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The Spanish mantilla: history and technique Испанская мантилья: история и техника

Abstract: The purpose of the following article is the study both historical and technical features of the classic Spanish Mantilla. We will see the evolution techniques, from those made by hand, both on looms or bobbin lace, coming to the embroidery in mechanical tulle, up to those totally made mechanically.

It is also reflected in this article, the most important areas of Spain, in the realization of Mantillas, where nowadays, they are still being carried out.

We will be able to observe, how and for what the Mantilla is used, in which events, and we will observe artistic pieces, where the Mantilla has a predominant role and the importance of the Mantilla in Spanish society.

Keywords: Bobbin lace, embroidery, mantilla, artistic crafts, tradition, cultural heritage, specific features.

Аннотация: Целью данной статьи является изучение истории бытования и техник исполнения классической испанской мантильи. В статье прослежена эволюция техник создания мантилий, начиная с тех, которые делались вручную, на ткацких станках и с помощью коклюшек, а также мантилий, выполненных вышивкой по тюлю, и тех, которые полностью создаются машинным способом.

В статье раскрыто, как и для каких целей использовалась и используется мантилья, для каких событий она предназначена. Проанализированы произведения искусства, в которых представлена мантилья, раскрыто значение мантильи в испанском обществе.

Ключевые слова: коклюшное кружево, вышивка, мантилья, художественные промыслы, традиция, культурное наследие, характерные особенности.

The use of Mantilla and veils in the Iberian Peninsula, dates back to the time of the Iberians. Iberian culture covers a period of time, from the 7th century to the 1st century BC, in full Iron Age although they already populated the south of Spain, (Andalusia), since the Neolithic, therefore, the Iberian people appeared and evolved in the Iberian Peninsula.

Iberian culture was made up of various tribes scattered throughout the peninsula, each with its own idiosyncrasy and independence.

Iberian women wore veils or cloaks on their heads, depending on the weather. Some significant examples can be seen in sculptures found in archaeological sites such, The Lady of Baza (il. 1) and The Lady of Elche (il. 2-3).

The Lady of Baza, is an Iberia Sculpture from the 4th century BC made by Bastetan tribe, who populated the southeast of the Iberian Peninsula, with its epicenter in Baza, old Basti (Granada), In the sculpture it can be seen that woman wore a kind of cloak on her head, with ornament in the form of red squares, and other intense blue fabrics.



Il. 1. Sculpture “The Lady of Baza”. 4th century BC. Museo Arqueológico Nacional.



Il. 2. Sculpture “The Lady of Elche”. 5-6th century BC.
Museo Arqueológico Nacional.

Another Iberian sculpture, more famous than the previous one is the Lady de Elche.

Elche is a city located in eastern Spain, belonging to the province of Alicante, this Iberian area had its capital in Edeta, the current Liria, although this area was made up of various city-states, which is currently as a part of the Valencian Community.

In the Lady of Elche can see that she wore a kind of veil on her head with ornaments carved on the fabric, she is very richly attired, from which we can deduce that she was a prominent person in the society of her time. The sculpture is currently in the archaeological Museum of Madrid.

The Iberian women were the ones who wore the fabrics, at the entrance of each house there was a loom, which was the place where there was more light. Women made beautiful and rich fabrics, highly valued even in Ancient Rome. The celebrations include an annual party to recognize the women who made the most beautiful and sumptuous fabrics. (According to the classic quote, Note I Rabanal 1985).



II. 3. Sculpture “The Lady of Elche”. 5-6th century BC. Museo Arqueológico Nacional

As a result of the second of the Punic wars, between Rome and Carthage (218-201 BC), Rome conquers the Iberian Peninsula, making all existing languages disappear, and imposing Latin with the exception of Euskera a language spoken in the Basque country (northern Spain and southwestern France), imposing the culture and customs that predominated in Rome, which included Roman clothing, such as the use of tunics and veils, that Roman women used to attend the temples, these veils were called **FLAMMEUM**, they were made of fine gauze and rich embroidered ornaments the use lasted until the Christian Era being, the attorneys of the current Mantilla [4, p. 41].

With the fall and crisis of the Roman Empire, they burst into Hispania, the name given to the Iberian Peninsula from which the name Spain (España), derives, the **VISIGOTHS**, barbarian peoples who entered the Peninsula from the north, from Gaul (France), centering its capital in Toledo, giving way to Visigothic Kingdom, which lasted from (507-711 AD) the year the Muslim invasion began.

Visigothic women adopted a large part of Roman clothing, such as the cloak worn by matrons, embroidered in purple and containing gold its edges. This cloak is called **THE PEPLUM**. The garment that covered the head and part of the back on the right side had the name of **STOLE**. The raw material for its elaboration, wool, linen or hemp was used, later due to the Muslim influence raw materials such as silk and cotton were added.

During the middle Ages from the 5th century to the 15th century, women covered their heads with veils and very varied mantles, some of Muslim influence.

At the end of the 15th century, the use of the cloak became general throughout Spain, and it was already given the name of Mantilla de Aletas, it was considered a garment belonging to popular costumes, although in each region it maintained its appearance, conditioning each both physical and social moment, Just as in cold lands they were used to shelter from the cold, they were made with some types of cloth, and only some were adorned with velvet, silks and beads, giving them a double purpose, the coat and the adornment. In warm lands, they were softer and lighter fabrics, giving them a more ornamental use than as coat.

It was not until the 16th century when lace mantillas began to be used, as can be seen in some portraits of the time. The Mantilla was part of the wardrobe of the most elegant women, who used them to attend both popular festivals and religious services. The Mantilla did not become popular among the ladies of the court until well into the 18th century, since then it was used exclusively by the popular classes. It was in this century when cloth and silk Mantillas were replaced by those made entirely of lace.

Queen Elisabeth II of Spain (1833-1868) generalized and popularized the use of the Mantilla among ladies of the Spanish Nobility, with the overthrow of Queen Elisabeth II, a series of international conflicts began to decide the future King of Spain. On November 16, 1870, the constituent Cortes elected by majority Duke Amadeo de Aosta with the name of Amadeo I, second son of the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II.

Amadeo I and his wife Maria Victoria, wanted to impose on the Spanish Court, the fashions imported from France, such as the use of headdresses and hats, to detriment of the Mantilla, this caused an unrest among the courtesan ladies, demonstrating through the streets of Madrid dressed in the Mantilla and the comb, showing the rejection of Spanish society to Amadeo I. This event was called **THE CONSPIRACY OF THE MANTILLAS**, thus making the Mantilla take on even more relevance in Spanish society. Amadeo I kingdom in Spain barely 3 years (1870-1873). Giving way to the I Spanish Republic (1873-1874).

The most popular types of lace for the execution of the Mantillas are the Blonde and the Chantilly, both of which come from France, the lace from the Bayeux and Caen area, and the Chantilly from the area of the same name.

They are very fine lace, made in fine silk and lasa silk, in the Blonde the bottoms are made in Lille stitch (manual tulle) and the motifs are filled in lasa silk, thicker and matt, achieving a relief effect. However, in Chantilly, the Lille stitch is still used, but the motifs are made in half a stitch with the threads that are entering from the Lille stitch creating a more transparent and lighter effect, and thus saving time in the execution of the lace although the outlines of the motifs, thicker silk is used to highlight these motifs.

Both the Blonde and the Chantilly, the largest pieces are made in strips, so that several women could work in the same piece, these strips are then joined with the racroc stitch, This stitch was created by a lady named Madame Cahanet from Calvados area, France, in the early 19th century, as mentioned in Mrs. Bury Palliser's book published in 1875 in London [5, p. 195]. The racroc stitch was made by expert women with two needles that crossing them and hooking the two strips, creating the missing cell between the two strips.

These laces are introduced into Spain from the north, border with France, specifically in Catalonia. According to documentation that exist in the Mares de la Punta Museum in the town of Arenys de Mar, the lace began to be made in Catalonia from the second half of the 18th century, the designs were of French influence, but unlike France, which were more in the taste of light-colored lace, in fact the word blonde derives from the French word, blonde. In Spain they were more popular than

those of black color that were used for religious services and mourning, these silks were dyed with a dye from a plant called **Palo de Campeche**, from the Yucatan area (Guatemala), mixed with sulfate of iron that gave it a more intense black, the consequence of the use of this dye was the burning of the silk, and over time these laces tend to disappear. The light-colored Mantillas were still used for fairs and to attend the bullring.

In Catalonia, a large lace industry was created, creating large companies to manufacture Catalan Lace, in fact, it began to be called Catalan Blonda, its great boom was in the 19th century, companies such as: **MARGARIT, FITER, VIVES o MAGI MORA**, FOLLOWED French fashion in their designs.

The epicenter of the lace industry in Catalonia is the area of Barcelona, such as Hospitalet de Llobregat, Sant Boi de Llobregat, Sant Climent and nearby towns. There was also a large industry in the Maresme area (north of Barcelona), which includes towns such as Mataro, El Masnou and Arenys de Mar.

In the 19th century, the ball was characterized by being made with very dense designs, that is, very ornate, while in the 20th century the lace became lighter with lighter with lighter designs.

All the production made in Catalonia was sold mainly throughout Spain, especially in Madrid, even as suppliers to the Royal House. It was also exported to America.

Another very important area in the manufacture of Mantillas de Blonde, is the one called CAMPO DE CALATRAVA, with its capital in CIUDAD REAL, (south of Madrid), although the epicenter of the manufacture of lace is the town of ALMAGRO.

There is already written evidence of the manufacture of lace, even from the 17th century as stated by our most universal writer, Miguel de Cervantes y Saavedra, in his masterpiece Don Quijote de la Mancha, where it appears, in his second volume published in 1615 in the page 674 [2, p. 674].

With this he makes it known that the girls made lace for their livelihood. Narrow cotton or linen lace was made.

The Blonde in Almagro comes from the hand of the couple made up of MR. MANUEL FERNANDEZ and MRS. RITA LAMBERT in 1770, who came from Madrid. As mentioned in the geographical and statistical, Historical Dictionary of Spain, and its possessives is from overseas, volume II, page 65 of 1847, author, Pascual Madoz, they create a silk lace industry, in which some 400 women were already working in 1779. His Majesty Carlos III (1716-1788), awarded the marriage with the Royal Cell with a pension of 6000 reals for 6 years.

In the 18th century there were already about 11000 women, most of the towns of Campo de Calatrava, dedicated to the manufacture of silk lace. And in particular to the Mantillas, which is known as Mantilla Almagreña, since in 1790 the Catalan industrialist Mr. JUAN BAUTISTA TORRES, from Mataro promoted the industry.

In a national exhibition in 1841, the Blonda Almagreña gets the gold medal competing with the catalan blonda.

As a result of both the Civil War (1936-1939) and the mechanical incursion Mantillas, the industry fell into decline, causing most of the workshops to close.

The Almagreña blonde has the peculiarity that its motifs are larger than in the catalan blonde. They also have a great difference in the design in the Lille stitch patterns, in the French and Catalan blonde it is rhomboid in shape and in the Almagreña Blonde they are straight lines, making intermediate lines disappear, so fewer pins are used in their execution, due to scarcity in the past, and faster in its execution. As Mrs. Natividad Gonzalez Silvero, a lace teacher in Almagro, tells me, no pins are used in the intermediate lines but the point is still executed without pinning. This background is known as Almagro tulle, and it is a bit more complicated in its execution.

Like the Catalan Blonde, the Almagreñas Mantillas have been exported to the rest of Spain and America.

Another very important area in the manufacture of Mantillas is Granada and its entire region, although in this case the Mantillas are embroidered in silk on mechanical silk tulle. These Mantillas do not reach the category of lace, only the tulle on which it is embroidered, which is a mechanical lace. In fact, tulle is called the mechanically manufactured, and the name comes from the French city of Tulle.

During the 19th century, with the beginning of the industrial Revolution, and the mechanization of the looms, first Mr. John Hathewoart, from Leicester, invented a machine for weaving mesh using brass bobbins, where he began to manufacture smooth tulle similar to manual, but of great width, for the manufacture of dresses.

It was not until 1813, John Leavers developed the Leavers Machine, which united the mesh (tulle), weaving machine with a jacquard machine, this allowed the motifs to be woven at the same time as the mesh, mechanically obtaining the effect of embroidered tulle.

Large textile industries are created from Catalonia to Andalusia, lowering costs in the manufacture of fabrics.

Regarding the Mantilla Granadina, as it appears in the book “60 years of Granada art”, authors, Mr. Antonio Arastegui and Mr. Antonio Lopez [1, p. 53], mention that in the Albaicin area, the epicenter of Granada crafts, there was a very old lady, named Antonia, who transferred old embroidery motifs to new tulles. Mrs. Antonia bought the tulle a Mr. Domingo Hernandez Velilla’s house, which was located on Lineros street in Granada. In that store a clerk named Mr. Ricardo Valdivia dispatches, Mr. Ricardo’s wife learned to embroider in tulle from Mrs. Antonia.

Over time and with the increase in visitors to Granada, the demand for scarves grows, so Mr. Ricardo comes up with the idea of creating a workshop, in which he put Mrs. Maria Sanchez as director, and he put some of Mrs. Maria’s students as operators, this workshop was installed on Salvador Street 12. In 1910 there about ten workshop, created by workers from the original workshop.

After the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the embroidery in tulle was resumed with force in Granada and all its region, account of it, the one who was my teacher of embroidery in tulle, Mrs. Mercedes Sanchez Zuñiga, 82 years old, from Granada

and embroiderer since she was a child. Mrs. Mercedes observed ladies at the doors of their houses embroidering Mantillas, since many women embroidered in their homes. Mercedes, as a child, was going to ask for the tulle to work, but she said it was for her mother. Mercedes work was to the taste of the bosses, and they decided that she would do bigger jobs like Mantillas, until then, only gave her small jobs, such as veils, handkerchiefs, etc. This is when it was discovered that the real embroiderer was Mercedes, an 11-year-old girl, since the mother even had to go to the workshop to give explanations.

Mercedes was paid 200 pesetas (1,20 euros) for a shawl in 1949, a very good salary for the time, could make one in a day, embroidering from 5 in the morning until the afternoon, her father, operator of RENFE (Spanish Trains Company) earned the same money for 2 weeks of work.

After embroidering, Mercedes, had to help her mother with the housework, since she was a family with 7 children, all boys except her, who was the little one, it is know that at that time, men did not collaborate in the housework.

Many women and girls dedicated themselves to the trade of tulle embroiderer, since they earned more than working in the field, or in any other craft, The women worked from their homes, once the work was finished, they took the Mantillas to be reviewed, to give the go-ahead to the work, and pass them on to the vendors for sale throughout Spain and America. The embroiderers were paid for work done, each garment had a different price.

The Granada Mantilla is worked on mechanical silk tulle, which is placed stretched in a frame, a little longer than the Mantilla, and approximately the width of the Mantilla. A Mantilla usually measures 240cm longer by 120cm wide, although it will depend on the height of the woman, who wears it, it should not exceed the hem of the skirt, and the skirt below the knee, according to the mark protocol.

The tulle is sewn with fabrics on the edges with holes called “Propiendas”,

It is placed on the tulle, in the longest part it is sewn to a strip of fabric that is nailed to the stick, and in the narrow part a string is passed through the Propiendas holes, and fit the side sticks. One the tulle has been stretched, the paper with the chosen design is placed, attached to the tulle underneath with pins or basting.

Next, the entire drawing begins to be outlined on the tulle with the chosen thread, usually silk. One the Mantilla is outlined, the drawing is removed, and they begin to embroider, first the adornment stitches and then fill in the motifs. The Granada Mantilla has exactly 5 or 6 different stitches, since it wants to resemble the one made with bobbins, in fact it uses many Chantilly designs and even its own, with Moorish influence, inherited from the Kingdom of Granada (1238-1492).

The Mantilla is finished on its edge with a scallop stitch, it is trimmed and removed from the frame and the Mantilla is ready for use.

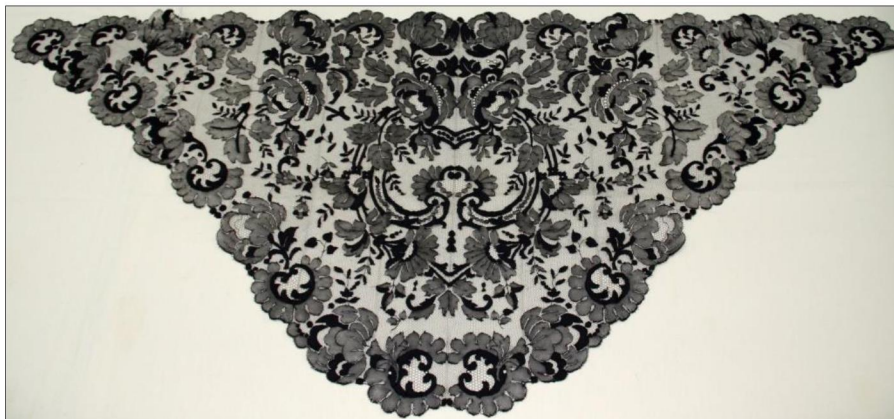
At present Mantillas can be seen in the Holy Week processions throughout Spain, especially in Andalucia, famous are the Holy Week in Seville and Malaga. And attendance at the bullring at the fair.

My special thanks to.

Arenys de Mar Museum, in the person of its director Mrs. Neus Rivas San Emeterio for the information on the blonda and catalan Mantilla.

Mrs. Natividad Gonzalez Silvero from Almagro for providing me with photos and information about the classic Mantilla of Almagro

Mrs. Mercedes Sanchez Zuñiga for the information on the job of embroiderer of Mantillas in Granada.

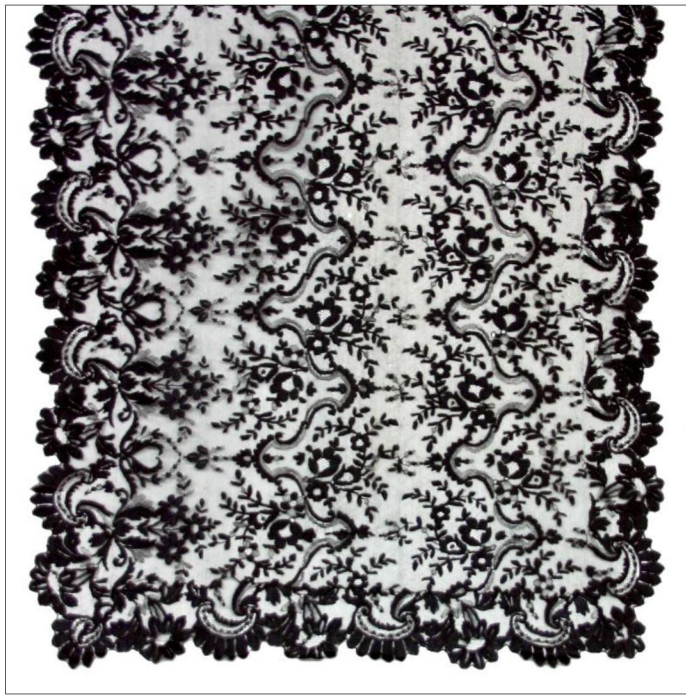


Il. 4. Mantilla made for Queen Fabiola of Belgium in 1959. They made it into the city, Sant Vicenç de Montalt and held the Maison Rosendo Vises' sons of Barcelona.

It's a two-tone blonde. Museo of Arenys de Mar



Il. 5. Collection Mrs. Càrmen Tórtola.
Valencia, Barcelona College of the Major Art of Silk



Il. 6. Mantilla designed by Mr. Alejandro de Riquer for Queen of Spain, Victoria Eugenia of Battenberg. It was made in 1906 by the Maison Vives or the Maison Filer of Barcelona it was a gift from the Catalan monarchists to the Queen, on the occasion of her wedding with Alfonso XIII. 2 IDENTICAL Mantillas were made, one is conserved in National Heritage of Spain, and another was left by Riquer's sister, whose granddaughter donated in to the Arenys de Mar Museum



Il. 7. Photo Tortola. Museum of Arts of Barcelona. Photo by David Castañeda in 1915



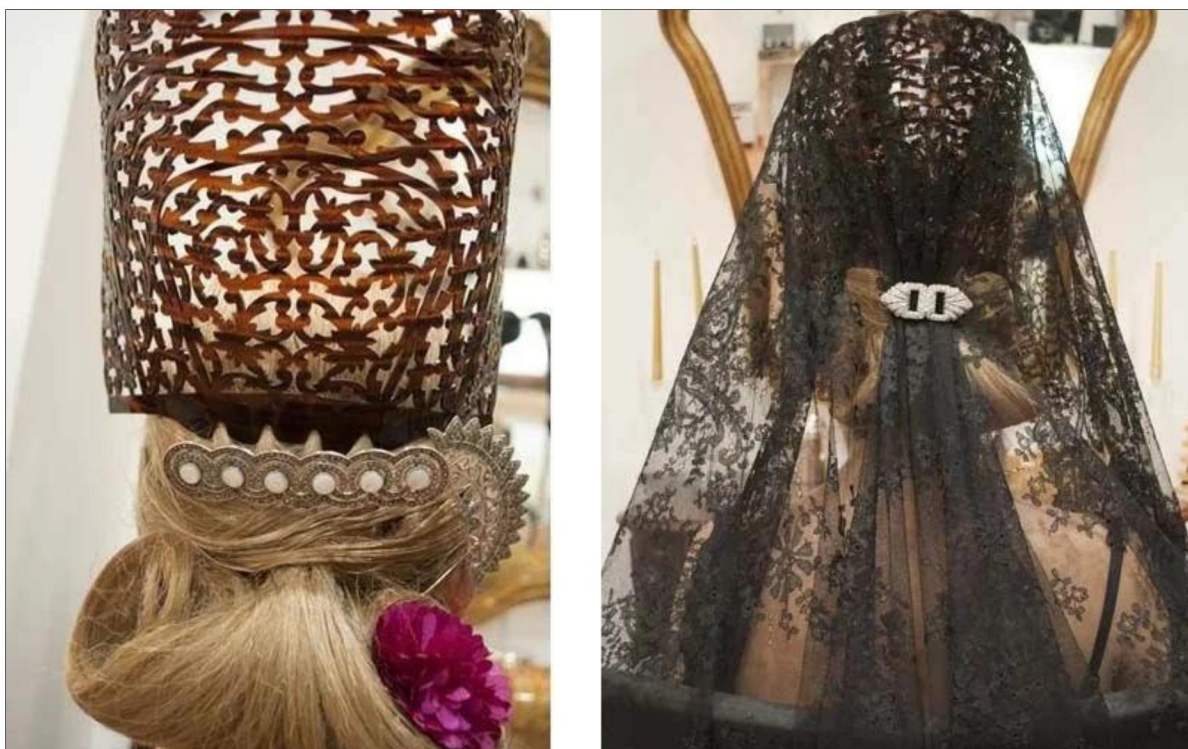
Il. 8-



9. Mantilla woman, godmother for her son's wedding. Photo by Angel Sanchez



Il. 10. Jacqueline Kennedy wearing classic Mantilla in his visit to Seville in 1966, sitting next the Duchess of Alba. Anonymous photo from Google



Il. 11. Way to place a Mantilla, Anonymous photo from Google



Il. 12. Queen of Spain, Sofia of Greece, dressed in Mantilla. Photo from Pinterest of Trendy by Conde



Il. 13-16. Almagro Mantilla in process of execution by Mrs. Natividad Gonzalez Silvero. Photo by Mrs. Natividad Gonzalez



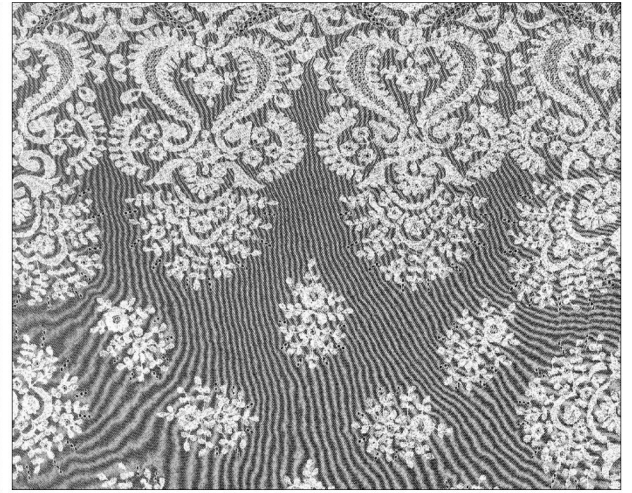
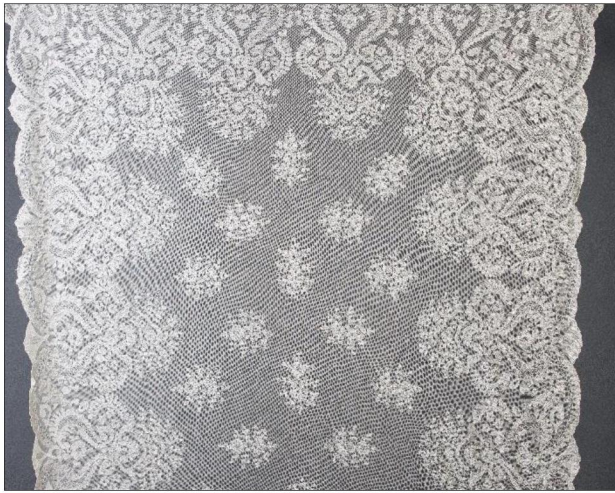
Il. 17. Almagro Mantilla owned by Mrs. Guadalupe Alcazar Prado.
Photo by Mrs. Natividad Gonzalez



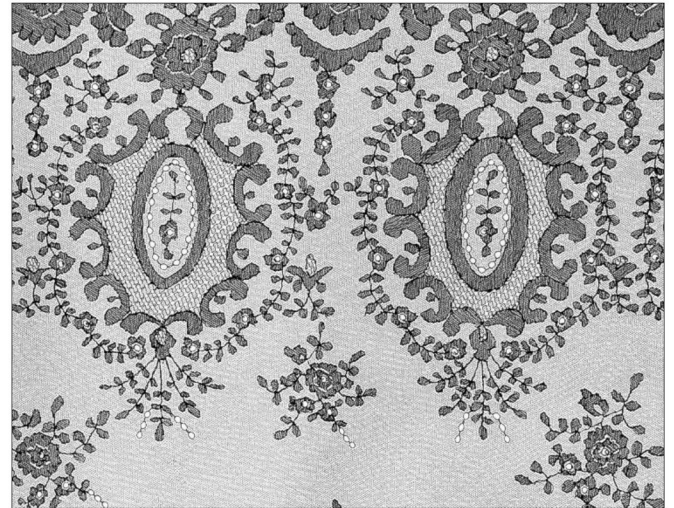
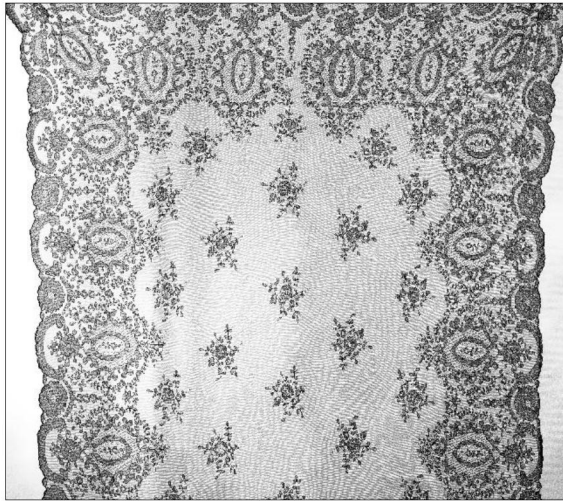
Il. 18. Almagro Mantilla owned by Mrs. Nieves Gomez Prado.
Photo by Mrs. Natividad Gonzalez



Il.19. Almagro Mantilla. Photo by Natividad Gonzalez Silvero.



Il. 20-21. Typical Granada Mantilla, embroidered in tulle in ecru, property of Mr. Angel Sanchez. Photo by Mr. Diego Dominguez



Il. 21-22. Typical Granada Mantilla, embroidered in tulle in black, property of Mr. Angel Sanchez. Photo by Mr. Diego Dominguez



Il. 23. Maria Diaz Cordoba, Mr. Angel Sanchez's grandmother's sister dresss with the typical Mantilla

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