

# Icon of Sin

An *icon of sin* is an artistic motif meant to serve as visual aid to examining one's conscience. It takes the form of a statue or painting of a yinrih holding an object in each paw and with a fifth object wrapped in the tail. What the objects are can vary from region to region, but here are a few common ones along with what they symbolize:

- A drinking bowl: drunkenness
- A bag of coins: greed
- A mirror: pride
- A knife or a spiked tail weapon: either wrath (when used against another) or despair (when used against oneself)
- A thurible\*: dissipation or drug use
- A fruit or other food: gluttony

They're placed outside of confessionals for the benefit of penitents seeking absolution.

They're also found outside of gambling establishments, gel head parlors, and drug dens, lavish restaurants, or anywhere one would associate with hedonism. It's actually unknown whether they were first used in a religious context and adopted ironically by those secular establishments, or whether they started out as symbols glorifying hedonistic behavior, and hearthkeepers started putting them outside their confessionals to remind their litter of their sins.

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\* used to burn incense containing intoxicants.

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