

Have you seen a folly?

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“Folly” has two uses. A folly (locura o desatino) can be a stupid thing. The base of the word is “fool”.

A folly (disparate) can also be a building in an unusual context, for example, a small tower (torre) or other unusual and decorative (decorativo) building in a park or garden. A folly in this context is a useless and extravagant structure or building. In Madrid there are follies in some parks. For example, in the park “El Capricho” there is a hermit’s (casa de ermitaño) house - this is a folly.

Examine these examples:

- It will be folly to raise taxes when the economy is in a slump (depresión). This means it would be stupid to raise taxes when the economy is in a bad state.
- It is sheer (puro) folly to think that Mr. Sanchez can grow the Spanish economy. In other words, it is absolutely stupid to think that Mr. Sánchez can grow the economy.
- Fiscal folly is widespread in Europe (la insensatez fiscal está muy extendida en Europa).
- It would be folly for European leaders to ignore the lessons of Brexit (sería una locura que las dirigentes europeas se limitan a negar las lecciones de Brexit).