



THE GREAT RESET BETWEEN UTOPIA AND PROGRAMMATIC
PROPHECY IN LIGHT OF THE JOHANNINE
APOCALYPTIC ESCHATOLOGY

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Introduction

DEFINING QUESTION & PURPOSE

QUESTION

What is Great Reset?

The Great Reset is a programme of *World Economic Forum (WEF)* adhered to by business, political, academic, and other international leaders, whereby a set of forecasts of and proposals for the current decade are advanced in the hope to boost proper action in various worldwide leadership positions.

This vision is projected in the context of the current COVID19 pandemic but is somehow framed to address the more dangerous climate change, which is now way on the rise.

The logo of the World Economic Forum, featuring the text "WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM" in white capital letters, with a white circular arc partially encircling the text.

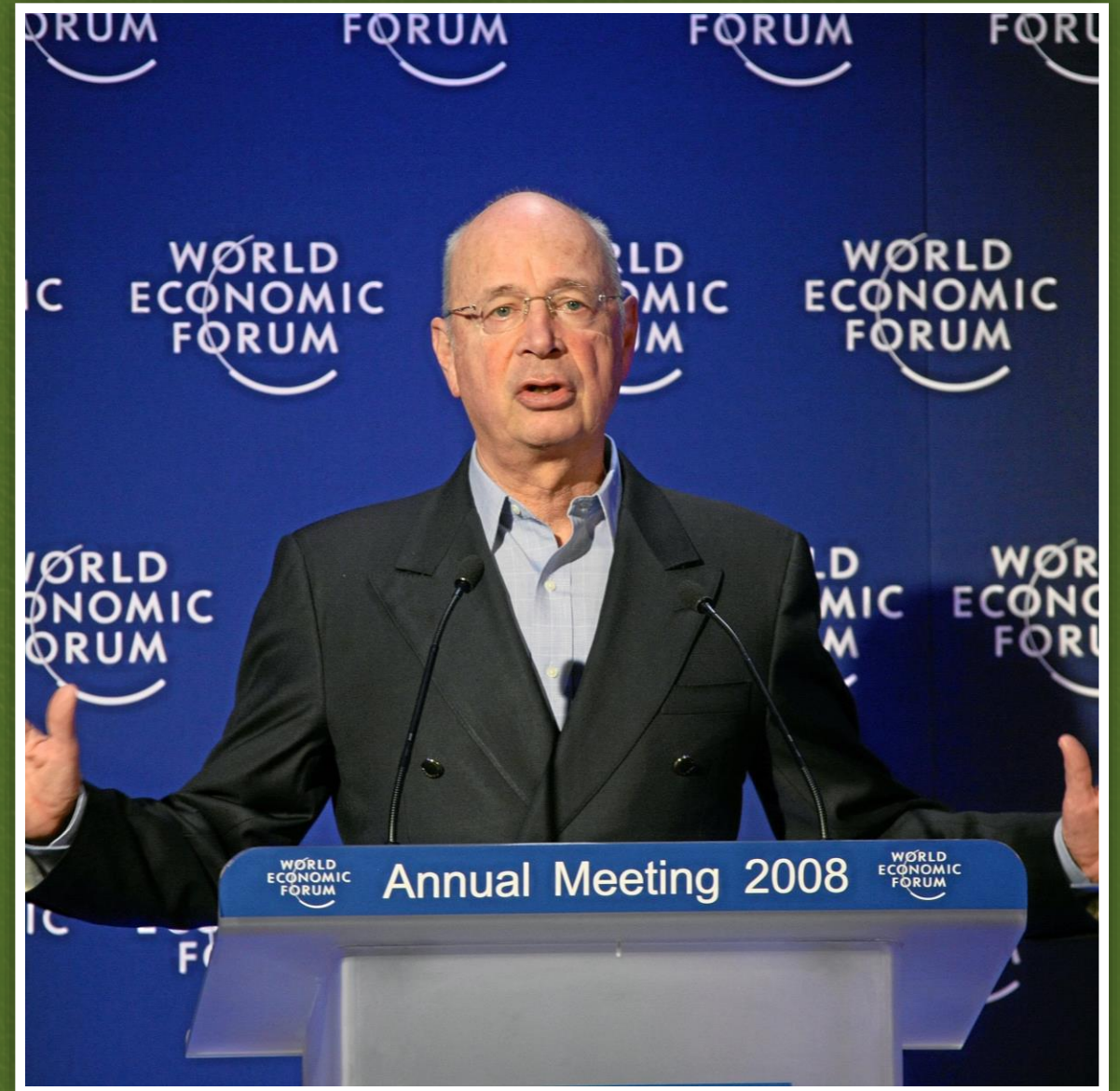
WORLD
ECONOMIC
FORUM

A background image of Earth from space, showing a curved horizon with blue oceans and brownish-yellow landmasses under a dark sky.

Climate Change: Earth in the next 100 years

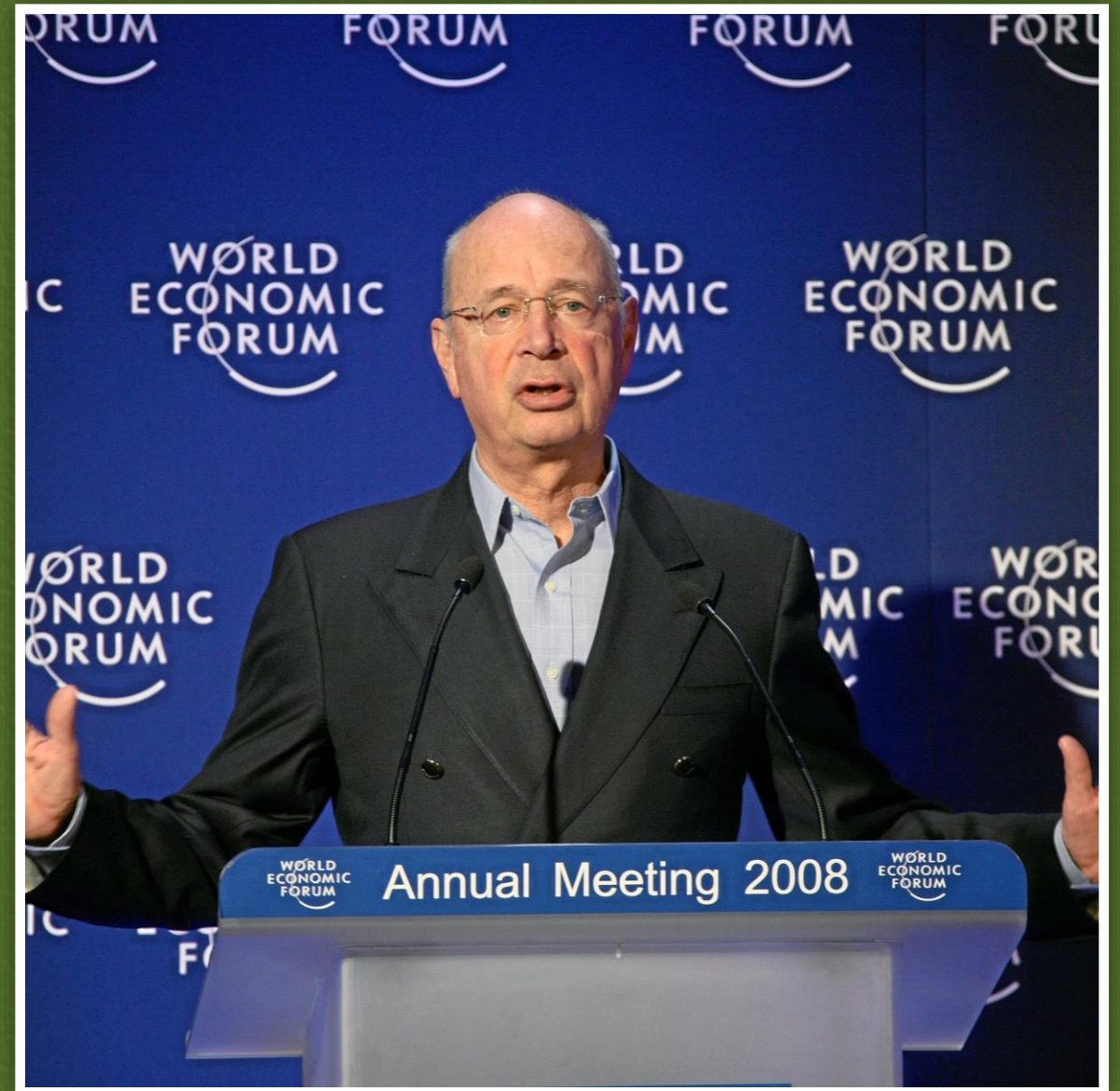
According to google trends, in the last 12 months the search for “great reset” registered a peak in the week of US elections back in Nov 15-21, 2020.

<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?q=great%20reset>.



The quest for World Economic Forum was high during the last week of Jan 2021, mostly due to its 50th (online) meeting, between Jan 25-29.

<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?q=great%20reset>.



QUESTION

Great Reset &
Programmatic
prophecy

This should suffice to infer not only that both the Great Reset and WEF are topics of current interest but also that they are instrumental to understand the world today and mostly its post-COVID19 version.

Programmatic prophecy = (1) a projection and explanation of what follows, while planning it and carrying it out. (2) Not a guess, but a plan.

Purpose

This study ...

- aims at setting the Great Reset perspective in dialogue with the eschatological scenario of Revelation.
- tries to identify to what degree (if at all) does the Great Reset fulfill or anticipate the fulfillment of Johannine eschatology.
- tries to lay out the basic prophetic components of John's eschatological construct.

The Basic Tenets of the Great Reset

ECONOMY, SOCIETY, GEOPOLITICS,
ENVIRONMENT, TECHNOLOGY

Great Reset

Throughout this study, the phrase “great reset” refers to the book entitled *COVID-19: The Great Reset*, authored by Klaus Schwab, founder of WEF, and Thierry Malleret.

As the two describe their book published in July 2020, it is a semi-academic writing whose main objective is to provide the reader with a picture of the post-pandemic world, primarily in terms of what it “might, and perhaps should, look like”.

The essence of the proposal is that of a better world: “more inclusive” (as far as humans are concerned), “more equitable” (economically speaking), and “more respectful of Mother Nature” (with regards to environment). If humanity does not get it right, the result is the worse version of the world we left behind when the pandemic swelled. The COVID19 context makes the present to be momentous, in the sense that it accentuates some pre-existing failures and trends, which is why swift action is mandatory.

COVID-19: THE GREAT RESET

KLAUS SCHWAB
THIERRY MALLERET

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

Klaus Schwab, “A Better Economy Is Possible. But We Need to Reimagine Capitalism to Do It,” *Time* (22 oct, 2020).

- The point of contention here is: **saving lives or saving economy?** The *vision* seems positive: “Only saving lives will save livelihoods.” But *reality* is much more different. As an example, while \$36M people were fired in US during the first few months of the pandemic, AMAZON increased its assets with \$12B during the same period of time
- Essentially, he argues that “Rather than chasing short-term profits or narrow self-interest, companies could pursue the well-being of all people and the entire planet.”
- No more (neoliberalist ideology): “market knows best” and “business of business is business”

1. **Economic Reset**
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

Is this the fulfillment
of Revelation?

- However positive this view of future economy may sound, Revelation views the small-great, rich-poor, free-slave disparities (13:16) going into end-times. More than that, at the bottom of the list of product exchanges between the merchants of the earth and the woman-Babylon we find “cargoes of bodies and human souls” (18:13). These are clear pictures of the few that get rich at the exploitation of the many. So the “more equitable” economy of the Great Reset on WEF’s agenda either will fail or it is simply a propaganda meant to cover the old capitalist trade. Either way, the ECONOMIC RESET is not what Revelation previews.

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

Trust, Radicalism,
Wealth Redistribution

- At the level of population, there is a strongly perceivable **loss of trust in the state institutions** (for the poor way they coped with COVID19). Therefore, people tend to wish radical changes.
- Companies, on the other hand, by begging for help during the pandemic, **increased the government importance**. “One of the great lessons of the past five centuries in Europe and America is this: acute crises contribute to boosting the power of the state.”
- Public sector > Private sector (Company > employee)
- Schwab and Malleret refrain from precise predictions but provide some global contours of how the society will be affected. “First and foremost, the post-pandemic era will usher in a period of **massive wealth redistribution, from the rich to the poor and from capital to labour**. Second, COVID-19 is likely to sound the **death knell of neoliberalism**, a corpus of ideas and policies that can loosely be defined as favouring *competition over solidarity, creative destruction over government intervention and economic growth over social welfare*.”

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

Is this the fulfillment
of Revelation?

- The improbability of the last point, I have already pointed out in the comment at the end of the economic reset section. Revelation does not see social equality at the end of times. But it does see the increase of government importance and social radicalization. The dragon gives the sea beast such a “great authority” (13:2) that the inhabitants of the earth consider the latter unparalleled in authority and power (13:4). The global authority of the sea-beast is clearly affirmed in 13:7 and then transferred to the earth-beast in 13:12. Based on this world-wide jurisdiction, the latter beast is in the position to order the earth-dwellers to make an image of the sea-beast which, on its part, exercises a global authority like the sea-beast (13:16-17; cf. v. 7). This seems to illustrate the increase of the government importance and how the public realm will dominate the private one. There will be offered no personal freedom. At the same time, the image of the beast is a creation of the inhabitants of the earth (lower/common strata of society) that radicalizes as soon as is brought to life.

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

- Jonathan Michie, “Davos 2021: to achieve a ‘great reset’, we can’t count on the same old globalists to lead the way,” *The Conversation* (Jan 22, 2021).
- Melissa Denchak, “Paris Climate Agreement: Everything You Need to Know,” *NRDC* (Jan 15, 2021).
- Rebecca Friedman-Lissner, “Help build a new, open world,” in *How US foreign policy will shape the ‘Great Reset’ - 12 experts explain* (Oct 29, 2020).

- From deglobalization to nationalism (ex. BREXIT, Trump’s election)
- This is the reason why we need one nation to fill the hegemonic vacuum and keep things together. “The 21st century will most likely be an era devoid of an absolute hegemon during which no one power gains absolute dominance. RESULTS: chaos, multipolarity, intense competition for influence, nationalistic conflicts, competition for resources. **“If no one power can enforce order, our world will suffer from a “global order deficit”.**
- J. Michie: “The big hope is 78-year-old Joe Biden.”
- M. Denchak: “This new era of U.S. climate leadership represents our last, best chance to course-correct in the global race to tackle climate change.” Biden campaign’s climate plan ... more aggressive than ... the Paris Agreement.
- R. Friedman-Lissner: “The United States simply cannot keep the world open on its own – it needs to marshal the strength of its allies. [...] The world is at a critical juncture and the opportunity to define the terms of the coming “great reset” will not come again.”

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
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5. Technological Reset

Is this the fulfillment
of Revelation?

- The Book of Revelation presents the hegemonic power at the end of times under the symbol of the earth-beast. This seems to be the key figure, the true link between the authority of the sea-beast and the formation of its image. Under its leadership, both democracy and nationalism seem to drastically diminish. In this sense, the Great Reset is one way to anticipate these developments.

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

Oliver Milman, “Biden to ‘hit ground running’ as he rejoins Paris climate accords,” *The Guardian* (Jan 19, 2021).

- Put in relation to the current COVID19 crisis, “The climate risk is unfolding more slowly than the pandemic did, but it will have even more severe consequences. To a great extent, its severity will depend on the policy response to the pandemic.” Therefore, climate-friendly policies are urgent.
- To make carbon-based industries disappear and entirely restructure them requires a massive and united intervention. If this does not happen, climate change accentuates and jeopardizes human societies at a greater scale than COVID19. Newly elected American administration seems focused on its mission.
- **O. Milman: “The aggressive opening salvo to help address the climate crisis, which Biden has called “the existential threat of our time”, is set to include various executive orders to resurrect a host of pollution rules either knocked down or weakened by the Trump administration.”**

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
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5. Technological Reset

Is this the fulfillment of Revelation?

- John presents the future of the planet in “hot” terms. The first plague brings a terrible skin disease, the second brings disasters on seas, the third a shortage of water and, during the fourth plague, the sun scorches the inhabitants of the earth with a great scorch (Rev 16:8-9). The torrid sun, the lack of food and drink are also felt by the great multitude of the 144 000 (7:16). This makes me think that, sooner or later, the environmental reset will fail on its way.

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
3. Geopolitical Reset
4. Environmental Reset
5. Technological Reset

Welcome to 2030.

“Once in a while I get annoyed about the fact that I have no real privacy. No where I can go and not be registered. I know that, somewhere, everything I do, think and dream of is recorded. I just hope that nobody will use it against me.”

Ida Auken, “Here’s how life could change in my city by the year 2030,” *World Economic Forum* (11 Nov 2016). Available at <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/11/how-life-could-change-2030> (Accessed at Feb 14th, 2021).

- E-LIFE/ONLINE was embraced over night. It is *safer-cheaper-greener*
- Health or Privacy? Schwab and Malleret suggest that “Contact tracing and tracking are therefore essential components of our public-health response to COVID-19.”
- With over 5 billion smartphones in the world, the potential to identify the infected is unprecedented. In fact, as indicated in various American and European surveys, the number of citizens who seem to favor smartphone tracking by public authorities is growing.
- What will the government do with this information? Control OR respect values/freedoms.

1. Economic Reset
2. Societal Reset
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5. **Technological Reset**

Is this the fulfillment of
Revelation?

- The perspective of being permanently and easily monitored seems to reflect what John saw when he spoke of: "... all who refused to worship [vs.] all people [who] receive a mark ..." (Rev. 13:15-17).
- We cannot envision the possibility of a global economic boycott for those who refuse the mark of the beast and finally, a death decree for those who do not worship the image of the sea-beast, unless a system of surveillance is in place. The Great Reset introduces the idea of surveillance alongside freedoms and in a health-danger context. Revelation speaks about much more.

Utopia, conspiracy, or
programmatically prophecy

WHICH ONE?

Evaluation

Quinn Slobodian, “How the ‘great reset’ of capitalism became an anti-lockdown conspiracy,” *The Guardian* (Dec 4, 2020).

John Mauldin, “A ‘Great Reset’ Is Coming... But Not For Capitalism,” *Forbes* (Nov 30, 2020).

Ben Sixsmith, “What is the Great Reset?” *Spectator* (Nov 17, 2020).

Andrew Stuttaford, “The Great Reset: If Only It Were Just a Conspiracy,” *Capital Matters* (Nov 27, 2020).

Stacey Rudin, “What’s Up with the Great Reset?” *American Institute for Economic Research* (Jan 6, 2021).

- Within the circles of political analysts, the Great Reset has been received with mixed sentiments and virtually always with concerns. Some think a political platform is **too little** to move things (Slobodian).
- Others hold that it is **just a propaganda**, behind which, as usual, the rich get richer (Mauldin).
- Unlike among some laity Christian circles, political analysts do **not** perceive the Great Reset as **a conspiracy**. Some even say, it would have been good if it were a conspiracy (Sixsmith).
- Yet and on the contrary, “The Great Reset is being orchestrated in plain sight, and not by a shadowy group of plotters. But to accept that is not to deny that it may be consequential.” (Stuttaford).
- Related to the last point, there are writers who contend that the Great Reset is not a mistake, but a systematically and consciously promoted **agenda**, wherein the issue of public health seems to be a **cover for a new political vision that undermines the Western fundamental liberties and prepares a small elite to rule over the many** (Rudin).

Johannine apocalyptic eschatology

ECONOMY, HEGEMONY, ALLEGIANCE,
WORSHIP, FREEDOM.

Eschatological economy vs. equitability of the Great Reset

- **Inclusiveness and equitability**, according to Schwab and Malleret, are two key ingredients supposed to make up the better world. In Revelation, at first reading, the cause that absorbs all efforts seems to be of a different nature – worshipping the sea beast (Rev 13:8; cf. vv. 14-16; 14:9-11). Although this seems to describe a religious phenomenon, which appears to be absent from the Great Reset, a relation between the two might exist at other levels.

Land and Sea

A first century sculpture of Emperor Claudius in Roman Sebasteion (Aphrodisias Museum, Turkey) reveals the Caesar as the source of land and sea prosperity.

The cornucopia and the steering oar symbolize the prosperity of land and sea under the emperor's rule.

<http://aphrodisias.classics.ox.ac.uk/sebasteionreliefs.html#prettyPhoto>.



Revelation: the Elites are destroying (not saving) the world.

S. J. Friesen, "Myth and Symbolic Resistance in Revelation 13," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 123/2 (2004): 281-313 (309-310).

- Unlike this historical claim, the apocalyptic beasts coming from the sea and the land are given a negative role by John. As Friesen suggests, "In John's narrative, the sea and land became sources of danger and oppression, not peace and plenty." [...]
- The planet's commodities are absorbed by the merchants of the woman-Babylon, also called "the magnates of the earth" (18:23), who seem to make business and enrich the merchants of the earth (18:11-13) and those making profit from the sea (18:15, 17).
- "In dominant urban culture, those who promoted the worship of the emperors were honored with inscriptions, statues, and religious offices. [...] According to Revelation ... the elites of Asia and of Asia's cities [are] portrayed [...] as mythic antagonists of God. According to John, the network of elite families was leading the world to eschatological catastrophe." WEF does indeed gather the top elites in the business and politics of the day and invites them to save the world through the Great Reset but Revelation tells the Elites do not save, they destroy.

Eschatological hegemony

What does it take to be the
big boss?



William H. Shea, “The Chiastic Structure Of Revelation 12:1-15:4
The Great Controversy Vision,” *Andrews University Seminary
Studies* 38/2 (Autumn 2000): 269-292 (281).

William Shea points out a series of parallels between Exod 15 and the chiastic vision of the Great Controversy (Rev 12:1-15:4), which are relevant for the present topic. The Israelites praise God by asking “Who among the gods is like you, LORD? Who is like you-- majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?” (Exod. 15:11), just as the inhabitants of the earth say, “who is like the beast?” (Rev 13:4). The Israelites praise God for being a “warrior” (Exod 15:3), just as the inhabitants of the earth cry out, “who is able to make war with it [the beast]?” (Rev 13:4).

From this we can infer that **the worldwide admiration and worship of the sea-beast must be motivated by a sort of liberation that the sea-beast is able to carry out on behalf of the inhabitants of the earth.** If the Great Reset programme would be successful, we would have a collective hegemon, likely to be worldwide acclaimed and paid homage to.



Various forms of allegiance to the sea-beast

P. A. Harland, "Honouring the Emperor or Assailing the Beast: Participation in Civic Life Among Associations (Jewish, Christian and Other) in Asia Minor and the Apocalypse of John," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 22/77 (2000): 99–121.

- P. Harland suggests that the allegiance to the imperial cult in Asia Minor were of three types: **involvement, interaction, separation**. Those involved paid total homage to the emperor, which included both non-cultic and cultic honors. There were groups inside the church which considered legitimate to interact with the cult and honor the emperor in social, political, and religious (non-cultic) sense (e.g., setting up an inscription, dedicating a structure or building or engaging in the practice of regular prayers for the emperor). Harland contends that John takes a sectarian stance on the matter and that he pleads for complete separation.
- Whether this is true or not, the article highlights that the degree of involvement in the worship of the beast may be an issue among those who are part of the resistance.

Worship

Religious, meta-religious or both?

C. Raymond Holmes, “Worship in the Book of Revelation,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 8/1–2 (1997): 1–18.

- Perusing the Great Reset platform, it will readily be observable that religion seems to be the Great Absent. But Revelation sets the final conflict in religious terms. How do we decode eschatological worship?
- C. Holmes: Worship = “an attitude of submissive praise” (p. 3), “The supreme act of worship is the complete surrender of being and life.” (p. 8), “Worship is a political as well as religious act, in the sense that it challenges all who would usurp the authority ...” (p. 11).

Worship

Religious, meta-religious or both?

Jon Paulien, “Revisiting the Sabbath in the Book of Revelation,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 9/1-2 (1998): 179-186.

- Jon Paulien: observes that the eschatological false worship is a trespass of the first four commandments of the Decalogue.
- Although the breaking of first three commandments may easily have political dimensions (worshipping a kingdom means after all submission), the breaking of the fourth is primarily religious. Here, Paulien estimates that the Sabbath is an excellent candidate for being a test of true worship and loyalty, since there is no rational reason to keep the seventh (and not another) day except that God says so. He sees the Sabbath in eschatology, as the tree of knowledge of good and evil was in the beginning. The only reason to obey God in both instances is that God required so.

Enrique B. Treiyer, “Ap 13:11-18: feu du ciel et marque de la bete,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 37/1 (Spring 1999): 73-86 (esp. 74-80, 82-83).

- Enrique Treiyer observes **a chiasm in Rev 13:11-15** which has in **the center of it the idea of deception**. ... Certain parallels between Joel’s prophecy and Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost make Treiyer suggest the reception of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 as a background of the fire brought down by the earth-beast. In light of the chiasm mentioned above, **the fire in Rev 13:13 conveys a false revival, a pseudo-Pentecost**.
- As far as the mark of the beast is concerned, Treiyer poses that the term “mark” refers to slavery and that the position “on the hand or on the forehead”, alongside other thematic parallels between Rev 13 and Exod 13, echoes the exodus of Israel from Egypt. This makes the **reception of the mark of the beast a kind of extreme measure that is meant to ensure the safety of the inhabitants of the earth in anticipation of the last plagues in ch. 16 (climate change out of control?)**.
- **In this sense, the Great Reset is a paradigm for this fulfillment, as securing safety in the face of future danger entails a degree of dependence (slavery?).**

Eschatological freedom and the two beasts of Revelation

Danielle Pletka, “Support policies that advance free markets and free societies,” in *How US foreign policy will shape the ‘Great Reset’ - 12 experts explain* (Oct 29, 2020).

D. Pletka:

- “While it is not the job of the United States to deliver the world of evil, in protecting the national security of all Americans, our leaders have a responsibility to advance these same values, understanding that a freer world is a safer world. The “how” is always the question; **there will always be compromises made to serve immediate national security interests.** But an expression of values at the core of U.S. national security policy – and our belief in the primacy of freedom – should be a priority in every interaction. **If the United States doesn’t advance these values, we can be certain there will be no other nation that fills the vacuum.**”

Freedom

Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti* (Oct 3 2020).
http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html#_ftnref23

33. FREEDOM OF MARKET
=> human costs. “Yet the brutal and unforeseen blow of this uncontrolled pandemic forced us to recover our concern for human beings, for everyone, rather than for the benefit of a few.”



Freedom

“245. – **no individual, group, class, nation or state. Not even the majority of the social body may violate these rights, by going against the minority**”

CONTEXT: modern totalitarianism & denial of human rights.



Freedom

“274 **You know well how much suffering is caused by the denial of freedom of conscience and of religious freedom, and how that wound leaves a humanity which is impoverished, because it lacks hope and ideals to guide it**”.

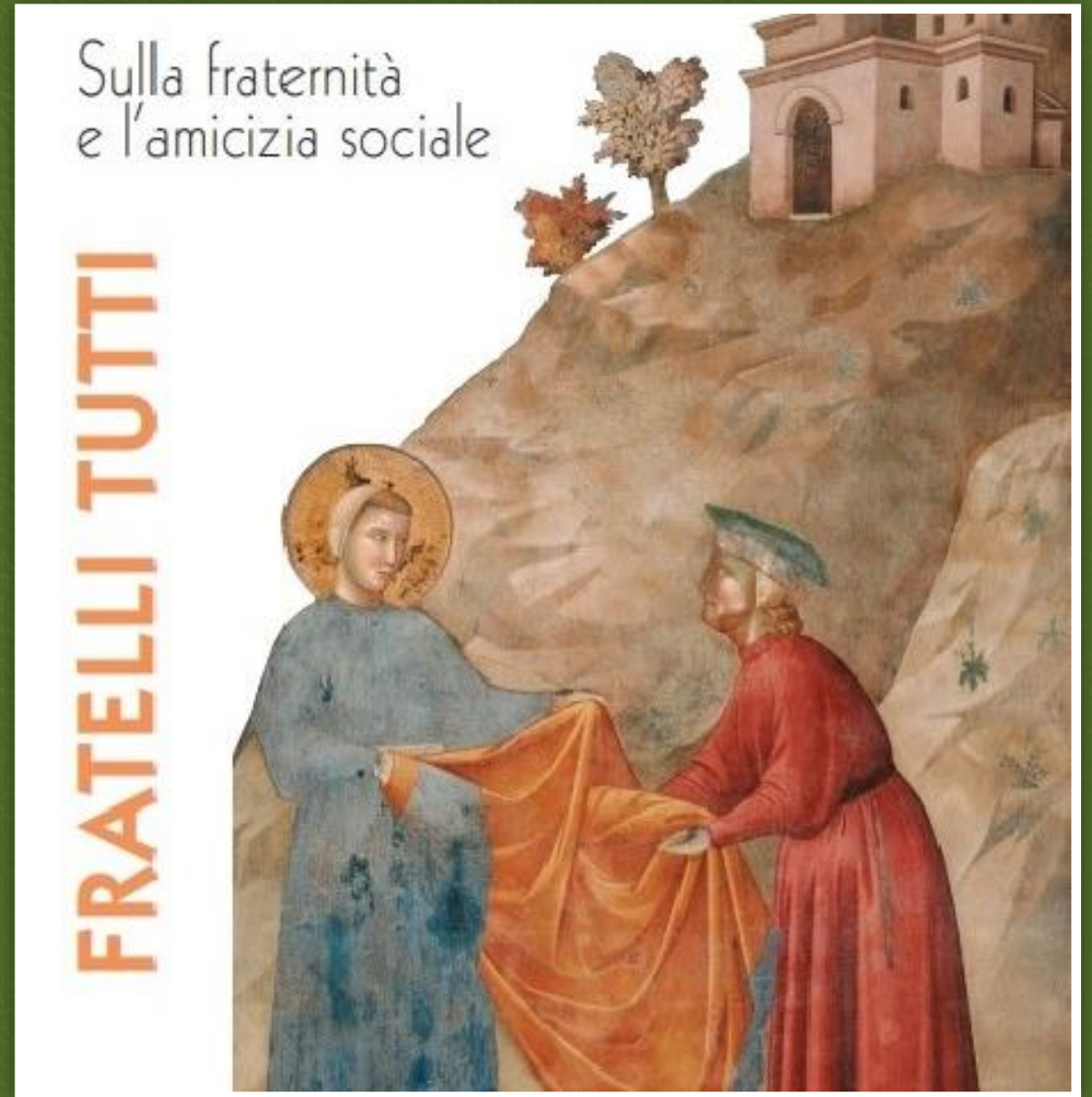
CONTEXT: Removing God from society leads to idolatry and refusal of human dignity.



Freedom

“279. We Christians ask that, in those countries where we are a minority, we be guaranteed freedom, even as we ourselves promote that freedom for non-Christians in places where they are a minority. **One fundamental human right must not be forgotten in the journey towards fraternity and peace. It is religious freedom for believers of all religions.**”

Has Rome changed?



Conclusions

DOMAINS	GREAT RESET	JOHANNINE ESCHATOLOGY
ECONOMY	EQUITABLE	INEQUITABLE (e.g. slave trade, ch. 18)
SOCIETY	WELFARE OF ALL <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TO AVOID RADICALIZATION• TO INCREASE TRUST IN THE GOVERNMENT	RADICALIZATION (e.g. inhabitants of the earth are instrumental for erecting an image of the beast) INCREASE OF GOVERNMENT DOMINANCE (e.g. the two beasts)
GEOPOLITICS	US&ALLIES MUST INFORCE GLOBAL ORDER (~ CLIMATE)	LAND-BEAST&ALLIES (SEA-BEAST AND ITS IMAGE) INFORCE GLOBAL ALLEGIANCE
ENVIRONMENT	SOLVE THE CLIMATE CHANGE CRISIS	UNSOLVE/DELAY THE CLIMATE CHANGE CRISIS
TECHNOLOGY	E-LIFE (TRACING&TRACKING)	TRACING & TRACKING (e.g. “all the inhabitants of the earth ...”)

Conclusions

DOMAINS	JOHANNINE ESCHATOLOGY	GREAT RESET
ECONOMY	DESTROYING ELITES	SAVING ELITES
HEGEMONY	COMES AFTER LIBERATION	IF SUCCESSFUL, THE GREAT RESET SOUNDS LIKE A LIBERATION
ALLEGIANCE	INVOLVEMENT, INTERACTION, SEPARATION	DELIBERATE & ENFORCED
WORSHIP	POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS SUBMISSION	POLITICAL SUBMISSION
FREEDOM	IMAGE OF SEA BEASTS (HELPED BY THE LAND BEAST) DENIES ALL FREEDOMS.	CONTEMPORARY US AND VAT ARE EITHER LED BY A GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT BELIEVE IN THE VALUE OF FREEDOM OR EVERYTHING IS A FAÇADE.