

*Angel Sanchez Sirviente, teacher of lace and embroidery in the social department of the town hall Marbella, Spain, Marbella, Urb. Marbella Hill Club Esmeraldas 4, e-mail: assirvientes@hotmail.es*

*Анхель Санчес Сирвиенте, преподаватель кружевоплетения и вышивки социального отдела муниципалитета г. Марбелья, Испания, Марбелья Хил Клуб Эсмеральдас 4, e-mail: assirvientes@hotmail.es*

### **Cordoba arabesque lace**

#### **Кружево арабески города Кордова**

**Absrtact.** The article deals with the Cordoba lace which appeared in Spain many years ago. The author gives a historical survey about this kind of lace. Many circumstances preceded the appearance of this type of lace and therefore the study of the heritage represented by this lace gives a lot of interesting information. At present this kind of lace is very popular among the people in Spain and in the whole world that made it possible to include it in the world heritage list of UNESCO in 2018.

**Keywords:** Cordoba arabesque lace, Spain, lace manufacturing, bobbins, silk, thread, silver, gold.

**Аннотация.** В статье рассматривается кружево города Кордова, появившееся в Испании много лет назад. Автор пишет о том, что появлению этого вида кружева предшествовали многие обстоятельства, дает исторический обзор его развития, указывает, что изучение наследия, представленного этим кружевом, дает много интересной информации. В настоящее время этот вид кружева очень популярен среди жителей Испании и во всем мире, что позволило включить его в список всемирного наследия ЮНЕСКО в 2018 году.

**Ключевые слова:** кружево арабески города Кордова, Испания, изготовление кружева, коклюшки, шелк, нитки, серебро, золото.

The Córdoba arabesque lace, it is inspired by sculptured panels, found in the archeological site, called Medinat Al-Zahra, which is 8 km from Cordoba, in the south of Spain.

Medinat Al-Zahra means bright city, was founded in 940 A.D. it reflected the new policy, economic and ideological of Al-Andalus. And its destruction began in 1010-1013 with various civil wars.

Through the centuries the place suffered numerous plundering of its materials until de XIX<sup>th</sup> century. It is at the beginning of the XX<sup>th</sup> century, that excavations began, revealing what was the most beautiful city in the west.

Abd Al-Rahman III ordered to build the city, belonging to the Umayyad dynasty from Persia, and turned Cordoba into the center of the Muslim Empire in the west, making Cordoba the first city in west of Europe.

For a century, Cordoba rivaled culture and splendor with cities like Baghdad, capital of the Abbasid Caliphate, and Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire.



A fan made in the technique of Cordoba arabesque lace

Abd Al-Rahman was a great promoter of culture, creating more than 70 libraries, founded a University, the school of Medicine and the Schools of translators from Greek and Hebrew to Arabic. He built the palatine city of Madeinat Al-Zahra, which was his residence until his death, it also expands the Mosque of Cordoba,

rebuilding the Minaret. The Minaret is the place where Muecin makes the calls to summon to prayer, from the balcony of the Minaret.

Under the reign of Abd Al-Rahman III (929-961) and his son Alhaket II (961-976), the Caliphate of Cordoba, enjoys its greatest splendor, which consolidates the Cordovan State, and organizes the entire socio-political and military system of the Caliphate. The Caliph Alhaket II successor to Abd Al-Rahman III, is credited with the foundation of a library that came to have more than 400.000 manuscripts books.

Entering the Abd-Al-Rahman room, where political receptions were held, we appreciate a rich decoration, with carved stone panels, which represent the Tree of Life of ancient Persia. The Tree of life is an important symbol, which is part of all religions. In the Hinduism the tree represents the one under its shadow, Buddha meditates eternally. In the book Mormon, it is the symbol of God's love, and in the ancient Iran, it is the tree of the world, very large, the HAOMA, which carries all the seeds and that hitting this plant and drinking from it, is attributed to it, health, fertility, and even immortality.

The Type of work of the stone panels is called Atauriques, the main features are with vegetables ornament characteristic of Islamic art, especially as regards the Caliphate art of Cordoba. In the era of Romanticism (1800-1850) it was called Arabesque [1]. Although this type of art is much older appearing arabesques in Egyptian and Assyrian monuments, as well as in Greeks and Romans. The arabesques were widely used in the Italian Renaissance period from the end of the XIV<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century, a period of transition from the Middle age, to the modern age of Europe.

When I saw these panels, the first thing, I thought was that they looked like lace, and that is when I started thinking to make it in lace. I thought about making it in parts but it didn't work, so I started doing it with a continuous tape, with linen stitch and when I got to the floral motifs, switch to various ornament points. When thinking about what type of thread I am going to use, I thought about the most sumptuous fiber par excellence in the Caliphate era, which was silk.



The production of silk was the most important industry in Al-Andalus. Silk is a fiber from China, according to studies it has its origins in the XVII<sup>th</sup> BC. China had exclusivity for three millennia, the time they could hide the secret of its manufacture. Over time the secret was revealed, thanks to merchants, thieves and spies, extending its manufacture throughout Europe.

The Persians learned the art of silk making, in the VII<sup>th</sup> century the Arabs are done with the secret of silk manufacturing, by invading Persia, and they transmit the secret throughout Islam, especially in the Mediterranean area, such as Spain, since the optimal conditions, both of climate and location, were given for its production [2, p. 94].

The manufacturing of silk from the worm to the final product is called “Sericulture”.

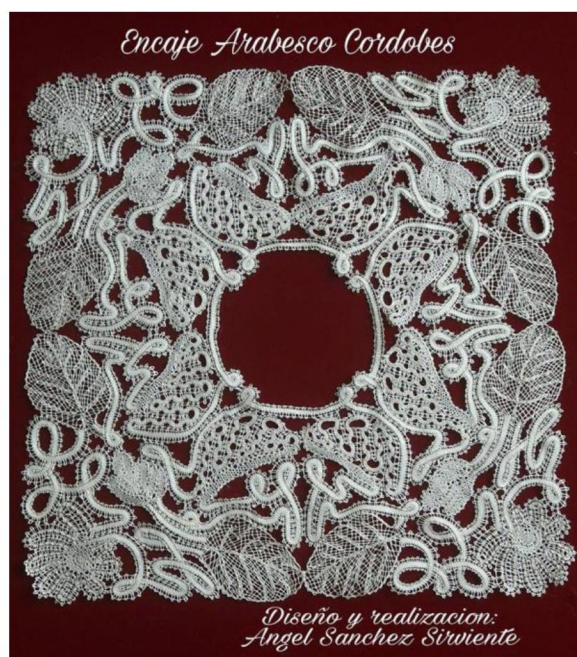
Silkworm breeding and mulberry cultivation takes place in Al-Andalus about 740 AC, with the arrival of Syrian tribes, who settled in the Vega of Granada, Jaen, Niebla (Huelva), and the Aljarafe in Seville, which due to their climatic and strategic conditions were ideal. In these areas small farmhouses were created, these farmhouses were called “Alquerias”, and were given this name, specially, in the area of Granada to Valencia, south east of Spain.

The Arabs of the Al-Andalus were great masters in the art of horticulture, they knew the ideal time for the cultivation of mulberry and the breeding of the silkworm, all of this is recoded in the book called “The Cordoba Calendar”, also called the book of the division of times. This book was written in 961 AC by the Mozarabic bishop Recemundo. The book describes what agricultural work should be done in each month of the year. And thus be able to track and evolve each of the products. It also contains large astronomical and meteorological predictions studies, depending on the position of the sun and the stars. The Arabs of Al-Andalus were masters in these subjects and also in mathematics, philosophy and medicine.

Al-Andalus was the first European territory where the breeding of the silkworm began and as a result the production of silk. The fabrics that were made in Al-Andalus were much appreciated, both in the east and the west.

In the earliest tissues it is possible to appreciate metallic threads such as gold, silver or brass, beautifying the fabric.

To give it a relief effect to the lace, as in sculptural panels, I add a contour threads, I thought of a thread of gold or silver, as they existed in the fabrics of Al-



The lace project of the author

Andalus [3, p. 185].

Usually eleven pairs of bobbins with silk and one pair with gold or silver, in the motifs, pairs are removed, depending on the point we make.

The tape is joined by itself, without any braid between, and there, is no type of filling in the gaps that exist between the tapes. It can be done in the color you want, but always with gold or silver in the contour.

Medinat Al-Zahra has been declared a world Heritage site by UNESCO in 2018.

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