

## *Who is the Whore of Babylon?*

"THEN THE ANGEL CARRIED ME AWAY IN THE SPIRIT INTO A WILDERNESS. THERE I SAW A WOMAN SITTING ON A SCARLET BEAST THAT WAS COVERED WITH BLASPHEMOUS NAMES AND HAD SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS. THE WOMAN WAS DRESSED IN PURPLE AND SCARLET, AND WAS GLITTERING WITH GOLD, PRECIOUS STONES AND PEARLS. SHE HELD A GOLDEN CUP IN HER HAND, FILLED WITH ABOMINABLE THINGS AND THE FILTH OF HER ADULTERIES. THE NAME WRITTEN ON HER FOREHEAD WAS A MYSTERY: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I SAW THAT THE WOMAN WAS DRUNK WITH THE BLOOD OF GOD'S HOLY PEOPLE, THE BLOOD OF THOSE WHO BORE TESTIMONY TO JESUS. WHEN I SAW HER, I WAS GREATLY ASTONISHED." (BOOK OF REVELATION 17, 3-6)

**The symbols in the Book of Revelation like the Whore of Babylon has always fascinated and stimulated artistic productions. This image carries with her a very long tradition In the Bible, Babylon is a word that refers to the worst moment in Bible history. In 587 B.C. the Babylonian destroyed Jerusalem, ruined its Temple and had forced most of the population to exile. Babylon is an oppressive and destructive symbol. The Book of Revelation takes this symbol and contextualizes it to talk about the oppressive Roman Empire. The "Pax Romana" was a strong stability due to the oppression of all sorts of contestation. Because the first Christians contested the Empire traditions and its Emperor's divinity, he executed them. To subvert this Empire and fight against the writing power, the Apocalypse dare to personify it into a prostitute figure who drinks out of a cup filled up with the impurities and the blood of the people she kills.**

**Since, the interpreters took the image of the Babylon prostitute to denounce the Bad and the oppression. For example, Luther and the first Protestants see in Her the Pope and the Catholic institution. Later, some people took the same image to denounce Hitler. Reading this text today brings up questions: What do we need to denounce? What are the sources of oppressions, violence and "Bad" in today's world?**

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