited due to an unauthorized shadowy figure in President Geun Hye Park’s administration, the June struggle was ignited by the indirect Presidential election and the deaths of two undergraduate students, Jong-cheol Bak, who died due to being tortured, and Han-yeol Yi who died from the tear gas bombs of the police. The Korean crowd in 1987 finally switched the designation system of the next president to the direct election of the President through the June Struggle.<sup>3</sup> Another major resistance is the “April Revolution” that occurred on 19th April, 1960. As a result of this April Revolution, on 26 April 1960, the first President of South Korea, Syngman Rhee,

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<sup>1</sup> Hyun-ju Ock, “[From the Scene] Angry Protesters Demand Park Step down,” *The Korea Herald*, October 30, 2016, accessed April 9, 2018,

[http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20161030000209&ACE\\_SEARCH=1](http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20161030000209&ACE_SEARCH=1).

<sup>2</sup> Hyun-ju Ock, “[Newsmaker] Koreans Win Global Prize for Candlelight Rallies,” *The Korea Herald*, October 16, 2017, accessed April 9, 2018, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20171016000953>.

<sup>3</sup> George Lakey, “South Koreans Win Mass Campaign for Democracy, 1986-87,” *Global Nonviolent Action Database*, July 6, 2011, accessed April 9, 2018, <https://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu/content/south-koreans-win-mass-campaign-democracy-1986-87>.

resigned.<sup>4</sup> Although there were also other protests of resistance that did not end with successful results, those three major protests must be acknowledged in South Korean history as being successful as a result of the efforts of the people, of the “crowd,” in those three resistances. In each of those cases, they accomplished their goals successfully and brought about positive change to their respective governments.<sup>5</sup> These movements or resistances are not only phenomena in South Korea. The Brazilian people resisted as a nation and brought about the impeachment of their President, Dilma Rousseff, in 2016.<sup>6</sup> Many Japanese today are also asking for the resignation of Shinzō Abe, the Prime Minister of Japan.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, large crowds in the U.S not only have cried out “Not my President!” to protest their last presidential election,<sup>8</sup> but also teenagers especially are now asking their President Donald Trump for total reform of the gun laws nationwide.<sup>9</sup> In other words, the crowd is still taking action for their desire for change in their countries throughout the world, and the desires of the crowds are definitely politically motivated. Why does the crowd make political demands in each country? Why did the crowd in John make a political demand? What was the *milieu* of the crowd then and now? Does the

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<sup>4</sup> Kyung Moon Hwang, “Remembering April 19, 1960 Student Revolution,” *The Korea Times*, April 16, 2014, accessed April 09, 2018, [http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2016/05/633\\_155532.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2016/05/633_155532.html).

<sup>5</sup> Even though the crowds in the April Revolution and June Struggle in South Korea achieved their purposes, another military coup and dictator took over the regimes soon thereafter.

<sup>6</sup> Simon Romero, “Dilma Rousseff Is Ousted as Brazil’s President in Impeachment Vote,” *The New York Times*, August 31, 2016, accessed April 9, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/01/world/americas/brazil-dilma-rousseff-impeached-removed-president.html>.

<sup>7</sup> Andy Sharp, “Japan Protesters Call for ‘Liar’ Abe to Resign Over Scandal,” *Bloomberg*, April 14, 2018, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-04-14/japanese-protesters-demand-liar-abe-s-resignation-over-scandal>.

<sup>8</sup> Matea Gold, Mark Berman, and Renae Merle, “‘Not My President’: Thousands Protest Trump in Rallies across the U.S.,” *The Washington Post*, November 11, 2016, , accessed April 16, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/11/10/not-my-president-thousand-protest-trump-in-rallies-across-the-u-s/?utm\\_term=.31a41c8c1c99](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2016/11/10/not-my-president-thousand-protest-trump-in-rallies-across-the-u-s/?utm_term=.31a41c8c1c99).

<sup>9</sup> Taylor Swaak, “‘High Schoolers in Washington, D.C. Stage ‘Lie-In’ as Student Cry for Gun Reform Grows Louder” *Newsweek*, February 19, 2018, accessed April 16, 2018, <http://www.newsweek.com/high-schoolers-washington-dc-gun-reform-grows-louder-811989>.

crowd in John have a similar background to the crowds in the world now? How should the crowd now understand and interpret John?

The second meaning is that the crowd in John had a strong desire in their minds that they shared. The crowd, which included thousands of people, had similar thoughts about enthroning Jesus. The fact that so many people had shared similar thinking suggests that they had a great aspiration, and the fundamental ground of the crowd was that they desperately wanted to change their society and power structures. Generally speaking, the aspiration of the crowd was highly motivated toward bringing out about change to their political context. However, there were also some people who regarded the crowd as a dangerous phenomenon. They were the religious authorities (11:48), especially the political group. Of course, some people may argue that the main target of the religious authorities was Jesus, not the crowd. However, Jesus could not be the target of the religious authorities without the crowd. The religious authorities perceived that the force behind Jesus was the crowd following him and, for that reason, Jesus was viewed as a dangerous man by them (11:48, 12:19). However, the crowd that advocated for someone other than the current religious authorities existed not only during Jesus' era.

According to New Testament scholars, Richard Horsley and Tom Thatcher, there were also other crowds in the history of Israel around Jesus' time. A crowd arose in Judea, Galilee, and Perea after Herod the Great.<sup>10</sup> In 66 CE, more than thirty years after the death of Jesus, the crowd experienced the "Jewish War" and it continued until 73 CE.<sup>11</sup> There was also a movement of the crowd caused by a Samaritan prophet in 36 CE. There

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<sup>10</sup> Richard A. Horsley and Tom Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publ. Co., 2013), 24.

<sup>11</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 24.

was also another crowd led by the prophet, Theudas, ten years later.<sup>12</sup> Acts also speaks about four thousand people who were led by an Egyptian (Acts 21:38) and it occurred in the late 50s CE.<sup>13</sup> In other words, an assembled mass of people with great aspirations represented a danger and a threat to the religious authorities, not only the leaders of the crowd.

South Korea also had an analogous situation. The South Korean people had a great motivation to change their society and corrupt government power in 2012, not only last year with the candle protest. At that time, populism had become a hot issue in South Korea, due to the people's frustration toward the current political system, and it was treated as a threat to democracy by the conservative side that was the ruling party without an accurate definition of populism.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, some South Korean people who stand on the conservative side of the political arena face a crisis now because they believe that President Geun Hye Park was impeached by the mass people's protest that they describe as populism.<sup>15</sup> If so, is it populism that people just desire and hope? Is populism negative in the society all the time? What is the meaning of populism exactly? Did the crowd have a populism in John and was it negative? As mentioned above, are Brazilian people, Japanese people, and American people also a danger and negative in their society? How should one of the crowd now read and understand John in relation to the crowd's aspiration? Those misunderstandings and questions occur due to misuse of the term populism. The term is sometimes used negatively to denounce parties or politicians that

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> John Power, "[VOICE] Has Populism Taken over Politics?" *The Korea Herald*, April 09, 2012, accessed April 16, 2018, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20120409001225>.

<sup>15</sup> Sang-hun Choe, "South Korean Right Is Frozen, as Impeached Leader's Loyalists Won't Let Go," *The New York Times*, February 18, 2017, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/18/world/asia/south-korea-impeached-leader-park-geun-hye.html>.

follow after popularity with the people only. However, populism is the desire of people to change their politics because of hardship.<sup>16</sup> Nonetheless, the distorted meaning of populism is still prevalent in the society.

The third meaning is that the crowd in John needed a leader, or rather a new leader for them, the king of Israel. Although Jesus evaded the demand of the crowd at first (6:15), the crowd did not give up their desire and he emerged as the new leader of the crowd (6:24-25). On the other hand, the religious leaders did not recognize Jesus as a new leader and they chose to arrest him and kill him, even though they were also a part of the Israelites, another crowd (18:3, 31).<sup>17</sup> Jesus was then killed by the Roman authorities before the crowd corroborated on having Jesus as their leader, the king of Israel. There was an apparent gap between the crowd, the religious authorities, and “the Jews.” The gap among those distinct perspectives happened not only in the past, but also occurs in the present. The crowd may have their desire and also their leader. However, that leader for whom the crowd advocates can be regarded as a true positive leader by some while others may view the leader as simply being a negatively ambitious person.

South Korea also has experienced a similar situation. South Korea had a significant crisis with a politician, Chŏl-su Ahn, who is regarded as a populist by the South Korean people now, but not at the time when he first appeared in 2012. Ahn emerged as a promising politician in 2012.<sup>18</sup> Sometimes, An had the highest approval

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<sup>16</sup> For further discussion, see “1. The Populism Theory of Current Politics and Popular Movement in Jesus’ Era” in chapter three.

<sup>17</sup> There are two crowds in John: the *ochlos* and the *laos*. Further discussion about those crowds is elucidated in chapter one.

<sup>18</sup> Sang-hun Choe, “Political Star Starts Fund to Benefit South Korea,” *The New York Times*, February 6, 2012, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/07/world/asia/korean-political-star-starts-charity-to-confront-inequality.html>.



rating among the politicians of opposing parties in 2012.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, Ahn made people disappointed, and he stands now with a new party that has emerged from the impeached party.<sup>20</sup> For this reason, not only most South Korean people but also many scholars say that Chŏl-su Ahn was and is a typical populist.<sup>21</sup> This reputation is correct, if the populist is understood as a person who seeks popularity with the people for his or her own political purpose.<sup>22</sup> If An had become a candidate for President in 2012, South Korean people may have voted for him, but last year, when South Koreans impeached the President, most Korean people wanted Jae-in Moon, who was the opposition candidate. Today he is the President of Korea now. In other words, a crisis by a populist group fortunately passed, regardless of the people's will.

However, there are many countries that have or had populist crises. The representative countries with populist candidates today are the U.S, U.K, France, Italy, Austria, Finland, Australia, and Canada.<sup>23</sup> The problem is that those populists intervene into the politics or win the elections, and they cause a retrogression of politics.<sup>24</sup> This means that people's aspirations could be led in unwanted direction by the populist. The populist appears where the populism is since the populist cannot stand without popularity with the people. If so, how can the crowd discern whether such a person is a negative populist or a positive leader? How did the crowd in John come to recognize Jesus as a

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<sup>19</sup> Scott A. Snyder, "South Korea's Presidential Election Heats Up With Ahn Chul-soo's Declaration to Run," Council on Foreign Relations, September 26, 2012, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/south-koreas-presidential-election-heats-ahn-chul-soos-declaration-run>.

<sup>20</sup> He-rim Jo, "People's Party Finalizes Decision to Merge with Bareun Party," *The Korea Herald*, February 11, 2018, accessed April 17, 2018, <http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20180211000223>.

<sup>21</sup> Sang-hun Choe, "South Korea Election Turns Into 2-Way Race as Dark Horse Surges," *The New York Times*, April 14, 2017, accessed April 16, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/14/world/asia/south-korea-election-ahn-cheol-soo.html>.

<sup>22</sup> For further discussion, see "1. The Populist and the Revolutionary Leader" in chapter four.

<sup>23</sup> Ki-suk Cho, *Popyullijŭm Ŭi Chŏngchihak: Ahn Chŏl-su Wa Rosŭ Pero Ŭi Pusang Kwa Churak* [*The Politics of the Populism: Rise and Fall of Chŏl-su Ahn and Ross Perot*] (Kyŏnggi-do Koyang-si: Ingan Sarang, 2016), 54.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

person good enough to be their leader? What kind of factors or character of elements in Jesus caused the crowd accept him as qualified to their new leader? Who was Jesus to the crowd? In addition, on the other hand, how did the religious authorities and Jews come to recognize Jesus as negative threat that could destroy their tribe and country? In the perspective of the present politics, was Jesus a populist? If Jesus was not a populist, what type of leader was Jesus and how did he achieve popularity with the crowd? Is there another type of leader who can command popularity?

Those three meanings emerging from Jn. 6:15 and concerning purpose, aspiration, and leadership are the key to understanding John in relation to the crowd. Prior to probing these questions further, it is necessary to figure out who the crowd was in John. Where did the crowd in John come from? Who was the crowd in John? What kind of people did the crowd consist of? Actually, those questions about the identity of the crowd do not only concern John's Gospel. There is also *minjung* theology for Mark's crowd, one that had already been explored. Moreover, since *minjung* theology was born in the Korean context, it can be a good bridge between the crowd in John and the Korean people. Through this process, we shall discover that the crowd in John were definite protagonists in the history of Israel for the political change of their society and country, and not only did their aspiration appeared as populism but also Jesus was the leader of the crowd. In addition, the crowd in John is not essentially different from the crowds that try to change their society with political aspirations in the world today.

## CHAPTER ONE:

### The Identity of the Crowd

The first scholarly research that focused on the notion of the crowd was *minjung* theology of the Korean theologian, Byöng-mu Ahn, who concentrated on the crowd exclusively in Mark, but not in the other Gospels. Thus, it is very significant to apply *minjung* theology to see the crowd in John, since John's crowd is closely related to Mark's crowd. In addition, in the Gospels we find two Greek words for crowd, *ochlos* (ὄχλος) and *laos* (λαός), and Ahn concentrates on the notion of the *ochlos* (ὄχλος). However, the *ochlos* (ὄχλος) should be understood in relationship to the *laos* (λαός) in John because Matthew and Luke emphasize the *laos* (λαός), unlike Mark, for their theological purposes, but John uses the *laos* (λαός) to specifically strengthen the understanding of *ochlos* (ὄχλος).

#### 1. *Minjung* Theology of Byöng-mu Ahn and the Crowd in Mark

Byöng-mu Ahn developed *minjung* theology through engagement with diverse scholarly disciplines such as economics, history, literature, and the society.<sup>25</sup> Prior to constructing *minjung* theology, Ahn experienced the harsh circumstances in Korea immediately following the Korean War in the mid-1950s. The Korean people strongly needed religious comfort for their internal struggles, due to the trauma of the Korean War. At that time, Ahn realized the presence of distortional religion and religious leaders who

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<sup>25</sup> Yung Suk Kim and Jin-Ho Kim, eds., *Reading Minjung Theology in the Twenty-First Century Selected Writings by Ahn Byung-Mu and Modern Critical Responses*. (Eugene, Or.: Pickwick Publ., 2013), xi.

were operating principally for hegemony in religious fields.<sup>26</sup> In the 1970s, the Korean dictator, Chung-hee Park, and his policies of persecution ignited Ahn's *minjung* theology movement. The principal catalysts of the *minjung* movement were the labor movement in the 1970s involving numerous laborers and the Tae-II Jeon event in early 1970s; he set himself on fire in protest against unjust labor conditions, which triggered the unrest of the labor movement.<sup>27</sup> Ahn found profound similarities between these numerous laborers and the *ochlos* (ὄχλος) in Mark, and they played a key role in the movement. Therefore, Ahn connected these numerous people (*minjung* means "ordinary people" in Korean, that is *min* refers to the people and *jung* refers to the masses of the people) to *ochlos* (ὄχλος) in Mark as the main players in the movement of Jesus.<sup>28</sup>

According to Ahn, the Gospel of Mark was written based on four urgent issues. The first involved the reevaluation of the Jewish tradition that was the root of Jewish life in terms of politics, religion, and culture. The second focused on the consideration of how to deliver Christianity to Jewish Christians who had lost their country. The third was the idealized savior, Jesus, within the development of the early years of Christianity. The fourth comprised the many common Christians who were feeling the material threat of death everyday, regardless of the resurrection of Jesus and their understanding of the forgiveness of sins in relation to the death and crucifixion of Jesus.<sup>29</sup> Under those four premises, Ahn argues that Mk. 1:14-15 is the "cornerstone" of Mark's *minjung* theology

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<sup>26</sup> Jin-Ho Kim, "The Hermeneutics of Ahn Byung-Mu: Focusing on the Concept of 'Discovery of Internality' and 'Otherness of *Minjung*,'" in *Reading Minjung Theology in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Kim and Kim, 17.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Byöng-mu Ahn, "*Minjung* Theology from the Perspective of the Gospel of Mark," in *Reading Minjung Theology in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Kim and Kim, 69.

as well as the background of the economy and the culture.<sup>30</sup> In Mark 1:14-15, one reads, “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news’.” This reflects the situation in Galilee. According to Ahn’s analysis, Galilee was under the religious judgement and discrimination that were produced by the political and cultural context of “the time of rabbinic Judaism”<sup>31</sup> because Galilee, which had been regarded as a Gentile land, had been invaded by a Hellenized culture. Also, the Roman Empire divided the geographical area into the two regions of Galilee and Judea in order to promote regionalism.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Galilee was the headquarters of the political and the military resistance against Rome.<sup>33</sup> Galilee suffered under harsh economic conditions, despite the fact that the land of Galilee was rich and fertile.<sup>34</sup> Ahn asserts that this was because most Galileans were tenant farmers and day laborers,<sup>35</sup> and the politicians and the priests, all pro-Rome, were the masters of the land and did not dwell in Galilee.

This leads to the argument of why the crowd in Mark is referred to as the *ochlos* (ὄχλος) in Greek. Ahn articulates the five characteristics of the *ochlos* in Mark.<sup>36</sup> From his perspective, the following characteristics define the *ochlos*: First, the *ochlos* designates the people who not only are following Jesus but also gathering wherever Jesus

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 78. Ahn notes that he does not have a fully detailed basis for affirming this status and identity of the Galileans, but he suggests some factors about Roman policy, feudality, and taxes through citation of some scholars.

<sup>36</sup> Byöng-mu Ahn, “Jesus and *Minjung* in the Gospel of Mark,” in *Reading Minjung Theology in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Kim and Kim, 51.

was.<sup>37</sup> Although Mark does not indicate the reason that the *ochlos* follows Jesus, they are the audience for the activities of Jesus. Second, the *ochlos* was regarded as “the sinners” in society. The author of Mark groups the sinners with the *ochlos*. Third, the *ochlos* is distinguished from the disciples, but they are not rebuked at all, unlike the disciples. The *ochlos* is the antipode of Jerusalem, which is the enemy aligned against Jesus. Plus, the *ochlos* comes from Galilee, not Judea. Fifth, the *ochlos* and the authorities who are the ruling class are in tension. The authorities are wary of the *ochlos*, trying not to stir them up. In short, the *ochlos* always follows and supports Jesus in the form of the masses, and even though they are the sinners in the society but not disciples. According to these characteristics, therefore, the *ochlos* is the foundation of Jesus’ activities. Thus, Jesus without the *ochlos* could not be imagined in Mark since Jesus himself is one of *minjung*.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, Ahn argues the *ochlos*, the *minjung*, should be understood in relation to Jesus whose actions and attitude reflect the thinking of a being who focuses on the collective aspect of society and the importance of living as a social being.<sup>39</sup> Thus, to study Jesus’ activities is to study *minjung*, and Jesus and *minjung* are in “the categories of host and guest.”<sup>40</sup> In relation to this category, Ahn argues that *minjung* could identify with the narrative of Jesus. There are five features of such identification that can be found in the Markan characterization of Jesus. First, Jesus is one of *minjung* because he is also from Galilee. For this fact, Mark records his occupation (carpentry) and the argument that

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<sup>37</sup> Moreover, The word *ochlos* (ὄχλος) appears thirty-six times throughout Mark.

<sup>38</sup> Ahn, “*Minjung* Theology from the Perspective of the Gospel of Mark,” 87.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 85. Ahn derives this social biography from the term, “son of man”. According to Ahn’s argument, the origin of ‘son of man’ in Daniel has a collective and social significance, and Jesus uses the words, ‘son of man,’ as a “collective concept.”

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 87.

the Messiah could not be the offspring of David since King David belonged to Judah. Second, not only Jesus but also most characters in Mark who are related to him are Galileans, and they use rural language.<sup>41</sup> Third, *minjung* and Jesus always are together in Mark. It means that *minjung* shares the same lifestyle, circumstance, and situation with Jesus.<sup>42</sup> Fourth, Jesus' passion is the compression of the *minjung* experience. Ahn asserts, "Jesus (the 'son of man') in this passion is the symbol of the whole group,"<sup>43</sup> and the question of Jesus on the cross, "Why have you forsaken me?" is also reflective of the space of the *minjung*, the *ochlos* that was destroyed by Rome. Fifth, therefore, the resurrection of Jesus is an event that also involves one the *minjung*, the Galileans, and the promise of Jesus to see them in Galilee advocates the *minjung* understanding of resurrection as new hope.<sup>44</sup> In addition, Jesus' attitude that Ahn points out also shows how precious the *ochlos* is for Jesus in Mark. Jesus must feel a responsibility to the *ochlos*, since he sees the *ochlos* as the sheep that have lost their shepherd (Mk. 6:34). Jesus proclaims the *ochlos* as his family (Mk. 3:34). Mark shows that Jesus teaches the *ochlos* all the time. (Mk. 10:1).<sup>45</sup> Jesus is dedicated to the *minjung*, to the crowd.

*Minjung* was the context itself of Byōng-mu Ahn's life. The Korean *minjung* opened Ahn's eyes to see the crowd in Mark, and Jesus is the crowd itself. Not only Jesus but also the crowd in Mark is analogous with the Korean *minjung* who are the protagonists in Mark. The crowd is the history itself in Mark, and God's prophecy and salvation reveal their actualization through the crowd.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>45</sup> Ahn, "Jesus and *Minjung* in the Gospel of Mark," 52.

## 2. The Crowd in the Synoptic Gospels

Each Gospel has its own original crowd. For researching of John's crowd, a comparison of Mark's crowd to the crowd in Matthew and Luke shows that Ahn's *minjung* theology does not apply in the same way to all the Gospels, but the crowd in Mark is very distinctive.

The word "crowd," is *ochlos* (ὄχλος) in Greek, and this *ochlos* appears in all of the Gospels. Ahn argues that the first use of the term *ochlos* (ὄχλος) is made by Mark, since there is no use of *ochlos* in the Pauline epistles that were written before the gospel of Mark.<sup>46</sup> The word *ochlos* is hardly used in LXX so that the connotation of the word is not used in any other way except to refer to a mass of the people.<sup>47</sup> According to Ahn, Mark uses the word *ochlos* deliberately, despite it being an abstract term, in order to let readers pay attention to this "social composition of the people."<sup>48</sup> On the contrary, a very common word that means the people as the mass in the Old Testament is the *laos* (λαός).<sup>49</sup> Mark uses *laos* only two times, in 7:6 and 14:2. 7:6 is a citation from the book of Isaiah that is spoken by Jesus and 14:2 is spoken by the chief priests and scribes to designate the *laos* as the people of Israel. Not only does the meaning of *laos* in LXX refer to the Israelites as the people of God, but also the connotation of the *laos* in Hellenistic Judaism, outside of the Bible, is that of YAHWEH's possession.<sup>50</sup> In addition, *laos* is

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 50. The approach of Byöng-mu Ahn to Mark by using the historical criticism must be based on the 'Marcan Priority' that was suggested by Bernhard Weiss, F. H. Woods, and B. H. Streeter during late 1800s and early 1900s. Matthew must be the first user of *ochlos*.

<sup>47</sup> Gerhard Kittel, et al., eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, trans. Geoffrey William Bromiley, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 5:584.

<sup>48</sup> Ahn, "Jesus and *Minjung* in the Gospel of Mark," 49.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>50</sup> Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 4:29.



translated from the Hebrew *am* (אִם), which has ethnic connotations.<sup>51</sup> In other words, the religious leaders use *laos* to mean “their people” as distinct from Galileans or sinners.

Therefore, Ahn’s argument that authorities distinguish the *ochlos* from Judeans is valid. Based on Ahn’s analysis, it is obvious that the *laos* in Mark follows the traditional usage of *am* (אִם) that refers to the ethnic Israelites of YAHWEH. However, the position of the *ochlos* and *laos* is flipped in Mark because of the two uses of *laos*, due to the fact that the *laos* get to have another connotation through Jesus. As stated above, *laos* is referenced one time by Jesus (Mk. 7:6). This reference comes from Isa. 29:13, “The Lord said: Because these people draw near with their mouths and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their worship of me is a human commandment learned by rote” (Isa. 29:13 NRSV). Without doubt, the *am* (אִם) refers to the people of God, the Israelites, here. But this verse is used by Jesus to blame the Pharisees and scribes who raise an issue for the tradition of the elders against Jesus. Thus, “these people” in Isaiah 7:9 refer in the Markan context to the Pharisees and scribes, and they are the people who have hearts far from God. Consequently, the true definition of the *laos* in Mark is the people who have hearts far from God. For this reason, the term *laos* as used by the religious leaders in Mark is governed Jesus’ definition of it. As a result, the word opposite to the *laos*, the *ochlos*, replaces it for the true people of God in Mark.

Matthew’s crowd, also designated by *ochlos* and *laos*, is not the same as Mark’s. For the appreciation of Matthew’s crowd, the assessment of *laos* is important. First, *laos* is used fourteen times in Matthew. Five times are with the citation of the Old Testament.<sup>52</sup> Of course, these five citations fit with the meaning of *am* (אִם) as the people

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 4:32.

<sup>52</sup> Included are Mt. 1:21, 2:6, 4:16, 13:15, and 15:8.

of YAHWEH, but there are other citations that mean just the Israelites, unlike Mark's condemnatory use of *laos*. Thus, the citations of the *laos* do not refer solely to a negative reference to the Israelites. Rather, in Matthew, the term just means the Israelites, in general. The remaining nine uses<sup>53</sup> are related with the symbol of YAHWEH such as "the kingdom" (βασιλεία) (Mt. 4:23) and "the chief priests."<sup>54</sup> Therefore, Matthew does not depict the image of the *laos* as negative. Rather, Matthew's use suggests the traditional meaning from the Old Testament, namely "the people of God." In other words, Matthew washes away Mark's negative image of *laos*.

Second, the term, *ochlos*, is used fifty times in Matthew,<sup>55</sup> and each use of *ochlos* is related to Jesus' activities in the various contexts. However, unlike in Mark, this *ochlos* does not consist of supporters of Jesus. For example, people who arrest Jesus are referred to as the *ochlos* (Mt. 26:47:55). Warren Carter points out that scholars have not reached any consensus about the use of the term, *ochlos*.<sup>56</sup> Carter turns his topic from the crowd, itself, to the relationship between the crowd and the audience by means of audience oriented criticism,<sup>57</sup> suggesting that the precise meaning of Matthew's use of *ochlos* has not been figured out yet. J. R. C. Cousland also emphasizes a different aspect for the study of Matthew's *ochlos*. According to Cousland, the term, *ochlos*, is a distinctive factor of Matthew's depiction of the crowds, and Matthew employs this term to "characterize the crowds during Jesus' public ministry."<sup>58</sup> However, Cousland's argument is not about the identity of the *ochlos*, but the role of the *ochlos* in Matthew. At

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<sup>53</sup> Included are Mt. 2:4, 4:23, 21:23, 26:3, 26:5, 26:47, 27:1, 27:25, and 27:64.

<sup>54</sup> There are just two uses that are not related seemingly to the symbol of YAHWEH. Those verses are Mt. 26:5 and Mt. 27:64, but those are also spoken by the chief priests.

<sup>55</sup> Warren Carter, "The Crowds in Matthew's Gospel." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 55, no. 1 (January 1993): 54.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>58</sup> J. R. C. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 39.

the same time, Cousland also claims that Matthew does not provide accurate information about the crowd,<sup>59</sup> but it is clear that the crowd in Matthew is largely a literary construct.<sup>60</sup> That is, Cousland has a similar opinion with Carter in terms of the ambiguous identity of the *ochlos*. Thus, it is clear at least that while Matthew reinforces the *laos* as the true people of God, the *ochlos* is unclear regarding their identity. Consequently, Matthew's understanding of the crowd seems completely different from that of Mark.

Luke's crowd is broader than Matthew's crowd. First, use of the term *laos* is more frequent in Luke than in Matthew or in Mark. Luke uses the term, *laos*, thirty-six times. In this process, the problem is that Luke breaks the boundary of the traditional meaning of *am* (אָמ) through the stories of five events.<sup>61</sup> Richard S. Ascough discusses this broken boundary of the traditional meaning of *laos* in a footnote in his article on Luke's crowd scenes.<sup>62</sup> According to Ascough, Luke mixes *laos* and *ochlos* together in those five scenes mentioned above. Thus, Luke does not completely distinguish between *laos* and *ochlos*. Second, Luke does not distinguish the *ochlos* from religious leaders, rather, they are considered part of the *ochlos*. While Mark describes the *ochlos* as "sinners" and thus they cannot be with the religious leaders at all, Luke clearly shows that the religious leaders are among the *ochlos*,<sup>63</sup> even though they regarded the *laos* as the same social class with themselves.<sup>64</sup> Yong-Sung Ahn, a professor at Seoul Women's University in

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>61</sup> Included are Lk. 6:17-19, 7:1, 8:42-47, 9:11-16, and 3:7,10,15,18,21. The people mentioned in verse 7:1 represent the same people who appear in 6:17-19.

<sup>62</sup> Richard S. Ascough, "Narrative Technique and Generic Designation: Crowd Scenes in Luke-Acts and in Chariton." *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 58, no. 01 (January 1996): 74.

<sup>63</sup> Those verses include 5:17-19, 19:39, 22:47, and 23:4.

<sup>64</sup> Ahn, "Jesus and *Minjung* in the Gospel of Mark," 62.

Korea, points out this relation to the religious leaders in a footnote in his book.<sup>65</sup> Ahn argues that there are other groups in the *ochlos* in Luke, such as tax collectors (Lk. 5:29) and disciples (Lk. 6:17), as well as religious leaders, while *laos* excludes the religious leaders.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, Luke breaks the boundary between sinners and religious leaders, unlike Mark. Third, Luke sometimes includes gentiles in the *laos*. When Simeon praises God for the baby Jesus in the temple, Luke uses the *laos* to designate all peoples, including gentiles (Lk. 2:31).<sup>67</sup> Further, Luke uses the term, *laos*, to refer to all diverse people, including those who come from Sidon and Tyre, the gentile lands (Lk.6:17). As a result, the boundary of the traditional meaning of *laos* is broken. Accordingly, not only Luke's *ochlos* but also his use of *laos* does not follow Mark's concept. Instead, Luke boldly breaks the boundary of the *ochlos* and the *laos* and mixes both together.

Consequently, Byöng-mu Ahn's *minjung* in Mark, that is based on the *ochlos*, is disconnected from the understanding in Matthew and Luke. Matthew dilutes the purity of the *ochlos* by including other people in it. Luke also breaks the boundary between sinners and religious leaders by including the religious leaders in the *ochlos*. In addition, Matthew washes away the negative image of the *laos* present in Mark. Also, Luke goes further by breaking the boundary of the meaning of the *laos/am* (λαός) as referring to the ethnic Israelites of YAHWEH. Therefore, the term *minjung* or *ochlos* in Mark is definitely not applicable to either Matthew or Luke.

### 3. The Crowd in John: The *Ochlos* (ὄχλος) and the *Laos* (λαός)

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<sup>65</sup> Yong-Sung An, *The Reign of God and Rome in Luke's Passion Narrative: An East Asian Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 78.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>67</sup> John Nolland, *Luke 1-9:20*, WBC 35A (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1982), 120.

The following discussion does not presuppose any literary dependence of John's Gospel on Mark's Gospel.<sup>68</sup> Nevertheless, it is striking to note that John's presentation of the crowd differs from the presentations of the crowd in Matthew and Luke, but is very similar to Mark's presentation of the crowd. Through this comparison of Mark to John, John could be understood as also reflecting populism and reflecting affinities with *minjung* theology. Arguably, indeed, the crowd is even more significant in John than in Mark.

First of all, John's *laos* is developed almost in the same way as Mark's *laos*. As previously noted, Mark's *laos* is the ethnic Israelites of YAHWEH that are distinguished from the Galileans, and John's *laos* is the same. Nevertheless, the reason why the word, "almost," is used above, is that there is no negative image of the *laos* in John, unless 7:35-8:11 is considered as an original part of the text,<sup>69</sup> while Mark has a negative image of *laos* by the citation of Isaiah's critical message. *Laos* appears the same number of times in John as in Mark. Although *laos* appears two times in John, in 11:50 and 18:14, the second mention is at repetition designed to recall the first mention. Thus, one might say that the term, *laos*, is, in effect, used only one time in John.

Jn. 11:50 reads, "You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed." This *laos*, "the people," as translated by the NRSV, is mentioned by the religious authorities who are concerned with

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<sup>68</sup> For a detailed assessment of possible relationships between John and the Synoptic Gospels, see D. Moody Smith, *John among the Gospels* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2001).

<sup>69</sup> The first mention of the *laos* in the version of John that has been most often used throughout Christian history is in 8:3. This first mention conjures up a negative image of the *laos*. 8:3 implicitly depicts the *laos* as sinners. This is because the scripture says that "they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman" (8:9 NRSV), which implies that the *laos* and accusers who are Pharisees and scribes had committed the same sins as or greater sins than the woman had (see Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 1:735.) In short, this textually uncertain Johannine periscope strengthens the negative image of the *laos* more even than Mark does.

the destruction of the *laos*. In this verse, the *laos* is completely the same as the traditional meaning of the *am* (אִם), referring to the ethnic Israelites. This is because John articulates this *laos* as the *ethnos* (ἔθνος), “the nation.” Richard J. Cassidy also is of the opinion that the *laos* in John 11:50 is a reference to the Jewish people.<sup>70</sup> In addition, the term is used in the context of an assembly of the Sanhedrin, and Caiaphas, the high priest, who is one of the Sanhedrin, urges other Sanhedrin members to save their ethnic people, the *laos*, from the Romans. Therefore, the *laos* is obviously distinguished from the *ochlos* in John, at least by the religious authorities.

As Matthew and Luke have a larger boundary for the *ochlos* compared to Mark, John also has a broader boundary for the *ochlos* than Mark but, at the same time, John peculiarly hides and conceals the *ochlos*.

First of all, to hide the *ochlos*, John decreases the number of times he uses the word, *ochlos*, and employs other terms that function as synonyms for *ochlos*. The word *ochlos* appears only nineteen times in John considerably less than Mark’s use of *ochlos* that occurs thirty-six times. However, while Mark’s *ochlos* appears throughout his narrative, John’s uses of the word are concentrated in several events. Among them are the healing on the Sabbath (5:13), feeding the five thousand (6:2, 5, 22, 24), the festival of Tabernacles (7: 12, 13, 20, 31, 32, 40, 43, 49), the raising of Lazarus (11:42, 12:9), Jesus’s entry into Jerusalem (12:12, 18), and Jesus’ speaking about his death in Jerusalem (12:29, 34). Moreover, John uses other terms throughout his gospel that, in effect, have the same meaning as *ochlos*. Among them are the following: *pas* (πᾶς) (3:26), *hoi mathetai* (οἱ μαθηταὶ) (4:1), *hoi Samaritai* (οἱ Σαμαρῖται) (4:39), *hoi Galilairoi* (οἱ Γαλιλαῖοι) (4:45), *he oikia hole* (ἡ οἰκία ὅλη) (4:53), *hoi anthropoi* (οἱ ἄνθρωποι) (6:10,

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<sup>70</sup> Richard J. Cassidy, *John’s Gospel in a New Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 43.

6:14), *ho Ioudaioi* (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) (11:45), *ho ethnos* (ὁ ἔθνος) (11:51, 52), and *hoi archontoi* (οἱ ἄρχοντοί) (12:42). What this means is that the *ochlos* is frequently in hiding in John.

In the events in which the *ochlos* explicitly appears, the identity of the *ochlos* is diverse, although clues as to their identity are provided. First, the *ochlos* appears for the first time in 5:13. This story is about the healing of the lame man who has been sick for thirty-eight years. Given that the crucial topic of this healing story is the Sabbath violation of Jesus<sup>71</sup> and the lame man is urged to observe the Sabbath practices (5:10), the lame man is a Jew.<sup>72</sup> Moreover, Jesus slipped away into the *ochlos* after he had healed the lame man (5:13). Considering the setting of the Sabbath and Jerusalem, the *ochlos* is composed of Jews. However, the *ochlos* is not referred to as Jewish explicitly and other people who designated “the Jews” appear. These Jews judge Jesus’ lack of observance of the Sabbath. For this reason, Brown separates the Jews in 5:10 from the general Jewish population.<sup>73</sup> Thus, these Jews who are mentioned are the religious authorities,<sup>74</sup> while the other Jews, the *ochlos*, are just the ordinary people of Jerusalem. In that sense, the *ochlos* of 5:13 are hiding their identity.

Second, the *ochlos* appears in the story of the feeding of the five thousand. In this story, the *ochlos* is also not identified explicitly, much like the case previously discussed. But again there are clues about who comprises the *ochlos*. John narrates that “Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias” (6:1 NRSV).

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<sup>71</sup> Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, AB 29. (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 210.

<sup>72</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary, I*. (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 641.

<sup>73</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 208.

<sup>74</sup> Warren Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2008), 162.

Although it is not certain where the other side is,<sup>75</sup> informed conjectures are possible. Horsley and Thatcher argue that the *ochlos* comprise Samaritans and Galileans and people on the other side of the Sea of Galilee.<sup>76</sup> It is common for Jews to go “up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves” (11:55 NRSV). Brown argues that the mention of the Passover is inserted for the Passover theme in 6:51-59, even though he does not exclude the possibility that it has a real connection with Passover.<sup>77</sup> Seemingly, although Brown’s argument may be that the inserted Passover is not related to the identity of the *ochlos*, it could also be that this inserted Passover theme strengthens the identity of the *ochlos*. Brown mentions that Gärter and Kilmartin interpret four verses (6:28, 32, 42, 52) on the Passover theme as the question and answer pattern of the Jewish Passover *Haggadah*.<sup>78</sup> Considering the argument of Gärter and Kilmartin, the people who are in those four verses must be Jews since Passover is a festival of Jews.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, the *ochlos* followed Jesus from “the other side” (6:1) to “another other side” (6:22-24). Therefore, the people who are in those four verses are part of the *ochlos* in chapter six because not all of the people included in the *ochlos* can cross the sea. Schnackenburg suggests the possibility that the boat is inserted by editors.<sup>80</sup> In addition, the *ochlos* calls Jesus “Rabbi” (6:25), a term that is used by Nicodemus who is a Pharisees (3:2).<sup>81</sup> Jesus also discourses to the *ochlos* about Moses who gave the bread (6:32), and Rudolf Schnackenburg also considers the people who demand a sign to be

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<sup>75</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 1:664.

<sup>76</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 121.

<sup>77</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 245.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

<sup>79</sup> Jn. 6:52, the fourth verse reveals that they are Jews.

<sup>80</sup> Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, vol. 2. (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 33.

<sup>81</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 261.



Jews.<sup>82</sup> Thus, some clues that exist regarding the *ochlos* in chapter six suggest that the *ochlos* includes diverse groups. The *ochlos* is composed not only of Jews but also of Samaritans and Galileans. Consequently, the *ochlos* of chapter 6 is a highly diverse group.

Third, the *ochlos* appears in the story of the festival of Tabernacles (7:10-52). In this story, the diverse identities of the *ochlos* further increase and are more significant than in the feeding of the five thousand. This story happens in Jerusalem while “the Jews” are looking for Jesus (7:11). The *ochlos* is avoiding “the Jews” (7:13) while discussing with each other about Jesus (7:12). “The Jews” are completely separated from the *ochlos*, since the Jews in Judea are apparently hostile to Jesus (7:11, 25). Some of the *ochlos* considers Jesus a good person and the *ochlos* fears “the Jews” (7:13). Therefore, “the Jews” here must again be the religious authorities.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, “the Jews” do not arrest Jesus when they are astonished by his teaching (7:15), even though they are looking for him to kill him (7:1). Indeed, Jesus himself publicly discloses the attempt of the Jews to kill him (7:19). But, the *ochlos* does not know this fact at all and accuses Jesus of having a demon (7:20).<sup>84</sup> That is, the *ochlos* is separated from the Jews who are the religious authorities. On the other hand, the *ochlos* itself is not one unity for the *ochlos* has ambivalent opinions outwardly (7:12, 40-43). Keener argues that this is natural since there are diverse Jews who came from around the world for the festival of Tabernacles and they represent various groups of Jews.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the Pharisees identify the *ochlos* as those who do not know the Law. “Those who do not know the Law” is the

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<sup>82</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 2:35.

<sup>83</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 307.

<sup>84</sup> Despite this, some of the *ochlos* starts to believe in Jesus (7:40). It is a process to follow Jesus, like the Samaritan woman who was hostile to Jesus initially in chapter four. Regarding the Samaritan Woman, see “4. Other Disciples in John” in chapter two.

<sup>85</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:710.

representative expression of those “who are often careless about the Law,”<sup>86</sup> but the religious authorities use this expression to blame those who are the authorities or Pharisees in the story who believe in Jesus (7:48-49).<sup>87</sup> Therefore, the *ochlos* also contains the religious authorities who believe in Jesus like Nicodemus. As a result, the identities of the *ochlos* become more diverse as the *ochlos* includes those Jews of the Jewish diaspora, some religious authorities, and the Pharisees who believe in Jesus.

Fourth, the *ochlos* is mentioned two times in the story of Lazarus (11:42, 12:9) and also appears when Jesus enters into Jerusalem (12:12, 17-18). The *ochlos* in both the Lazarus story and Jesus’ entrance into Jerusalem extends the boundary of the *ochlos* still further in two aspects. The first aspect is the identity of “the Jews.” “The Jews” in the story of Lazarus do not include only the religious authorities. The fact that Bethany is near Jerusalem (11:18) implies that “many Jews” come from Jerusalem<sup>88</sup> and that they are just ordinary Jews because not all people in Jerusalem are the religious authorities (7:25). Jesus also had been working “among some of the ordinary people of Jerusalem.”<sup>89</sup> Given that John does not articulate the identity of the *ochlos* in chapter six as Jews, those Jews who come from Jerusalem could be distinguished from the *ochlos* in chapter six. In addition, the *ochlos* who welcome Jesus in chapter twelve (12:12) are the same people as the Jews who saw Lazarus raised (12:17), and they witness to what Jesus had done to other *ochloi* in Jerusalem (12:18). It shows that the *ochlos* in chapter eleven and twelve

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<sup>86</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 325.

<sup>87</sup> The Pharisees’ statement, “But this crowd, which does not know the law-- they are accursed” (7:49 NRSV), could simply mean, “If you Pharisees or other authorities believe in Jesus, you are identical with those who do not know the law – they are accursed.”

<sup>88</sup> George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36, 190.

<sup>89</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 121.

includes ordinary Jews who live in Jerusalem. Thus, the boundary of those included in the *ochlos* is further extended.

The second aspect is that there are new characters in the *ochlos* beyond “the Jews” (11:19, 31, 33). These new characters are the disciples (11:7, 15-16). In John, the disciples are Jews. Interestingly, the disciples are expressed positively as “Israel” by John, suggesting that John does not emphasize their ethnicity as Jews. Rather, the disciples are the people who are “excommunicated from the people of God outwardly” by the religious authorities who are mainly depicted as “Jews” (9:22, 34-41).<sup>90</sup> Further, the identity of the disciples does not depend on the region where they lived, but rather, on their discipleship.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, the *ochlos* in chapters eleven and twelve adds another criterion to the identity of the *ochlos*, that is, the aspect of discipleship, so that the identity of the disciples could be uncovered. Eventually, although the use of unclear expressions is one of the features in John’s writing,<sup>92</sup> John’s use of diversity within the *ochlos* as well as the many clues he provides the reader help to unveil true identity of the *ochlos*.

In conclusion, John’s *ochlos* is very similar to Mark’s crowd in a way. Regarding the *laos*, John has almost same concept as Mark’s *laos*, referring to the ethnic Israelites of YAHWEH. Regarding the *ochlos*, John uses a broader concept than Mark’s *ochlos* through clues that help to signify the identity of the *ochlos*. John also hides the *ochlos*. Instead, John uses other synonyms. In this process, the identity of the *ochlos* becomes also diverse because those synonyms include diverse regions and groups. Consequently,

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<sup>90</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:226.

<sup>91</sup> See “2. The Discipleship in John” in chapter two.

<sup>92</sup> Warren Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), 109.

the *ochlos* can cover all of the Israelites, including the disciples at times, and even the religious authorities.

## CHAPTER TWO:

### The *Ochlos* Hiding

As noted in the previous chapter, there are diverse people among the *ochlos* and they are hiding as the *ochlos* in John. John's principal way of hiding the identity of the *ochlos* is, ironically, to mention explicitly the identities of people. Diverse people among the *ochlos* are Samaritans, Galileans, Jews, and even some religious authorities and elite Jews. Therefore, "the *ochlos* hiding" is all of the people with potential to be/come the *ochlos*, the political mass of people. In addition, there is a bridge to figure out who they are in relation to Jesus. The disciples are the bridge and they include all of the people who are qualified as Jesus' disciples, according to the criteria for discipleship in this gospel, including even the readers of John. For this inclusiveness, John collapses the boundaries of the complete list of the disciples and deconstructs the authority of the disciples who are written about in the Synoptics. Furthermore, other disciples have roles to connect the disciples to diverse people and groups.

#### 1. The Disciples as the *Ochlos* Hiding in John

The disciples are a part of the *ochlos* that is hiding. The connection point between the disciples and the *ochlos* is 11:42, "I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd (*ochlos*) standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me" (11:42 NRSV). Jesus clearly designates that the *ochlos* comprise the people who are "standing here so that they may believe that you sent me." Therefore the qualification of the *ochlos* includes those who are standing around Jesus, and the disciples have the qualification as the those who followed him to Lazarus' tomb (11:7, 15-16). In addition,

the fact that the “sake” of Jesus appears both in 11:15 and 11:42 strengthens the argument that the disciples are included in the *ochlos*, since to believe is the representative feature of Johannine discipleship. However, John deliberately hides the disciples in the story of the raising of Lazarus (11:17-44), even though John clearly states that Jesus brought the disciples to Bethany (11:7, 15-16). The fact is that John does not hesitate to articulate that Jesus usually moves his disciples together,<sup>93</sup> but also that Jesus moves alone sometimes (6:15, 6:22). This factor supports the fact that John is hiding the disciples in the narrative of Lazarus. In addition, John switches the view of his readers from the *ochlos* to “the Jews” in 11:45. The expression “Many of the Jews” in 11:45 refers to the *ochlos*.<sup>94</sup> Consequently, John hides the disciples who are around Jesus at Lazarus’ tomb in Bethany from the *ochlos*, by omitting their title and pushes the title of “Jews” into the very next verse.

## 2. The Discipleship in John

Prior to identifying who the disciples are, it is necessary to understand the criteria for discipleship. This is because those criteria determine who the disciples are, which is the identity of the disciples.

John has specific criteria and conditions for his unique understanding of discipleship. Those criteria and conditions could be distinguished into two groupings. One concerns the criteria fulfilled by, or at least expected of, those who are explicitly named disciples in John. First of all, the most important feature of discipleship is to

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<sup>93</sup> Included are 2:2, 2:12, 3:22, 4:8, 6:3, 9:2, 11:54, and 18:1-2.

<sup>94</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 438.

believe in Jesus' name,<sup>95</sup> "which means trust in him as a deity."<sup>96</sup> "To believe" is identical with the action of receiving Jesus (1:12). In the prologue, John articulates not only the purpose or function of John the Baptist but also the way to be children of God. The purpose/function of John the Baptist is to lead all of the people to believe in Jesus (1:7) and the way to be children of God is to believe in Jesus' name (1:12). Jesus also asks the people to believe in him.<sup>97</sup> Second, another significant criterion of discipleship is the confession of Jesus' identity as Christ, or other similar titles.<sup>98</sup> The third criterion of discipleship is to convey Jesus to others.<sup>99</sup> Yet another criterion for discipleship are the conditions that must occur so that those who believe in Jesus may be known as his disciples, together with the fact that those conditions are expected to be fulfilled by or for the disciples after Jesus' resurrection (7:39, 14:16-19, 15:26, 16:5-7, 17:11-13). First, Jesus asks and says to the disciples that they are to serve and love each other so that they may be one.<sup>100</sup> Second, Jesus also predicts that the disciples will be hated by the world.<sup>101</sup> Third, Jesus predicts that the disciples will receive the Holy Spirit.<sup>102</sup> Most disciples in John, most of whose names we all see in the Synoptics, satisfy those criteria.

First of all, these disciples confess Jesus' identity as Christ. Andrew confesses Jesus as the Messiah (1:41). Philip confesses Jesus as the one who echoes Moses in the law and the prophets (1:45). Nathanael confesses Jesus as not only the Son of God but also the King of Israel (1:49). Thomas also confesses Jesus as "my Lord and my God"

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<sup>95</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:325.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 400.

<sup>97</sup> Included are 4:21, 10:38, 11:40, 12:36, 14:1, and 14:11.

<sup>98</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:430.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 430.

<sup>100</sup> Included are 13:14, 13:34, 14:15, 14:21, 15:10, 15:12, 15:14, 15:17, 17:1, 17:21, 17:22, 17:23, and 17:26.

<sup>101</sup> Included are 15:18-20, 16:1-2, 17:14, and 17:18.

<sup>102</sup> Included are 7:39, 14:16, 15:26, 16:7, 13, and 20:22.

(20:28). Moreover, most of the disciples convey Jesus to others. Andrew shares what he saw with Peter (1:41), and Philip urges Nathanael to come and see (1:46). Basically, those confessions and the conveying of Jesus cannot stand without the belief, which is the first aspect of discipleship.

However, those criteria of discipleship are not features that only those who are explicitly represented as disciples have. There are other characters who satisfy those criteria. Carter claims that the “disciples” mentioned by author in John are not only “the twelve male disciples.”<sup>103</sup> Thus, there are other characters who also are the disciples of Jesus in John. Moreover, the facts that there is not a complete list of the twelve disciples in John, unlike the Synoptics (Mt. 10:1-4, Mk. 3:13-19, Lk. 6:12-16),<sup>104</sup> and that not all of the listed disciples in John who also appear in the Synoptics completely satisfy those criteria--some characters’ criteria are omitted--opens the possibility that the disciples in John include the *ochlos* beyond the named disciples. In other words, the boundaries of the disciples are not closed in John, and all the people who have the criteria of discipleship are considered disciples in John.

### 3. The Disciples in John Who also Appear in the Synoptics

John collapses the traditional boundaries of the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics and further deconstructs their authority so that all of the characters who are qualified as disciples, based on John’s discipleship criteria, can be included in the disciple group, causing that group to merge with the *ochlos*.

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<sup>103</sup> Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 74.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.



First, certain of the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics do not appear in John. There are seven disciples in John who also appear in the Synoptics as Jesus' disciples: Andrew, Philip, Peter, Nathanael, Thomas, Joseph of Arimathea, and Judas Iscariot.<sup>105</sup> John does not fully list the twelve. John mentions the expression, "the twelve," only four times without the list. Three of those four mentions appear in the same episode in which when Jesus talks with the twelve disciples about leaving him (6:66-71). Carter too asserts that John does not refer to the disciples as the twelve male disciples who also appear in the Synoptics, even though the expressions the "twelve" is used by John.<sup>106</sup>

Additionally, it is ambiguous whether all of the disciples turn back and only twelve disciples remain with Jesus, or the disciples who remain with Jesus are just twelve at the time when many disciples leave him. Although Jesus says that he chose the twelve disciples (6:70), it does not clearly mean that he chose twelve disciples only. This is because the term *monos* (μόνος), that implies exclusiveness, is not used in this scene, and John uses *monos* (μόνος) many times in the Fourth Gospel.<sup>107</sup> Rather, Jesus may just be designating the twelve disciples who remain with him at that time. If Jesus chose only twelve disciples as his disciples, we cannot verify the names of those disciples who turned back (6:66). That is, nobody knows the names of the five remaining disciples

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<sup>105</sup> Carter includes the Beloved Disciple in that group in his book, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 74. However, there is no concrete evidence that the Beloved Disciple is one of the disciples who is written in the Synoptics since nobody knows the Beloved Disciple's real name. Besides, Joseph of Arimathea, not listed by Carter, is mentioned as a disciple in Matthew 22:57. For this reason, Joseph of Arimathea belongs to the disciple group. In addition, there is another disciple's name in chapter thirteen. That name is Judas (not Iscariot) (Jn. 14:22). The reason why this Judas (not Iscariot) is a disciple of Jesus is that he is also at the dinner table with the disciples (Jn. 13:4, 18:1) and he refers to Jesus as *kurios* (κύριος), a title usually confessed by disciples. In the Synoptics, people who have the name of "Judas" are referenced twice. Those are a brother of Jesus (Mt. 13:55, Mk. 6:3) and Judas, son of James (Lk. 6:16). Judas (not Iscariot) in Jn. 14:22 may be Judas son of James, rather than a brother of Jesus. Keener claims that Judas was a common name among Jews in *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2:976. Therefore, Judas probably is not one of the disciples who appears in the Synoptics.

<sup>106</sup> Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 74.

<sup>107</sup> Included are 5:18, 44, 6:15, 22, 8:9, 16, 29, 11:52, 12:9, 24, 13:9, 16:32, 17:3, and 30.

beyond the seven named ones, and John does not add more explanation about the twelve.<sup>108</sup> By omitting some of the disciples' names, John does not close the boundaries of the disciple group. If there were a complete list of the twelve disciples in John, there would not be any room for other characters to enter as disciples.

Second, John deconstructs the authority of the disciples in John who also appear in the Synoptics. The closed boundary of the disciple group strengthens the authority of the Synoptic disciples, since nobody could be as close to Jesus as the twelve disciples. John deconstructs the authority of the majority of the disciples who features in the Synoptic tradition by reversing the importance of them. Peter, James, and John are important disciples in the Synoptics because they follow Jesus more than others in the Synoptics.<sup>109</sup> However, James and John do not appear at all in the Gospel of John. In the case of Peter, his role and importance are thoroughly diminished, compared to the other disciples who also appear in the Synoptics. Peter does not convey Jesus to the others, whereas he hears the news about Jesus from his brother (1:41-42). Moreover, Peter has no conversation with Jesus when he meets Jesus (1:42). Peter is not the first disciple that Jesus meets unlike the narrative of the Synoptics (1:42).<sup>110</sup> In John, Jesus' attitude and answers in all conversations with Peter are negative.<sup>111</sup> Peter's confession about Jesus' messianic identity is "the Holy One of God" (ὁ ἅγιος τοῦ θεοῦ) (Jn. 6:69), which is

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<sup>108</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 117.

<sup>109</sup> Included are Mk. 5:37, 9:2, 14:33, Mt. 17:1, 26:37, and Lk. 8:51, 9:28.

<sup>110</sup> Included are Mk. 1:16, Mt. 4:18, and Lk. 5:3.

<sup>111</sup> There are six conversations between Peter and Jesus in addition to the first encounter. First, Peter confesses Jesus' messianic identity, but Jesus turns the topic to the devil (διάβολος) (6:70). Second, Jesus contradicts Peter three times when Jesus washes the disciples' feet (13:6-10). Third, Jesus tells Peter that he cannot follow Jesus in response to Peter's question about the destination of Jesus, and Jesus also predicts Peter's denial against Peter's oath that he will lay down his life for Jesus (13:36-38). Fourth, Jesus scolds Peter when he cuts off the right ear of the high priest's slave (18:11). Fifth, Jesus asks Peter three times whether he loves Jesus, as if he doubts Peter, and Jesus also predicts Peter's dark future regarding his death (21:15-18). Sixth, Jesus scolds Peter for Peter's question about the Beloved Disciple's future (21:22).

confessed by the unclean spirit in Mark (Mk. 1:24) and Luke (Lk. 4:34). Peter also denies Jesus three times (Jn. 18:15-18, 25-27). In other words, Peter is the most disappointing disciple among the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics.

On the contrary, other disciples who are less significant than Peter in the Synoptics are depicted positively. Andrew and Philip testify about Jesus to the other disciples, unlike Peter (1:41, 1:45). Andrew appears and meets Jesus first, prior to Peter (1:39-40). Colleen Conway argues that this is “as early indication of Peter’s diminished status in this gospel.”<sup>112</sup> Moreover, Nathanael<sup>113</sup> is complimented by Jesus as a true Israelite (1:47), whereas Peter is scolded from time to time (18:11, 21:22). Jesus discerns Nathanael’s capacity as a disciple when he was under the fig tree, a sign of prophecy,<sup>114</sup> whereas Jesus does not recognize Peter’s capacity to follow Jesus (13:36). In the case of Thomas, he tries to follow Jesus till death (11:16), and he confesses Jesus definitively as “my Lord and my God” (20:28), which is more obvious than Peter’s confession. Regarding Joseph of Arimathea, he reverently buries Jesus (19:38), in the absence of Peter. The only disciple who is worse than Peter is Judas Iscariot, the betrayer. Therefore, John deconstructs or equalizes the authority of the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics by redistributing their significance.

Secondly, there is a formula to diminish particular disciples’ importance. That formula is that the more famous the disciple is, the more flaws he has, and the less famous, the more merits he has. Peter is the most obvious example of how this formula works. Andrew the brother of Peter (Jn. 1:41) is a member of the major disciple group

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<sup>112</sup> Colleen Conway, “Gender Matters in John,” in *A Feminist Companion to John*, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Marianne Blickenstaff, vol. 2 (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 88.

<sup>113</sup> There is debate about whether Nathanael is Bartholomew or not; see Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:482.

<sup>114</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, 123.

with Peter, James, and John in Mark (Mk. 13:3). Andrew, with Philip, tells Jesus that some Greeks want to see him (Jn. 12:20-22). However, Andrew shows his limitations through economic calculation rather than spiritual belief (Jn. 6:9).<sup>115</sup> Philip appears just one time in the each of the Synoptics for the list of the twelve disciples.<sup>116</sup> In John, Philip is the only disciple among those who also appear in the Synoptics whom Jesus calls in person, rather than being introduced to him by other characters (Jn. 1:43). However, Philip shows the same flaw as Andrew (Jn. 6:9).<sup>117</sup> Thomas appears just one time in the each of the Synoptics among the list of the twelve disciples.<sup>118</sup> In John, Thomas tries to follow Jesus till his death (Jn. 11:16). However, Thomas has doubts about Jesus' resurrection (Jn. 20:25). Joseph of Arimathea who is depicted as a disciple in Matthew (Mt. 27:57) but not listed among the twelve disciples (Mt. 10:2-3) becomes in John an equivalent disciple with the other disciples who also appear in the Synoptics, since there is no concrete list of the twelve disciples in John. However, Joseph hides his identity because of the fear of the Jews (Jn. 19:38). Nathanael, whose name appears in John only (1:43-51, 21:2), not is mentioned in the Synoptics. Nathanael is complimented by Jesus (1:47). However, Nathanael has no activity after chapter one. As a common factor, those disciples who also appear in the Synoptics also do not realize the meaning of a certain prophecy and Jesus' word (2:22, 12:16, 16:17-18). Just one exception, the most striking character among all the disciples is Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus. Judas Iscariot has no merit at all and is worse than Peter. Therefore, all of the disciples who also appear in

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 120.

<sup>116</sup> Included are Mk. 3:18, Mt. 10:3, and Lk. 6:14.

<sup>117</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, 120.

<sup>118</sup> Included are Mk. 3:18, Mt. 10:3, and Lk. 6:15.

the Synoptics became equivalent with each other in John through the balancing of flaws and merits.

As a result, there are in John no boundaries enclosing the twelve disciples who also appear in the Synoptics, and further there is no authoritative disciple among the named disciples. All the disciples have their merits and flaws as ordinary people.

#### 4. Other Disciples in John

There are some characters in John who are not formally included in the disciple group, but who do meet the Johannine criteria for discipleship. Those characters would not qualify as disciples in the Synoptic context. They are either a member of the opponents of Jesus, a Samaritan, a beggar, or even an unidentified person. However, those characters share features of discipleship, or are even more excellent than the named disciples who also appear in the Synoptics. It means that those characters are also disciples in John in accordance with the Johannine criteria for discipleship.

Nicodemus is a very ambiguous character as one of Jesus' disciples.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, Nicodemus is a disciple in John. At first glance, it looks as though Nicodemus hardly fits the criteria of a disciple. This is because Nicodemus is a Pharisee and a leader of the Jews (3:1). The Pharisees were the main opponents of Jesus in John.<sup>120</sup> Nicodemus also confesses Jesus as "a teacher who has come from God" (3:2). The "teacher" does not mean the Messiah or is not equivalent with messiahship, since Jesus also refers to Nicodemus as a teacher of Israel (3:10). However, Nicodemus overcomes his limits. Nicodemus becomes a better character through the development of his

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<sup>119</sup> Susan E. Hulen, *Imperfect Believers: Ambiguous Characters in the Gospel of John* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 24.

<sup>120</sup> Included are 3:1, 7:32, 8:3, 8:13, 9:16, 11:47, 11:57, 12:42, and 18:3.

character (7:50, 19:39),<sup>121</sup> whereas the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics have no development in their character or even worse as in the case of Philip (14:8) and Thomas (20:25).

First, Nicodemus is not like the other authorities who are complete opponents (7:32, 11:50, 18:3), although he is a leader of the Jews in John. Nicodemus challenges the opponents of Jesus (7:50-51) even though he is timid,<sup>122</sup> when disciples do not appear to defend Jesus from the aggressions of his opponents.<sup>123</sup> Nicodemus also comes to Jesus for conversation with him (3:1) after the cleaning of the temple (2:15-16), not to criticize him, unlike some of “the Jews” (2:18). Second, the expression, “a teacher who has come from God,” while it is not a perfect confession for a disciple,<sup>124</sup> is still meaningful. This is because not all of the disciples confessed Jesus as Christ. Joseph of Arimathea who is described as a disciple has no confession in John. Without a doubt, Nicodemus is also better than Judas Iscariot. Nicodemus’ confession of Jesus as “a teacher who has come from God” is also recognized by Jesus himself in relation to his identity (13:13-14). Moreover, Nicodemus ultimately confesses his belief in the open through his activity of asking for Jesus’ dead body for burial (19:39). For this reason, not only Keener refers to Nicodemus as a disciple,<sup>125</sup> but also Beasley-Murray refers to him as a believer.<sup>126</sup> This identity of Nicodemus as a disciple has the effect of merging him with the Johannine *ochlos*, since members of the *ochlos* also fulfill certain Johannine criteria for discipleship. The *ochlos* is an open-ended group in John.

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<sup>121</sup> Hylan, *Imperfect Believers*, 23.

<sup>122</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:733.

<sup>123</sup> Included are 7:30, 7:32, 8:3, 8:13, 8:48, 8:53, and 8:59.

<sup>124</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, 119.

<sup>125</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:885.

<sup>126</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36, 359.

In chapter four, the Samaritan woman may also be considered Jesus' disciple. The Samaritan woman has more excellent features of discipleship than the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics. The Samaritan woman confesses Jesus as the Christ (4:29), whereas some Johannine disciples have no confession, as I noted above. In addition, the Samaritan woman conveys Jesus to others Samaritans (4:29), and the witness of the Samaritan woman brings many other Samaritans in their town to Jesus (4:39). On the other hand, only some of the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics convey Jesus to others. Andrew and Philip convey Jesus to Peter, who is Andrew's brother, and Nathanael only (1:41, 45).

A royal official also offers initial faith without a sign (4:48-49),<sup>127</sup> and his whole household believes in Jesus because of him (4:53). Thus, a royal officer is also implicitly represented as Jesus' disciple. In chapter nine, a blind man confesses Jesus as a prophet (9:17). Seemingly, the confession of the blind man does not develop from the prophet to the Messiah or one equivalent with the Messiah, but the context implies that he regards Jesus as the Messiah (9:22-23). Because of "the Jews'" agreement that "anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue" (9:22), it is reasonable to suppose that the blind man switches his confession to acclaiming Jesus as a prophet (9:17). Moreover, not only a man blind from birth confesses belief in Jesus (9:10) and conveys Jesus to the Pharisees through his testimony in response to their questions, (9:15, 17, 27, 30-33), but, also, the Pharisees, ironically, define the man as one of Jesus' disciples (9:28). Mary, Martha and Lazarus in chapter eleven also show their collective identity as disciples. Martha confessed Jesus as the Messiah (11:27). Lazarus's story becomes a chance for many Jews to believe in Jesus (11:45, 12:9-11). It means that

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<sup>127</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:630.

Lazarus' existence itself is the conveying of Jesus' identity. In addition, Lazarus is called a "friend" by Jesus (11:10) prior to the named disciples being called such (15:14), which means that Lazarus is at least on a par with these disciples. Furthermore, Mary prepares Jesus for burial (12:3, 7), as do Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (19:38-39), and in a context in which one of the official disciples, Judas, is contrasted unfavorably with her (12:4-7). Therefore, Mary, Martha and Lazarus are not only themselves disciples but also are better than some official disciples.

As a result, there are other disciples in John who are not mentioned in the Synoptics. Those characters may seem to be ineligible to be disciples because of their social status and other factors. However, these other disciples satisfy the criteria for discipleship that John has, and show that John's conception of discipleship is an unbounded one. Moreover, most of these other disciples are better than the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics. In addition, the diverse social statuses and positions of these covert Johannine disciples are the bridge to the *ochlos* as, in part, a hidden group of disciples in John.

##### 5. Beloved Disciples, Peter, and Judas Iscariot

The Beloved Disciple and Peter are very distinctive characters in John. John provides a bridge from the disciples through the Beloved Disciple so that the readers can empathize with the disciples in John and further raise the question of who is a hidden disciple among the *ochlos*. John uses Peter as the key to the bridge between the Beloved Disciple and the readers, and he also uses Judas Iscariot as a tool to degrade Peter, so that



the Beloved Disciple stands out from Peter. In other words, the Beloved Disciple and Peter show the way to the hidden aspect of the *ochlos*, and Judas Iscariot supports it.

First of all, one of the roles of Judas Iscariot's character is to degrade Peter, prior to the appearance of Beloved Disciple. John dresses up the negative image of Peter by language play. Peter's original name is Simon (1:41-42) and Peter is called Simon throughout John as well as in the Synoptics. John adds this name Simon to Judas Iscariot's name two times before the first appearance of the Beloved Disciple (6:71 and 13:2), and one time together with the Beloved Disciple (13:23-27). Firstly, the verse 6:71 occurs just after Peter's confession about Jesus' identity. In this scene, John calls both Peter and Judas Iscariot as "Simon" (6:68, 71). Further, John records that "Judas son of Simon Iscariot" is the *diabolos* (διάβολος) that betrays Jesus (6:70-71). Secondly, in the case of Jn. 13:2, this is the narration of the author right before the washing of the disciples' feet. John also calls Judas Iscariot as "Simon" (13:2) with information that the *diabolos* (διάβολος) "put it into the heart of Judas, son of Simon Iscariot to betray him" (13:2 NRSV). As soon as Jesus starts to wash the disciples' feet, "Simon' Peter" tries to stop Jesus from washing his feet (13:6). Thirdly, John also calls both Peter and Judas Iscariot as "Simon" in the first appearance of the Beloved Disciple (13:24-27), after which Satan (Σατανᾶς) enters into Judas (13:27). Consequently, the image of the *diabolos* (διάβολος) connects to Peter through the name of "Simon." Moreover, given that John does not refer to Judas Iscariot as "Simon" when Peter does not make a mistake (12:4) and that only John, among the four Gospels, calls Judas Iscariot the son of Simon,<sup>128</sup> it is apparent that John deliberately dresses up the negative image of Peter.

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<sup>128</sup> Included are 6:17, 13:2, and 13:26.

Not only by John degrading Peter through Judas Iscariot but also by a comparison to the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics, it seems that Peter becomes the most inferior disciple in John, except for Judas Iscariot. In this process, it seems that the Beloved Disciple emerges as an ideal character, better than Peter because the Beloved Disciple is depicted positively in the tension in relation to Peter. Namely, the Beloved Disciple is completely contrasted with Peter. To begin with, Peter frequently appears after chapter thirteen and the washing of the disciples' feet (13:4), whereas there have just been two appearances of Peter in the narrative prior to this.<sup>129</sup> The Beloved Disciple also frequently appears after chapter thirteen. The first scene of the Beloved Disciple is the last supper (13:23). The Beloved Disciple mediates a conversation between Jesus and Peter (13:24). The Beloved Disciple himself only, seemingly, hears who the betrayer is but nobody else hears it, including Peter (13:28). Peter cannot enter into the high priest's courtyard without the Beloved Disciple's help (18:15). The Beloved Disciple is the only one beside the crucified Jesus among all of the disciples (19:26). The Beloved Disciple runs faster than Peter to the tomb of Jesus (20:3). The Beloved Disciple also discerns prior to Peter that it is the risen Jesus on the shore when the disciples are fishing from a boat (20:7). Moreover, many scholars such as Culpepper<sup>130</sup> and Carter<sup>131</sup> also argue that the Beloved Disciple is an ideal disciple, based on the Beloved Disciple reclining next to Jesus.

Arguably, those examples of superiority are not related to discipleship itself. Rather, those examples are about physical and relational abilities such as hearing (13:28),

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<sup>129</sup> Those earlier appearances are the first encounter with Jesus (1:41-42) and the confession of Jesus' identity (6:68-69).

<sup>130</sup> Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*, 121.

<sup>131</sup> Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 76.

running (20:3), eyesight (21:7), and relationships with others who include Jesus (Jn. 13:23 and 21:20-23), the high priest (18:15), and Jesus' mother (19:26). Discipleship in John, however, neither depends on physical abilities nor "natural" relationships with Jesus or others. If biological relationship with Jesus or his mother, for example, is a significant factor for discipleship, the fact that Jesus' brothers do not believe in him must be removed (7:5). This is because in the natural realm the relationship between family members is strongest, and there is no record that Jesus denies his family in John, unlike in the Synoptics.<sup>132</sup> In addition, the Beloved Disciple is not the only the disciple who is loved by Jesus; so are Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (11:3-5, 36), and, further, his own who were in the world (13:1), including all of the disciples who were with him at the dinner table (13:34 15:9-12). If the relationship is not restricted to a biological relation or being the object of Jesus' love, the only advantage of the Beloved Disciple is that he physically touched Jesus as he reclined next to him in 13:23.

However, the real criteria for discipleship in John include belief, the confession of Jesus as Messiah, the conveying of Jesus to others, their love for each other, and the Holy Spirit, as noted earlier. Also, in the case of 21:20-23, Jesus is more interested in Peter than the Beloved Disciple in the text. Jesus seems to concentrate more on Peter than on the Beloved Disciple in this farewell scene. Keener also argues that Jesus' affection toward the Beloved Disciple is not unique in John and there are other people who share Jesus' special affection.<sup>133</sup> All of these factors combine to undercut the Beloved Disciple's presumed superiority. Indeed, the Beloved Disciple reveals limitations that disappoint the attentive reader in spite of his presumed superior abilities.

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<sup>132</sup> Included are Mk. 3:31-35, Mt. 12:46-50, and Lk. 8:19-21.

<sup>133</sup> Even though Keener points that out, he finally puts weight on the superiority of the Beloved Disciple. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2:918.

Firstly, the Beloved Disciple hears Jesus' answer better than that of Peter at the dinner table. The Beloved Disciple asks Jesus who the betrayer is and Jesus answers him with a symbol (13:26). Schnackenburg alludes to the Beloved Disciple understanding this symbol.<sup>134</sup> On the contrary, Keener comments that the Beloved Disciple does not understand this symbol, based on 13:28.<sup>135</sup> Keener's argument is that this narrative serves to emphasize the disciples' overall lack of comprehension because this story suggest that Jesus gave Judas just "the sop"<sup>136</sup> immediately after talking to the Beloved Disciple.<sup>137</sup> It shows that the Beloved disciple is not superior to the other disciples. Rather, it means that the Beloved Disciple is even more disappointing than Peter. If the Beloved Disciple does understand Jesus' answer, he is disappointing because he does nothing to prevent the betrayer even though he knows who the betrayer is (13:30). As a result, the first scene of the appearance of the Beloved Disciple does not mean that he is superior to the others and further reveals his limitations in spite of his better listening skills.

Secondly, the Beloved Disciple runs faster than Peter to Jesus' tomb after hearing from Mary the news that Jesus' dead body disappeared (20:2-4). Keener indicates that the

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<sup>134</sup> Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John, vol. 3*. (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 30.

<sup>135</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2:919.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 919.

<sup>137</sup> "The sop" about which Keener speaks should be not so as to comfort Judas Iscariot, but just bread, since Jesus does not comfort "the Jews" with the bread when he calls them *diabolos* (διάβολος) (Jn. 8:44). Moreover, this mere bread should be understood in relation to the replacement of the Lord's supper that is providing Jesus' flesh as the bread of life to the washing of the feet of the disciples. In terms of the Synoptic perspective, the sop that Jesus gives Judas is the bread of the life. However, John cannot accept that Judas consumes the bread of life since *Satanas* (Σατανᾶς) enters into him. For this reason, John omits the Lord's supper and replaces it with washing of the feet of disciples. In *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 29A, 559, Brown asserts that John replaces the Eucharist with the footwashing. The exception of Judas from Jn. 13:10 is possible with the washing of the feet of the disciples, But it is impossible with the Eucharist for Judas to eat the bread of the life that is the flesh of Jesus because if Judas takes the bread of the flesh of Jesus, he would live forever (6:51). For this reason, John cannot allow Judas to consume the bread of life. In addition, the *diabolos* (διάβολος) is mentioned three times in John, two times in relation to Judas (13:2 and, 6:70) and one time is relation to "the Jews" (8:44). The role of *diabolos* (διάβολος) is a murderer, liar and without truth (8:44), and those roles are related to Jesus' death. Therefore, Judas cannot eat Jesus' bread of the life since the roles of *diabolos* (διάβολος) is the antithesis of the bread of life, Jesus. If so, this text (13:21-30) is not about the Beloved Disciple's superiority, but Judas' inferiority.

Beloved Disciple's physical prowess of running is intended as a compliment in the narrative.<sup>138</sup> However, this running prowess also shows the Beloved Disciple's limitation. This is because the Beloved Disciple hesitates at Jesus' tomb to enter into it to check the veracity of Jesus' resurrection (20:5). Schnackenburg argues that this is a gesture of respect because the Beloved Disciple concedes precedence to Peter, and that, thus, Peter is not negatively depicted.<sup>139</sup> Additionally, not only does Keener claim that the Beloved Disciple believes Jesus' resurrection first based on 20:29-31,<sup>140</sup> but also Schnackenburg argues in support of the same opinion based on 21:7.<sup>141</sup> Brown also takes the same position and is in agreement with Schnackenburg regarding the Beloved Disciple's motivations.<sup>142</sup> However, these scholars do not completely explain 20:9, which indicates that it is not in Jesus' resurrection that the Beloved Disciple believes. Rather, what the Beloved Disciple believes in 20:8 is Mary's witness, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb" (20:2 NRSV), not Jesus' resurrection. This is because Jesus never speaks in person about his resurrection in John, which means the Beloved Disciple has no experience in hearing about Jesus' resurrection. The mention of Jesus' resurrection in John occurs three times, but those instances are spoken by the author, not Jesus himself (2:22, 20:9 and 21:14). Moreover, the problem with 20:9 is the difficulty that Schnackenburg and Brown have with the premise that the Beloved Disciple is superior to Peter. If the Beloved Disciple believes Mary's witness, it is not a problem any longer. Also, if what Beloved Disciple believes is not Jesus' resurrection, the Beloved Disciples

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<sup>138</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2:1184.

<sup>139</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 3:310.

<sup>140</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2:1184.

<sup>141</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 3:312.

<sup>142</sup> Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 29A. (New York: Doubleday), 987.

is not one of “those who have not seen and yet have come to believe” (20:29 NRSV). Therefore, there is no textual support for the contention that the Beloved Disciple believes the fact of Jesus’ resurrection first. Besides, the fact that the Beloved Disciple does not talk with others about it suggests that he only believes Mary’s witness, and, further, that he doubted Mary’s witness until his sighting in person. Consequently, the Beloved Disciple’s running prowess reveals his limitation through the concession of precedence for Peter and late belief about Mary’s witness.

Thirdly, the Beloved Disciple recognizes Jesus first rather than Peter in the Johannine epilogue, due to having better eyesight (21:7). However, the Beloved Disciple also does not hurry to meet Jesus when he discerns that it is Jesus from the boat, whereas Peter immediately dives into the sea (21:7). Readers can see this scene as the Beloved Disciple not loving Jesus as Jesus loves the Beloved Disciple, since he is not eager to meet Jesus, unlike Peter (21:7). Even if the recognition of the Beloved Disciple is not a result of his eyesight, but due to the fishing miracle,<sup>143</sup> it does not mean that the Beloved Disciple is superior to Peter because of a meaningless time interval between them on the matter of recognition. Thus, even the earlier recognition of the Beloved Disciple also reveals his limitations.

Therefore, all of the Beloved Disciple’s superior physical prowess when compared with Peter in John does not prove his superiority at all. Rather, it reveals the Beloved Disciple’s other limitations. As a result, the physical prowess of the Beloved Disciple deconstructs his superiority. Nevertheless, the Beloved Disciple is still the ideal disciple, just in case the readers wish to resemble him. Even though physical relationship with Jesus is not a condition of superiority as a disciple, the readers may want to be closer to

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<sup>143</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 2:1228.

Jesus, like the Beloved Disciple, unless they are opponents of Jesus, based on the assumption that every disciple in John is equal to every other disciple (excepting Judas Iscariot).

In conclusion, all of the disciples in John are part of the *ochlos* that is hiding. These disciples include not only the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics but also “the Jews” at times, the Galileans, and even the Samaritans. John deconstructs the authority of the disciples who appear in the Synoptics and positively depicts other disciples to balance them. Further, John provides a bridge to the readers by the involvement of the Beloved Disciple, through Peter and Judas Iscariot. The Beloved Disciple is the character with whom the readers can empathize. There are two reasons. One is that the Beloved Disciple is a nameless character. It means that any individual could be the Beloved Disciple, since the character is not closed.<sup>144</sup> Another is that while all of disciples confess and convey Jesus to other people who are in John’s narrative world, the Beloved Disciple confesses Jesus’ messianic identity and conveys Jesus to the readers who are beyond that narrative world. To provide that bridge to the readers, John thoroughly deconstructs not only Peter but also the Beloved Disciple himself. First, John degrades Peter through a negative image involving Judas Iscariot, so that the Beloved Disciple can stand out. Second, John not only reveals the Beloved Disciple’s limitations, but also disconnects the Beloved Disciple’s advantages from the Johannine concept of discipleship, so that Beloved Disciple cannot be considered superior to the others. Third, John encourages the readers to believe that they can practice discipleship better than Peter by showing Peter’s limitations as well as those of Judas Iscariot. Through this

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<sup>144</sup> There are arguments that the Beloved Disciple is not a historical character, but rather a symbolic character. Carter argues this in *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 183. Brown also suggests this in *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 29A, 376-377.

process, John also balances the Beloved Disciple, Peter, and the other disciples, including those who are named in the Synoptics. There is no superior disciple in John, but only one inferior disciple who is Judas Iscariot. Therefore, the Beloved disciple is the bridge to the readers so that they too can be part of the *ochlos* as disciples-in-hiding.



## CHAPTER THREE:

### The Relationship of the Crowd and Jesus in Terms of Populism

Populism exists in the world. Diverse countries have already experienced that phenomenon, and also could find themselves experiencing it in the future. For this reason, the study of populism is becoming more common and urgent.<sup>145</sup> There were also popular movements in the first century. Richard A. Horsley and Tom Thatcher connect them to the Gospel of John. In John, there is the attempt to enthrone Jesus as king by masses of people, unlike what occurs in the Synoptics. Moreover, the *ochlos* has a significant position in John as it is not only in relation to John but also is related to the current populism. The *ochlos* or people form a populist movement, prior to meeting Jesus or their populist leader, and further develop as a movement. They have similar backgrounds and share features with each other. Populism belongs not only to the current era but also has occurred throughout human history.

#### 1. The Populism Theory of Current Politics and Popular Movement in Jesus' Era

Populism is a very vibrant and challenging issue current politics due to diverse populist politicians in many countries, such as Chŏl-su An in Korea, Donald Trump and Ross Perot in the U.S., Nigel Farage in the U.K., Jean-Marie Le Pen and Marine Le Pen in France, Umberto Bossi in Italy, Jörg Haider in Austria, Timo Soini in Finland, Pauline Hanson in Australia, and Preston Manning in Canada.<sup>146</sup> According to Ki-suk Cho, there are diverse causes of populism and populists such as the decline of the political parties, the disappointment of the voters about current parties, the increase of the role of the

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<sup>145</sup> Cho, *Popyullijŭm Ŭi Chŏngchihak: An Chŏl-su Wa Rosŭ Pero Ŭi Pusang Kwa Churak*, 40.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 54-79.

presses and media, and the impoverishment caused by globalization and infinite competition. For this reason, the appearances of populism are diverse, depending on the countries and populists.<sup>147</sup> Thus, it is not necessary to have a political stance to understand populism. It can arise anywhere and against any side. It is necessary to remove any judgment of value regarding whether the populism is good or bad, since it has more positive aspects than negative aspects.<sup>148</sup> However, not only are there commonalities in every form of populism,<sup>149</sup> but also populism exists everywhere the ruled class has complaints against the social order and system made by the ruling class.<sup>150</sup> Cho finds one point of commonality that all populist movements share, from the origins of the populism movement, and with which most current scholars of politics agree. According to Cho, scholars of politics point out the Farmers' Movement in North America and the *Narodnik* movement in Russia in the late nineteenth century, both caused by economic exploitation, as the origin of populism. The features of those two movements are the following: (1) it purely started from the bottom and (2) it was a cry for reformation and anti-system resistance.<sup>151</sup> Based on these features and their causes, the minimal definition of populism that exists in every manifestation of populism, Cho claims, is that it distinguishes politics into two groups such that one group comprises sincere people and the other comprises corrupt elites. It also argues that the politics has to represent the people's general will.<sup>152</sup> Of course, scholars of politics who are interested in populism and populists are not generally interested in ancient eras but rather in current

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<sup>147</sup> Cho gives examples. While Donald Trump in U.S arose from the right wing, Chöl-su An arose from the left wing. Moreover, Ross Perot in U.S and Silvio Berlusconi arose in Italy arose from the middle of the political arena.

<sup>148</sup> Paul A. Taggart, *Populism* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>149</sup> Cho, *Popyullijŭm Ŭi Chŏngchihak: An Chöl-su Wa Rosŭ Pero Ŭi Pusang Kwa Churak*, 24.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

populist politicians. Nevertheless, the features and causes of populism that they identify are substantially similar to the ancient popular movement represented in the Gospel of John.

Several New Testament scholars approach the gospel Jesus as a populist king. Greg Carey sees the Marcan Jesus of Byöng-mu Ahn's *minjung* theology as a populist Jesus. In his essay, Carey has no specific definition of populism, but takes the popular character of the *ochlos* as his point of departure.<sup>153</sup> On the other hand, John A. T. Robinson defines the feeding of the five thousand as the expression of a "populist programme" which Jesus in the Synoptics rejects, but Robinson also has no accurate definition of the term "populist."<sup>154</sup> The view of both scholars regarding the definition of populist seems to suggest just a person who is popular with many people. However, both views are also different because while there is no rejection of populism by Jesus in Carey's essay, Robinson articulates that Jesus rejects being identified as a populist.

Besides, there are some scholars who have a political understanding of John.<sup>155</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, in this regard, are very interested in "popular" movements and Jesus is a populist figure in their book *John, Jesus and The Renewal of Israel*. Horsley and Thatcher have clearer concepts than Carey and Robinson about popular movements, as their focus is on the backdrop and the character of the movement, even though Horsley and Thatcher also provide no definition of populism. The backdrop of popular movements, they argue, is the economic exploitation of ordinary people and hostility

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<sup>153</sup> Greg Carey, "The Inhabitants of the Earth' in Revelation," in *Reading Minjung Theology in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Kim and Kim, 122.

<sup>154</sup> John A. T. Robinson "His Witness Is True': A Test of Johannine Claim," in Ernst Bammel and C. F. D. Moule, eds., *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 463.

<sup>155</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 13.

against the elites of the society.<sup>156</sup> The character of the popular movement depends on the specific purposes of each movement, that is, whether it is resistance or renewal.<sup>157</sup>

Horsley and Thatcher take some examples to show both types. The first example for the popular movement as resistance is the “*messianic* movement,”<sup>158</sup> which arose with the revolts in 4 BCE and in 66-70 CE. These popular movements as resistance tried to enthrone their leaders as king and attacked Roman institutions to “take back”<sup>159</sup> their lands and traditional way of life. The revolts enabled a degree of independence for a limited span of time.<sup>160</sup> The second example for the popular movement as renewal is the “*prophetic* movements,”<sup>161</sup> which were led by a Samaritan prophet at Gerizim in 36 CE, Theudas at the Jordan River in 46 CE, and a Judean prophet at the Mount of Olives in the late 50 CE mentioned in Acts 21:38. These *prophetic* movements held up certain divine miracles or symbols narrated in the Old Testament as models of liberation from their ruling class. However, the Roman Empire wiped them out these movements.<sup>162</sup> Therefore, although the implicit definition of the version of “populism” with which Horsley and Thatcher deal relies on certain features of the *messianic* and *prophetic* movements, its basic conditions are similar to certain features of the populism that is prominent in current politics, namely, economic exploitation and a hostile attitude against the ruling class. Consequently, it is reasonable to harness the methodology that Cho suggests to reveal the character of the *ochlos* in John.

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<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

Cho derives this methodology from Paul A. Taggart's "ideal-type" of populism<sup>163</sup> for universal study about the reasons and results of populism.<sup>164</sup> The criteria that Cho suggests consist of six conditions, but three of those cannot be used to study the *ochlos* here.<sup>165</sup> The first criterion is that "populism is hostile to representative politics."<sup>166</sup> Although ancient Israel did not have representative politics, the criterion can nevertheless be applied to the *ochlos* in John. This is because Cho's point with regard to the first criterion is that politics has no transparency, nor is it truly representative. Cho argues that the purpose of representative politics is the inclusion of more opinions from diverse people, but it needs also more experts and its process becomes more complex as it contains more groups. Ironically, the complex process and many experts make representative politics opaque.<sup>167</sup> Therefore, populism tends to be hostile to representative politics, since it cannot contain the people's opinions. For this reason, it is possible to replace representative politics with the religious authorities that is, in fact, the most overt political group in John.

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<sup>163</sup> Taggart, *Populism*, 3.

<sup>164</sup> Cho, *Popyullijŭm Ŭi Chŏngchihak: An Chŏl-su Wa Rosŭ Pero Ŭi Pusang Kwa Churak*, 47.

<sup>165</sup> The first criterion of the *ochlos* in John concerns the populists, not populism. Cho points out that the populist regards himself or herself as the heartland that represents the idealized concept of the group or community. The second criterion is about populism as a whole. Taggart argues that a lack of core values is the basis of populism. Essentially, this condition means that each example of populism that has occurred in different places and different time has its own version. Cho further explains that the main value usually comes from the heartland of specific groups or parties, but each example of populism has its own versions of the heartland. Taggart further adds that populism can be attached to some very different ideological positions because of "its inherent weakness and its potential ubiquity" ("Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics," 68). The third criterion is about the limitation of the research about populism, which is also about populism as a whole. Taggart argues that populism is a chameleon. Cho explains that the research about populism is restrained by its context, and it is also the reason why the study of populism stays in the research area.

<sup>166</sup> Paul A. Taggart, "Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics," in *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, ed. Yves Mény and Yves Surel (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 66.

<sup>167</sup> Cho, *Popyullijŭm Ŭi Chŏngchihak: An Chŏl-su Wa Rosŭ Pero Ŭi Pusang Kwa Churak*, 48.

The second criterion that helps to discern with clarity what populism is suggests that “populism is a reaction to a sense of extreme crisis.”<sup>168</sup> Populism emerges from crisis, change, or challenge in the society and it uses distrust against the elites and political parties.<sup>169</sup> The third criterion is that it “focuses on the self-limiting quality of populism.” Taggart further explains, “Populists are reluctantly political insofar as they only mobilize when overcome by a sense of crisis.”<sup>170</sup> Seemingly, this appears to describe the populist. However, this means that people’s hopes, needs, or desire for crisis, change, or challenge in the society call for the populist. Thus, it could be understood that people ignite populism.

## 2. The *Ochlos* Hostile toward Politics in John

For the first criterion above, the *ochlos* has to be hostile not only to the religious authorities but also to the Roman Empire. It also has a basis in that the religious authorities were not interested in the people’s opinions. About the inclusion of more opinions from diverse people, Horsley and Thatcher assert that the religious authorities did not convey the people’s interests to the Roman governors, despite the abuses and protests of the people.<sup>171</sup> However, there is seemingly no hostile attitude of the *ochlos* toward the religious authorities and Roman authorities in John. Horsley and Thatcher also suggest a positive basis for the non-hostile attitude of the *ochlos*. According to Horsley and Thatcher, the *ochlos* that were under the subjugation and exploitation of the Roman Empire in Palestine and so engaged in “hidden forms of resistance” instead of suffering

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>170</sup> Taggart, “Populism and the Pathology of Representative Politics,” 69.

<sup>171</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 122.

enslavement or death.<sup>172</sup> Nevertheless, the people in Palestine confronted the imperial rule and their rulers, unlike other regions of the empire, and those confrontations occasionally emerged also during Jesus' time.<sup>173</sup> Horsley and Thatcher find evidence of the hostile attitude of people to the religious authorities in Josephus who claimed that Jerusalemites burned the city because of economic exploitation and also attacked the house of the high priests and the Herodians.<sup>174</sup> Even if Josephus' records are often not specifically related to the period of Jesus, given that outright revolts between 4 BCE and 66CE were frequent,<sup>175</sup> it is reasonable to suppose that the *ochlos* in John also feel hostility not only to the religious authorities but also to the Roman Empire.

There are also other clues in John that the *ochlos* are hostile to politics. First, consideration needs to be given to the response of the *ochlos* and the religious authorities to baptism. The first account of a baptism occurs in Jn. 1:19-28. In this scene, the story is focused on the conversation between John the Baptist and the religious authorities. Keener claims that the religious authorities have suspicion of John the Baptist,<sup>176</sup> which implies that the religious authorities and the *ochlos* were not on good terms, since the *ochlos* that is following John the Baptist must have expected to experience baptism. Of course, there is no mention about the *ochlos* in 1:19-28, but considering both facts, that the religious authorities investigating John the Baptist involves the possibility that the *ochlos* gathers with John<sup>177</sup> and also that baptism cannot be performed by the baptizer alone, the *ochlos* must have been there. Moreover, the fact, that the *ochlos* follows Jesus

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<sup>172</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:431.

<sup>177</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:433.

to the place where John the Baptist baptized previously when Jesus take a rest at that place (10:40), supports the possibility that the *ochlos* must originally have been in that place of baptism.<sup>178</sup> The *ochlos* do appear in Jesus' baptisms in John. When Jesus baptizes,<sup>179</sup> the *ochlos* gathers with him (3:26). Horsley and Thatcher claim that not only Jesus' baptism but also John's baptism is threatening to the religious authorities, based on the tradition of Israel that the prophet's activity in the wilderness is a threat to Jerusalem.<sup>180</sup> Since the *ochlos* that comes to the baptism includes Israelites, they already know the traditions of Israel. As a result, the *ochlos* gathers with the baptizer, regardless of who the baptizer is, suggesting that the *ochlos* in John is hostile to the religious authorities.

Second, the hostile attitude is not only about "the Jews" and Galileans, but also the Samaritan *ochlos*. Soon after Jesus' baptism, Jesus meets the Samaritan woman (4:7). When Jesus talks to the Samaritan woman, she immediately responds with a hostile attitude and this attitude also stems from the traditions of Israel. According to Beasley-Murray, Samaritans are a mixed race populated by the king of Assyria who settled in the Northern Kingdom, and they, nevertheless, insist that they are the true Israelite successors of God's covenant and that their Pentateuch is the original version from Moses.<sup>181</sup> Moreover, Samaritans refuse to worship in Jerusalem. The conflict between the Samaritans and Jews deteriorated after the Babylonian exile since the Samaritans did not help to restore Jerusalem and they helped the enemy when the Jews had a war with the Syrian monarchs. The high priest of Jerusalem also burned the Samaritan temple on

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 831.

<sup>179</sup> The narrator of John explains that the disciples baptized (4:2), not Jesus. However, the fact that the *ochlos* came to the place of the baptism is still changeless.

<sup>180</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 111.

<sup>181</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36, 60.



Gerizim.<sup>182</sup> Although “the Jews” in 4:9 does not necessarily mean the religious authorities, but rather Jewish ethnicity,<sup>183</sup> the hostility of the Samaritan *ochlos* still is directed toward the religious authorities because of the elite Jewish ideology that regard Samaritan people as heathens.<sup>184</sup> The fact that the Samaritan woman immediately asks Jesus about Jerusalem when she realize Jesus is a prophet shows that the conflict with Jerusalem is a vibrant issue among the Samaritans and they are hostile to the religious authorities who are leaders of Jerusalem.<sup>185</sup>

Third, the *ochlos* tries to enthrone Jesus as the King of Israel (6:14-15). This is the most political and the most hostile response of the *ochlos* at the same time, toward the religious authorities. Furthermore, Brown argues that this attempt to enthrone Jesus as the king is a historical element, and one that might have provoked a dangerous revolt.<sup>186</sup> The title of king that the *ochlos* wants is a political title.

Carter presents some characteristics of kingship in this context, and there are three factors for understanding Jn. 6:14-15. Firstly, the title of the king indicates the salvation and judgement of God for all the nations in the Israelite tradition. Secondly, there are the duties of the king in Psalms 72 and two of those duties include protecting poor people and overcoming enemies. Thirdly, the word *basileus* (βασιλεύς), that means “king,” is used for diverse Gentile kings such as the Roman emperor, and local kings who were appointed by the Roman Empire. For this reason, the Roman Empire destroys other kingships that are not appointed by Rome.<sup>187</sup> Given that the *milieu* of the *ochlos* that they

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<sup>182</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, 170.

<sup>183</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36, 20.

<sup>184</sup> Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Gospel According to St. John, vol. 1.* (London: Burns & Oates, 1968), 425.

<sup>185</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36, 61.

<sup>186</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 250.

<sup>187</sup> Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, 192.

are the colonized of the Roman Empire, it is obvious that even only mention of a non-Roman-approved king is considered treason against the Roman Empire and the religious authorities who insist that their king is Caesar (Jn. 19:15). Carter also articulates, “The attempt to make Jesus king in John 6:15 poses this danger both for Rome and for Jesus and his followers as do Nathanael’s ascriptions of the title ‘King of Israel’ to Jesus (Jn. 1:49) and the people’s welcome to Jesus as he enters Jerusalem (12:15).”<sup>188</sup> Therefore, the king that the *ochlos* wants is not a symbol or metaphor, but clearly a political and hostile king to the Roman Empire and the religious authorities.

As a result, the *ochlos* in John are hostile to the politics of the religious authorities and the Roman Empire, which is a significant indication of their populism. The *ochlos* move by themselves and their direction is toward a politics with a hostile attitude toward Rome and its local officials.

### 3. The *Ochlos* Amidst Crisis, Change, and Challenge

The second criterion above regarding discerning what populism is whether or not it represents serious crisis, change, or challenge. There were four crises and changes at least reflected in John and prominent during the late first century when the traditions formed that made their way into John.<sup>189</sup>

First, the Israelite people suffered from the brutality of Pilate who was the Roman governor. Horsley and Thatcher show the crises of the Jewish people under Pilate through the records of Josephus. That is, according to Josephus, Pilate killed many Jews when he became the governor. Horsley and Thatcher state “Shortly, after he was appointed

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, LXXXIII.

governor, Pilate had caused a major provocation of Judeans by sending his soldiers into Jerusalem under cover of night carrying their army standards, which bore symbols offensive to Judean laws. When the Judeans mounted a large nonviolent demonstration, literally ‘laying their bodies on the line’ and daring Pilate to massacre them, however, he backed away from violently suppressing the protest.”<sup>190</sup> Horsley and Thatcher give two more examples of the brutality of Pilate. He quickly sent soldiers to suppress the movement of the Samaritan prophet at Mount Gerizim and also did not hesitate to kill those Jews who complained about his use of money in the holy treasury of the temple.<sup>191</sup> In short, Pilate was very aggressive toward the Israelites.

Second, there was a significant change in the Israelite society, regarding the role of the Pharisees. In John, the Pharisees play an important role “working side by side with the high priests” to maintain public order in relation to the Law in Jerusalem.<sup>192</sup> According to Horsley and Thatcher, the Pharisees had the role of important and influential players in the reign of the Hasmoneans. Although the Pharisees were subordinate to Herod’s court, they were elevated to a higher position in the high priestly regime that was influential in terms of the control over Judea and Galilee under the Roman governors’ control.<sup>193</sup> However, this role was not granted to the Pharisees before the great revolt in 66 CE.<sup>194</sup>

Third, there was a worsening situation of economic exploitation in the late first century. Vespasian started imposing a Jewish tax.<sup>195</sup> According to Cassidy, Vespasian

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<sup>190</sup> Horsley and Thatcher, *John, Jesus, and the Renewal of Israel*, 123.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>195</sup> Cassidy, *John’s Gospel in New Perspective*, 6.

was in charge of suppressing the great Jewish revolt in 66 CE, and he became familiar after the revolt with the *milieu* of Judea and the Jews, particularly regarding the economic support of the Jerusalem temple that was one *didrachma* for all male Jews above twenty-one years old.<sup>196</sup> Vespasian imposed a tax upon all Jews for supporting the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, which was Roman as *Fiscus Judaicus*. Furthermore, Rome made a separate treasury for them to control their administration. Moreover, Domitian who was a son of Vespasian levied this tax, according to Nerva who was an emperor after the Flavian emperors,<sup>197</sup> and who ruled much more rigorously.<sup>198</sup> For this reason, there were some Jews who hid their Jewish identity to avoid the tax.<sup>199</sup> Given that some emperors prior to Domitian such as Gaius and Nero already had imposed exorbitant tax on the Jews, it is apparent that the Jews were in an economic crisis and were seeking serious changes because of it.

Fourth, a political change and crisis occurred around Jesus' time and involved the cult of the emperors in Rome. According to Cassidy, the groundwork of the cult of the emperors was made by Augustus who reigned from 27 BCE to 14 CE. Since Augustus defeated many rivals and built good relationships with the senators and people in Rome, his successors could be strengthened.<sup>200</sup> This power of the emperor was intertwined with many religious factors, so that it was almost impossible to separate the political and religious fields. Cassidy claims "At this juncture attention is appropriately directed to the amorphous, complex Greco-Roman system of the gods. This system was susceptible to

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<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>197</sup> Flavian emperors are Vespasian (69-79 CE) and his two sons, Titus (79-81 CE) and Domitian (81-96 CE).

<sup>198</sup> Cassidy, *John's Gospel in New Perspective*, 8.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

manipulation and modification by the emperors themselves as well as by other persons of influence from the provinces and in Rome.”<sup>201</sup> There are two cases that Cassidy mentions. One is the veneration of emperors as supra-human after the emperor’s death. An honorific title, *divus*, that combined the notions of “divine” and “god,” and used to honor emperors, shows well the supra-human veneration given them.<sup>202</sup> Another case was the promotion of worship of living emperors. For this worship, Roman subjects built many temples and shrines for emperors, particularly in the eastern provinces, not least the province of Asia where, according to tradition, the Fourth Gospel originated.

Consequently, not only the *ochlos* in John but also the readers of John faced social, political and economic crisis and changes, and those crises and changes provided energy to the *ochlos* for an embrace of populism.

#### 4. The *Ochlos* Calling for the Leader

The third criterion of the populism as stated above is a leader who reluctantly participates in politics for the people’s hopes, needs, and desires. As mentioned above, it is a feature of the populist leader, but it is also an essential condition for the development of populism.

In John, diverse people confess Jesus’ identity with specific titles. Those titles are Messiah or Christ<sup>203</sup> including the one about whom “Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote” (1:45 NRSV),<sup>204</sup> prophet,<sup>205</sup> the Son of God,<sup>206</sup> the King of Israel (1:49,

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<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Included are Jn. 1:41, 4:29, 7:31, 7:41, and 11:27. The author of John reveals that Χριστός is translated from Μεσσίας.

<sup>204</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 1:315.

<sup>205</sup> Included are 4:19, 6:14, 7:40, and 9:17.

<sup>206</sup> Included are 1:49, 11:27 and, 20:31

12:13), “a teacher who has come from God” (3:2 NRSV) or Rabbi,<sup>207</sup> the Savior of the world (4:42), and the Holy One of God (6:69). In John, these titles were used by the people for the leader. Regarding the term Messiah, Carter argues that the title, “Messiah,” meant “the anointed agent of God’s sovereignty, powerful judgment, and transformational new life.”<sup>208</sup> Moreover, the term, Messiah, means “anointed” in Hebrew, and “the anointed one” means the representative of God.<sup>209</sup> The prophet, meanwhile, was an equivalent position with the king. Keener explains that the prophet and the king were identical in terms of positions of power since the “prophet who is to come into the world” (Jn. 6:14) is similar with “a prophet like Moses” (Deut. 18:18) and Moses’ role is that of a king (Deut. 33:5) in the Jewish tradition.<sup>210</sup> Therefore, the title, prophet, had the meaning of the leader of the people. The “son of God,” basically, denotes Jesus’ roles given him by God. Carter says that these roles are related to revelation of “the eschatological realities of vindication or judgement and life.”<sup>211</sup> Also, not only does it signify king, heavenly beings, or the Messiah in the Jewish tradition, but it also means the Roman emperor in the first century.<sup>212</sup> Thus, the title, son of God, that the people used was in reference to their leader. The king of Israel is definitely referred to the highest leader in Israel.<sup>213</sup> The teacher, Rabbi, was also a leader of Israel. According to Keener, the leaders regarded themselves as “the appropriate guardians of sound teaching”.<sup>214</sup> Nicodemus who also called Jesus, Rabbi, and teacher from God, was also a teacher (Jn. 3:10) and leader (3:1). Traditionally, the term, “savior” was also used for emperors

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<sup>207</sup> Included are 1:38, 1:49, 3:2, 4:31, 6:25, 9:2, 11:8, and 20:6.

<sup>208</sup> Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, 178.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>210</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:670.

<sup>211</sup> Carter, *John and Empire: Initial Explorations*, 194.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> For further discussing, see “2. The hostile *Ochlos* to politics in John” in chapter three above.

<sup>214</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:536.

including Julius Caesar who reigned from 49 BCE to 44 BCE to Augustus (27 BCE - 14 CE), Tiberius (14 CE - 37 CE), Claudius (41 CE - 54 CE), Nero (54 CE - 68 CE,) Vespasian (69 CE - 79 CE), Titus (79 CE - 81 CE), Trajan (98 CE - 117 CE), and Hadrian (117 CE - 138 CE).<sup>215</sup> This clearly shows that the “savior” was the call sign of the Roman Empire’s leader. In the case of the Holy One of God, this title was originally used to refer to a person of who was consecrated to God in the Old Testament, such as Samson (Jdg. 16:17) and Aaron (Ps. 106:1).<sup>216</sup> Not only Samson but also Aaron were leaders of Israel. Consequently, the titles that the *ochlos* used to call Jesus not only represented a confession of their faith, but also a representation of what they desired for Jesus as the title implied. As a result, the *ochlos* desired Jesus as their leader as evidenced by the use of these titles.

The *ochlos* actually pushed Jesus to become their leader, as their king (6:1-15). The initial trigger was Jesus’ healing signs. John thus reveals the reason why the *ochlos* follows Jesus. When Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, the large *ochlos* followed him for the healing signs that Jesus showed (6:1-2). Schnackenburg explains the healing signs were implicitly presupposed in 2:23 and 4:45, even though there are just two specific healing stories of a royal official (4:46) and a man who has been ill for thirty-eight years (5:5).<sup>217</sup> The *ochlos* suddenly chose to enthrone Jesus as the king, after the feeding of the five thousand and confessed Jesus’ identity as the prophet (6:14). As it is articulated above, the prophet is identical to the king. It means that they had to have confidence that Jesus was a king or the new Moses.<sup>218</sup> Keener finds the historicity of the

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<sup>215</sup> Cassidy, *John’s Gospel in New Perspective*, 13.

<sup>216</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 298.

<sup>217</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 2:13.

<sup>218</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:670.

attempt to enthrone Jesus from the *milieu* of Jesus, even though the Synoptics have no record of it. According to Keener, the reason why the Synoptics do not have the record of the attempt to enthrone Jesus is that the writers of the Synoptics were closer to the time of the war between Judea and Rome, causing the writers to omit the tradition from their Gospels for fears of misinterpretation due to their revolutionary sentiment. However, John had a specific reason to emphasize this record due to the cult of the emperor.<sup>219</sup>

The stronger evidence that the people pushed Jesus as their leader due to their populism is shown in the narrative about the follow up steps of the *ochlos* after the withdrawal of Jesus who faded into the woodwork and crossed the sea of Galilee with his disciples (6:16-21). However, the *ochlos* looks for Jesus when they realize that Jesus was not there (6:22-24). Finally, they meet Jesus on the other side of the sea (6:25). Of course, Jesus does not take sides with the *ochlos* to be the king they had desired. Jesus detects the foundation of the purpose of the *ochlos* (6:26). John clearly reveals that the reason why the *ochlos* follows him is due to the healing signs (6:2). After the feeding of the five thousand, the *ochlos* had a serious reason to enthrone Jesus (14-15). However, Jesus defines the reason that the *ochlos* followed him was due to his feeding of the *ochlos*. Schnackenburg argues that what the *ochlos* saw through the sign of feeding was not divine meaning, but their pleasure in physical satisfaction.<sup>220</sup> Nevertheless, the *ochlos* did not give up and later succeeded in declaring Jesus their king (12:13). It clearly shows that the *ochlos* was eager to enthrone Jesus regardless of their misinterpretation. Therefore, it is clear that the *ochlos* in John had needs and desires to have a leader, and they pushed

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid., 671.

<sup>220</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 2:13.



Jesus to become their king. The titles the *ochlos* use underscore their desire to enthrone Jesus as their king.

In conclusion, the *ochlos* in John displayed their populism. Scholars have diverse definition of populism, but there are traits of populism that are recognized by most scholars. Through populism, the people distinguish politics in terms of two groups that include pure or authentic-minded people and corrupt elites. They are regarded both as being identical and also as hostile toward each other. Populism has features regarding a movement that starts from the bottom and shows resistance to the system. Cho suggests some criteria, based on Taggart to discern populism. Those definitions, features, and criteria also apply to John since there were significant popular movements that arose from the bottom also in the Roman world. The Johannine *ochlos* is hostile to the religious authorities and the Roman Empire, it faces political, economic, and social crises and changes, and it looks for a leader for its movement. In other words, the *ochlos* in John expresses populism and seeks the fulfillment of its populist desires in Jesus. However, whether the Johannine Jesus can be regarded as a populist or not is another issue.

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### Jesus from the Perspective of the Religious Authorities and *Ochlos*

As noted in chapter two, Horsley and Thatcher distinguish popular movements into *messianic* movements and *prophetic* movements. The condition of each is whether people regard them as either having a leader who would drive out the Roman Empire and recover their country and properties or being led by a prophet who would show divine miracles or symbols for liberation from the ruling class. Eventually, in John, Jesus is leading the *messianic* movement in this perspective for the enthroning attempt of the *ochlos*, even though there are some clues that it also could be understood as a *prophetic* movement based on a prophecy of the destruction of the temple (2:19). Which type of leader do the people understand Jesus to be? Cho further distinguishes the leader within populism into “the populist” and “the revolutionary leader.”<sup>221</sup> Those two types of leaders are very similar to the understandings of the *ochlos* and the religious authorities in John.

#### 1. The Populist and the Revolutionary Leader

The populist and revolutionary leader resemble one another since they engage in ardent advocacy for the masses of people and they want to renovate the existing practices and the current politics.<sup>222</sup> For this reason, even some experts and the press confuse the populist and revolutionary leaders.<sup>223</sup> Cho suggest five categories to distinguish the populist and revolutionary leader, based on the transforming leadership that McGregor

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<sup>221</sup> Cho, *Popyullijŭm Ŭi Chŏngchihak: An Chŏl-su Wa Rosŭ Pero Ŭi Pusang Kwa Churak*, [*The Politics of the Populism: Rise and Fall of Chŏl-su Ahn and Ross Perot*] 87.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

Burns suggests.<sup>224</sup> The first category is related to the origin of those leaders. The populists come with their popularity from other fields; in other words, they are not new politicians. Also, that is the reason why the populists have explosive power. However, the revolutionary leaders rise among the politicians.<sup>225</sup> The second category is how to drive the political practices. The populists reject bureaucracy, that is, the existing way of the politics in their society and directly connect advocates to themselves, and emphasize personalized leadership. Specifically, the populists set people at the head of their movement since they suppose that they can be a mouthpiece of the people's will as one voice, as they are negative about the representative system. On the contrary, the revolutionary leaders try to seek renovation of the existing medium of politics from within political parties and a national assembly.<sup>226</sup> The third category is that of leadership. The populists are authoritarian and dictatorial in terms of their decision-making, despite their emphasis on developing a relationship with people. The populists usually make a decision not with authorized experts, but with private relationships. In contrast, the revolutionary leaders are value-oriented. The revolutionary leaders persuade people and stir up people's enthusiasm, based on values and morality. The fourth category refers to the power base. While people cynical about politics and apolitical people support the populists,<sup>227</sup> critical people with values and authentic desires for change support the revolutionary leaders.<sup>228</sup> The fifth category is rhetoric. The populists have three features in rhetoric. Firstly, the populists speak under the supposition that all of the people have an identical will. Secondly, the populists have distrust and hatred for the system and the

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid., 86.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 90.

vested interests; that causes personalization that depends on an individual leader. Thirdly, the populists have an ambivalent attitude toward power because they reluctantly participate in politics.<sup>229</sup> On the contrary, the revolutionary leaders also have three features. Firstly, the revolutionary leaders speak about the conflict in the society since they come on stage to resolve social conflicts. Secondly, the revolutionary leaders try to empower people, due to the fact that they emphasize the revolution from the bottom. This involves the extension of the ordinary people's civil rights. Thirdly, the revolutionary leaders try to lead by personal example through embodiment of morality and their values since they move people through a value-oriented vision.<sup>230</sup>

Taken together, the populist and the revolutionary leader are defined comparatively: The populist is a person who casts people's needs into populism and takes popularity from people for his or her political purpose, while the revolutionary leader is a person who tries to embody *Zeitgeist* through the renovation of politics. Therefore, on the one hand, *Zeitgeist* is not essential for populists since their purpose is popularity with the people. On the other hand, popularity with the people is not essential for revolutionary leaders, since their purpose is the renovation of a political system.

## 2. The Populist Jesus as Seen by the Religious Authorities

To the religious authorities of John's Gospel, Jesus was a populist. To maintain the stance of the religious authorities, the relevant texts with the religious authorities are reviewed here.

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., 91.

The first feature of the populist is that they are not politicians for the first time. At that time, the religious authorities represented the political force.<sup>231</sup> For the religious authorities, Jesus is not one of them. When Jesus appears for the first time in Jerusalem, “the Jews” ask Jesus to show them a sign. “The Jews” here are the “overseers of the temple” the religious authorities.<sup>232</sup> It means that “the Jews” ask Jesus to identify who he is and it also means that “the Jews” do not know him at all. The religious authorities also regard Jesus as a Galilean (7:41, 7:52), even though there is some argument that Jesus’ hometown is Jerusalem (4:43-45),<sup>233</sup> which implies that Jesus is not a religious authority. Moreover, a feature that represents explosive power comes from the freshness that occurs with Jesus. Jesus and his disciples attract many more people than John the Baptist (3:26), and the religious authorities hear about that phenomenon (4:1). Also, the *ochlos* shouts, “Hosanna” and “the King of Israel” before him (12:13), and the religious authorities look at that scene with dismay (12:19). Thus, Jesus comes into the political world from apolitical fields from the perspective of the religious authorities.

The second feature is that of rejecting the current system of politics and connecting to the people directly through personalized leadership. Jesus drives out the sheep and cattle (2:15) and rebukes those who are selling the doves (2:16). This could be seen as rejecting the ritual system of the temple controlled by the religious authorities. Actually, the religious authorities accept Jesus’ acting as a challenge not only to the ritual system of the temple but also to the aristocracy that controls the temple.<sup>234</sup> The asking for

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<sup>231</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:525.

<sup>232</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 1:348.

<sup>233</sup> Beasley-Murray, *John*, WBC 36, 73.

<sup>234</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:525.

a sign is the evidence of it because the sign is proof of God's power and authority.<sup>235</sup> In addition, Jesus heals people on the Sabbath and even in Jerusalem, and confronts the religious authorities. First, Jesus calls and heals the lame man who has been sick for thirty-eight years at Bethesda, in Jerusalem, on the Sabbath (5:1-9). When those Jews, who are not ordinary Jewish people, but religious authorities,<sup>236</sup> realize that Jesus healed the lame man (5:15), Jesus prefers to claim that he also works for his father, God (5:19). Second, Jesus also heals a blind man on the Sabbath (9:14). This healing is taken as an issue by the Pharisees (9:16). Of course, there is no debate with Jesus, but this case occurs after the first healing and debate on the Sabbath (5:1-18). In addition, Jesus meets and talks with this lame man (5:14) and the blind man (9:35), in person, after the healing and accusation (5:10, 9:24, 34). From the perspective of the religious leaders, it can be regarded as strengthening his position because the religious authorities become aware of this fact (5:17-18, 9:40).

The third feature is that of the authoritarian and dictatorial leadership, especially depending on private relationships rather than authorized experts. Outwardly, Jesus is definitely authoritarian and dictatorial toward the religious authorities. Jesus overturns the table of the money changers and casts out sheep and the cattle without any attempt of conversation with the religious authorities. The authorized experts are the religious authorities themselves or public religious officials in Rome.<sup>237</sup> Moreover, Jesus does not try to have a peaceful conversation but debates with "the Jews" aggressively when they who are authorized experts ask for a sign. The fundamental reason why the religious authorities regard Jesus as a populist is that they have public committees or a system to

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid., 529.

<sup>236</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 208.

<sup>237</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:525.

make critical decisions and it works in John (7:45-52, 11:47-53). Jesus also shows an authoritarian attitude. Jesus does not listen to the authorized experts who argue that the Sabbath violation is based on the Law, but he insists only on his personal authority based on his relationship to his Father, God, not on the Law (5:17), and further he repeats the Sabbath violation again (9:14).

The fourth feature is rhetorical, which is part of the fifth category above. There are three points in Jesus' rhetoric. The first point is the supposition that all of the people have an identical will. However, Jesus is not interested in the people's unified will or desire at all. This is the sole feature of the populist leader that Jesus does not have in John. The second point is the distrust and hatred of the system and their vested interests. From the perspective of the religious authorities, there are many responses of Jesus that seem like distrust and hatred. First of all, Jesus asks again about the impossible condition of the Jew's asking of a sign of his identity. The impossible condition is to destroy the temple (2:19). Of course the destruction of the temple means Jesus' prediction about the destruction of the temple<sup>238</sup> or Jesus' death and resurrection.<sup>239</sup> Nevertheless, it is impossible that it be fulfilled for "the Jews" because they understand "Jesus' words at their face value."<sup>240</sup> Further, even the disciples, themselves, get to know its meaning only after the resurrection of Jesus (2:21-22). Second, Jesus entrusts himself to no one in Jerusalem (2:24) at all. Third, Jesus refuses to have "the Jews" come to him to have life. (5:40). Even if this means that "the Jews" are not ready to believe in Jesus<sup>241</sup> or they

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 524.

<sup>239</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 1:349.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 350.

<sup>241</sup> Brown, *The Gospel According to John I-XII*, 228.

actually do not have the will to come to Jesus,<sup>242</sup> it is clear at least that “Jesus has an air of pessimistic resignation.”<sup>243</sup> Fourth, Jesus calls “the Jews” “sons of the devil” (8:44), even though their number contains some who believe in him (8:31). Eventually, “the Jews” who believe in Jesus reverse their position (8:48, 59). Fifth, Jesus openly speaks before the Pharisees, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” (9:39 NRSV) The judgment separates people into two groups; those who pay attention and those who refuse it.<sup>244</sup> Further, these words are spoken after the debate between the blind man and the religious authorities (9:13-34). Therefore, this means that Jesus would judge those who do see, the religious authorities, and the Pharisees immediately realize that they are those (9:40). The third point in the rhetoric is the attitude of ambivalence toward power based on a reluctant participation in politics. Jesus looks as though he is not interested in power, since he speaks two times about his future away from the centers of human political power. Jesus says that he will leave (7:33), implying that he will be beyond Israel (7:35). Jesus also says, “I am going away, and you will search for me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come” (8:21 NRSV), which may mean death (8:22). However, Jesus does not reject being called the “king of Israel” by the people (12:13). In other words, Jesus has an ambiguous character and can be viewed as a dangerous person.

Overall, the religious authorities have limited information about Jesus, and that information could be interpreted as Jesus being a dangerous populist who employs the popularity of the *ochlos* for his own political purpose.

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<sup>242</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 2:125.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>244</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:795.



### 3. The Revolutionary Leader, Jesus, as Seen by the *Ochlos*

On the other hand, Jesus is a revolutionary leader to the *ochlos*. The first feature of revolutionary leaders is that they rise among the politicians, but this criterion is not always necessary. Jesus is likely a stranger to the religious authorities. However, from the perspective of the *ochlos*, Jesus is not a stranger because John the Baptist guarantees him as a religious person (1:29). This means that Jesus may not be famous, but nor is he entirely unrelated to the *ochlos*. Keener comments “The Baptist’s public confession in Jn. 1:36 could make historical sense in the context of the Baptist being an eschatological prophet.”<sup>245</sup> Moreover, the fact that most people who meet Jesus confess that he is a prophet or the messiah<sup>246</sup> proves that people regard him as a religious person worthy of special reverence.

The second feature is that revolutionary leaders try to renovate the existing medium of politics. Jesus does not try to make a new ritual system. Of course, his baptism could be seen as a rejection of the system of the temple by the religious authorities. However, the baptism of John the Baptist and Jesus does not ask for repentance, unlike the Synoptics (Mk. 1:4, Mt. 3:2, Lk. 3:3). Schnackenburg explains that the baptism in John is a “symbolic action of the eschatological prophet.”<sup>247</sup> Instead, the Johannine Jesus has his ministry centered on Jerusalem and the Jewish festivals.<sup>248</sup> Moreover, Jesus does not hesitate to debate and discuss with the religious authorities in

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<sup>245</sup> Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1:452.

<sup>246</sup> For more discussion, refer to “4. The *Ochlos* Calling the Leader” in chapter three.

<sup>247</sup> Schnackenburg, *Gospel according to St John*, 1:293.

<sup>248</sup> Included are 2:13-21, 5:1-47, 7:10-8:59, 10:22-39, and 12:12-50.

person,<sup>249</sup> which means that Jesus is active at the boundary of the existing medium of politics.

The third feature of the revolutionary leader is that they are values-oriented and persuade people based on their values, whereas populists are solely authoritarian and dictatorial. Carter classifies Jesus' words and work in John according to chapters. According to Carter, chapters one to twelve elaborate Jesus' identity and roles, and chapters thirteen to seventeen elaborate Jesus' instruction for the way of life of his disciples.<sup>250</sup> Those topics can be re-classified according to values in Jesus' discourse, and there are three major values. The first value is life, salvation. Jesus identifies himself as seven kinds of material for salvation. Those are the bread of life (Jn. 6:35, 48), the light of the world (8:12), the gate of the sheep (10:7), the good shepherd (10:11), the resurrection and life (11:25), the way, the truth, and the life (14:6), and the true vine (15:1). Besides, Jesus speaks about life or eternal life<sup>251</sup> and the water of life for salvation (4:14, 7:37-38). The second value is Jesus' identity in relation to God.<sup>252</sup> The third value is the renovation of the religious elements, including the renovation of the temple (2:16, 4:21, 4:24), the renovation of individual faith (3:5), the renovation of salvation (6:40, 8:51, 9:39, 17:2-3), and the renovation of the Law.<sup>253</sup>

The fourth feature of the revolutionary leader is his or her rhetoric, which is the fifth category above. There are three points to their rhetoric. The first point is that revolutionary leaders are in the conflict seemingly because they try to resolve issues.

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<sup>249</sup> Included are 2:18-22, 3:1-15, 5:17-47, 7:14-36, 8:12-59, 9:39-41, and 10:22-39

<sup>250</sup> Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 61.

<sup>251</sup> Included are 4:14, 4:36, 5:24-29, 5:39-40, 6:27, 33, 40, 6:47-54, 6:63, 10:10, 10:28, 12:25, 12:50, and 17:2-3

<sup>252</sup> Included are 4:34, 5:17-18, 5:19-29, 5:30-47, 8:18-19, 8:28-29, 8:42, 10:30, 37-38, 12:45-50, 14:7-10, and 14:28.

<sup>253</sup> Included are 13:34, 14:15, 14:21, 15:10, 15:12, and 15:17.

Carter also points out this aspect of the Johannine Jesus' activity. According to Carter, Jesus' speaking intensifies the conflict with the religious authorities.<sup>254</sup> Jesus places himself in conflict with "the Jews" for his cleaning of the temple (2:13-20). His objective is to purify the temple, which is not a personal issue. Jesus appears having a debate (3:11) with Nicodemus who comes to Jesus and is challenged to believe in being born from above (3:3), which is a religious issue. Jesus also starts the conversation with the Samaritan woman with conflict (4:9-12), but he finally resolves not only her personal issue but also the Samaritans' religious issue (4:14-24). Jesus heals the lame man and it becomes a problem for "the Jews" (5:10), and "the Jews" eventually become aggressive toward Jesus (5:17-18). Sometimes Jesus casts a theological issue to the *ochlos*, and "the Jews" who are among the *ochlos* engage in dispute with Jesus. Jesus also corrects the application of the Law in Jerusalem (7:23). In other words, Jesus is always asserting himself on the religious and social issues. They may appear like conflicts since he tries to resolve particular issues.

The second point is empowerment of people, due to the fact that the revolutionary leaders want the revolution from the bottom. Jesus empowers his disciples prior to arrest. Jesus teaches his disciples before the festival of the Passover (13:1). Then, Jesus washes the feet of the disciples (13:5) and emphasizes loving each other to the disciples repeatedly.<sup>255</sup> Jesus encourages his disciples to have works like him or greater than him (14:12), and further, Jesus refers to the disciples as his friends (15:14). Moreover, Jesus warns that disciples would be hated by the world (15:18, 21, 16:1) but he also comforts them (15:19, 16:2) with peace (16:33) and the Holy Spirit (15:26, 16:13). Jesus' disciples

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<sup>254</sup> Carter, *John: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist*, 61.

<sup>255</sup> Included are 13:34, 14:15, 14:21, 15:10, 15:12, and 15:17.

in John are not the twelve, unlike the Synoptics.<sup>256</sup> Thus, Jesus' empowerment applies to all of his disciples, not only the twelve. In other words, Jesus empowers all of his disciples, the *ochlos*. The third point is that revolutionary leaders try to lead by personal example. Jesus carries out dangerous ministries or debate by himself. Jesus cleanses the temple (2:15), and he engages in Sabbath violation in person (5:5:8, 9:6-7). Although the disciples cannot heal the sick, it is significant that Jesus does not ask them to do such things. Moreover, Jesus puts up with danger of murderers. When "the Jews" are looking for Jesus to kill him in Judea (7:1), Jesus goes up to Jerusalem without the disciples (7:10). Jesus himself repeatedly becomes the target of murder (5:18, 7:32, 8:59, 10:31). This clearly shows that Jesus leads by personal example during the entire period of his ministry.

Consequently, Jesus does not hide behind the disciples or the *ochlos*. He simply tries to change the religious issues at the boundary of the existing way. Jesus follows the values he has, not seeking popularity with the *ochlos*. Jesus is the exemplary leader for the revolution of Israel.

In conclusion, there were some leaders who employed their popularity with the people in the first century, but the Johannine Jesus is not a populist who exploits popularity for his own political purpose. However, the religious authorities judge Jesus with limited information, due to feeling threatened by him. The religious authorities are afraid of his popularity among the people, and they believe that they themselves are the authorized group of the Empire, even though they are specifically the "religious authorities." Eventually, Jesus is the dangerous populist from the perspective of the religious leaders. Nevertheless, Jesus is definitely the revolutionary leader to the *ochlos*.

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<sup>256</sup> For further discussion, you may refer to "4. Other Disciples in John" in chapter two.

Jesus tries to change and develop the society in terms of the religious and political aspects in defiance of the diverse threats to the Empire. Jesus always finds himself in the middle of the issues to resolve them in the existing political and religious way, and he speaks and acts out of his ideal values and encourages the *ochlos* and takes on dangerous tasks. Jesus never stops and leads his ministry by personal example. In other words, Jesus is the revolutionary Messiah.

## CONCLUSION

The first illumination on the people, themselves, in the Gospels was *minjung* theology of Byöng-mu Ahn who discovered marginalized people who were known as the *ochlos* in Mark and who wanted to change the society. Ahn recognized the *ochlos* in Mark to be the same as *minjung*, that is, the crowd of people who tried to change the society and corrupt governmental power in Korea. The *ochlos* in and behind Mark was the main protagonist of the Jesus movement and hence of Christian history. Jesus is also one of the *ochlos*, and his mindset, purpose, and reason for the movement are identical with the *ochlos*. Moreover, the *ochlos* in Mark consists of Galileans only. Yet, in Mark, there is another group of people who are opposite the *ochlos* and Mark refers to those people as the *laos*. Though the *laos* are also Jews, Mark alludes to them as being far from God through Jesus' quotation of Isaiah (Mk. 7:6-7). Therefore, the people who are closer to God's will and heart in Mark are the *ochlos*.

Each Gospel has its own *ochlos* and its own *laos*. Matthew strengthens the *laos*. Matthew removes the negative image of the *laos* and uses the *laos* to refer to the Israelites as people of God. On the other hand, Matthew has no exact figure of the *ochlos*. Luke broadens the meaning of the *laos*. The *laos* in Luke is not confined to the traditional meaning of *am* (אִם), "people [of God]." Luke merges the *laos* with the *ochlos*. Moreover, sometimes Luke includes gentiles as part of the *laos* and moves religious leaders from the *laos* to the *ochlos*.

However, in the case of John, the *ochlos* and the *laos* are analogous, even though there is no compelling evidence that John uses Mark's tradition about the *ochlos* and *laos*. John's *ochlos* is also the protagonist of the popular movement and is completely

distinguished from the *laos* as in Mark. John's *ochlos* also includes great supporters of Jesus and they try to change the society much like Mark's *ochlos*. John's *laos* is almost the same as Mark's *laos* that comprises ethnic Israelites. However, John also broadens the *ochlos*, by including religious authorities. John's *ochlos* contains Galileans and other diverse Jews as well as Samaritans, and varies according to region. Also, John contains disciples in the *ochlos* by a new criterion that unveils the true identity of the *ochlos*.

That new criterion is the Johannine conception of discipleship, and all of the disciples in John may actually be said to be the *ochlos* in hiding. The connection point between the *ochlos* and the disciples is the story of Lazarus. In this story, mention about the disciples is omitted, but the story of Jesus raising Lazarus is also a story of discipleship. It highlights the importance of belief in Jesus, confessing his identity, to convey him to others. Such forms of discipleship, then, do not appear only among Johannine disciples who appear also in the Synoptics, but also among diverse groups of people such as the Galileans, the Samaritans, and even "the Jews." Moreover, John expands the boundaries of the traditional twelve disciples in the Synoptics by omitting some disciples so that the overall group of disciples cannot be identified as only twelve. In addition, John pursues the equivalent status of all of the disciples so that nobody can be regarded as being superior to others, a value that also applies to the *ochlos*. For this equivalent status, John balances the disciples who also appear in the Synoptics and he also deconstructs the authority of those disciples based on the principle that no one is greater than others. That is, the more flaws the disciples have, and the less famous they are, the more merit they enjoy in John, and vice versa. John presents more positive disciple characters than appear in the Synoptics. Among them are Nicodemus, a royal

official, a blind man, and Mary, Martha and Lazarus; they all meet the Johannine criteria for discipleship. John also uses the Beloved Disciple, Peter, and Judas Iscariot to encourage readers of John to embrace discipleship. Judas Iscariot is a tool to degrade Peter, and the Beloved disciple emerges as the ideal disciple, but not superior since the Beloved Disciple still has limitations and the Beloved Disciple's positive portrayal is not strictly related to his qualities as a disciple. In other words, the Beloved Disciple is good and a figure with whom readers empathize, but he is still represented simply one ordinary disciple, which means that there is no superior disciple among all the disciples in John. These disciples, and the larger *ochlos* with which they merge, have a specific political agenda based on their desire and efforts to change society.

How may populism, specifically, be related to the Gospel of John? Populism distinguishes politics into two groups: one that comprises people who are authentic in their priorities and others who are corrupt elites, and they are identical and hostile to each other at the same time. Populism also argues that politics has to represent the people's general will. Although there are several views about populist thinking, so far in relation to Jesus among biblical scholars, there is no definition of populism and populists in use. Instead, scholars such as Richard Horsley and Tom Thatcher have researched deeply about popular movements in the first century. The connection point between Horsley and Thatcher's thinking regarding popular movements and current populism is the background out of which popular movements and populism emerge. The background starts purely from the bottom by severe exploitation or economic crises. According to Ki-suk Cho's methodology to discern populism, the *ochlos* in John meet the populist criteria. Obviously, the Johannine *ochlos* that consists of many different groups of Israelites is



hostile to the religious authorities and the Roman Empire and has their own movement because of the extreme crises in their life. Consequently, they desire their own leader.

However, the question is whether Jesus is a populist or a revolutionary leader. Cho also suggests specific criteria to discern whether a leader is a populist or revolutionary leader. The conditions are the following: first, what are the origins of the leader?; second, how does the leader drive the political practices?; third, how does the leader exert the decision-making process?; and fourth, what is the leader's rhetoric? Based on these conditions, the populist is a person who uses his or her popularity with the people for his or her political purpose, and the revolutionary leader is a person who tries to embody the *Zeitgeist* through the renovation of politics.

From the perspective of the religious authorities in John, Jesus is a populist who threatens their country and power. Jesus is not one of the elites nor is he an authoritative figure. Further, he rejects the existing politics and contacts and agitates people directly. Moreover, his rhetoric has distrust and hatred toward the system, has vested interests, is greedy for power but seemingly ambivalent. On the other hand, Jesus is a revolutionary leader for the *ochlos*. In the perspective of the *ochlos*, Jesus is qualified as an important religious figure by John the Baptist, and he tries to renovate the temple system and also observes Jewish festivals. Jesus also has core values that are eternal life, salvation, and the restoration of the faith, temple, and Law. Jesus' rhetoric is also clearly that of a revolutionary leader for the *ochlos*. Jesus' rhetoric is usually about conflicts, but he attempts to resolve these, and he empowers and encourages the disciples, and usually leads by personal example.

In conclusion, John is the story of the political *ochlos*, and John's Jesus is a member of that *ochlos*. He tries to change the society against the opposition of the religious authorities and the Roman Empire and the *ochlos* regarded him as a revolutionary leader. The *ochlos* has their aspirations, and it becomes a movement of populism under harsh conditions. Jesus shares a *Zeitgeist* with the *ochlos*. The *ochlos* is present throughout the whole of Israel, regardless of regional identities. And many of the *ochlos* become disciples of Jesus, the revolutionary leader, when they meet Jesus. Moreover, John invites the gospel readers to be the *ochlos*, the disciples of Jesus, through the character of the Beloved Disciple. The invitation or encouragement to be one of the *ochlos* exceeds John's desire and extends to all of the *ochlos* in the world today. This is because as the *ochlos* continues to expand, to become more powerful. The Christian *ochlos* in the world now that wants to change their respective countries and societies can, if they are open and responsive, feel how strong and desperate the *ochlos* in John was and they can also sympathize with that *ochlos* so that they understand and accept Jesus as a true leader. Consequently, God is with the populism of the *ochlos* in the society, then and now, as the way of God's salvation until Jesus returns to earth.

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