

(h)A(y)POCA(e)LIPSIS and the Beast as Ego-System:

Autoethnography of a Workplace Apocalypse in the Light of Revelation 13

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Note: Autoethnographic and hermeneutical essay; analogies are used for pedagogical and pastoral purposes. This text does not constitute psychological, medical, legal, or official theological advice. Coherencia Universal Project (UC).

Abstract: This text explores how the figure of the Beast in Revelation 13 can function as a mirror of contemporary experiences of abuse of power in workplace environments. Starting from an autoethnographic process—a personal “apocalypse”—it proposes understanding the Beast as an ego-system: a configuration that articulates emotional, narrative, relational, and institutional layers around the logic of pride and image preservation. The methodology combines lived narrative, analysis of personal meaning, situated biblical hermeneutics, and dialogue with symbolic-psychological readings of the Apocalypse. The essay presents a case of “(h)A(y)poca(e)lipsis in the present day,” where corporate communications, complicit silences, and management devices produce a field of symbolic violence that resonates with the structure of the apocalyptic text. Finally, it discusses practical implications for accompanying people who live through “workplace apocalypses”: the importance of naming the Beast without reducing it to specific individuals, recognizing the internalization of the pattern, and reclaiming dignity as a theological and political act.

Keywords: Revelation 13, Beast, autoethnography, abuse of power, ego-system, hermeneutics, organizational trauma.

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I. Thesis and Point of Departure

The scene in Revelation 13—a Beast rising from the sea, receiving power from the Dragon, embodying structured violence and demanding worship—has been read for centuries as a key to interpreting empires, economic systems, or specific political figures. This essay starts from a more intimate thesis: that same Beast can also be recognized in micro workplace scenarios where inspiring discourse, control mechanisms, and the sacrifice of bodies in the name of the mission come together.

The starting point is not a philological analysis of the biblical text, but a lived apocalypse: the experience of passing through an organizational context that presents itself as a space of care and meaning, but that in practice unfolds dynamics of humiliation, silencing, and emotional manipulation. The Apocalypse thus becomes a mirror in which this process can be named, ordered, and seen in depth.

The central hypothesis is that the Beast functions as a structural figure: not only a religious symbol, but a pattern that articulates individual emotions, personal histories, interpersonal bonds, and institutional devices. Calling it an ego-system underlines that its strength does not reside in a single isolated person, but in the convergence of layers that orbit around maintaining a certain image and power.

II. Method: An Apocalyptic Autoethnography

The path followed is deliberately hybrid. It combines at least four movements, inspired by the originating text itself: experiential flow, personal meaning, symbolic hermeneutics, and historical contrast.

★ Experiential flow and loved sense

First, the process is presented in narrative key: arriving at an organization that promises coherence and care, investing trust and energy, the first dissonances, the episodes of abuse, and the eventual exit. This flow is not presented as a simple “work story,” but as an existential sequence that seeks its own meaning.

★ Analysis of personal meaning

On that basis, the text explores what was at stake subjectively: expectations of recognition, earlier wounds, learned patterns of obedience, and ways of handling conflict. The focus is on how the Beast becomes possible from within, through tacit agreements, fears, and misplaced loyalties.

★ Situated hermeneutics of Revelation 13

The third movement consists of reading Rev 13 not as a map of the future but as a symbolic magnifying glass on what has been lived. Elements such as the delegation of power

from the Dragon to the Beast, the apparently mortal wound that “heals,” the seduction of the masses, and the mark that conditions the possibility of “buying and selling” are set in parallel with concrete organizational devices: hierarchies, narratives, communication protocols, and economic dependence.

★ Historical comparison by resonance

Finally, these intuitions are contrasted with prior readings in the tradition—psychological, theological, and socio-political—that have worked with the Apocalypse as a text about powers and structures.

The criterion is not doctrinal agreement, but structural resonance: where others have seen analogous dynamics, the contemporary case finds language and companionship.

The result is not an exegetical study in the strict sense, but an apocalyptic autoethnography: an exploration of how an ancient text can articulate and dignify the current experience of rupture, revelation, and exit from an oppressive system.

III. The Beast as Ego-System: Layers of Experience

From the analysis of experience, a composite figure emerges. The Beast is not reduced to an identifiable “bad guy,” but to a configuration of layers:

★ Emotional layer

A sequence of affects—surprise, insecurity, disorientation, understanding, frustration, anger, helplessness—accompanies the discovery of abuse and the decision-making process.

This sequence is not chaotic: it organizes itself around wounded pride, where pride is understood here as a core of dignity and the need to be seen in truth.

★ Narrative layer

The organization constructs stories that justify painful decisions in the name of a greater good, while discrediting critical perceptions. The Beast speaks well: it presents itself as guardian of values, expert in care, and guarantor of mission.

★ Relational layer

In daily practice, this narrative translates into asymmetrical relationships where certain voices count and others do not; where loyalty is measured by the capacity to endure humiliations in silence. The Beast needs audiences that applaud and witnesses that remain quiet.

★ Institutional layer

Finally, protocols, contracts, reporting channels, and governance structures end up sustaining, by action or omission, the abusive dynamic. Even when individuals change, the form persists: the Beast is bigger than any single face.

Naming this whole an ego-system allows us to speak of the interconnection between layers: the wound of personal pride resonates with institutional narcissism, and everyday micro-decisions feed or resist the global figure.

IV. Case Scene: A (h)A(y)poca(e)lipsis in the Present Day

A central part of the work consists in representing, in an almost literary way, a concrete case of workplace apocalypse: the process of communicating and managing a situation of abuse within an organization that perceives itself as ethical and transformative.

In this scene we find emails, meetings, posts on professional networks, and institutional silences. The Beast manifests in apparently minor details: the choice of words that shifts responsibility onto the victim, the insistence on the “image of the house,” the promise of internal processes that never materialize, the economic pressure that makes leaving difficult without paying a high price.

Through the lens of Revelation 13, this scene can be read as a ritual of worship: people are asked to sacrifice their own perception on the altar of the official narrative; those who have suffered are expected to integrate into the story without questioning it; “life” is granted to an image that must remain intact even if it generates suffering.

The analysis of the case does not seek to point the finger at specific individuals, but to show how a constellation of practices generates a climate in which the Beast—as structure—can live comfortably.

V. Inner Dynamics: From Wound to Recognition

The focus then shifts toward the interior of the author. The Beast is not only contemplated outside; it is also discovered within.

Auto-exploration traces how personal expectations, desires for belonging, and tendencies toward perfectionism facilitate the entry of the pattern. The original text articulates this dynamic in dialogue with the seven deadly sins, highlighting pride as the axis that sustains the rest. This is not about moralizing, but about seeing how certain affective configurations allow abuse to become normalized: the difficulty in setting boundaries, fear of disappointing, the temptation to “save” a system at all costs.

The final metaphor of the Beast with horns and tail standing in the threshold—“crossing without shrinking”—expresses the turn: the decision to go through the situation without denying one’s own dignity and without dehumanizing those who, in that moment, embody the pattern. Recognizing the Beast in the system and in oneself does not mean surrendering; it allows for leaving without remaining trapped in the destructive logic that feeds it.

VI. Hermeneutics of Revelation 13: Shifts and Resonances

With the case and the inner dynamic in view, Revelation 13 is reread in a symbolic-structural key:

- The delegation of power from the Dragon to the Beast is associated with systems that externalize their violence in intermediary figures: middle managers, committees, protocols that execute difficult decisions while preserving the “center’s” image as innocent.
- The mortal wound that heals evokes episodes in which the system appears to wobble—a complaint, a reputational crisis—but reconfigures itself without changing its underlying logic, sometimes even strengthening it through narratives of resilience.
- The mark on the forehead and on the hand symbolizes the internalization of the pattern in thought and action: ways of speaking, justifying, and acting that guarantee belonging and, in modern terms, access to “buy and sell,” that is, to continue participating in the economic and work circuit.
- The impossibility of trade without the mark is read as the material pressure that makes it difficult to leave an abusive structure: mortgages, family responsibilities, and professional networks tied to the system.

This reading does not intend to replace classical historical or eschatological approaches, but to add a layer: the Apocalypse as symbolic grammar for understanding extreme organizational experiences. In dialogue with authors who have read the Beast as a figure of totalitarian systems, projection mechanisms, or internalized power structures, the concrete workplace context is proposed here as a laboratory where that symbol becomes flesh.

VII. Historical Comparison by Resonance

The essay briefly dialogues with several readings that, from different angles, have addressed the Apocalypse and the question of structural evil: works in depth psychology that interpret the Beast as autonomous complexes, theological approaches that link it with powers and principalities, and socio-political analyses that identify it with imperial systems.

The specific contribution of this autoethnography can be located in three points:

★ Concrete organizational scale

While many readings operate at macro levels (empires, global economies), here we observe how apocalyptic logic condenses in the life of an organization of limited size, with names and faces recognizable in each person's daily life.

★ Articulation between trauma and symbol

The narrative shows how apocalyptic language can offer a framework for experiences that would otherwise remain scattered or be lived as individual guilt. The symbol does not negate the trauma, but inscribes it in a wider field that allows for processing it without trivializing it.

★ Ego-system as intermediate category

The notion of ego-system connects psychological and theological intuitions: it allows us to talk about structures that have a life of their own without reifying them as metaphysical entities, highlighting both their operational reality and their dependence on concrete human acts.

VIII. Practical Implications: Accompanying Workplace Apocalypses

If the proposed reading has any usefulness, it should become evident in the practice of accompanying people who are living “workplace apocalypses”—processes of profound rupture in their relationship with work, vocation, and the institutions that once welcomed them.

Some suggested implications are:

★ Naming the pattern without demonizing people

Speaking of Beast or ego-system makes it possible to distinguish between the structure and the individuals who embody it. This does not eliminate personal responsibility, but it prevents reducing evil to a few “bad apples.” It also makes it easier for the sufferer not to fall into a spiral of hatred toward particular faces, and instead see the whole field.

★ Recognizing internalization

The mark on hand and forehead recalls that part of the struggle is internal: habits of obedience, ways of justifying the unjustifiable, identities tied too tightly to the institution. Accompaniment can help discern what must be let go of externally and what must be reconfigured internally.

★ Caring for the material dimension of the exodus

The impossibility of “buying and selling” without the mark points to the economic conditions that bind people to harmful systems. Any exit process must take these constraints seriously: planning, weaving networks, seeking support. The theology of exodus includes a budget.

★ **Granting dignity to the one who leaves**

Reading one’s own story as apocalypse—as revelation—can transform a narrative of failure into a process of lucidity. The goal is not to glorify suffering, but to recognize the value of the gesture of someone who decides to stop worshiping the Beast, even if that implies loss.

IX. Conclusion: Seeing the Beast to Recover Dignity

The autoethnographic reading of Revelation 13 proposed here does not seek to exhaust the text or fix a definitive interpretation. More modestly, it aims to show how the figure of the Beast can offer a structural language for experiences of abuse of power in contemporary workplace contexts.

Naming the Beast as an ego-system allows us to:

- Recognize the convergence of emotional, narrative, relational, and institutional layers.
- Avoid both naïve personalization of evil and its dissolution into comfortable abstractions.
- Open the possibility of an exodus that is not mere escape, but an act of reclaiming dignity.

The Apocalypse thus ceases to be only a catalogue of terrors or a calendar of catastrophes and becomes a grammar of liberation: a way of seeing that illuminates patterns, legitimizes lucidity, and accompanies the exit. The verification of this reading will not be played out in doctrinal debates, but in the quality of the decisions it enables: relationships less subject to fear, institutions more open to revision, people who dare to cross the threshold without shrinking.

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Editorial Note

This essay is offered as an autoethnographic and hermeneutical exploration. Connections between the biblical text and contemporary experiences are presented as structural analogies, not as literal identifications. It does not replace therapeutic processes, spiritual accompaniment, or legal advice. The use of apocalyptic language may stir painful memories; it is recommended to read it with appropriate support when the experience of abuse or trauma is very recent.

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