

## CHRISTMAS IS NOT CELEBRATED IN ASTRAC

Thirty-one light years from Earth there is a planet to which astronomers give the scientific name of Wolf 1069 b, a term meaningless to the average citizen, but I will be less rigorous and refer to its inhabitants simply by the name of Wolfians. There are only two habitable continents there: Carpia and Astrac. What is told in this story happened almost simultaneously in four countries that in the past had been the great colonizers of Astrac, the richest and, at the same time, poorest region of Wolf. Currently they still maintain an extensive commercial relationship with the families that control the power of their former colonies, a relationship fundamentally based on the extraction of minerals that are very necessary for their industries and the development of their technology.

Studies on prehistory show that the first intelligent beings on the planet were located in Astrac, then they dispersed to other territories. According to the latest socioeconomic estimates, while one percent of the population swims in abundance, more than eighty percent barely survive or, worse still, live directly in misery. Boys and girls work from the first years of their lives, almost always for little more than food. Girls are forced to marry when they are barely out of childhood. In short, we could continue listing a whole series of characteristics that would make the reader's heart shrink; However, in Carpia, the most opulent and democratic territory on the planet, so much poverty and inequality has gone practically unnoticed. In general, with some exceptions, there is little empathy with the harsh living conditions that the Astracans have historically suffered. To be fair, it should be noted that the economic system prevailing in Carpia, especially in recent years, is also causing marked differences between the different social classes. For example, having a job may not be enough to live with some dignity. It would take no effort for an impartial observer to observe the continuous increase in soup kitchens to serve the most needy. However, there is little awareness of this situation in broad sections of the population.

Just two months ago in each of the four countries of the carpal continent an event took place that was widely reported by the media and social networks. For a better understanding of what is narrated here, it is convenient to say that most of the media are public limited companies whose majority shareholders are large companies and banks. The networks are owned by young people who stood out in the first years of the development of computing and later launched companies that made communication possible between Wolfians on a global level, regardless of their geographical location. For a long time they were financed by advertising and the sale of personal data to the market,

now to chat (a term that in Wolf means conversing between several people through electronic messages) in any of them, it is already necessary to pay a monthly or annual fee, such as the subscriber considers more appropriate.

In the capital of country A, the letter that a child sent to the Wolfian Santa Claus's entourage attracted attention. It did not have to be translated, as would have been necessary on Earth, because in Wolf everyone speaks the same language, with some small, unimportant variations depending on the area where they live. In the letter was a drawing of a Christmas wreath, handmade and colored. At the bottom you could read the following text: "Goten breham yos ed Astrac guelle ceha nasu nasmáse a tees ispa em riatus euq tedus em raviane goal de damico rapa nosu asdi Ciasgra ñorse." In Spanish: "I'm hungry, I'm from Astrac. I arrived in this country a few weeks ago. I would like you to send me some food for a few days. Thank you, sir." As you can see, dear readers, you know the letter "ñ", therefore, we could consider it not only Spanish but also universal.

Televisions, radios and newspapers echoed the news. So this one reached every corner. Despite the city council's efforts to find the little boy who had excited the population, this was not possible. Experts in handwriting, they worked with children from orphanages, immigrant detention centers, poor neighborhoods and hospitals without any results. If they had found him, the boy would have appeared on television, he would have been interviewed and some high-ranking State authority would have taken photographs with him. That probably would have been the plan. A plan that no one would have missed because it would have responded perfectly to the paraphernalia that usually accompanies this type of event.

Around the same time, in country B, ten letters from as many boys and girls also appeared that contained the same drawing and the same wish as the letter from country A. In this case, the senders were not from Astrac but from a neighborhood in the capital. and two rural areas in the south. Actions were quickly launched to clarify the matter. The next day, two teachers and a religious man were arrested for manipulating children and training them with ideas that threatened coexistence and national peace. The letters were destroyed and the three accused, although in the express trial what happened could not be clarified, after receiving a pat on the back, they had to pay a not exorbitant, but not insignificant, amount in compensation to the State.

On New Year's Day, when the president of country C was watching a live performance by a famous philharmonic orchestra, she noticed that her mobile phone made two buzzes. A video of two extremely thin, skeletal old women had arrived on her

WhatsApp, alone in a completely deserted terrain. One of them stared at the screen and spoke, translated into Spanish, as follows: "This is how we live in the north of Astrac, look at us carefully, we don't ask for donations, not even food. Climate change is destroying our lands and livestock, please take action at the next international conference. Thank you, your excellent lady." The same message reached the president of country D. In the first case they considered that the security of the president and the nation were at stake. The authors of the message could not be ordinary people; They were undoubtedly spies with a high level of training. From the beginning, an external conspiracy was thought of. The judicial and security institutions were put into operation immediately. The state of alarm was raised to the maximum level. There were secret actions, interrogations, arrests, "always with the authorization of the judges, as corresponded to a democratic regime," the authorities highlighted in their statements. In the second case, the president considered that it would be the work of one of his close friends, since it was common to play jokes on each other. Consequently, he did not report what happened.

A few days later, with Christmas already over, those responsible for the Christmas awareness campaign were announced via streaming. These were three organizations committed to the environment and the fight against poverty, inequality and the precariousness of services in the Wolfian Third and Fourth Worlds.

The chosen dates, the dissemination of the media, the commotion of opinions for and against issued by the networks for several successive days made many people aware of the situation on the planet, especially to the point that the climate crisis, the accumulation of wealth and the spread of poverty were part of the same problem.

The richest, gathered, as was customary during the first week of the year, in a small mountain town where they could practice skiing at will on its slopes without the presence of the crowd, released a statement in which they stated that the States should charge more taxes on large individual and family fortunes and allocate this income to reducing the global level of poverty and putting in place the necessary means to urgently combat climate change and modify the harsh predictions of scientists on the matter.

At the end of the first month of the year, the president of country C, the most powerful, reached an agreement with country B, the smallest, to house all Astracan immigrants who arrived on their shores in two large centers. One of them, for identification and reception of asylum seekers, and the other, for repatriations, a meaning that in Wolf means: returning a person to their country of origin.

I do not have more information, dear readers. We are all adults. When I have it in my hands, I will continue the story.

Jesús Claver Giménez