

Abject ignorance



By Guillermo Alvarado

It is hard to imagine that at this point in the 21st century there are still European officials capable of justifying or misrepresenting the terrible events that took place on our continent during the conquest, the genocide of its inhabitants and the brutal plundering of its riches.

However, they are there, some of them in important positions and say nonsense with such ease that one is left with the doubt of whether it is supreme ignorance or an abjection loaded with racism or, in the best of cases, as the title of this column says, an abject ignorance.

Such is the case of Mrs. Marta Rivera de la Cruz, deputy mayor of the City Council of Madrid, capital of the Spanish kingdom, and delegate of Culture, Tourism and Sports in that city. It should also be added that she is a prominent militant of the right-wing Partido Popular.

The lady in question said that during the colonial period, as everybody knows that dark period, Spain did not have colonies in America, but had "viceroyalties", and not content with that, she assured that the subjects of the crown, that is, the Castilians, never practiced plundering in our lands.

It is hard to imagine where she studied history, or if she ever did so in her life.

He should know, from the position he holds, that on the night of June 12, 1562, the Franciscan friar Diego de Landa made a gigantic bonfire where he burned the books containing Mayan knowledge, the so-called codices, in subjects such as astronomy, mathematics, agronomy and art.

Those texts were written when in Europe many people fled, wrapped in animal skins, when lightning struck or an eclipse of the sun or moon occurred, or women with high knowledge, their own ideas or simply owning a black cat, were killed for alleged witchcraft.

How was it possible, one would have to ask the lady, that without spoliation only four of those codices exist today and three of them are in Europe, in Dresden, Paris and Madrid, and only one, the Grolier, on her native soil, Mexico.

In her selective memory, the delegate of Culture, Tourism and Sport of Madrid erased the thousands of ships loaded with riches that left America for Europe and financed the development of that continent, except for what is now called Spain, which did not know how to manage all that was stolen here.

There is also in Madrid a collection of American art, the Treasure of the Quimbayas, a Colombian culture that has already disappeared, and that President Gustavo Petro insists on recovering for his people. By the way, another 90 pieces of this collection are in the Field Museum in Chicago, United States, where, of course, nobody thinks of ever returning them.

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