Los Pasatiempos de Alqueria

Alquerian pastimes are deep-rooted in the traditions of the sierra. The most obvious is annoying those from the opposing barrio and the most popular is the one in which Manuela excels. Of those that can be discussed in polite company perhaps football naturally takes the lead. Football in Alqueria was given a boost in 2013 when Alqueria Unido attended the UEFA Cup. They didn't last long. Just long enough for the spelling mistake to be spotted. They had to make their own way back from Amsterdam, hitchhiking and committing petty street crime to pay for food and shelter during their trek home.

The gentry of Alqueria have long practiced the sport of shooting. Using a selection of firearms ranging from shotguns to shoulder launched antitank missiles they have systematically decimated the wild-life of the area. Not as popular as it once was due to the decline in the number of devotees. The shooting party usually met at the Bar La Casa Devante where alarming quantities of Remitroot Rum were consumed. They would then stumble and stagger into the campo and start blasting at anything that moved. This had an adverse effect on the population of Alqueria in general and shooting enthusiasts in particular. There was a bid to ban the sport but as it kept the numbers of chinless wonders down it was deemed good for the environment.

Newt hunting is on the increase in the Village with the Alquerian Newt Hound bred specifically for the purpose. The Alquerian Newt is a genetically modified subspecies of the Common European Newt. Being ten times larger and with fearsome teeth that can tear through corrugated iron the creature is a match for any hunter. The Alquerian Newt Hound was bred from the Andalucían Hound by Pedro El Estevado. When the dog finds a newt it stands on three legs with its near-side front paw pointed at the amphibian, tail erect while barking and howling. The Newt is then secured and sold in the backstreets of Cairo where its genitals fetch a high price as an effective cure for Camel Drivers Crutch.

Imported pastimes have never done well in Alqueria, the attempted introduction of Morris Dancing is a prime example. When the Kessingland Morris Men and Haddock Gutters from Lowestoft arrived in Alqueria their tiny minds believed Morris Dancing would replace the passionate, exhausting flamenco. They gave one half of one display. Most Alquerians simply headed for the nearest bar, those that stayed soon lost the will to live. Only Loco Paco enjoyed the spectacle, he performs the same gyrations when the moon is full and bright.

Traditional pastimes have always held sway in Alqueria. There is none more enjoyable and traditional than that favoured by Manuela.